

An overview of common mentee characteristics

Disclaimer: Every mentoring relationship is different as is every individual. This document is not exhaustive in terms of the attributes each mentee may display but aims to illustrate a general picture of the type of student you might encounter/might be allocated as part of the scheme. If there is a preference please indicate this on your application form.

On average the scheme attracts three mentee archetypes:

- Students who lack structure, industry knowledge and confidence
- Students who are more open to accepting challenging feedback, and more easily steered in new directions
- Students that are intensely goal-oriented, highly dedicated, and may be single-minded in the career path they seek

All types are present in undergraduates and Masters students however more (but not all) Masters students may fall in to the last category. Dedicating sufficient time to the mentoring process is the first step to meeting a mentee's expectations.

Undergraduates:

- Frequently tend to need assistance becoming 'work ready'; they often have had few or no interviews in their lifetime. If they have had interviews, may have not been successful
- Often need guidance with their CV/understanding the value of networking, interpersonal skills, dedication, and time management. Much anxiety is caused by the idea of assessment centres and standing out from their peers
- They may seek to develop enhanced resilience to application and employment 'rejection' in favour of understanding the longer road to achieving their career goals – particularly in terms of the current fiercely competitive employment climate
- They may lack self-awareness and/or may lack awareness of own potential
- They may lack confidence when dealing with professionals, self-confidence, or belief in their own abilities
- Around 50 % of the annual cohort originate from non-traditional academic backgrounds and are essentially the first generation to enter University
- International students invest an enormous amount of capital in order to study in the UK. They may be very focused on seeking employment in the UK and on understanding UK working culture
- They can be extremely driven and ambitious but are unclear on how to achieve their goals
- Very determined but single-minded in their perception of industry
- Good natured but lacks an understanding of standard professional etiquette

Masters students:

- Are strongly oriented towards employment outcomes. They seek mentors who are able to offer insight and guidance on how to tailor job or internship applications to industry-specific employers
- They seek to gain tangible industry contacts or leads and broaden UK networks directly related intended career
- To aid this process we encourage mentors to adopt an openness to exploring and sharing your UK industry networks and leads to connect your mentee to others who might be able to shed light on their career development and prospects
- Meetings may be sporadic due to intensity of study workload, but the focus will be on helping them to locate relevant work experience outcomes, particularly from spring onwards
- Mentees may still lack professional or self-confidence – particularly if they are embarking on a career shift, or have not been successful in gaining meaningful employment outside of their studies
- International mentees often want to stay in the UK after completion of their studies. Given that they may need to acquire sponsorship to do so, the emphasis of the relationship is likely to be on making themselves more appealing to UK employers
- Even if the student has had employment success in another country they find the UK job market a lot tougher - competition is intense. For these students a key goal is to establish methods for showing the applicability of their international work experience to a UK employer
- Expectations may need to be managed. It may take persistence to encourage a Masters student to think differently about their plans or path if you feel they would benefit from a different perspective or should consider alternative strategies for career progression