

## **Public Law Wales Mentoring Guide**

### **Preliminary**

1. This Guide sets out principles and guidelines for mentors and mentees of the Public Law Wales Mentoring Scheme ('the Scheme'). It also gives an overview of the application process and provides an email address for those running the Scheme.

### **The Mentoring Scheme**

2. The Scheme provides structured and focussed support to members of Public Law Wales ('PLW') to help them develop their Public Law practices and career progression.

3. The Scheme is open to prospective mentees over the age of 18 who either work in Public Law or aspire to do so. It is expected that prospective mentors will already have an established career in Public Law, but this will be considered on a case by case basis. The Scheme pairs mentees with mentors who have the necessary skills and experience to provide the mentee with the type of guidance sought.

4. Mentors and mentees will be from different Chambers, firms, organisations or universities (as relevant).

5. The mentor will usually have at least five more years of relevant experience than the mentee.

6. The mentee may seek a mentor for general and ongoing support and/or to achieve a specific and defined goal, which may include the following:

a. Career development: starting or developing a Public Law practice;

b. Managing work relationships;

c. Work-life balance;

d. Returning to Public Law work after a period away from practice;

e. Moving chambers, firms or organisations; or

f. Silk, panel or judicial applications (provided the mentor has appropriate experience).

7. Mentoring through the Scheme is confidential, one to one, and there is an expectation of regular communication between both parties.

8. Participants in the Scheme will not be paid and nor will any expenses be provided.

9. The Scheme is run and administered by a Mentoring Committee which is comprised of members of the PLW Committee (and may also include members outside of the PLW Committee).

### **The Application Process**

10. Members of PLW who are interested in being mentors should download and complete a Mentor's Form, which is available on the PLW website.

11. Members of PLW who wish to be mentored should download and complete a Mentee Form, which is available on the PLW website.

12. Mentees are encouraged to be as specific as possible about their reasons for seeking a mentor and what they hope to achieve with the mentor's help. The more information provided, the better

the mentee/mentor match. If there is a specific issue which is particularly important to a mentee, it should be marked as being an 'essential requirement' on the form.

13. Completed forms should be sent to [mentor@public-law.wales](mailto:mentor@public-law.wales).

14. The Mentoring Committee will determine the number of mentoring spaces available and will allocate mentors to mentees. Mentor and mentee forms will be seen by all members of the Mentoring Committee, and also potentially with other members of the PLW Committee. The process of matching mentors to mentees will be carried out by a member of the Mentoring Committee and names of paired mentors and mentees will be available to all of the Mentoring Committee.

15. Completed forms will be retained by PLW for seven years from the end of the Initial Term <sup>1</sup> (unless the mentor/mentee requests otherwise or alternative arrangements are made in specific cases such as where it has not been possible to allocate a mentor to a mentee). Information provided to the Mentoring Committee as part of the completed forms will be used only for the purposes of matching mentors and mentees and for otherwise administering the Scheme, subject to the professional reporting obligations of the members of the Mentoring Committee.

16. Applications from prospective mentors and mentees are welcomed all year around, however the matching process will take place from September 2024 on a quarterly basis (i.e. September, December, March and June).

17. Once a mentee has been allocated a mentor, a member of the Mentoring Committee will provide the mentee with the mentor's contact details (together with any other relevant information about the mentor), and the mentee will be asked to make contact. There is an expectation that the mentee will make initial contact and take the lead on arranging the first meeting. Information about the mentee, with whom the mentor has been matched with, may also be provided to the mentor by the Mentoring Committee.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the mentee**

18. Mentoring is a flexible practice that is likely to be highly individual. Once a mentee has been paired with a mentor, mentees and mentors are expected to develop the mentoring relationship themselves. Neither the Mentoring Committee nor the PLW Committee will be involved in organising meetings or managing the mentoring relationship. At the initial meeting, the mentor and mentee may want to discuss ground rules such as:

- a. The mentee's mentoring goals. It is important to have realistic expectations of the support which a mentor can offer;
- b. How/where to meet – remote or in person;
- c. The frequency of contact (a good rule of thumb is for mentoring discussions to take place every 4 to 6 weeks);
- d. Whether there are any specific confidentiality issues not covered by this Guide;
- e. Any conversational no go areas or boundaries;

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<sup>1</sup> The Initial Term will be a period of 12 months from the date that the mentor is paired with the mentee, representing the length of time the Mentoring Committee assume that the mentoring relationship will endure unless the mentor or the mentee inform the Mentoring Committee otherwise.

- f. Who will be responsible for arranging meetings (note this will usually be the mentee);
- g. Subject to paragraph 19 of this Guide, how to draw things to a close: either party should be able to terminate the mentoring relationship, without giving reasons.

19. PLW assumes that the mentoring relationship will last a period of 12 months from the date that the mentee is paired with the mentor, unless the mentor or the mentee informs the Mentoring Committee otherwise.

20. PLW expects, that unless the pair agrees otherwise, the mentee will:

- a. Keep information shared by their mentor confidential (unless: the mentee has a regulatory or legal obligation to report it; it is necessary to inform a third party to protect the mentor or a third party from harm; or the mentor consents);
- b. Be clear with their mentor about their expectations;
- c. Drive the mentoring relationship forward;
- d. Take responsibility for arranging meetings and setting the agenda.

21. It is expected that each mentee will only have one mentor from the Scheme at any one time (though they may of course have other mentors outside of the Scheme). If mentees wish to seek further mentoring support from another mentor from the Scheme following the successful conclusion of a mentoring relationship, mentees are expected to submit a further mentee application to the Mentoring Committee. See paragraph 27 for information about when a mentoring relationship is terminated early.

#### **Roles and responsibilities of the mentor**

22. The mentor will endeavour to provide guidance, advice and support that meets the mentee's stated aims.

23. PLW expects the following from the mentor:

- a. Information shared by the mentee will remain confidential (unless: the mentor has a regulatory or legal obligation to report it; it is necessary to inform a third party to protect the mentee or a third party from harm; or the mentee consents);
- b. Be clear with their mentee about their envisaged timeframe for the relationship; and
- c. Commit to regular meetings with their mentee, as agreed with the mentee.

24. It is not the role of a mentor to provide the mentee with advice about specific cases they are working on or to provide legal education or legal advice.

25. At the time of application, mentors should indicate whether they wish to be allocated more than one mentee at any one time as part of the Scheme. However, there is no expectation that mentors should have more than one mentee.

#### **Roles and Responsibilities of the Mentoring Committee**

26. The Mentoring Committee will:

- a. Administer the Scheme and allocate mentees to appropriate mentors;
- b. Be a point of contact for mentors and mentees and assist with any concerns which may arise.

### **Terminating the relationship**

27. Mentoring is an entirely voluntary process and it should be a positive one for both parties. If, for whatever reason, things do not work out and either the mentor or the mentee wish to terminate the relationship before the expiry of the Initial Term (see footnote 1 for the definition of Initial Term), the Mentoring Committee will (if possible) arrange for the mentee to be introduced to a new mentor and vice versa.

28. The Mentoring Committee retains discretion to refuse access to the Mentoring Scheme or to remove a mentor or mentee from the Scheme at any time.

29. PLW reserves the right to withdraw or modify the Scheme at any time.

### **Further information and Feedback**

30. If you would like further information about the Scheme or would like to provide any feedback about the Scheme, as either a mentor or a mentee, please contact a member of the Mentoring Committee. This email may be shared among the other members of the Mentoring Committee and the PLW Committee but can be anonymised at your request.

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