**Personal Safety with Mentoring at GCU**

*Please note that this guidance refers to the mentoring networks and frameworks offered through People Services, The Graduate School and Academic Development & Student Learning (ADSL).*

**A safe and secure campus**

The University is in effect a small community in its own right with a population equal to, and in some cases greater than, housing estates and small villages. The university is a multi-million pound business with the need to balance the books and service the needs of thousands of student clients and staff. The objective in support of this is to ensure a safe and secure campus with students, staff and visitors feeling safe and secure through highly visible and dedicated security staff operating out of a centrally accessible Security Office. Whilst a mentoring relationship is entered in to on a voluntary, and mutually agreed basis, please note that both mentor and mentee are supported through a safe and secure campus. Security services are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Security contact details are at the end of this document.

**GCU Values and Behaviours**

Our established GCU Values and Behaviours offer a framework that reflects how a mentoring relationship should be experienced by mentor and mentee.

The values of integrity, creativity, responsibility and confidence were selected by the staff and students of the University as those we felt represented GCU at its best as the University for the Common Good.

A Value on its own is just a word. We want our Values to be lived, to drive and define us. To achieve this we have captured the definition of each of our Values within a set of benchmark behaviours. These aspirational statements clarify the things we would like to be recognised for and help us in evaluating and improving our current practices.

There are two types of GCU benchmark statement:

* those that describe the behaviours we aspire to as an organisation; and
* those that describe how we as individual members of GCU aspire to live our values depending on our role within the university.

**What is mentoring?**

Mentoring is a learning relationship and can be a transformational experience for participants on learning programmes such as the Postgraduate Certificate in Academic Practice (PgCAP), Advance HE’s Aurora Introduction to Leadership Programme and the Research Staff Mentoring Programme led by The Graduate School.

Your GCU mentor is a critical friend and sounding board outside of the development programme you are enrolled on, and is the person who will help you make sense of your own institution's culture and internal politics and power structures.

Mentors are skilled at building rapport, have excellent listening skills and ask powerful open questions to help you develop your own problem solving skills. They also engage in the giving and receiving of feedback, with the aim of you integrating your reflections in to your professional practice. Mentors can be men or women and the mentor and the participant must get on well for the mentoring relationship to be effective. Mentoring requires openness, honesty, trust and commitment, and the mentor needs to be able to make time available to work with their mentee.

Mentoring is a structured process, with meetings scheduled and held on a regular basis over an agreed period of time.

Careful consideration needs to be given to the ending of the mentoring relationship. This is an important stage which includes evaluating the relationship and summarising the overall learning for both mentor and mentee. The early stage of the ending will include acknowledgements of all that has taken place, who and what has helped, and acknowledgment of independence now held by the mentee. As part of the ending both mentor and mentee can celebrate their respective achievements and clarify routings for additional help or support going forward. Agreeing options for future contact will also be discussed at this stage. The tone of this ending and closing-off of the relationship will have some structure but be a relaxed conversation.

**Safeguarding steps in a mentoring relationship**

Given that the decision to enter into a mentoring relationship is a voluntary one, the ability to step out of the relationship, as mentor or mentee, can happen at any point during the agreed duration of the working arrangement. This can be done by contacting the lead co-ordinator for the appropriate mentoring scheme e.g. for the PgCAP this would be contacting the ADSL PgCAP lead, Aurora – this would be the Aurora Lead and/or the GCU Aurora Champion.

However, it is hoped that this situation will be a last resort as it were; once all other avenues have been explored e.g. it might be that the mentor or mentee are not making the time to meet up regularly and that the situation could be discussed openly.

Additional things that you can do to support yourself in the context of safeguarding when in a one to one relationship, even when meetings are based on our campus, are detailed below. These steps are framed in the context of an **assessment of risk** that can be followed to ensure your personal safety when arranging regular meetings with your mentor.

1. Make sure that someone in position of trust and authority knows your whereabouts.
2. Plan for your own safety. For example take a mobile phone with you, and make sure it is fully charged.
3. Familiarise yourself with the area when you will be meeting/working.
4. Present yourself in appropriately in various contexts e.g. dress.
5. Communicate any concerns to your mentoring co-ordinator.
6. Follow the mentoring ethical code of practice.
7. Trust and listen to your instincts.
8. Record and report any incidents that cause you concern, in a confidential understanding, to the relevant Mentoring Programme Lead.

**Mentoring policies and resources to support safeguarding**

Overarching mentoring policies and resources that exist to support safeguarding of mentor and mentee are listed below:

* Mentoring Ethical Code of Practice

In the context of the GCU Values and Behaviours, familiarise yourself with your responsibilities under the ethical code of practice, which is a framework that outlines acceptable behaviours for a mentoring relationship. This code is in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff engaged in a mentoring relationship.

To access the Code please use this link: <https://www.connected.gcu.ac.uk/sites/TLP/Pages/Mentoring.aspx>

* University Health, Safety and Wellbeing Policy

In the context of the GCU Values and Behaviours, familiarise yourself with the health & safety arrangements in place to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of staff engaged in a mentoring relationship.

To access the Policy please use this link:

<https://www.gcu.ac.uk/media/gcalwebv2/healthandsafety/Safety,%20Health%20and%20Wellbeing%20Policy.pdf>

Mentoring networks aforementioned, for example Aurora mentoring which is led within People Services has an informal mentoring agreement which also has safeguarding guidance. Please access a sample of the agreement here:

<https://www.connected.gcu.ac.uk/sites/WorkingHere/Shared%20Documents/Training%20and%20Development%20Documents/5.%20GCU%20mentoring%20agreement.pdf>

**Contact numbers**

* Contact Telephone Main Campus: 0141 331 3787
* Contact Telephone Caledonian Court: 0141 331 3958

**People Services**

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