

# Mentoring Programme

Handbook for Mentees





# Contents

<b>4</b>	<b>Introduction to the CSC Mentoring Programme</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>CSC Policies</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>Roles, responsibilities and opportunities</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>The mentoring cycle</b>
<b>10</b>	<b>Engaging with your Mentor</b>
10	Stage 1: Building rapport
13	Stage 2: Achieve a short-term goal or learning objective
15	Stage 3: Review your goals
16	Stage 4: Prioritising the remaining time
17	Stage 5: Wrapping up and moving on
<b>18</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>
<b>19</b>	<b>Resources</b>
19	Mentee top tips
20	Icebreakers
21	Setting goals
22	Effective communication
23	Receiving constructive feedback
24	Making the most of your final weeks
24	Keeping a record



# Introduction to the CSC Mentoring Programme

## Welcome to the CSC Mentoring Programme.

The CSC Mentoring Programme provides an opportunity for Commonwealth Scholars to be paired with a Commonwealth Alumnus to support their knowledge and skills development and provide a practical understanding of how these can be implemented post-Scholarship to achieve development impact. Your Mentor may also provide support as you adjust to living and studying in the UK.

This Handbook is designed to support you throughout your time as a Mentee. It provides information about your role and responsibilities, the objectives of the CSC Mentoring Programme, and ways you can learn from your Mentor. Please use the Handbook to refer to any information on the programme structure, expected outcomes for each mentoring stage, resources to support meaningful mentoring sessions, the monitoring and evaluation timeline, and information on induction sessions and virtual meet-ups.

Please make this Handbook the first point of enquiry if you have any questions about the programme. If you are still unsure, please contact the Alumni Team at [alumni@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:alumni@cscuk.org.uk)

Whilst the programme covers a one-year cycle, we hope the relationship you will develop with your Mentor as both a Mentee and a peer will continue beyond the programme and become a life-long partnership.

If you require a large print version of the Handbook, please contact the Alumni Team at [alumni@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:alumni@cscuk.org.uk)



## CSC Policies

### Code of Conduct for Award-Holders

As a Commonwealth Scholar or Fellow, you are an ambassador for both the CSC and your home country, and your actions and communication will have an impact on the reputation of both. You are therefore expected to adhere to high standards of conduct and behaviour and to show respect to others and your surroundings at all times.

You should familiarise yourself with the Code of Conduct for Award Holders, available on the [CSC website](#).

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a core requirement of the Mentor-Mentee relationship. You must not disclose any personal information, conversations, or issues raised with or by your Mentor with a third-party. Your Mentor will also agree not to disclose this information. If you have any concerns about confidentiality, you should notify [alumni@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:alumni@cscuk.org.uk)

### Duty to report

During your studies, you may experience unexpected issues which may affect your time in the UK. You should contact your Programme Officer on matters related to financial aspects of your award, travel arrangements, and visa and welfare issues.

If your Mentor has serious concerns for your welfare and personal safety and understands that the CSC has not been informed, they have a duty to report these concerns to the Alumni Team.

### CSC safeguarding policy

The CSC is committed proactively to safeguard and promote the welfare of our beneficiaries, and to protect its staff, Commissioners, beneficiaries and all those with whom the CSC comes into contact. The CSC requires staff, members of the Commission, applicants for and recipients of CSC awards and suppliers to act consistently with its requirements for safeguarding.

Award-holders should make sure that they are familiar with their UK host institution's own safeguarding policy and procedure including reporting mechanisms in case they should need to use it, but should also note the [CSC's Safeguarding Policy](#) which sets out the obligation for staff, members of the Commission, applicants for and recipients of CSC awards and suppliers to act consistently with its requirements for safeguarding. Any safeguarding concerns should be reported to the Commission at: [csc.safeguarding@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:csc.safeguarding@cscuk.org.uk)

### Mentoring pairing

Commonwealth master's and doctoral Scholars studying in the UK are eligible to apply to become a Mentee.

Pairings are made based on application responses across a number of areas, including: Mentor country preference; your subject and/or field of study; topic area; key words; motivations for becoming a Mentee; and the professional experience of a Mentor.

Where possible, the CSC will match applicants using the above information. You should note, direct matches (Mentee and Mentor studied the same subject at the same institution) are rare and not the aim of the programme.

## Roles, responsibilities and opportunities

During the programme it is important that both Mentors and Mentees understand their roles and responsibilities.

### As a Mentee, you can:

- Ask for guidance on how to ensure your studies will support your development impact goals and be applicable to your home country context
- Seek support in developing soft skills required for your personal and professional growth
- Learn from your Mentor's experiences and expertise to develop your skills and knowledge and support your academic and development goals
- Ask questions about how to apply your studies to the workplace, or for support in developing key skills to help you secure relevant employment on your return home
- Seek support in adjusting to living and studying in the UK
- Share updates on your studies and progress and keep your Mentor informed of your successes. You should also celebrate any successes or achievements made by your Mentor

### Your Mentor can:

- Help you focus on the development impact potential of your studies and provide relevant sector and/or research information to support this
- Provide motivation during intensive study periods, such as examinations, assignment submissions, and vivas
- Support you in adjusting to UK teaching and culture and create a safe environment for you to ask questions about social aspects of living in the UK
- Provide guidance on how you can implement your knowledge and skills in the workplace following your Scholarship, and/or advise on employment where these skills are most needed to support sustainable development in your home country
- Encourage you to take advantage of the CSC's engagement activities and events and stay connected with the CSC community during your studies. This may include joining one or more of the [CSC's Knowledge Hubs](#), or getting involved in your [Regional Network](#)
- Share in your successes during your studies, for example attendance at conferences and events, award nominations, and publications

Whilst the CSC understands there may be other ways in which you require support from your Mentor during your studies, there are some aspects of your time in the UK that the role of a Mentor does not cover.

**Your Mentor will not:**

- Draft, write, or proof-read essays or dissertations on your behalf. They may advise on plans, or small sections of work, but will not complete work on behalf of their Mentee.
- Provide advice on immigration and welfare matters. You should contact your CSC Programme Officer on matters related to financial aspects of your award, travel arrangements, and visa and welfare issues.
- Disclose personal or sensitive information about their Mentor with a third party. Please note the 'Duty to report' information on page 5.

**As a Mentee, you will not:**

- Expect your Mentor to draft, write, or proof-read essays or dissertations
- Try to contact your Mentor outside of the agreed communication channels or times, as set out in the first introductions stage of the programme cycle
- Disclose personal information about your Mentor or sensitive discussions with a third-party



## The mentoring cycle

To ensure both Mentors and Mentees get the most out of the programme, mentoring stages have been developed to guide your progress. The CSC will stay in contact with you throughout the programme and provide updates and support via regular mailings and events.

### Mentoring stages

#### STAGE 01

- Mid-November - Mid-January
- Rapport building
- Introductory webinar
- First pulse survey

#### STAGE 02

- Mid-January - March
- Achieve a short-term goal or learning objective
- Virtual meet-up for Mentees
- Second pulse survey

#### STAGE 03

- April - June
- Review remaining goals and change goals if required
- Virtual meet-up for Mentees

#### STAGE 04

- July - September
- Prioritise remaining time and discuss post-Scholarship plans

#### STAGE 05

- October - December
- Post-Scholarship support for master's Mentees; ongoing support for doctoral Mentees
- Wrapping up and moving on
- Final feedback survey



## Participate in events for Mentees

During the programme, you will be invited to attend programme events, including:

- Induction webinar at the beginning of Stage 1 to introduce you to the programme and key information
- Virtual meet-ups during Stages 2 and 3. The meet-ups provide an opportunity to meet with fellow Mentees and receive programme updates.

## Resources for Mentees

In this Handbook you will find the following resources (from page 20) to support you during the programme, and references will be made to these for each mentoring stage.

- Top tips for Mentees
- Ice breaker questions
- Setting SMART goals
- Effective communication
- Receiving constructive feedback
- Making the most of your final weeks

You can also access additional resources on the [Mentoring Programme resources webpage](#), including:

- Guidance on building a strong mentoring relationship: ideas and questions to support initial meetings and understand how you can best work together
- Mentoring log: to record your meeting notes during your mentoring session
- SMART goals record: to record your goals and monitor your progress
- Materials from the induction webinar

You can view a list of Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) about the programme on the [CSC website](#).

## Taking care of your wellbeing

During your studies it is important that you take care of your mental health and wellbeing. You may wish to seek additional support from your Mentor to discuss challenges in relation to living and studying in the UK, such as culture shock and living on a student budget. The CSC has compiled resources on student wellbeing, available on the [CSC website](#).



## Engaging with your Mentor

This section of the Handbook provides guidance on each of the mentoring stages and tips on staying engaged with your Mentor to ensure you can both make the most of your pairing.

### Stage 1: Building rapport

Timeline: Mid-November to Mid-January

#### Induction webinar

Mentors and Mentees will be invited to take part in an induction webinar which will provide further information about the Mentoring Programme, what to expect, and how to make the most of this opportunity. The webinar will also provide an opportunity for you to ask any questions you may have about the programme. If you are unable to attend the live webinar, materials from the session will be made available on the [resource webpage](#).

#### First introductions

Your Mentor is responsible for making the first contact via email. In their first email, they will include information about why they volunteered to be a Mentor and some background information about their Scholarship or Fellowship and current employment.

You must respond to your Mentor as soon as possible to establish your first contact. You should take this opportunity to get to know your Mentor and share information that will help them to support you during your studies, as well as identify ways in which your learning may be relevant to their work and area of expertise. Your reply should include:

- Your reasons for applying to the programme
- A short summary on your studies and intended home country benefit, as well as any specific development goals you hope to achieve as a result of your studies
- Your employment background and how this is relevant to your studies
- Your availability to schedule your first virtual meeting

We encourage pairs to follow-up introduction emails with a virtual meeting so you can discuss your goals for the programme and get to know each other. To support your initial meetings, you should refer to the '[Guidance on building a strong mentoring relationship](#)' available on the resource webpage.

#### Setting goals

A key part of a successful mentoring pairing is setting goals. It is important you and your Mentor set clear goals at the start of the programme so they know what support to provide, and you understand what you can ask them about. When setting goals, you should remember this is a two-way learning experience and you should think carefully about what you would like to learn from your Mentor and what they may like to learn from you.

At the start of the mentoring cycle, you should each aim to set 3-5 goals. These can be a mix of short-term and long-term goals. For each goal, you should agree what is expected of each role to achieve these and discuss timelines for this.

## An example of a SMART goal

You may set a goal to work on your time management skills and submit your assignment on time, using your department's agreed referencing system.

<b>Specific</b>	<p><b>Be specific about the end results</b></p> <p>To work on your time management skills and submit your assignment on time, using your department's agreed referencing system.</p>
<b>Measurable</b>	<p><b>Goals should be measurable to help monitor progress and success</b></p> <p>Break down your goal into measurable steps. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Discuss time management tips and techniques with your Mentor</li> <li>- Identify any questions or queries you have about the referencing system used by your department. Who can you ask in your department? Is this a style your Mentor is familiar with?</li> <li>- Share any guidance provided by your department so your Mentor understands your questions and what you have been asked to do</li> <li>- Agree with your Mentor to share updates at fixed intervals on your research and writing progress and discuss where you may be behind or ahead and how to re-evaluate your time</li> </ul>
<b>Achievable</b>	<p><b>Goals should be within your capabilities but challenging and offer an opportunity for development.</b></p> <p>You may wish to discuss your strengths and limitations. In this example, this could include understanding the format of your assignment, putting forward an argument, writing skills, sourcing your references.</p>
<b>Relevant</b>	<p><b>Reflect if your goal is relevant to what you are trying to achieve</b></p> <p>Have you identified the right elements to focus on to achieve your overall goal? Is there anything missing, or anything that will not contribute to this?</p>
<b>Timebound</b>	<p><b>To help track your progress, goals should be timebound</b></p> <p>Break down your time into measurable steps to meet the final deadline for the completion of the work and your goal.</p>

## Activity for Mentees

**First pulse survey** - complete a short pulse survey to confirm if you and your Mentor have established contact and discussed your goals.



## Stage 1 outcomes

### At the end of Stage 1, you and your Mentor should:

- Have attended, where possible, the induction webinar
- Have completed the first pulse survey
- Understand why you have been paired with each other
- Have agreed the method and frequency of communication
- Understand how you both will support each other's set goals
- Acknowledge areas where support cannot be provided
- Have familiarised yourself with the resources available in the Handbook and the Mentoring Programme resource webpage

## Useful tips

- **Use an ice-breaker activity.** This is a great way to get to know your Mentor. You can find suggested ice-breaker questions in the 'Resources' section
- **Set SMART goals.** Following introductions and ice-breaker meetings, you and your Mentor will be able to identify core areas where they can provide support and set clear goals to achieve through the Mentoring Programme.
- **Decide how you will communicate.** You should agree the following with your Mentor:
  - All communication and personal information shared is confidential
  - The preferred platform to hold meetings. We advise a video platform where possible, or at least for the first few sessions, as face-to-face communication virtually helps in building rapport.
  - The frequency of communication and meetings. We advise a minimum of two contact hours per month
  - Areas you would like to focus in during the programme and where your Mentor can and cannot support these
  - Your pronouns (he/him, she/her, they/them)



## Resources

- Ice-breaker questions (see page 20)
- [Guidance on building a strong mentoring relationship](#)
- Setting goals (see page 21)
- [SMART goals record](#) to record your personal goals
- [Mentoring log](#) to make notes on the topics discussed and the actions agreed during each meeting

## Stage 2: Achieve a short-term goal or learning objective

Timeline: Mid-January – March

### Work towards a short-term goal

Post-stage 1, Mentors and Mentees should focus on achieving a short-term goal or learning objective which forms part of a long-term goal. At the beginning of this stage, you should let your Mentor know what you would like to focus on, referring to your SMART goals to identify key roles and responsibilities for achieving this.

As you work on your short-term goal, do not forget to ask your Mentor about their short-term goal and discuss how best you can support your Mentor to achieve their goal.

### Work towards a learning objective

During this stage, you and your Mentor may choose to work towards a learning objective which forms part of a long-term goal. Learning objectives should be brief, clear, specific statements of what you would like to be able to achieve through smaller activities and skills development. Discuss the learning objective you would like to work on and the support you will need from your Mentor.

### Activity for Mentees

**First virtual meet-up in early March** – Mentees will be invited to a virtual meet-up which will provide an opportunity to meet, learn about experiences of participating in the programme, and receive information on the next stage of mentoring.

**Second pulse survey** – complete the second and final pulse survey to confirm the progress of your pairing



## Stage 2 outcomes

### At the end of Stage 2, you and your Mentor should:

- Have achieved a short-term goal or learning objective
- Feel pleased with the progress you are both making
- Understand how each of your skills and knowledge are supporting the pairing and what you can learn from each other
- Have contributed to each other's short-term goal(s) or learning objective
- Have attended, where possible, the first virtual meet-ups
- Have completed the second and final pulse survey

### Useful tips

- **Select a relevant and achievable short-term goal.** The key to achieving a short-term goal is to make it relevant to your current needs and understand if it can be achieved within a short timeframe.
- **Don't be afraid to ask questions.** If you have doubts about how to achieve your selected goals, or need clarification, ask your Mentor.
- **Ask for feedback.** Don't be afraid to ask for your Mentor's feedback as you test your ideas and work towards your goals.

### Resources

- Setting goals (see page 21)
- Effective communication skills (see page 22)



## Stage 3: Review your goals

Timeline: April - June

During stage 3, Mentees and Mentors should review and evaluate the remaining goals and discuss how to use the rest of the formal mentoring cycle effectively. While you and your Mentor work towards your goals, you may find some goals are not relevant anymore. You should discuss this with your Mentor and seek their support in making any changes.

### Activity for Mentees

**Second virtual meet-up in May** – Mentees will be invited to a second virtual meet-up which will provide an opportunity to share learning and experiences of participating in the programme so far, tips and guidance on how best to use the time with your Mentor, and receive information on the next stage of mentoring.



### Stage 3 outcomes

#### At the end of Stage 3, you and your Mentor should:

- Be pleased with the progress made so far and feel confident in changing or adding new goals if needed
- Understand how to apply advice and learning or seek further support
- Be fully engaged in the programme and feel that keeping in touch is part of your learning experience
- Have attended, where possible, the second virtual meet-up

### Useful tips

- **Refer to your previous meeting notes and SMART goals record.** Always refresh your memory before meetings with your Mentor. This will help in being flexible and making changes to your goals to best suit your personal and professional growth.
- **Learn together.** Explore ways in which you can learn from your Mentor on how to achieve your goals, discuss challenges faced so far, and identify ways to overcome these.



### Resources

- Effective communication skills (see page 22)
- Receiving constructive feedback (see page 23)

## Stage 4: Prioritising the remaining time

Timeline: July – September

In July, you will be half-way through the programme. During this stage, you and your Mentor should prioritise the remaining time in the formal mentoring cycle. As you discuss any final goals, this will also be a time for you and your Mentor to start conversations around your plans post-Scholarship, or future years of your study.

For master's Mentees, take this opportunity to discuss any support you may need in understanding how to implement your knowledge and skills in the workplace and/or existing employment post-studies, developing professional skills, and preparing for new career opportunities.

For doctoral Mentees, you may wish to discuss how you will take your studies forward and apply what you have learned in this first year. You should use this stage to discuss how to prioritise any final goals and make the best use of the remaining time.

### Stage 4 outcomes

#### At the end of Stage 4, you and your Mentor should:

- Understand the need to prioritise the remaining time during your studies in the UK (for master's Scholars) and have identified key goals to focus on
- Discuss any final areas of support you would like to focus on during the final stages of the programme

#### Useful tips

- **Reflect on your achievements.** You and your Mentor should refer to your SMART goals record to look at previous goals and celebrate achievements made so far.
- **Be open to feedback.** As part of the mentoring process, you and your Mentor should be open to providing and receiving constructive feedback that will help you both to further develop your skills and achieve your goals. You can find information on receiving constructive feedback in the 'Resources' section.
- **Keep your Mentor informed about busy periods.** This may be a busy period for you with deadlines, examinations, or other work which may affect your commitment to regular meetings. Keep your Mentor informed if you are unable to meet or if you need additional support during this time.



#### Resources

- [SMART goals record](#) to record your personal goals
- [Mentoring log](#) to make notes on the topics discussed and the actions agreed during each meeting



## Stage 5: Wrapping up and moving on

Timeline: October - December

You should use the final stage to reflect on what you and your Mentor have achieved throughout the mentoring cycle and what you have valued as part of this pairing.

For master's Mentees, during this post-Scholarship stage, reflect on how you will implement the knowledge and skills you gained during your studies to achieve development impact in your home country. Discuss with your Mentor the support you may need in developing professional skills for a new or existing role and/or plans for further studies to enhance your career growth.

For doctoral Mentees, reflect on how you will move forward with your studies, taking into consideration advice and guidance from your Mentor, and areas of support you may still require.

As this is the final stage in the programme, you and your Mentor should start conversations to wrap up the pairing. Should you wish to stay in contact with your Mentor, you should use this time to let them know that you would like to continue to stay connected, outside the formal programme. Whilst you may decide to stay in contact, the dynamics of this relationship may be different, and it is important that you discuss this with your Mentor.

If you choose not to stay in contact with your Mentor, take this time to acknowledge the support you have received and how you will use this following your studies.

### Activity for Mentees

**Final feedback survey** – share your thoughts and experiences of participating in the CSC Mentoring Programme.



## Stage 5 outcomes

### At the end of Stage 5, you and your Mentor should:

- Have achieved your final goals and learning objective
- Reflect on what you have each learned and how you have supported each other
- Keep each other up to date on future plans
- Identify your next steps
- Share your experiences of participating in the programme through the final feedback survey

### Useful tips

- **Reflect on your experience as a Mentee.** During the final stage, you should take time to reflect on the goals you have achieved and experiences of participating in the programme.
- **Identify how your relationship may change post-programme.** There are many ways you and your Mentor may choose to stay in contact. This could be social or professional and you should discuss this as you come to the end of the programme.



## Resources

- Making the most of your final weeks (see page 24)

## Monitoring and evaluation

The CSC will monitor and evaluate the mentoring cycle to ensure all participants get the most out of the experience and to support the future development of the programme. You will be asked to complete the following surveys:

<b>December</b>	<b>First pulse survey</b> You will be asked to complete a pulse survey (short survey between 3-4 questions) to confirm if you are now in contact with your Mentor.
<b>March</b>	<b>Second pulse survey</b> You will be asked to complete a pulse survey (short survey between 3-4 questions) to confirm the progress of your mentoring pairing.
<b>November</b>	<b>First evaluation survey</b> You will receive a formal evaluation survey about your experiences as a Mentee and the Mentoring Programme more widely. The survey will be sent to all Mentors and Mentees and ask questions about the materials provided, cycle touch points, personal development opportunities, and wider gains of the pairing.
<b>April</b>	<b>Post 4-month survey</b> This will be the final survey you receive about your pairing and will ask you to reflect on the longer-term benefits of taking part in the Mentoring Programme.

## Unsuccessful pairings

During the programme, there is the possibility that not all pairings will continue and complete the cycle. In these situations, the Alumni Team will terminate the pairing. Reasons for unsuccessful pairings vary and some are outlined below:

- Mentee or Mentor has not submitted their agreement form confirming participation
- Mentee or Mentor can no longer participate in the programme due to other commitments and/or unforeseen circumstances
- Mentee and Mentor mutually agree that the pairing cannot continue

The Alumni Team do not guarantee to provide an alternative pairing but encourage unsuccessful participants to seek out alternative means of support through CSC activities.

## Resources

### Top tips for Mentees

The following tips are designed to highlight some of the ways you can engage with your Mentor. This will help you achieve your goals and gain appropriate knowledge and skills to support your academic and professional development.

## Top tips for Mentees

Get to know your Mentor



Set clear objectives



Be willing to learn from your Mentor



Self-evaluate and assess your skills and abilities effectively



Don't be afraid to ask questions



Keep your Mentor updated on your work, research, and extracurricular activities



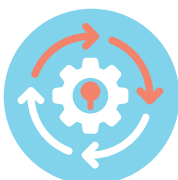
Explore ways to overcome challenges or barriers you may face in your work and research



Be open to feedback from your Mentor



Test your ideas and ask your Mentor to provide feedback



Strengthen your understanding of your development impact goals



The tips mentioned above will help you shape your conversations with your Mentor and help you achieve your objectives of participating in the programme. There are many ways Mentees and Mentors can work together and learn from each other during the programme.

## Icebreakers

First introductions can sometimes feel awkward. As such, you may wish to ask your Mentor some ice-breaker questions during your initial communications and meetings. If you ask an ice-breaker question you should also share your answers.

As well as using the icebreaker suggestions below, you should also refer to the '[Guidance on building a strong mentoring relationship](#)' document. This provides additional ideas and questions to support initial meetings and understand how you and your Mentor can best work together.

**Below are a few ice-breaker questions you may want to ask and answer as part of your introductory messages:**

- Tell me five facts about you
- Why did you apply for a Commonwealth Scholarship?
- Who do you admire?
- What are your professional goals?
- What is your favourite memory from your Scholarship?
- What does success look like to you?
- What are your hopes for this mentoring pairing?
- What do you like best about your job?
- How do you learn best?
- What scares you?
- What do you think are your key strengths?
- What have been the most significant learning experiences in your career?
- What knowledge and skills do you feel I possess that could be of benefit to you?
- What areas of learning would you most like to develop?



## Setting goals

Goals are an important part of performance development and setting appropriate goals is key to providing the framework needed to increase your performance and achieve high impact.

You should aim to set 3-5 goals at the start of the mentoring cycle and assign specific roles and responsibilities to achieving these. All goals should be SMART.

When setting your goals, you should also think about the following questions:

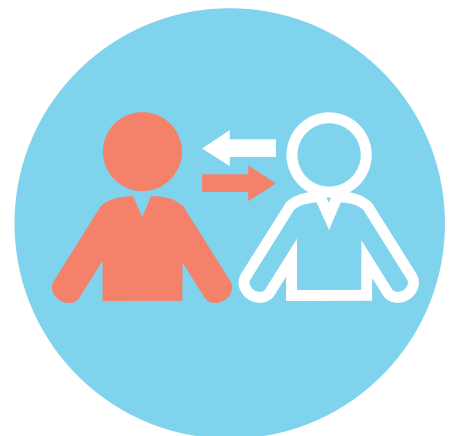
- What will I do and how will I do it? (Specific and Achievable)
- Where do I need support and how will I gain this? (Achievable)
- How will I know I have made a difference? (Measurable, Relevant, and Timebound)

<b>Specific</b>	<p><b>Be specific about the end results.</b></p> <p>To work on your time management skills and submit your assignment on time, using your department's agreed referencing system.</p>
<b>Measurable</b>	<p><b>Goals should be measurable to help monitor progress and success</b></p> <p>Break down your goal into measurable steps. For example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss time management tips and techniques with your Mentor</li> <li>• Identify any questions or queries you have about the referencing system used by your department. Who can you ask in your department? Is this a style your Mentor is familiar with?</li> <li>• Share any guidance provided by your department so your Mentor understands your questions and what you have been asked to do</li> <li>• Agree with your Mentor to share updates at fixed intervals on your research and writing progress and discuss where you may be behind or ahead and how to re-evaluate your time</li> </ul>
<b>Achievable</b>	<p><b>Goals should be within your capabilities but challenging and offer an opportunity for development.</b></p> <p>You may wish to discuss your strengths and limitations. In this example, this could include understanding the format of your assignment, putting forward an argument, writing skills, sourcing your references.</p>
<b>Relevant</b>	<p><b>Reflect if your goal is relevant to what you are trying to achieve</b></p> <p>Have you identified the right elements to focus on to achieve your overall goal? Is there anything missing, or anything that will not contribute to this?</p>
<b>Timebound</b>	<p><b>To help track your progress, goals should be timebound</b></p> <p>Break down your time into measurable steps to meet the final deadline for the completion of the work and your goal.</p>

## Effective communication

Communication is a two-way process and the ability to communicate effectively is an important skill in both professional and personal relationships. Below are some tips to help develop effective communication skills:

- Be an active listener. If you are communicating in person or virtually it is important that you are actively listening to the other person. This involves both paying full attention to the speaker and allowing them to talk uninterrupted while showing verbal and non-verbal signs of listening, such as nodding, making encouraging or empathetic sounds.
- Explanation techniques- keep it simple! Be clear and succinct when providing advice or suggestions. This may be by using non-technical language, or providing examples to help illustrate your point.
- Be empathetic and understanding, even if you don't agree with the other person. It is important to respect their point of view and find a common understanding.
- Stay calm. Discussions can sometimes be frustrating, however it is important that you stay relaxed and calm and find alternative ways to provide feedback.
- Be open-minded and flexible to your Mentor's thoughts or ideas
- Ask open-ended questions to encourage longer discussion



## Receiving constructive feedback

As part of your goals you may require your Mentor to give positive and constructive feedback. It can sometimes be difficult to receive feedback, particularly if you have spent a long time on a piece of work, or feel that you have a great idea. It is important that you understand how to receive and interpret feedback and how you can learn from this.

- Always approach feedback positively and calmly. This will help you to listen and respond.
- Actively listen to the feedback given to ensure you understand the points being made
- Make it a conversation. Ask for specific examples and clarifications and don't be afraid to ask questions about areas you are unsure of or don't understand.
- Consider ways you can address the feedback given. If you agree with the points made, think about what you can do differently and talk this through with your Mentor. If you don't agree, talk this through with your Mentor to understand why they may feel differently and clarify if there may be misunderstandings.
- Keep a note of the discussion and the feedback received so you can reflect on this later
- Remember to thank your Mentor, even if you don't agree or aren't sure how to use their feedback





## Making the most of your final weeks

The final weeks of the mentoring cycle will pass quickly and it is important that you and your Mentor use this time effectively to ensure that you both achieve any outstanding goals and continue to feel engaged and supported.

- Reflect on what you have both achieved so far. This may be as part of the goals set, or additional skills and knowledge you have learned from each other.
- Review what goals are still outstanding. Why are these goals outstanding?
- How have you and your Mentor changed your approach or way of thinking? How will this be of benefit in future?
- What new challenges or learning opportunities do you now feel able to approach?
- Will you stay in contact outside the formal Mentoring Programme? If so, how will your relationship change and what do you hope to achieve?

## Keeping a record

It is important to keep a record of the personal goals you and your Mentor set as part of the programme. The CSC has created a draft log which you can use to record these, available on the [Mentoring Resources webpage](#).

During your meetings with your Mentor, you should take notes on the topics discussed and any actions you have each agreed. This will help you to monitor progress towards achieving each of your goals.

You should agree with your Mentor if you would like to share your notes at the end of each meeting or conversation and confirm any action points.

The CSC has also created a draft log to record this information, available on the [Mentoring Resources webpage](#).

## Contact us

Do you still have questions about the CSC Mentoring Programme? You can refer to the Frequently Asked Questions page available on the [CSC website](#), or contact the Alumni Team at [alumni@cscuk.org.uk](mailto:alumni@cscuk.org.uk)







COMMONWEALTH  
SCHOLARSHIPS

[www.cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk](http://www.cscuk.fcdo.gov.uk)



[twitter.com/commschols](https://twitter.com/commschols)



[fb.me/commonwealthscholarships](https://fb.me/commonwealthscholarships)



[flickr.com/cscuk](https://flickr.com/cscuk)