Flinders UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF MEDICINE AND PUBLIC HEALTH MENTORING SCHEME

GOOD PRACTICE GUIDE

Welcome

WELCOME TO THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE & PUBLIC HEALTH MENTORING SCHEME

The CMPH aims to foster the development of its staff and students through its mentoring program. This voluntary program is designed to facilitate the transfer of the personal and professional knowledge of an experienced person (mentor) to a less experienced staff member or student (mentee) to assist in the development of the mentee. Participation from all career stages (from the most junior to senior levels), from rural and remote areas, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islanders and people of any gender is encouraged.

The mentoring relationships developed through this program are designed to be separate from those of the mentee with their Research Group Head or Supervisor. The nature of these mentoring relationships can be varied depending on the parties involved, and the aims, desired outcomes and type of mentoring required. A typical mentor-mentee relationship, however, is likely to involve:

- the mentor and mentee meeting approximately monthly
- the transfer of advice relating to career guidance, such as setting career goals, assistance with CV building, and providing a fresh perspective
- a vehicle for the mentees to gain other useful contacts.

The mentoring relationship is designed to be of general career related advice and assistance, and is not designed to involve:

- direct advice on the mentee's research projects or their design, or specific detailed advice on their work activities
- direct assistance with drafting of manuscripts, grant applications or teaching program content.

These are the roles of the mentee's supervisor or collaborators. Mentors might comment or advise on grant applications but should not be involved in creating the content.

This document is intended to provide a set of useful guidelines as a framework for the mentoring relationship. We encourage mentors and mentees to become familiar with this document, which also outlines the benefits of this relationship, and your roles and responsibilities.

Further information can be obtained from the FHMRI RED Committee by contacting CMPH.research@flinders.edu.au

Table of Contents

04 **Introduction**

05 **What is Mentoring?**

05 Benefits of Mentoring

05 Benefits for the Mentee

05 Benefits for the Mentor

05 Benefits for CMPH

06 Roles and Responsibilities in the Mentoring Process

06 Role of the Mentee

06 Role of the Mentor

07 **About the CMPH Mentoring Scheme**

07 The Scheme

07 Becoming a Mentor and/or Mentee

07 Developing a Mentoring Agreement

09 **How Mentoring Works**

09 Your First Meeting

09 Outline for Subsequent Mentoring Sessions

11 **Setting Mentee Goals**

12 **If Things Aren't Working Out**

12 Reviewing the Mentoring Partnership

12 When Things Aren't Working Out

13 **Appendices**

19 **References and Acknowledgements**

Introduction

Mentoring helps individuals achieve their personal aspirations and goals in the work place and aids in attaining a state of well being.

A mentor is defined as:

- a wise and trusted counsellor or adviser
- an experienced senior sponsor or supporter.

The mentor / mentee relationship involves trust, support and empathy. Such elements are essential for a rewarding and beneficial relationship.

This guide outlines how mentoring can be arranged for mutual benefit of the participants and the CMPH. It provides a framework and suggests ways in which the benefits and impact of your particular and unique mentoring arrangement can be maximised.

Having decided to join the scheme, you should think carefully about the outcomes you would like to achieve. It is important to set some objectives.

These may be to:

- explore professional and personal development options
- gain advice on dealing with work related issues
- gain a continuing post or promotion
- stay sane
- decide on career priorities or
- help you make critical decisions.

Frequently, we are faced with competing options. Mentors can be extremely useful in helping to define the options and to delineate pathways to a personal objective. They can also open doors by setting up contacts internally and externally and introducing the mentee to activities that provide exposure to new environments.

Not only are there benefits to the mentee but there are many valuable personal rewards for mentors too, particularly from the sharing of new perspectives and the sense of fulfilment that you will gain.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a voluntary relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) in developing specific skills and knowledge that will enhance the less-experienced person's professional and personal growth. The mentor assists growth by sharing resources and networks.

The process is based on encouragement, constructive comment, openness, mutual trust, respect, and a willingness to learn and share. It is a relationship where both people in the relationship gain benefit and where the mentor acts as a role model.

Mentoring relationships differ according to the way they are formed, their aims, the context and the degree of difference in the experience of both parties. Ideally an individual will be mentored throughout life, most likely by a number of mentors as the mentee's needs/goals change and mature.

THE BENEFITS OF MENTORING

Benefits for the Mentee

- The opportunity to learn from someone more experienced
- Gain new competencies, skills and knowledge
- Increase self-awareness
- Gain fresh insights and perspectives
- Get assistance with career promotion and mobility (inside and outside Flinders)
- Possibly gain increased visibility or exposure
- Gain greater organisational knowledge and understanding
- A better understanding of roles
- Increased networks
- Development of a sense of professional identity
- Gain support through difficult times
- Help with decision making.

Benefits for the Mentor

- Personal satisfaction through contributing to others' development
- The ability to share knowledge, talents and experience
- Fresh perspectives, ideas and knowledge
- Reflection on own practice, style and experience
- Professional recognition and reputation
- Skills in developing others
- Increased networks within the organisation.

Benefits for CMPH

- Professional and leadership development of key staff
- On the job learning
- Sharing of organisational and role knowledge
- More communication channels across the organisation
- Support networks for employees
- Increased staff attraction and retention
- Improved workforce effectiveness.

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES IN THE MENTORING PROCESS

Role of the Mentee

The role of the mentee is to:

- Shape the overall agenda and goals for the relationship
- Identify priority issues for action or support
- Be willing to look at issues from a different perspective
- Listen actively
- Be willing to learn and develop and try out new ideas
- Seek feedback and take it on board
- Respond to questions and challenges thoughtfully
- Communicate openly
- Be respectful of the mentor's time and commitment
- Come prepared to each meeting
- Reflect and act between meetings
- Maximise the benefits of the relationship
- Agree on and commit to the ground rules set out in the mentoring agreement.

Role of the Mentor

The role of the mentor is to:

- Establish realistic and attainable expectations
- Assist in solving problems and setting goals
- Give personal and emotional support
- Listen actively
- Motivate by encouraging, supporting and challenging
- Provide guidance based on past experience
- Share stories, including mistakes
- Act as a sounding board for ideas
- Encourage looking at issues from a variety of perspectives
- Give constructive, specific feedback, and suggest areas for improvement
- Introduce the mentee to others who may provide additional support or advice
- Providing 'inside' knowledge about the organisation or profession
- Prepare for, and reflect between, meetings
- Act as co-learners and ask for feedback on their contribution to the relationship
- Agree on and commit to the ground rules set out in the mentoring agreement.

About the CMPH Mentoring Scheme

THE SCHEME

Becoming a Mentor and/or Mentee

The first step to entering the CMPH Mentoring Scheme is to submit an expression of interest to be a mentor and/or mentee. An online submission process will open at regular intervals for self nomination. As a potential mentee, you will be asked to nominate which elements you would like mentoring in e.g. building research networks, applying for grants, consumer engagement, etc. Potential mentors will be asked in their EOIs to nominate which elements they are comfortable providing mentorship in.

Following this, the Mentoring Program lead from the FHMRI RED committee will pair mentors and mentees according to the information in these EOIs.

Information sessions will be provided at regular intervals to allow new parties to enter the scheme.

Once a mentor has been identified, the Program lead will communicate this to the mentee. The mentee then needs to contact the mentor, introduce themselves and arrange a time to meet. Initially a formal mentoring agreement needs to be established.

Developing a Mentoring Agreement

A formal agreement should be completed together at the first meeting. This establishes the boundaries to be discussed and the goals of the mentee. It is best to discuss this early so that the parameters are well understood by each party.

A mentoring agreement template is attached in **Appendix A**.

Paramaters to discuss include:

Expectations: The mentee needs to clearly state what they would like to get out of the relationship. The mentor needs to communicate which attributes they will bring. This allows common ground to be established.

Set meeting framework: An agreement should be reached about the type, duration, location and frequency of meetings. Boundaries around availability and accessibility are a factor in mentors agreeing to offer their time to mentor.

Set goal time frames: Set realistic time frames for the goals, starting with goals to be achieved in 6-12 months.

Con identiality: Discuss between the parties which areas are deemed con idential to one or other. In situations where both parties work in the same organisation it can be easy to unintentionally break con idences.

Phone and email contact between sessions: The mentee should check whether the mentor is happy to have phone or email contact between sessions. Most are, but this can't be assumed. Email contact is a good way to update each other on goals and progress.

No fault exit clause: The capacity to end the relationship, without blame, when it does not work for either party is extremely helpful. It allows sensitive issues such as a clash of values, mentor inexperience and mentee non-commitment to be addressed positively and without in-depth explanation. Examples of pitfalls that may arise where the exit clause is important are outlined later in the guide.

Working together through the questions posed in the Mentoring Agreement in **Appendix A** will enable the parties to create a shared understanding of how the relationship will work. Realistic shared expectations set the scene for a successful partnership.

How Mentoring Works

YOUR FIRST MEETING

This is generally an informal meeting to help you both decide on whether the match is the right one – an opportunity to meet each other and get a feel for how you might work together. You will complete the mentoring agreement at the first meeting.

Mentees should prepare for the first meeting by considering the points to be filled out in the agreement. Importantly, a set of potential goals should be formulated and taken to the first meeting.

Mentors should consider the following points prior to the meeting and use some of these as a basis for the conversation:

- What do you want to achieve from this meeting?
- What do you want from me during this meeting?
- What are you trying to achieve with your goals?
- What will you feel like when you achieve your goals?
- How will you know when you achieve your goals?
- Have you identified all opportunities?
- Is there anything else that you can do?
- Which course of action do you favour?
- What obstacles do you think you'll encounter on the way?
- What support do you want from me and/or others in your plan?
- How useful has this meeting been for you?
- Where do we go from here?

OUTLINE FOR SUBSEQUENT MENTORING SESSIONS

1. Find a mutually acceptable meeting place. Ideally choose a location where you are unlikely to be disturbed.

2. Schedule a beginning and end time and try to stick to it.

3. Whatever the current meeting is about, it is important to review how things went since the last meeting. This is the 'observation' part of the action learning cycle. Having someone to assist you in making sense of how your efforts are going is extremely useful.

4. Before you launch into your topic for the current meeting it is a good idea to outline what you want to talk about and what you hope to achieve by the end of the meeting eg a decision on whether to write an invited book chapter or a paper from your last study. In fact, we recommend that before your meeting you email your mentor to let them know what you want to talk about (just a couple of lines is fine). This increases the productivity of your meetings.

5. Mentees should feel able to ask for advice and ideas from their mentors. However, it is probably not a good idea for mentors to offer strong opinions on what they think a mentee should do, unless this is asked for. The mentee is the driving force in the mentoring partnership.

6. Mentors may want to gently challenge their mentee if they feel they are not progressing well or are avoiding difficult decisions.

However, at the end of the day, the decision is the mentee's.

Some tips for consideration are:

- Ask the mentee what they would like to focus on at the beginning of the session
- Follow-up and review and actions from previous sessions
- Challenge in a constructive way
- Hold the mentee accountable for what they agreed to do
- Explore blockages when there has been no progress
- Question and listen more than speaking - unless sharing experiences or offering specific advice
- Recognise and build on successes
- Keep critique positive. Build the person's confidence and self-belief
- Reflect back what the mentee has said from time to time to reinforce points
- Agree on next steps or actions at the end of each session.

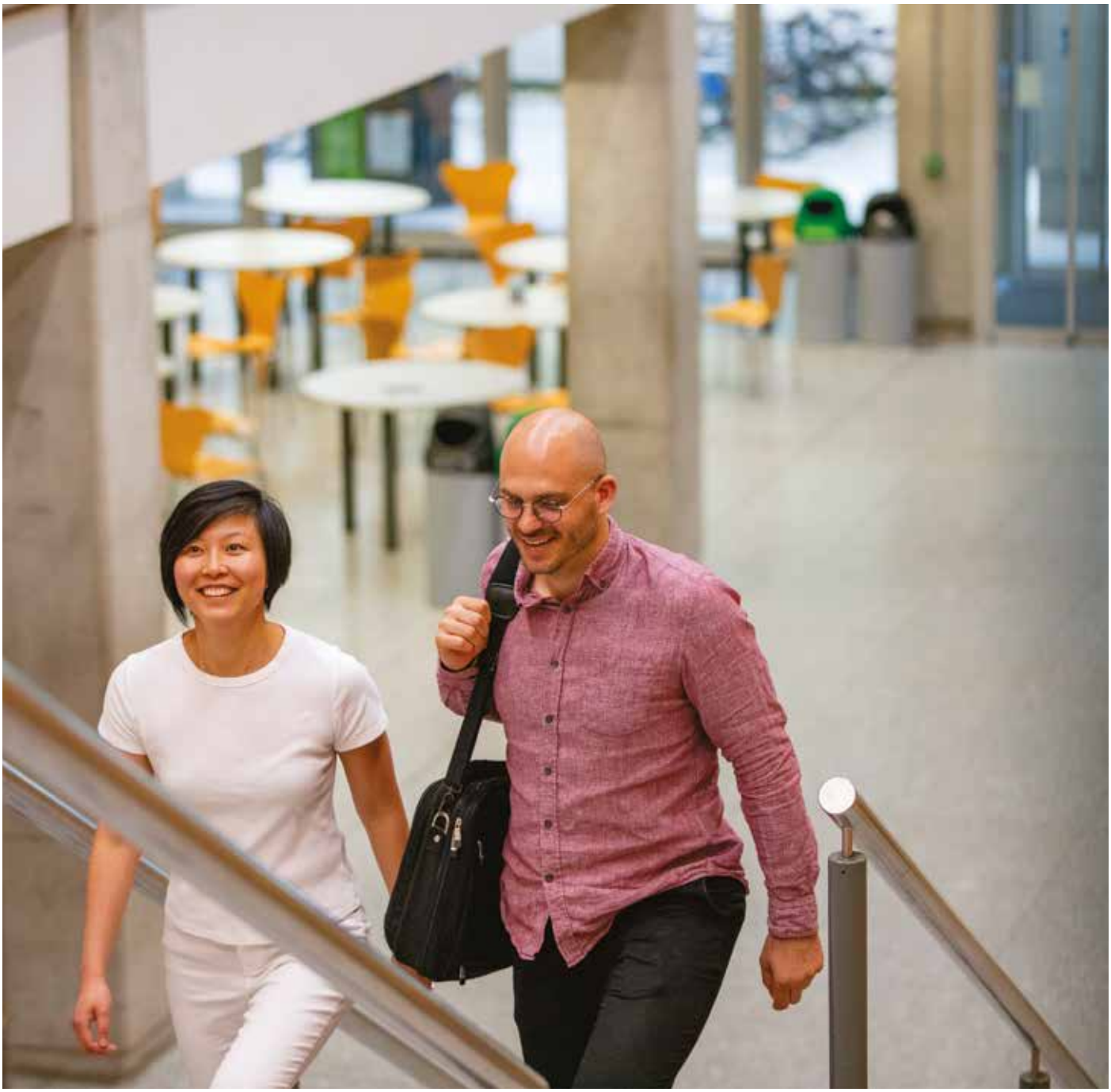
A set of ideas for discussion at the meetings is provided in **Appendix B**. A further guide for mentors is provided in **Appendix C**.

7. At the end of the session, it is a good idea to summarise what you are going to do next. It is ideal to record this and send your mentor an email summary. A template is provided in **Appendix D**.

8. Always arrange your next meeting at the end of your current meeting. Even if you have to change it later, it is better to have one scheduled; that way it is far more likely to happen.

Setting Mentee Goals

Mentees should develop a set of goals to be clarified at the beginning of the relationship. It is important to realise that these goals are likely to change and be refined over time as experience and understanding is gained. Flexibility is needed, particularly when changes occur in the workplace. There may be a need to respond to these changes by altering goals.



If Things Aren't Working Out

REVIEWING THE MENTORING PARTNERSHIP

It is useful to have a discussion occasionally to ensure that the mentoring partnership is still meeting the needs of both the mentor and the mentee. If either of you are unsure about something, it is a good idea to contact any member of the CMPH Mentoring Steering Committee.

WHEN THINGS AREN'T WORKING OUT

Mentoring is a voluntary process and, on the whole, should be an enjoyable and rewarding (including at times, quite challenging!) experience.

Giving and receiving feedback can be sensitive and, without a level of rapport, a mentee may feel inhibited in what they can say. A critical or directive mentor, or a mentee who is not open to feedback and reflection, can be problematic - as can a sense of power imbalance or feeling intimidated. In short-term relationships where skill-building is the goal, the level of rapport will not be as important an issue. However, where the mentee requires a sounding board for personal issues, the capacity for intimacy is important.

In such cases, parties should trust their intuitive judgment and acknowledge any mismatch as soon as possible. The earlier it is addressed the easier it will be to manage. The 'no blame exit clause' allows this to be accepted without full explanation. For example if you find that a mentor is too critical and directive and that this will be a major inhibitor in your learning it is sufficient to say "I'm finding that our styles are so different that I am having difficulty following through on your suggestions. I think that it may work better for me to find a mentor with a style more like my own." As a mentor you could say "I'm finding that I can't support you in the way I think you need and it may be better for you to find somebody better able to assist you."

If there is a clash of values this is best dealt with by invoking the no blame exit clause. An example of a value clash may be when a mentor advises of a course of action that is unethical or lacks integrity, or conversely a mentor may find the mentee's values are questionable.

If the experience is not what you had hoped or is not working out, and talking to the other party hasn't solved the problem, then contact any member of the CMPH Mentoring Steering Committee.

Appendices

Flinders UNIVERSITY | College of Medicine & Public Health

APPENDIX A

College of Medicine and Public Health Mentoring Program

Mentoring Agreement

This mentoring agreement is designed to ensure that

_____ and _____

mentor mentee

have an agreed strategy to underpin their mentoring relationship and achieve the agreed professional and organisational outcomes listed below.

The focus of this mentoring relationship is to: _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

What competencies/ activities will this mentoring relationship hope to influence?

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

_____ _____

How will you (mentor/mentee) communicate? _____

How often should you talk? _____

How often should you meet? _____

Short term goals: (what agreed changes/ differences could be expected in the next 6 months?) _____

Long term goals: (what agreed changes/ differences could be expected beyond 12 months?) _____

Flinders UNIVERSITY | College of Medicine & Public Health

APPENDIX A

College of Medicine and Public Health Mentoring Program

Mentoring Agreement

As mentor and mentee we both understand how honest, respectful and genuine communication can enhance this mentoring relationship and we agree to work with personal and professional integrity at all times. We agree that all discussion and communication between us remains confidential and that no information will be shared without mutual consent.

As mentor and mentee, we understand that it is possible that this relationship may not work out, and accept that the relationship may be ended by either party without blame. We agree to a no-fault conclusion of this relationship if, for any reason, it seems appropriate.

Signed:

_____ and _____

mentor **mentee**

OTHER DETAILS AS AGREED:

This document has been adapted, with permission, from the Mentoring Program of the Centre for Cancer Biology, Adelaide.

CRICOS No. 00114A

APPENDIX B - SUGGESTED DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR MENTORS

How are you?
How are you feeling about yourself - good and bad?
How are you travelling with your job at the moment?
How do you feel about those you work with?

What has happened since the last session?
What have you done that you said you'd do?
What break-throughs or insights have you experienced?
What new choices or decisions have you made?

What are you working on?
What progress have you made in your goals and activities?
What has got in the way of progressing any actions set?
What have you done that you are proud of?
What successes/wins have you had?

How can your mentor assist?
Where are you stuck?
What support do you need?
What are you wondering about?
What advice do you need?
What do you need to plan for/deal with?

What is next?
What is the next action or goal to take on?
Where do you want to focus?
What do you want next for yourself?

APPENDIX C - MENTOR SELF-ASSESSMENT: COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

How do I show I am interested?
Showing interest provides a platform for developing a productive relationship.
- Listen more than you talk
- Ask open questions
- Watch for body language and cues - acknowledge and respond
- Talk about the mentee not yourself - focus on their interests and problems
- Pace the conversation - don't rush it
- Be flexible - let the mentee lead the conversation.

How do I determine the mentee needs?
A mentee should assess and come to the session with their development goals reasonably well defined. As part of the mentoring process these may be clarified and redefined. If a mentee is unprepared, discussions on the following topics may assist. What are their future career aspirations and what do they need to do to achieve these? What are their strengths and weaknesses? Conducting a personal SWOT analysis may be useful. What are specific challenges or issues they are facing at the moment that they need advice on/ support?

How do I check that I am doing all right?
How can you ensure things are going well?
- Ask them!
- Observe if they are engaged, responsive and spontaneous
- Use your intuition - watch for signs of discomfort or hesitation
- Use goals and signposts, or other objective measures of progress
- Define stages of achievement so that you both know you are making progress.

How do I give good feedback?
Feedback is a vital part of the learning process
- Focus on the behaviour not the person
- Focus on observation rather than inference, intuition or guesses
- Focus on description rather than judgment
- Be specific rather than general
- Balance the negative with the positive.

How do I motivate?
A mentee's motivation will vary over the period of the relationship. When this is low a mentor can:
- Provide perspective and a 'reality check'
- Identify strengths to build on
- Determine the blockages and problem-solve around these
- Maintain optimism and confidence in their capacity
- Look for, acknowledge and leverage from progress.

How do I deal with a failing or unproductive relationship?
Mentoring relationships do not always turn out as planned and it is important not to just press on regardless.
- Reflect and diagnose before making a decision. Discuss the issues openly with the mentee
- Check out what the mentee thinks is happening and how they feel
- Reflect on your own misgivings
- Try to identify and describe issues in a detailed rather than a generalised way.

APPENDIX D - MENTORING MEETINGS: REFLECTIVE NOTES

(Photocopy as required)

Date: _____ **Length of meeting:** _____

Session overview- what was discussed:

What came out of the session for me:

What I am going to do before the next meeting:

Interesting ideas from the session:

Next meeting: _____

Support given by mentor:

☐	active listening	☐	constructive feedback
☐	responding to feelings	☐	coaching in specific skills
☐	help to clarify an issue	☐	challenging
☐	giving information	☐	general discussion
☐	solicited advice	☐	problem solving
		☐	other (specify) .....

References and Acknowledgements

This guide is based on material written and developed by Dr Marina Delpin, Flinders University.

Burke, RJ & McKeen, CA. (1997) *Benefits of mentoring relationships among managerial and professional women: A cautionary tale.* Journal of Vocational Behaviour, 51, 43-57.

Kram, KE. (1985) *Mentoring at work: Development relationships in organizational life.* Glenview, IL: Scott Foresman.

Elements of this guide were drawn from material developed by Kathryn McEwen Organisational Psychologist (kathrynmcewen.com)

First published in 2008 by Flinders Partners Pty Ltd & M. Gardiner
All rights reserved. No production, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without prior written permission.
Additions, updates and edits have been made, with permissions, by Dr Marina Delpin for the Flinders
University Researcher Mentoring Scheme 2012-2019, and by the CMPH Mentoring Steering Committee 2019.

CRICOS No. 00114A