BMA committee mentoring programme
Information for mentors
What is the BMA committee mentoring programme?
The BMA recognises the importance of supporting new committee members and building the leadership skills of existing committee members.

Mentoring can have a number of positive effects on career development, satisfaction and performance, access to opportunities, and the development of knowledge and confidence. It is important, for example, that you demonstrate respect by remaining faithful to commitments, being receptive to your mentor’s guidance or advice, and demonstrating accountability.

The BMA committee mentoring programme is designed to help and support committee members within the medico-political setting.

Mentoring has real and tangible benefits for the individual, but also for the BMA as an organisation. We hope that by sharing knowledge and experience, and developing the skills and confidence of committee members, committees will operate more effectively and encourage a diverse pool of members to participate. It is also an opportunity to develop and support the future leaders of the BMA.

Who can apply to be a mentor?
Any BMA committee member (past or present) can apply to be a mentor. Mentoring is undertaken on a purely voluntary basis.

What is mentoring?
Mentoring is a partnership and a process. Mentors offer support and guidance to mentees, encouraging them to manage their own learning and development, and to set and achieve their personal goals within the medico-political setting. In successful mentoring relationships, mentees are proactive and take the lead in working towards their goals. The underlying goal of the BMA committee mentoring programme is to support the professional development of members, and give them the skills required to be effective committee members and future medico-political leaders.

What will be required of me as a mentor?
As a mentor, you will play an important role in supporting new committee members and in helping develop future leaders of the BMA. As a part of supporting you to carry out this role effectively all programme mentors will be expected to attend a CPD (continuing professional development) accredited BMA mentor training session.

“Mentoring is to support and encourage people to manage their own learning in order that they maximise their potential, develop their skills, improve their performance and become the person they want to be.” Parsloe 1992
Each mentoring relationship varies, but mentoring can generally be understood as a supportive relationship and process. The mentee will benefit from your experience and knowledge, as you will provide guidance and encouragement, and challenge them to achieve their potential. You should aim to be independent and objective, and be prepared to provide constructive feedback on how you feel the mentee is progressing. As a mentor you are not a supervisor, or a manager.

The mentoring relationship is informal and flexible; it is between you and your mentee to decide on details such as when, where and how often to meet or what they hope to gain from the process. The ways in which you support your mentee will depend on your mentee’s developmental needs and medico-political aspirations, and how you agree to go about providing the support to achieve these aims. You should encourage the mentee to take the lead in steering the direction of the mentoring relationship, setting and working towards personal goals.

Mentoring is dynamic in nature. It is likely that your mentoring relationship will change over time, reflecting the developing needs and aspirations of the mentee.

The role requires a commitment of time and energy. Mentors also gain from the mentoring experience, including further training and networking opportunities.

**Do I need any training to be a mentor?**
Even if you do not have any specific mentoring training or previous experience as a mentor, mentees will still benefit from your experience and knowledge, and from the opportunity to discuss their career goals with an independent and objective colleague.

The BMA mentoring programme offers CPD accredited mentoring training sessions for mentors and mentees. The cost of training, including travel and childcare costs are covered. Please contact the BMA equality and inclusion unit for more information on the training and future training days.

If you are interested in developing your skills further, the equality and inclusion unit would be happy to signpost you towards further resources and training programmes.
How will I be matched to a prospective mentee?
When you volunteer to be a mentor, you will be asked to provide some basic information about yourself, including a brief biography, and to select what you feel are your ‘key skills and experience’. This information will be kept confidential.

Upon receiving an application from a potential mentee, the equality and inclusion unit will undertake a ‘matching’ process, which involves matching the mentees needs to the key skills of a mentor.

The programme is BMA wide, and the centralisation of the database allows the option of matching a mentor from outside of the mentee’s specific committee membership. This will help to avoid any potential conflicts of interest, and foster an open and trusting mentoring relationship.

A mentee may also request a specific committee member to act as their mentor. This will be subject to that committee member’s willingness to participate in the programme.

The BMA recognises the importance of pairing an appropriate mentor with the correct mentee. You are encouraged to contact the equality and inclusion unit should you have concerns about the relationship with your mentee.

The matching process, along with applications and the mentor database, is strictly confidential.

How can I apply?
For more information on the mentoring programme and to apply to be a mentor please contact the equality and inclusion unit via:
Email: mentoring@bma.org.uk
Contact: Jonathan Longley
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