



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
MELBOURNE

Faculty of  
Medicine, Dentistry  
and  
Health Sciences

# MDHS HONOURS ALUMNI MENTORING PROGRAM

## HANDBOOK 2024



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# WELCOME MESSAGE

Welcome to the Honours Alumni Mentor Program (HAM).

This program has been developed to provide support to Honours students in the Faculty of Medicine, Dentistry and Health Sciences (MDHS) throughout the course of their Honours year.

The Honours Alumni Mentor Program connects commencing Honours students with an early career research or PhD student mentor to assist in the transition from an undergraduate course to entering the world of research at the University of Melbourne. This mentor has completed an Honours year and can give personalised advice about the experience, help their mentee make connections with their peers, and help them learn more about the coursework/research options available to them after their studies.

If you are a mentor, you will bring knowledge, enthusiasm, and a passion about your field to the mentoring relationship to help new students feel supported and connected through what can be a high-pressure and sometimes isolating year. Mentoring is a two-way street, and mentors will also learn from their mentees, develop their leadership skills, and expand their professional network throughout the program.

If you are a mentee, you will have an eagerness to learn from others, share your journey and make connections within your Honours cohort. Your Honours degree is vastly different from your undergraduate experience and this program provides you with a solid support network that will be there every step of the way.

Building a mutually beneficial, open, and trusting relationship with your mentor or mentees will take time and effort, but we will be here to guide and support you. We look forward to working with you and we hope that you enjoy this experience.

Please contact us directly with any questions, concerns, suggestions and/or feedback.

Thank you for participating in the Honours Alumni Mentor Program!

Sincerely,

**Your MDHS Student Life Team**

health-hub@unimelb.edu.au

# TESTIMONIALS

“I thoroughly enjoyed the Honours Alumni Mentoring program and it gave me the opportunity to meet with other honours students from MDHS, which is great since we tend to be based in many different institutes, so meeting each other in any other way is difficult.”

“I like how I’ve made a connection with a mentor that has done the honours program, and seeing where they are now, and the processes they went through to get there. My mentor is a PhD candidate, and this is a potential pathway that I am interested in, so it is very insightful. I also like how I’ve been connected to other honours students in my group from different specialties. Honours can be very isolating, so it is valuable for me to have other honours students I can talk to about difficulties or challenges that I might be facing and hear about theirs too.”

“My favourite part of the Honours Alumni Mentoring Program is having the opportunity to interact with other students and mentors about their honours experiences. It helped me particularly when I was worried that I might be falling behind but knowing we were all going through the program together stopped me from becoming too stressed. The events were also all very well put together and were all very enjoyable.”



# PROGRAM TIMELINE

## March

- Mentors will be matched with up to 6 mentees based on the location of everyone's study/research.
- Everyone will have the opportunity to introduce themselves to their mentor group via email before the launch event.
- Everyone will be required to complete a pre-program evaluation.
- Launch event – the first time everyone will meet in person!

## April:

- Everyone should have their first meeting this month.
- We check in to make sure everyone's groups are running smoothly.

## May:

- We run our first mentor-only catch up – this is a chance for mentors to get to know each other and discuss how their groups are going.

## June:

- Meetings continue.

## July:

- We conduct a mid-year evaluation to check in on everyone's experience so far.
- All mentors and mentees have the opportunity to get together at the program half-way event.

## August:

- To help with upcoming assessment, the program offers academic workshops for mentees – mentors are welcome to attend too!

## September:

- The final mentor-only catch up – this is a crucial time to hear others experiences as their mentees are working on their projects.

## October:

- Meetings continue.

## November:

- Everyone celebrates their achievements within the program at the end of year event.
- Everyone is required to fill out the end of program evaluation so that we can continue improving the program for future mentors and mentees.

# GUIDELINES FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES

## Mentors should

- Relate to students and demonstrate empathy and understanding.
- Be willing and able to support and motivate others.
- Be able to maintain appropriate boundaries.
- Be willing to share their knowledge and keep learning themselves.
- Be able to build rapport and guide others to university services and resources.
- Attend all training to prepare for the role and actively participate in the mentor community.

## Mentors should not

- Be cynical, negative, or judgmental.
- Be a personal counsellor, academic adviser, or mental health specialist.
- Make decisions on behalf of their mentee.
- Be responsible for a mentee's academic performance, career choices and/or personal wellbeing.
- Be expected to carry burdens that will impact on their own success.

## Mentees should

- Schedule meetings with your mentor and peer group and be punctual.
- Actively engage with their group.
- Be open to new ideas and perspectives.
- Be respectful.
- Respond to all communication promptly.
- Practice active listening by putting away all distractions (including phones).

## Mentees should not

- Ask their mentor to assess their academic work.
- Share confidential details of their mentors' advice/experiences publicly.
- Expect their mentor to solve problems for them.
- Stay in their comfort zone and avoid new experiences.

# MENTORING SESSION TIPS

## At the First Meeting

- Introduce yourself: including personal and professional experiences and ambitions.
- Discuss mentoring goals and what everyone would like to get out of the program.
- Establish a schedule for future meetings (it is recommended that you meet for 1 hour once to twice a month).
- Settle on the best way to stay in contact (e.g. email, or other messaging service).
- Mentors to keep note of how many mentees attended for feedback surveys.

## At Subsequent Meetings

- Follow up on any action items from the previous meeting.
- Discuss how everyone is finding their study/projects and how their goals are progressing.
- Set a date and time for your next meeting.
- Mentors to continue keeping note of how many mentees attended for feedback surveys.

## Tips for mentees

- Be inquisitive. Don't be afraid to ask questions!
- Follow through. If your mentor has given you advice or something you can work on, act on it and report how it went back to the group.

- Keep your calendar updated. If you have something coming up or need to take time to complete an assessment, let your mentor know as soon as possible.
- Be authentic. To get the most out of your experience in the program, be open about your areas of interests and aspirations.
- Set goals. Make the most of the opportunity by thinking about what you want to get out of the experience.

## Tips for mentors

- Build trust. Your sessions should be a safe space for your mentees to share their experience, make sure you're fostering that safe environment. Follow through on what you say you're going to do.
- Celebrate your mentees achievements. Sometimes, mentoring conversations can revolve around stresses and challenges, so make sure you balance the topics by celebrating your mentees.
- Keep your mentee's aims and goals in mind. Your mentees should always be a step closer to achieving their goals after each session.
- Draw on your experiences. It is important that you share your stories so that your mentees know that you understand them.

# MENTORING POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

## Student Conduct Policy

Participants shall maintain professional standards of behaviour and are expected to be aware of and adhere to the Student Conduct Policy (MP1324).

As part of this policy, the University Student Charter reflects the key principles and values underpinning the partnership between students and the University. It sets out what students are responsible for and what they are entitled to expect.

## Privacy and Confidentiality

All contact details will be maintained confidentially and access limited in accordance with the University's privacy policy, which can be found at <http://www.unimelb.edu.au/disclaimer/privacy.html>

## Insurance cover

Student Personal Accident and Public Liability insurance is provided to enrolled students involved in University related activities. This extends to work-shadowing with their mentor (though not to unpaid "work" experience). This is an important distinction. Please contact the Mentoring Program Coordinator if you need clarification.

## Occupational Health and Safety

Mentors should be aware of all relevant occupational health and safety requirements where the student visits their workplace as part of this mentoring program. This may require the student to be inducted into the occupational health and safety orientation process of the work environment as relevant and will require the mentor to ensure that the student's health and safety is not at risk while at the workplace. The University expects that the mentor's workplace will have the requisite public liability insurance cover with respect to accidents that may occur at the workplace. Mentees should comply with relevant occupational health and safety requirements while at the mentor's workplace as notified to them by the mentor. For further

information about occupational health and safety generally, please visit the Work safe Victoria website. [www.worksafe.vic.gov.au](http://www.worksafe.vic.gov.au).

NB: Please note this would not apply if you were meeting in a public place.

## Duty of Care and Ethical Requirements

Students and mentors must agree to behave in a professional, lawful, ethical and responsible manner at all times. Anyone who experiences any uncertainty or discomfort with the mentoring relationship should contact the MDHS Student Life Team immediately. We will then contact you to discuss your concerns.

## Code of Conduct

Participants of the University Mentoring Program are requested to adhere to the following code of conduct:

- Observe confidentiality at all times, including all contact details.
- Maintain professional standards of behaviour and safety.
- Treat others with courtesy, be respectful and nonjudgmental.
- Fulfil agreed commitments.
- Assist with evaluation and feedback.
- Contact the MDHS Student Life Team with any concerns or difficulties.

## Grievance procedure

In the first instance, participants should discuss the issue with the MDHS Student Life Team. If the participant does not feel the matter is resolved they should then discuss the complaint with the Manager. Complaints and grievances will be dealt with according to University of Melbourne procedures. For students, these are outlined at: Student Complaints and Grievances Policy



# CONTACT US

The MDHS Student Life Team are here to support both mentees and mentors through their Honours Alumni Mentoring program journey. For any queries or advice, please get in touch with us. If you have joined the program but feel that you are no longer able to continue your commitment, please let us know us as soon as possible.

## **MDHS Student Life Team**

[health-hub@unimelb.edu.au](mailto:health-hub@unimelb.edu.au)