

Mentor Code of Conduct

We ask that all mentors volunteering for The Brokerage Online Mentoring programme commit to following our code of conduct.

In this document, “mentee” refers to any young person participating in the programme. “Programme” refers to The Brokerage Online Mentoring Programme. “Mentor” refers to anyone volunteering to work with a mentee as part of the programme.

The role of The Brokerage

- The Brokerage shall provide training in the form of a webinar session which will explain the programme and the mentor’s role before, during and after the programme.
- The Brokerage shall provide programme resources to allow you to volunteer as an effective mentor. These will include written guidance on session content and a named programme manager to answer questions and oversee the programme.
- The Brokerage shall recruit mentees for the programme, ensuring they are suitable for the programme and committed to taking part. The Brokerage will also train mentees on their role.
- The Brokerage will provide necessary information about the mentee to the mentor. This will include relevant contact details, personal information where it is relevant (such as the young person’s school subjects or career aims), and the mentee’s age. The mentee’s age is particularly relevant as there are separate procedures to follow if the mentee is under 18. The majority of mentees are 18 or over. If this is not the case it will be made clear to relevant mentors.
- While reasonable steps will be taken to mitigate against it, The Brokerage cannot guarantee that all mentees will commit to the programme. If mentees do not show the required level of commitment The Brokerage will be responsible for communicating this with mentees and taking steps to resolve the situation.
- The Brokerage will ensure that the programme is of high quality. This will include seeking feedback at a ‘mid-point’ review and at the end of the programme and responding to all feedback from mentors and mentees before, during and after the programme.

The role of the mentor

Mentors are volunteering to work with a mentee to complete a structured mentoring programme with the aim of developing the mentee’s employability skills and knowledge of the working world.

To do so the mentor is encouraged to develop a professional relationship with the young person based on mutual professional respect. While this will take time and input from the mentor, it is expected that mentees also put time and effort into the programme.

- The mentor commits to taking part in a one-hour training session followed by 7 weekly hour long mentoring sessions.

- The mentor commits to completing monitoring forms, including a weekly record of whether mentoring took place as planned, and completing a 'mid-point' and 'end-point' feedback survey.
- Mentoring sessions will take place online using zoom or similar video conferencing software. Mentors are responsible for deciding which digital platform works best with them and their mentee.
- The majority of mentees taking part in the programme are 18 or older. Mentors will be told if this is not the case with their mentee. Where this is the case, mentors commit to arranging online mentoring sessions with their mentee without direct input from The Brokerage on the scheduling of these sessions. Where mentees are younger than 18, The Brokerage will schedule sessions.

Romantic/sexual relationships

Romantic/sexual relationships between mentors and mentees are forbidden, even where both mentors and mentees are over the age of 18. This is because the conduct of mentors (and Brokerage staff) should be based on the following principles:

- Mentors should recognise a professional and ethical responsibility to protect the interests of mentees, to respect the trust involved in the mentoring relationship and to accept the constraints and obligations inherent in that responsibility.
- To embark on a romantic/sexual relationship with a mentee involves serious difficulties rooted in unequal power, and hence choice, of the parties concerned, as well as real problems in maintaining the boundaries of professional and personal life.
- Mentees who are, or who have been, involved in a romantic/sexual relationship with a mentor and who do not consider their involvement to be truly consensual will have the right to complain to The Brokerage. Where mentees are younger than 18 this could involve legal proceedings.
- Mentors should recognise the potential reputational risk to themselves, their employer and The Brokerage inherent in the mentoring role.

Child protection and safeguarding

A child is anyone under the age of 18. An adult at risk is any person who is aged 18 years or over and at risk of abuse or neglect because of their needs for care and/or support.

- The Brokerage will not knowingly match a mentor with a mentee who is an at risk adult without prior consent from the mentor and without proper training.
- If, during the mentoring programme, the mentor comes to suspect the mentee is an at risk adult they will immediately notify Tom Slatter at The Brokerage tom@thebrokerage.org.uk
- Mentors who will be working with mentees under 17 will be told this before the programme begins and will be provided with relevant child protection training.

Inappropriate behaviour from mentees

Inappropriate behaviour is any behaviour that could be deemed unprofessional. This might be lateness to mentoring sessions, not replying to emails, not completing agreed preparatory work before a session. It might also include unprofessional behaviour towards the mentor such as being disrespectful, or not staying within professional boundaries.

- The Brokerage will recruit mentees to the programme via an application process that mitigates against potential poor behaviour
- The Brokerage will also train mentees on behaviour expectations
- If the mentor witnesses behaviour that they think may be inappropriate, they commit to bringing this to the attention of The Brokerage. In most cases it will be The Brokerage's duty to address this behaviour.
- On occasions of minor inappropriate behaviour such as lateness to a mentoring session, mentors may decide to address this themselves without input from The Brokerage. This is permitted, but is not a requirement, and any such concerns no matter how minor should be brought to the attention of The Brokerage before action is taken.

Contact with mentees outside the programme

Mentors and mentees may wish to stay in contact after completing the programme.

- Where mentees are under 18, mentors should not share personal contact details such as their phone number or address. Where mentees are 18 or over, The Brokerage recommends personal contacts details are still not shared.
- During the programme, contact between mentors and mentees should be via email and video conferencing software.
- Contact via social media platforms should be limited to professional sites such as LinkedIn.
- After the programme, there is no expectation that mentors and mentees stay in touch, and mentors are not required to do this. Mentors may stay in touch with their mentees if they wish. Where the mentee is under 18, this should be done via The Brokerage (e.g. by cc'ing the programme manager into email conversations).