

## Guidelines for Mentors and Mentees



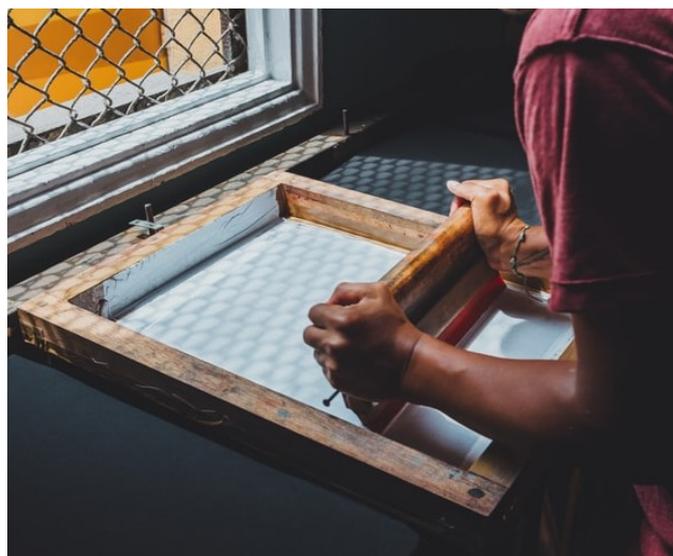
### WELCOME TO THE SDC'S MENTORING PROGRAMME

The SDC's Mentoring Programme aims to help less experienced Licentiates and Members to -

- develop their practice as designer/makers,
- define and understand the problems they are facing,
- set targets for their craft practice,
- decide on what they will do to achieve them, and
- to enable Licentiates to work towards full Membership of the Society.

The Mentoring Programme is now open to all Licentiates and Members. In order to make it work, we invite Fellows and established Members to become Mentors to Licentiates and less experienced Members

Previously, most Mentoring sessions have taken place in London, which was sometimes off-putting and costly for members living a long way away, and we are now offering Mentoring in all parts of the country and encourage videoconferencing as well. This will enable us to deliver Mentoring to be delivered more quickly and efficiently.



Mentoring can cover these sorts of issues:

- Assessing the current situation in the Mentee's craft practice and helping the Mentee to determine the most appropriate values, vision and goals.
- Creating work to a higher professional standard. Developing craft techniques. Skills development and the identification of training needs.
- Career plans and opportunities.
- Building professional networks and relationships.
- Developing the appropriate business model. Setting up a workshop. Recruiting and managing people. Management and operations. Manufacturing options. Intellectual property. Business records and accounting. Finance. Costing, budgeting and pricing.
- Sales, marketing and promotion. Brand positioning and developing a USP. Market research. Identifying customers and how to reach them. Developing a sales plan. Writing promotional material. Online selling. Use of social media.
- Choosing the most appropriate place to exhibit. Making submissions for exhibitions.
- How Licentiates can work towards full SDC membership. Opportunities to become more involved in the SDC at the local and national level.

Although its Mentors and Mentees are likely to work in the same discipline, it may sometimes be helpful for Mentees wanting to look at more general issues of artistic, career and business development to be Mentored by someone in a different discipline.

Mentees may want to think about what they hope to get out of Mentoring when they have discussions with possible Mentors.

## WHAT IS MENTORING?



Mentoring is:

- a one-to-one relationship that continues over a period of time between a less experienced person (the Mentee) and an established professional (the Mentor) that provides consistent support, guidance and practical advice and which enables the Mentee to gain the necessary skills, knowledge and confidence to be able to perform at a higher level;
- an opportunity for a less experienced person to gain access to impartial, non-judgmental guidance and support;
- a process in which people work together to define and achieve goals;
- a two-way process in which both parties derive satisfaction from the Mentoring process.

Although mentoring is similar in some ways to coaching, training, counselling and consultancy, they are not the same thing. Mentoring is less formal than coaching and tends to be less task-oriented and the relationship tends to continue for longer. Mentoring is an extended relationship helping the Mentee to define and achieve their own goals, while training delivers formal, short-term instruction relating to the execution of specific, pre-defined tasks. Mentoring, unlike counselling, does not focus on personal problems and unlike consultancy offers continuing support over a determinate period based on a personal relationship.

## THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING

Mentoring is more than just the transfer of knowledge from Mentor to Mentee, and it offers benefits to both Mentees and Mentors.

The Mentee will gain a better understanding of their practice, clarity about what they want to do, the opportunity to discuss their work and methods with an experience craftsperson, help in advancing their career and help in setting objectives and thinking about finding ways in which they can be realised in practice. The experience of a designer maker, often working alone in their studio for long hours, can be lonely and isolated at times, and Mentees may just want the opportunity to bounce ideas off someone who can cast an experienced eye on their studio practice,



The Mentor who is willing to invest time in developing younger member can gain personal satisfaction from sharing their skills and experience and other benefits including, gaining recognition as an expert and a leader in your field, developing your personal leadership style, renewing and developing your communication skills, gaining exposure to fresh perspectives, ideas and approaches, and gaining insight into what is happening in the younger, less experienced part of your field.

## HOW IT WORKS

Mentoring works best if an extended period of support and advice to Mentees is offered and we discourage one-off meetings without follow-up. We would expect the Mentoring relationship to last for between 6 months and 2 years as is felt appropriate and to involve at least 4 face-to-face meetings between the Mentor and Mentee. The initial meeting should last between 2 and 3 hours and subsequent sessions may be between 1 and 2 hours long.

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A Mentee might sometimes request a session from another Mentor to give them an alternative approach to their work. This is perfectly acceptable as each Mentor will have different strengths and knowledge to offer a Mentee.

## SOME TIPS FOR MENTORS

Set the Mentee at ease. Start with a general chat about what they are doing. Put yourself into a context with some of your personal background.

Outline the purpose of the process and explain what mentoring is and what it's not.

Ask about the Mentee's goals. What are they looking to achieve today, next week, next year?

To encourage the Mentee to take initiative and to get involved in the mentoring process, try to use open-ended questions - i.e. questions that require more than a simple "Yes" or "No" answer.

- What do you want to discuss today?
- Where are you now?
- How long have you got?
- What do you need from me?
- Where do you see yourself in a year's time?
- Why do you want to reach that goal?
- What does success look like to you?
- What interests you/excites you?
- What are you good at?

Suggest actions to the Mentee:

- What are your priorities?
- What research have you done?
- What is the hardest/easiest bit?
- Have you done a SWOT analysis? (strengths/weaknesses/opportunities/threats)
- Is there a Plan B? (if not brainstorm one)
- Where will you find your sources of inspiration?



Communicate in a way that motivates the Mentee. Develop their confidence, self-esteem, respect and trust in the relationship.

Share your personal experiences and knowledge with the Mentee to help them achieve the goals you have agreed on.

Support the Mentee to develop and use skills in solving problems and making decisions.

Use your personal and professional networks to help your Mentee at your discretion.

Use a range of communication strategies, including listening, questioning, and giving and receiving feedback.

Resolve any differences without damaging the relationship. If the relationship isn't proving constructive, inform the Mentoring Manager.

When the Mentee has achieved their objectives, negotiate and manage closure of the Mentoring arrangement.

## SMART OBJECTIVES

It's a good idea to encourage Mentees to make their goals SMART –

**Specific – Measurable – Achievable – Realistic – Time-based**

Set in place a timetable for implementing objectives and reviewing progress. If the goal is vague or can't be measured, and there is no timetable for implementation, there is a danger of drift and it won't be possible ever to determine whether the goal has been achieved or not.

Vague goal –

**“I'd like to become respected by other people in my craft.”**

Translated into SMART goal -

**“By the end of three years,  
I want my work to be exhibited at COLLECT.”**

Help the Mentee to think through the steps they need to take to get from where they are now to where they want to be when they have achieved their goal. Each of these steps need to be translated into SMART objectives – e.g. “By next week, compile a list of galleries to approach; by the end of next month, contact all of them.” Every big problem is just a sequence of small problems.



However, goal setting is may not always be required or appropriate, and the Mentee may want something different from the Mentor, such as encouragement and confidence building, or the opinion and judgement of an experienced maker on the design and workmanship of their craft.

In subsequent sessions you may find reality-check questions useful:

- How are things going?
- What have you achieved since we last met?
- What has worked/hasn't worked?
- What has led you to this point?
- What experience/skills do you have related to what you want to do?
- What problems can you perceive on the way?
- Is there anything stopping you from getting started?

## RECORDING

For your convenience, to help the Mentee and to make it possible for the SDC to review the Mentoring Programme, Mentors are required to take brief notes of the session on the form provided, recording the name of the Mentor and the Mentee, the date of the mentoring session and the number of sessions that have been held, topics discussed, and goals set, the Mentor's comments and the Mentee's comments.

## PROCEDURE FOR PAYMENT

Mentees will be charged and Mentors will be paid for face-to-face meetings with Mentees, including online sessions via Zoom, Skype, Facetime, etc, but not for phone or email communication with Mentees.

The procedure for charging and payment:

- Mentor notifies the Mentoring Manager that a mentoring session has been arranged.
- An invoice is issued to the Mentee for the mentoring received.
- The Mentee pays the SDC in advance of the mentoring session.
- SDC issues a receipt to the Mentee to be shown to the Mentor to confirm that payment has been made.
- Mentor submits report of mentoring session, with claim for payment.
- SDC pays Mentor.

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