

ASSOCIATION OF WOMEN BARRISTERS MENTORING SCHEME

MENTEE DOCUMENTATION

What can AWB mentoring offer me?

Our Mentoring Scheme promotes an informal and confidential connection through which one barrister (the Mentor) voluntarily gives of her time to support, advise, and encourage another barrister, student or pupil barrister (the Mentee).

Our scheme offers up to two conversations with a Mentor to assist a Mentee with a particular issue at a particular stage of her career. A more general overview of the scheme is also on this website.

The Mentoring request form

Please fill out the form as fully as possible with your contact details, professional background and request for advice so that the AWB Committee can best match you with an appropriate Mentor and give that Mentor comprehensive information about you in preparation for your first conversation. To facilitate a suitable match, it is vital that you identify as clearly as possible the issue about which you are seeking mentoring support.

The information that you supply on the form is kept strictly confidential to the AWB Committee and your allocated Mentor.

Remember that, whilst Mentors are able to discuss work-related issues and offer you their advice and perspectives from their own experience at the Bar, Mentors will not be able to give you legal advice on any matter raised, offer work experience or a pupillage or tenancy, act as a CV/application-writing service (although a Mentor may offer tips as to a useful methodology), or give any form of medical or psychological counselling.

Finding you a Mentor

Our Mentor database is designed to represent a cross-section of barristers of different ages, practice areas and viewpoints but who share the common desire to support other barristers in their careers by volunteering their assistance.

The Committee will do its best to match you with a suitable Mentor to discuss your issue. In the unlikely event that this cannot be done from the existing database, the Committee (with your permission) will approach another barrister who may be able to assist.

Once a suitable Mentor has been found, you will be notified of that fact and the Mentor will be given your contact details to make the initial contact within two weeks. We will not give out a Mentor's details to the Mentee without the Mentor's permission.

If by any chance you have not received contact from your Mentor within 2 weeks of the date when you were notified of a Mentor match, please let us know so that we may resolve matters.

Getting the most out of our Mentoring Scheme as a Mentee

Some tips to assist the process include:

- Identify clearly and succinctly the particular issue about which you seek advice
- Take the lead in the partnership - be proactive before your first conversation with your Mentor by considering why you are seeking advice and by preparing questions, a list of your aims and goals, and reviewing your CV
- Be honest with yourself: for example, if you seek advice about how to overcome clerking issues to develop your practice more effectively, identify briefly your strengths and weaknesses, the realistic opportunities open to you and the obstacles that you face in advance of your first conversation with your Mentor
- Don't expect a shoulder to cry on - our mentoring is not counselling but instead aims to provide advice and encouragement so that you can make decisions, think through your options and formulate realistic plans to achieve your goal. Ultimately, any decisions are yours to make and for which you alone must take responsibility.
- After the first conversation, take time to consider carefully the issue you have discussed with your Mentor, the advice that you may already have been given, and whether to take any decisions or action. If necessary, schedule a follow-up conversation with your Mentor and remember to prepare effectively again for that next conversation.
- Don't expect your Mentor to commit to an ongoing mentoring relationship after your two conversations offered by the scheme. Popularity of mentoring advice has required us to limit the scheme, and the decision to continue with any mentoring relationship thereafter is entirely one for the Mentor to make.