



Hild Bede Career Mentor Scheme est. 2012

Getting the most from mentoring

The Hild Bede Career Mentor Scheme is a brilliant opportunity for undergraduates to be paired with an experienced professional (and former Hild Bede student) to gain one-to-one careers advice, support and guidance in relation to their profession and sector.

Introduction

Thanks to the generosity and sense of community that lingers within our college alumni long after they leave, the College of St. Hild & St. Bede can proudly offer current students the unique opportunity to sign up to our **Career Mentor Scheme**.

Established in 2012 by the Alumni Relations Office, we aim to search through our collection of Hild Bede Career Mentors to find a professional alumnus who can best help answer your industry-specific questions, give you a better idea of what their profession is really like, and advice on how to succeed in getting to the position they're in now. Our mentors will share their own experiences and expertise, and encourage you to develop your own careers ideas. This is an incredible chance for you to gain insider insight into the knowledge and skills required to succeed in the companies you want to apply for.

We have put together a short document to help you to maximise your mentor-mentee relationship, so that you can utilise this opportunity to it's full advantage **efficiently** and **effectively**.



What do we mean by mentoring?

Mentoring is where you **seek advice and guidance** from someone whom **you aspire to be like** in some way - in this case career-wise.

Our "**mentors**" are typically experienced Hild Bede alumni who offer to share knowledge and advice with a less experienced, Hild Bede undergrad, or "**mentee**".

Mentoring requires many sophisticated qualities and skills...being an 'ace dude' who can 'burp Elton John's greatest hits' probably isn't amongst them!



Why should you sign up?

We will pair you with a Hild Bede alumnus with whom you may share similar career interests, academic background and/or experience. They may give you a better idea of where your degree can take you and a head start in tackling the ever-more complex job market, from an **insider's perspective**. Not only is the scheme free, but it offers a whole host of employability benefits, including:

- One-to-one, specific career advice, support and guidance from an experienced professional
- Gaining a developmental partnership through which the mentor shares expertise, skills & information to foster your professional growth
- Develop personal and professional competencies which will set you apart from other students and graduates
- Mentors usually bring to the relationship a wide knowledge about the business, culture, dynamics, and politics and are often regarded as role models
- Your mentor can evaluate your CV and application forms—an industry professional from your sector of interest knows exactly what companies are looking for and can really help you to sell yourself on paper
- Advice on your professional development and how to manage a career plan (E.g. tips on applying to internships and graduate schemes)
- Mentors offer insights into the ways their company works and a realistic insight into your chosen profession, in different ways than the company's recruitment representative can
- Possible networking opportunities
- Mentors can challenge your assumptions
- Mentors can share their own experiences

Ultimately, the scheme aims for the development of a supportive one-to-one relationship between a



Mentor/mentee ground rules

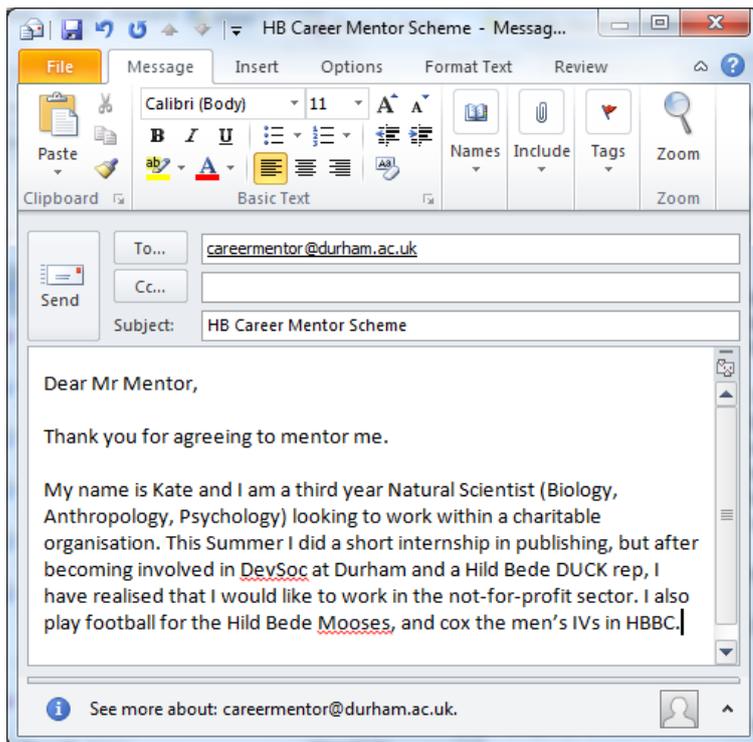


To create a valuable mentor/mentee relationship, at the outset you should establish the following with your mentor:

- ⇒ **Clarification of goals**—are you both clear about each other’s expectations of each other & the relationship? What will make this a satisfying & useful relationship for both of you?
- ⇒ **Content**—what are the topics you want to discuss? What are the priorities? What, if any, are the limits to what you talk about?
- ⇒ **Knowledge** – what do we want/need to know about each other?
- ⇒ **Responsibilities** – who will take primary responsibility for deciding how often you talk? Will contact frequency be **sporadic** (as and when you think of questions), **regularly** (e.g. once a month), or just a one-off? Decide *how* you want to **communicate**. Most contact will be remote and over email, however, some mentors may prefer to use Skype/phone, and some have even met up for lunch in London! It is entirely up to your requirements/ your mentor’s willingness. Who will initiate communication each time? Is your mentor required to ‘check-in’ with you regularly to see how you’re doing?
- ⇒ **Openness & trust** – have you agreed that openness & trust are essential? How will you ensure they happen?
- ⇒ **Confidentiality** – what, if any, are the limits to the confidentiality of the relationship?



Relationship with your mentor



First communication with mentor:

- **Introduce yourself**

Give a brief background: name, year of study, subject of study, where you want to take your degree, any experience you've already had, and don't forget—what you've been involved in at Hild Bede

(your shared heritage is the reason you have acquired this amazing contact—it's always nice to develop a pleasant rapport with your mentor, so where appropriate do chat about your experiences of Hild Bede together).

NB. If you find out any funny stories—do pass them on as we're always looking for magazine contributions!

- During your initial contact with your mentor you should discuss and agree the '**ground rules**' of your relationship.
- It is important to be explicit about the specific aims and nature of the support you require - knowing what you want out of the relationship and being explicit about this from the outset is critical to getting what you want.

Think about...

- **What do you want from your mentor?**
- **What is your agenda, objectives and goals?**
- **How do you want to come across to your mentor?** Formal/informal
- **What does your mentor need to know about you?**
 - **Social**—career history, domestic circumstances, interests outside of work
 - **Career ambition**—likes/dislikes about job, where you want to be in 3 years time, greatest achievements/failures, what your picture of success is, clarify your career goals
 - **Development goals**—improvements in current role, preparation for future role, where mentee would most value guidance/advice/a sounding board
- **What other information would you like to share with your mentor? E.g.**
 - recent feedback
 - your development plan
 - challenges you are facing
 - your strengths and talents



Example questions

If you are struggling with what exactly you should and could ask your mentor, here are some ideas for you to build on. Listed are some examples of generic questions you may wish to use as starting points:

- * Could you look at my CV, and provide some constructive suggestions on how I could improve it?
- * Am I lacking in experience in any particular areas?
- * Would you recommend a company with whom I would benefit from work experience?
- * What clubs/socs & exec positions would look best on my CV?
- * How much time should I devote in my final year to looking for work after uni vs uni work?
- * What do you like best about your job/working for your company?
- * What is the most challenging thing about your line of work?
- * What is the 'work to life' balance like in your current position?
- * Do you think I'm better suited to other roles within the company?
- * I have no idea if this role is actually right for me—how did you decide it was what you wanted to do?
- * What are the best grad schemes within this sector?
- * Who looks best on your application form when supplying a reference?
- * What advice could you give for interview technique?
- * What happens at the assessment centre?
- * What reading/practice questions can I look into in order to prepare?
- * What did you study at Hild Bede?
- * What clubs/socs were you involved in?
- * What do you know now that you wished you'd have known as an undergrad?
- * I didn't manage to secure an internship, and this seems vital for this sector—what would your advice be?
- * I've never had work experience in this sector, is it too late?
- * If I want to undertake a post-University gap year, how can I make it productive and an attractive asset to employers?



Quick FAQ

Career Mentor Scheme—WHAT IS IT?

The Hild Bede Career Mentor Scheme is a brilliant opportunity for undergraduates to be assigned to an experienced professional (and former Hild Bede student) and gain one-to-one careers advice, support and guidance into their profession/sector.

Open to all Hild Bede undergraduates

- **Duration:** Up to the mentor and mentee
- **Who can apply?** At present, the scheme is *only* open to current undergraduates.
- **When can I apply?** Applications are on-going—there is no deadline

What are the benefits?

- One-to-one, specific careers advice, support and guidance from an experienced professional
- Advice on your CV and applications from a professional in your sector of interest
- Tips on applying to internships and graduate schemes
- Gain a realistic insight into your chosen profession
- Possible networking opportunities

Who are the Mentors?

- Experienced professionals at various stages of their career
- From a wide range of sectors and professions, including: Banking & Audit, Charity Sector, Education, Engineering, Fundraising, Event Management, Exploration Geology, HR & Recruitment, Law, Leisure/Tourism, Management Consultancy, Media, Oil & Gas, Museum & Heritage Curating, Public Sector, Publishing, Sales & Marketing, Science & Technology
- Based all over the UK and overseas
- Have offered to provide one-to-one careers advice, support and guidance in regards to their profession/sector
- Have offered to provide monthly contact via email (and potentially telephone or more)

(Since the scheme is in its early stages, we may lack mentors in some sectors. However, recruitment of mentors is on-going and we hope to offer you a larger database and diversity of mentors to approach. If your career interest is not yet represented, just ask and we'll do our best to find someone to help you)

What are you looking for in a mentee?

- Students motivated to improving their prospects and employability
- Students open to ideas and feedback
- Students who are proactive and interested in making the most of the opportunity !

How do I sign-up?

Email hildbede.alumni@durham.ac.uk

