HELP OUR STUDENTS THRIVE
WITH CAREER MENTORING
WHAT IS THRIVE?

Thrive is a partnership which is established between a professional and an undergraduate during their penultimate year of study. These students may be looking to create and clarify their career goals, or explore them in more depth through exposure to the workplace.

The support offered by a mentor can make a significant difference to the success of their transition into graduate roles, boost their motivation and build resilience whilst making challenging decisions.

Benefits for those involved:

- Gain a clear picture of the graduate talent pool.
- Raise your organisation's profile on campus.
- Increase staff interest in self-development.
- Develop staff interpersonal skills and emotional intelligence.
- Enhance business networks.
- Feel truly challenged and gain a new perspective.
- Fine tune your empathy, listening skills and ability to motivate.
- Give something back to the University.
- Feel a great sense of satisfaction by helping another.
- Meet other professionals within your sector.
- Boost career clarity.
- Build and expand professional networks.
- Develop communication skills.
- Insight to expectations of graduates.
- Guidance on application processes.

"My skills in listening and mentoring have improved. Through being involved in this scheme I have been inspired to take on mentoring roles within my own institution. It was very interesting to get insight for a student studying at Reading today as it was 20 years ago when I graduated."

"I learnt what it really means to be a mentor: that listening is vital and it is a case of offering your experience to guide your mentee. Through my mentees I also felt connected with Reading University again, and their youthful enthusiasm was also a positive experience!"

"My mentor was in the profession that I wanted to go into and if I had any questions about real life, I could go and ask her about it and she would give me a straight answer."
A message from the Vice-Chancellor to Reading alumni

Thrive is an excellent example of how we aspire to work in collaboration with our alumni for the benefit of our students and, indeed, the wider University community.

For our mentors, they tell us that it helps them to reflect on their own careers and further develop their skills as facilitators. It also gives them that priceless, warm feeling of contributing something to the next generation of graduates.

I am extremely grateful to all our mentors who give up their valuable time to help our students in their endeavours. We encourage our mentors to stay with us for as long as possible because they make an invaluable contribution to the lives and life-chances of our students.

Please accept my best wishes. We hope to build valuable partnerships in the future through mentoring.

Who can be a mentor?

We ask that mentors:

- Are university graduates.
- Have at least 2–3 years of post-study/university experience.
- Are student focused with strong listening, questioning, empathy and motivational skills.
- Are willing and able to commit to one hour per month to assigned mentees.

The mentoring year

| June - Sept | Online training |
| Aug - Sept | Face-to-face training |
| September | New cohort starts |
| October | Match confirmed |
| Nov - Dec | Meet and greet events |
| January | Settling-in check |
| February | Speed networking and training afternoon |
| March - June | Mentoring continues |
| June - Sept | Additional mentor recruitment |
| July | Mentors asked to remain with scheme |
| August | Mentoring ‘wrap up’ |
| September | Celebration event |
FAQS

Can I select my mentee?
The matching process is mentee-led. Mentors can set mentee preferences e.g. ‘study within a specific discipline’ or ‘male’/’female’ but cannot select individual students for mentoring. Matches are made on a development-need-basis. We are committed to offering mentoring support to all students, regardless of their academic ability.

I am not a University of Reading alumni, can I be a mentor?
Yes you can. Although, we prefer for our mentors to be either alumni or work on one of our campuses. Selecting alumni or other employees that we know well, can help with our duty of care to students. Similarly, if you work in a professional role that is closely regulated this can be reassuring for our students. For more information, contact the team.

I haven’t been a mentor before, can I be a mentor?
Absolutely, alongside initial training, the team are on hand throughout the year to support you as a mentor. There are opportunities for mentors to exchange expertise, complete skills training and also have access to a resource bank during the mentoring year. Experience of managing people or projects can put you in great stead to be a mentor.

Can I recruit my mentee?
Yes, but, only if they are genuinely interested in the roles your organisation can offer that they have formed an independent view about. A hard sell will conflict with your mentoring role. If they are interested then refer them to your organisation’s normal application processes and provide them with fair support throughout the process.

How much time and training is involved?
All mentors must complete an initial two to three hour training session. This can be completed online or face-to-face at the University of Reading. There are additional opportunities for training and workshops throughout the year. Some time will also be appreciated to help us evaluate the scheme. Mentoring itself should take on average one to two hours of your month, per mentee.

Can I ask my mentee to promote our organisation on campus?
You can encourage your mentee to apply for any student ambassador roles you may have so that this is arranged formally. Alternatively you can wait and allow them to spread natural enthusiasm about your organisation as a result of your brilliant mentoring.

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For more information, please contact:
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