

# Before you begin

This learner guide is based on the unit of competency *TAEDEL404 Mentor in the workplace*, Release 1. Your trainer or training organisation must give you information about this unit of competency as part of your training program. You can access the unit of competency and assessment requirements at: [www.training.gov.au](http://www.training.gov.au).

## How to work through this learner guide

This learner guide contains a number of features that will assist you in your learning. Your trainer will advise which parts of the learner guide you need to read, and which activities you need to complete. The features of this learner guide are detailed in the following table.

Feature of the learner guide	How you can use each feature
<b>Overview</b>	This section provides general information about the vocational education and training sector and its essential components (such as training packages), which will underpin your learning.
<b>Introduction</b>	The introduction covers the key concepts relevant to this particular unit of competency, including the terminology that will be used throughout this learner guide.
<b>Learning content</b>	Read each topic in this learner guide. If you come across content that is confusing, make a note and discuss it with your trainer. Your trainer is in the best position to offer assistance. It is very important that you take on some of the responsibility for the learning you will undertake.
<b>Templates</b>	Templates are referred to throughout the guide. These are samples of working documents similar to those found in a training organisation. Completed templates may be useful as evidence for portfolio assessments. Ask your trainer for sample templates provided with the <i>Trainer's and assessor's</i> guide for this unit.
<b>Examples</b>	Examples of completed documents that may be used in a workplace are included in this learner guide. Examples highlight learning points and provide realistic examples of workplace situations.
<b>Activities</b>	Activities give you the opportunity to put your skills and knowledge into action. Your trainer will tell you which activities to complete.
<b>Summary</b>	Key learning points are provided at the end of each topic.

Throughout this learner guide, reference is made to both sets of Standards, presented as VQF/AQTF.

## The Australian Qualifications Framework

The Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF), a component of the VQF, is a policy framework that defines the standards for regulated qualifications in Australian education and training. It specifies the learning outcomes for 16 nationally recognised qualifications. The following diagram represents the 10 levels of the AQF.



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AQF Second Edition, January 2013, p. 19.

An RTO must issue qualifications and statements of attainment that align to the AQF and meet the requirements of the AQF Qualifications Issuance Policy and the endorsed training packages within that RTO's scope of registration.

## Training and assessment

The primary role of RTOs in the VET system is to deliver accredited training and assessment-based units of competency and qualifications. You may be employed by an RTO to facilitate classroom, online or blended learning; to deliver workplace-based training and assessment on-site to enterprise staff; or to coordinate and support enterprise trainers, coaches and mentors in their roles.

Alternatively, you may be an enterprise trainer whose role is to facilitate learning and carry out assessment in the workplace, perhaps based on national units of competency or internal enterprise standards. The work you do may or may not lead to a recognised qualification.

When working with training packages and before providing training or assessment services, there are two aspects of competency and units of competency that you need to understand:

- ▶ How to identify and 'unpack' the key features of a unit of competency
- ▶ The dimensions of competency and their role in ensuring that competency incorporates all aspects of work performance

## Explore a unit of competency

You should unpack a unit of competency and consider each part of the unit to form a picture of what a competent person looks like, how assessment should occur and what evidence is required.

The following table summarises the components of a unit of competency, as defined in the TAE Training and Education Training Package Implementation Guide.

Component feature	What it relates to
<b>Unit of competency</b>	
Title	The title describes the unit outcome.
Unit application	This field describes how the unit is practically applied, who would typically use it and the unit of competency's relationship to licensing, legislative or certification requirements.
Prerequisite units	This is an optional field that specifies any unit/s in which the learner must already be competent prior to achieving competency in this unit.
Unit Sector	This field is used to categorise units of competency in relation to industry sectors or types of work.
Elements of competency	<p>Elements of competency describe the outcomes of the significant functions and tasks that make up the competency.</p> <p>Elements describe actions or outcomes that are demonstrable and assessable.</p>
Performance criteria	Performance criteria specify the required performance in relevant tasks, roles, skills (including foundation skills) and the applied knowledge that enables competent performance.
Foundation skills	This field describes the language, literacy, numeracy and employment skills that are essential to performance.
Range of conditions	This is an optional field that specifies different work environments and conditions that may affect performance. Range is restricted to essential operating conditions and any other variables essential to the work environment, so it is quite different from the previous range statement.
Unit mapping information	This field specifies the code and title of any equivalent unit of competency.
Links	This field provides a link to the Companion Volume Implementation Guide.
<b>Assessment requirements</b>	
Performance evidence	Performance evidence, as the name implies, specifies what individuals must do to show that they satisfy the performance standards in the unit of competency.



## Topic 1

In this topic you will learn how to:

- 1A Identify the scope and boundaries of the mentoring relationship**
- 1B Document the mentoring plan**
- 1C Establish ground rules and expectations**
- 1D Establish and maintain confidentiality**

## Develop a mentoring plan

Mentoring means different things to different people; it can take different forms according to what people seek to gain from a mentoring relationship. To establish an effective mentoring relationship, a documented plan with identified goals and expectations and clear boundaries must be developed.

A documented plan allows all parties to reflect and agree on the objectives of the mentoring relationship and how these will be achieved. The mentoring plan becomes a roadmap to achieving outcomes. A mentoring relationship without a plan can quickly become little more than a series of 'coffee catch-ups' that offer no real value to either party.

The skills needed to be a mentor include those listed in the following table.

Skills needed to be a mentor	Example
Planning and time-management skills to mentor in a workplace	Managing your time so you are available to meet with your mentee on a regular basis as agreed in the mentoring plan
Ability to motivate and encourage learners	Being able to communicate with your mentee in a way that 'connects' with them; for example, speaking to a 16-year-old mentee is likely to require different communication skills than speaking to a 45-year-old mentee
Skills to provide guidance and feedback to individuals	Knowing how to provide positive and constructive feedback to individuals
Interpersonal skills to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ engage in relationship building, including building trust and maintaining confidentiality</li> <li>▶ respond to diversity, including gender, ethnicity and disability</li> </ul>	<p>Knowing how to build a rapport with a mentee so they feel comfortable sharing their concerns and needs with you</p> <p>Understanding a mentee's background and physical needs and taking these into consideration so you are better able to guide and support them</p>
Communication skills such as listening, questioning and giving and receiving feedback	Knowing how to communicate appropriately in a given situation
Initiative and enterprise skills to apply procedures relating to WHS and environmental legislation in the context of workplace mentoring	Modelling safe work practices and instilling the same respect for safety procedures, duty of care and vigilance for hazards in the mentee

## Define scope and boundaries

At the outset the scope and boundaries of a mentoring program should be clearly defined. In other words, what is the purpose of the program? Mentoring programs can vary, particularly in formal mentoring programs put in place to support organisational needs. These needs may translate to mentoring programs that achieve the outcomes shown here.

### Help

- ▶ Help to socialise new employees into the company

### Support

- ▶ Support a particular target group; for example, by advancing career opportunities for female employees

Take the lead in demonstrating win-win negotiation skills by listening actively, acknowledging needs and being prepared to find common ground. Some of the criteria that you and the mentee should be aware of when negotiating are shown below.

### Negotiation criteria

- ▶ Be clear about your own needs
- ▶ Make sure that you understand each other's perspective; listen actively to what the other is saying and ask open questions to clarify needs or clear up uncertainties
- ▶ Be open and honest with each other
- ▶ Avoid entering negotiations with a fixed idea on what the outcome will be; instead, seek a win-win outcome for each party
- ▶ Communicate using appropriate verbal and nonverbal language
- ▶ Be sensitive to cultural, language and generational differences

## Negotiation steps

Here is a simple five-step model that you may find useful when negotiating a mentoring agreement. If you are using a model such as this one, make sure you discuss it with the mentee so both of you understand each step.

### Steps for negotiating a mentoring arrangement

**1**

#### Personal goals

Both parties put forward their needs/perspective

**2**

#### Reasons

Both parties give reasons for their needs/perspective

**3**

#### Acknowledgment

The parties acknowledge each other's needs/perspective

**4**

#### Options

The parties make a list of options that both find acceptable

**5**

#### Agreement

The parties agree on an option that provides the maximum benefit to both of them (win-win scenario)



## Actions to build mentee confidence

Displaying a lack of confidence isn't necessarily a bad thing, but building self-confidence is something every person should work towards.

There are many strategies you can use to help build a mentee's confidence.

### Acknowledgment

- ▶ Acknowledge the person's achievements and accomplishments, no matter how small

### Role modelling

- ▶ Be a good role model by behaving and communicating sincerely and confidently with the mentee and people around you

### Confidence

- ▶ Show confidence in the mentee and their ability to achieve goals; do this publicly in front of the mentee's peers, colleagues and managers

### Safe environment

- ▶ Provide the mentee with a safe environment to practise skills and knowledge and provide them with constructive feedback on what they did well and what they can improve

### Self-reflection

- ▶ Ask the mentee to keep a diary each day or week recording the things they did well, the 'lessons' they learnt and the things they would like to improve on; ask the learner to reflect positively on their diary entries

## Build the mentee's self-esteem

A person with low self-esteem generally feels that they are less worthy than others and that they don't deserve to succeed. Often someone with low self-esteem does not value themselves or like themselves very much. In some cases a person can have a high level of self-confidence in their current capacity but low self-esteem, which makes it difficult for them to move on. For example, your mentee may be good at their job and be very comfortable with performing all their work duties, but believe they got there because of sheer luck rather than ability.

A lack of confidence can sometimes be related to a low self-esteem. Be alert to any signs of poor self-image, such as weight gain or weight loss, poor personal hygiene, dressing inappropriately and so on. If necessary, encourage the mentee to seek support from a qualified counsellor.

When developing trust and respect ...	Explanation
Get to know your mentee, including their strengths and weaknesses	<p>You won't get to know the mentee overnight. Allow time to find out about the person behind the one you see at work.</p> <p>Build the relationship incrementally by encouraging them to reveal their interests, their likes and dislikes and by sharing with them your own personal side. Show that you are interested in them as a person and not just 'doing your job'.</p> <p>You need to know how they learn and communicate, too. Be aware of the differences between generations X and Y and how they respond to work and learning.</p>
Be consistent in your behaviours and decision processes, but allow for flexibility to meet mentee needs	Approaching your interactions with others consistently allows them to know what is expected. This can include how you speak and act, as well as the standards you set. For example, if it is agreed that meetings should commence punctually, this applies to both parties.
Support the mentee, but don't take responsibility for their actions	The mentee is responsible for their actions and achieving their goals, not you; but you can help them develop the skills they need to reach their goals. For example, if an apprentice doesn't submit a workplace project on time, they are responsible for the consequences. However, this could be an opportunity for you to help the mentee work on their time-management skills.

In the following example, a mentor works with a mentee to develop her confidence and self-esteem, and to build respect and trust in the relationship.

## Example

### Develop learner attributes and trust in the mentoring relationship

Jenny is a mentor for a young Torres Strait Islander trainee, Alkina, who is undertaking a hospitality traineeship. The two have a mentoring agreement and have already met twice.

Jenny is an experienced mentor who likes to spend the first 15 minutes or so of each meeting in relaxed general conversation; she feels this often reveals a lot about the person she is mentoring. Jenny notices that Alkina tends to describe her own ability negatively. She also mentions that people she knows who have attempted the traineeship found it difficult.

For Jenny, this is an opportunity to discuss Alkina's traineeship progress. Alkina is up to date with all on- and off-the-job learning activities so Jenny congratulates her on this. Jenny also discusses the learning activities that Alkina will be completing before her next mentoring session and asks Alkina if there is anything she feels she may have trouble with.

Alkina shrugs her shoulders, but Jenny persists and goes through each learning activity with Alkina. She notices that Alkina seems to shrink into herself when they start talking about an oral report that Alkina is to give. Jenny spends some time discussing her own feelings when giving oral reports and outlines the strategies she uses to overcome her nervousness.

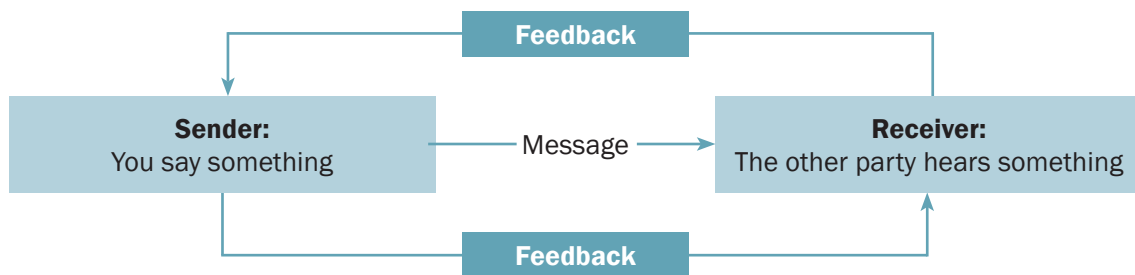
Jenny suggests that they move their next meeting to a few days before Alkina is required to give the oral report. That way Alkina can practise presenting the report with Jenny, and Jenny can provide Alkina with feedback.

Alkina agrees to this and leaves the meeting more relaxed than at the start.



## Listening and questioning skills

Any sort of communication is a two-way process, in which a message is transmitted between sender and receiver. Feedback provides the opportunity to seek clarification and change the message.



The communication cycle

## What listeners hear

Sometimes what you say and what the other person hears is not the same. This happens because what the receiver hears is filtered by influences such as their culture, life experiences, language abilities, education level, and experiences in workplaces and training. Using active listening when giving and receiving feedback is an important part of the communication process as it allows the receiver and you, the sender, to clarify that each understands what the other says or hears.

When the mentee or another stakeholder is responding to you, practise active listening by using the techniques as follows:

- ▶ focusing on the person talking and really listening to what they say
- ▶ letting the other person know you are listening with verbal and visual indicators such as nodding your head or using phrases such as 'I see'
- ▶ observing their body language to identify congruence between words and actions
- ▶ being aware of your own feelings and reactions to what is being said and monitoring your own body language
- ▶ paraphrasing or 'mirroring' – once the speaker has stopped speaking, summarise and repeat to them what you think they have said
- ▶ asking questions to clarify or obtain further information.

### Closed questions

Closed questions are used to help you elicit facts; often these require only a one or two-word answer (yes or no). For example, 'Have you finished working through Topic 3?'

### Open questions

Open questions are used to elicit additional information or clarify statements; open questions tend to start with 'how', 'why', 'what' or other words that encourage an extended response. For example, 'How did you find Topic 3?'

## Conversing with a mentee

Encourage the mentee to take the lead role in any conversation; a mentor should spend more time listening than talking. Avoid the trap of being a 'solution provider'. Instead, be a guide who opens up discussion of situations or challenges. Identify the assistance a person needs, and encourage them to reflect on how they can meet challenges. It is true that a mentor can have a great deal of knowledge and experience to offer but this does not mean they should overwhelm the mentee and take control of the communication.

Here are some strategies for taking a guiding or prompting role and in doing so helping the mentee take some ownership of the conversation.

### Take turns to speak

- ▶ Remember that a conversation means taking turns – wait for the mentee to finish talking before you speak.

### Be visibly attentive

- ▶ Face the attendee and give them your full attention. Use 'verbal nods' to let them know you are listening and encourage them to continue; for example, saying 'I see' or 'I understand' at appropriate points.

### Be patient

- ▶ Ask the mentee questions and then be patient as they reflect on the question and provide their response.

### Ask open questions

- ▶ Ask open questions to encourage the mentee to expand on their thoughts.

### Suggest alternatives

- ▶ If the mentee is not engaging in the conversation, provide different options or ideas for strategies or solutions they may consider applying to their circumstances.

### Provide space in the conversation

- ▶ When speaking, pause at appropriate intervals to give the mentee the opportunity to ask questions or run with an idea.

### Avoid filling silences

- ▶ Avoid the impulse to fill silences; allow the other person time to do that first.

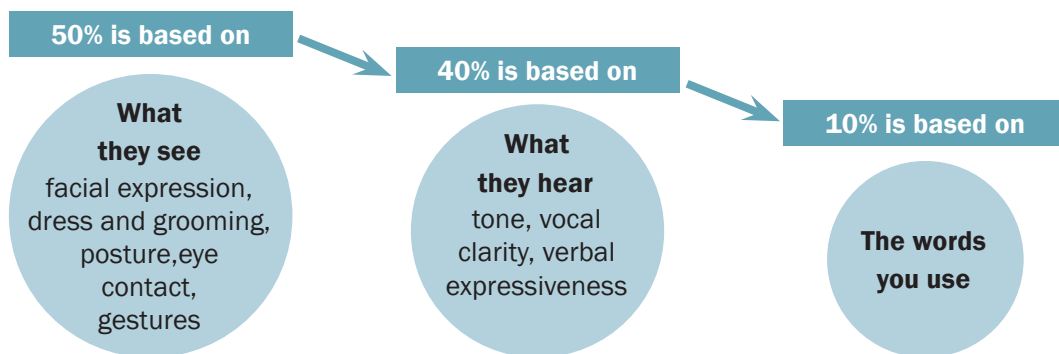
## Communicating with the use of technology

Many mentor–mentee interactions are face to face. There may be times, however, when technology provides a viable and necessary alternative medium. Email, texting, chatrooms and blogs, telephone discussions, audio messages and videoconferencing are all part of the way we communicate.

While the basic rules for communicating when using technology may not change, they do become have their own protocols. When we communicate, the person we are communicating with analyses what they hear and see as well as the words we say. In fact, the words we say may be the least important part of the process.

Effective communication relies heavily on what a receiver perceives they are seeing (that is, nonverbal communication) in order to interpret what the sender is saying. If you are communicating via non-visual technology, you will need to adjust your communication to as far as possible replace the nonverbal cues commonly used in communication.

This diagram illustrates how the receiver of communication analyses communication.



## Written communication

Written communication can add another layer of complexity. The receiver cannot see your body language and cannot hear the tone of your voice. Instead they must rely only on words alone.

Communicate unfavourable messages in person, but if this is not possible, draft your message and then leave it for at least 24 hours so you have time to review it before sending it. This avoids a message being sent in the heat of the moment. Check for understanding and reactions. Perhaps ask, ‘What do you think about that?’ or ‘Can you think of alternative ways of doing that?’ Keep messages short to reduce the chance of misunderstanding and confusion. Use bullet points if possible.

Provide context before relaying new information; for example, ‘At our last meeting we discussed the possibility of you attending the next networking meeting of ABC Group and you said you’d be interested in going. I’m just letting you know that I’ve contacted the ABC Group and they are happy for you to attend. I’ll be there too of course.’

It is also important to discuss what types of communication you both have access to, and how you will use them.

The following list suggests more techniques you may be able to use to ensure distance communication between yourself and a mentee is as clear as possible.

### Techniques for successful distance communication

- ▶ Choose your words carefully to minimise the chance of misinterpretation and check the tone of the words used. Focus on one topic per email or text.
- ▶ Understand the protocols of texting, chatrooms, and social network sites. For example, avoid texting or email in ALL CAPS as this is perceived as yelling.
- ▶ Maintain your professionalism; avoid smileys and emoticons unless this is a technique you are using to break down barriers with a mentee.
- ▶ Ensure your email address and message bank message reflect an appropriate level of professionalism.
- ▶ Remember who you are communicating with. Use language that the mentee understands and that takes their background into consideration.
- ▶ If you are sending a text message, avoid abbreviations that your mentee may not know. Also remember that some people may not be able to retrieve or respond to text messages.
- ▶ Avoid sending multiple emails, texts or messages – this causes confusion similar to when people are talking over each other.

In the next example, a mentor shares a personal experience that encourages a mentee to communicate his own situation.

### Example

#### Share personal experiences and knowledge

Robert is mentoring Jason, a young horticulture apprentice. Jason is not long into the apprenticeship, so the two have not spent a great deal of time together. Jason has missed two mentoring sessions and is not responding to Robert's calls. Robert checks with Jason's supervisor who confirms that Jason's attendance at work over the last month has been sporadic; Jason has been away from work for the last two weeks.

Robert is concerned at Jason's lack of participation. He knows that Jason comes from a background of family upheaval: he's unsettled, apparently mixing with disaffected youth. Jason appears to be at high risk of not completing the apprenticeship. It is a familiar scenario to Robert, who did it tough himself, but overcame barriers to gain a qualification and secure a responsible position at a relatively young age.

Robert thinks about Jason and how he can get him to a mentor meeting. Jason has the latest smartphone; he and Robert have often compared technology. Robert sends a friendly text inviting Jason to lunch at a cafe popular with younger people – far enough from the workplace and the RTO so they are unlikely to run into people from either. Jason keeps the message light and brief and doesn't mention Jason's absences.

Robert is pleased when Jason accepts and turns up to the lunch meeting. However, Jason's body language is defensive and Robert's initial attempts at conversation are met with guarded one-syllable responses. Robert seeks common ground by asking about Jason's involvement in the local football team and learns that Jason is uncertain if he'll continue to play because of accommodation issues. Robert senses there is more to it.

## 2C Support problem-solving and decision-making skill development

One of the objectives of a mentoring relationship is to equip the mentee with the skills and knowledge to resolve issues that arise in their own personal and working life. A mentor should not try to solve the mentee's problems, but rather assist the person to develop problem-solving and decision-making skills.

Problems and issues that are work-related are often more clear-cut and easier to deal with than a mentee's personal problems; often the challenges are greater for a young person than for someone with more life and work experience.

### Common issues confronting apprentices and trainees

- ▶ How to communicate with their workplace supervisor or others in the workplace
- ▶ How to source information regarding support services or their training
- ▶ How to manage personal problems associated with independent living; for example, financial problems
- ▶ What to do if they are having difficulty completing their apprenticeship/traineeship
- ▶ What to do if they don't know or are not sure of how to complete a workplace task

## A problem-solving model

Often a problem can seem difficult to resolve because a young person lacks the skills, knowledge and experience to identify the best options and make a decision based on a clear priority. Effective mentoring helps the mentee by providing a system or model that they can use to help them arrive at a reasoned decision. The following table offers one possible approach to problem-solving.

Step	Explanation
1. Acknowledge that there is a problem.	<p>People will often try to pretend that there is no problem or that the problem is not theirs. For example, a female trainee who is being harassed by a male staff member may think, 'I only see him on two days a week, I can handle it and I can handle him'. Nevertheless, her enjoyment of the job and work performance is affected and she feels intimidated.</p> <p>Acknowledging the problem includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ accepting that something isn't right and that it needs to be fixed</li> <li>▶ considering the consequences if the problem is not addressed.</li> </ul>

Problem-solving techniques you might like to try:

- ▶ Brainstorming
- ▶ Six Thinking Hats
- ▶ Five Ws
- ▶ Five Whys
- ▶ Pros and cons

## Brainstorming

Brainstorming is useful when used in conjunction with Step 4 of the previous model.

Ask the mentee to write down the problem and then all the possible solutions they can think of without considering the relative worth of each option. Most people are familiar with brainstorming but some may need encouragement to be imaginative and think outside the box.

Do not judge any of the ideas presented in case you stifle the mentee's creativity.

## Six Thinking Hats

The Six Thinking Hats strategy was devised by Edward de Bono and can be very useful in trying to decide which of several possible solutions should be implemented. The basis of the strategy is to ask the mentee to view a decision from different perspectives (that is, by wearing different hats).

Mentors can also use the Six Thinking Hats to demonstrate to the mentee that there are other ways of thinking. This is useful when a mentee has a habit of thinking in a particular way; for example, they are pessimistic or procrastinate excessively. In this case, a mentor could take them through a Six Hat activity to demonstrate alternative ways of thinking.

Colour hat	Perspective	Focus on
White	Facts and information	Who, what, when, where, why, how
Red	Feelings and emotions	How do I feel? What is my gut instinct? How are the people involved going to be affected? How might they feel?
Black	Being cautious	What don't you know? What could go wrong? What are the risks? Are there unforeseen consequences?
Yellow	Being positive and optimistic	How can you turn this experience into a positive one? What can you learn? What benefits will an action bring?
Green	New ideas, alternatives, solutions	Thinking outside the box; addressing points raised in the Black Hat
Blue	Big picture and planning	How can a resolution to this problem benefit all trainees and employees?



Over the course of your relationship the size of Quadrant 1 should grow; that is, you should learn more and reveal more about yourself; your mentee should likewise know more about themselves and you them, as the expanded windows in the following diagram show.

While self-disclosure is a useful strategy to build trust and to help in resolving differences, it can also be risky in that too much self-disclosure can result in your mentee gaining power in the relationship because of what you have revealed. For example, mentioning to the mentee that you intend to seek alternative employment at the end of the year may not be wise.

	<b>Known to self</b>	<b>Unknown to self</b>
<b>Known to others</b>	<b>1</b> Open spot	<b>2</b> Blind spot
<b>Unknown to others</b>	<b>3</b> Hidden spot	<b>4</b> Unknown spot

An explanation of each quadrant is given in the following table.

<b>The Johari Window: what the quadrants mean</b>	
<b>Quadrant 1</b>	This quadrant holds information that both you and your mentee know about you: simple information such as your name and occupation. Slowly the content of that quadrant will expand as the mentee learns more about you; for example, your football team and whether you have children – information that you may share during mentoring meetings.
<b>Quadrant 2</b>	This quadrant holds information that a mentee knows about you that you don't know about yourself; for example, that you frequently say 'okay' at the end of statements or that no-one thinks your jokes are funny.
<b>Quadrant 3</b>	This quadrant holds information that you know about yourself that your mentee does not know; for example, that you had to apply for five jobs before you were successful in getting your current job.
<b>Quadrant 4</b>	This quadrant holds information about you that neither you nor your mentee know; for example, that you would make a great photographer if you ever took up this hobby.

## Inviting discussion

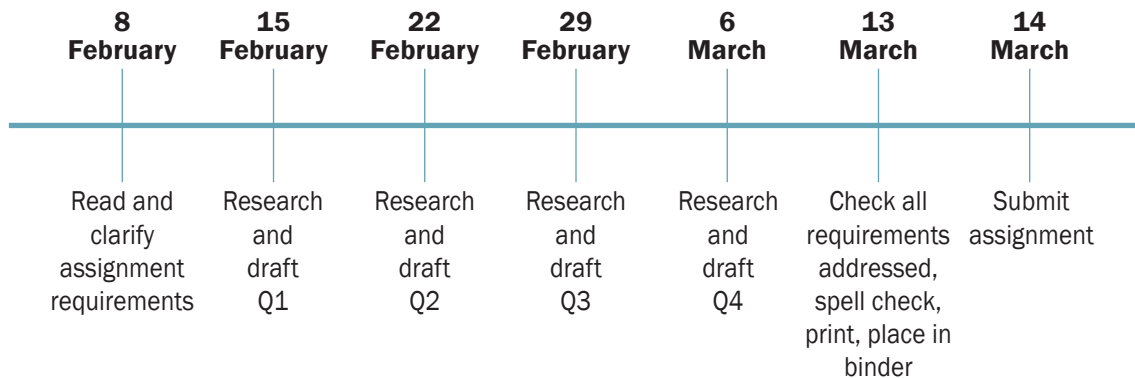
Interactions with a mentee, particularly when you are attempting to resolve differences with them, should encourage the person to identify that a difference exists and then invite candid discussion of it. Unless you talk about your mutual differences, satisfactory and genuine resolution may not be found. However, such an approach requires trust and a good understanding of the person you are dealing with and a willingness and ability to control the amount of emotion in the discussion.

To help your mentee manage their time so they are more likely to meet these commitments, you may need to help them set up a schedule. The advantage of a written schedule is that it can be referred to regularly and represents a commitment by the mentee.

Establishing a schedule depends on the complexity of the task and the person's needs. You could recommend something as simple as an online calendar or a smartphone scheduling application.

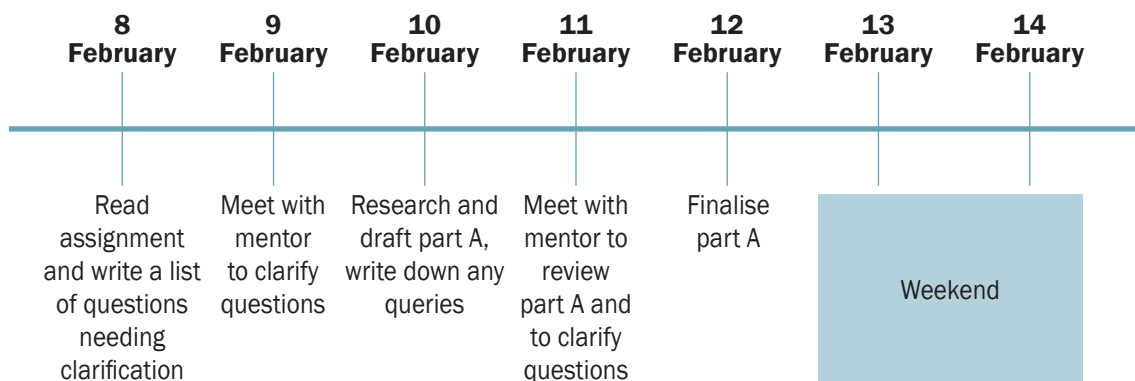
## Using a Gantt chart

A Gantt chart or time line is a good way to plan an approach to completing an activity. It can be done simply or at a very detailed level. For example, the following time line shows how a mentee could plan to ensure that an assignment is completed on time:



The format of the time line does not matter as long as it shows the progression from one activity to the next based on time.

The next example shows a more detailed version of this time line.



# 3C Recognise and discuss changes in the mentoring relationship

The goals documented in a mentoring agreement are established at a given point and may change over time. The original goals may become irrelevant, inapplicable or unattainable.

Monitoring and reflecting on the mentoring relationship allows a mentor to identify changes to the relationship, initiate a discussion of developments with the relevant people and review and update the mentoring agreement.

While minor changes could be easily accommodated, significant change may necessitate a whole new agreement. It is important that everyone understands the goals of the relationship and the obligations, role and responsibilities of each party.

## Changes that may occur in a mentoring relationship

Relationships change and evolve over time. Both the mentor and the mentee will experience changes in their personal and professional needs and life situations. Consequently, the mentoring relationship should be regularly assessed to confirm that both parties understand the relationship and remain committed to it.

Change is normal, and it is important to ensure that all stakeholders are advised of changes that may affect the mentoring relationship.

### Changes in a mentoring relationship

- ▶ The relationship has developed problems that cannot be resolved by discussion or mediation.
- ▶ The mentor has an increased workload that means they can no longer devote the time required to the relationship.
- ▶ One party is moving to a location that makes contact difficult, or has had a change in personal circumstances that affect the relationship.
- ▶ The expectations of the agreement no longer align with the mentee's needs or abilities.
- ▶ The mentee has progressed to the point that they could benefit from a new mentor.
- ▶ The mentor or mentee is going on leave for an extended period, which will affect the achievement of the mentee's goals.
- ▶ The end date for the mentoring relationship has arrived but both parties would like to extend it.

## Summary

1. Establishing goals is the first step towards achieving them, but a mentee may need support to plan how to achieve those goals in a way that meets their individual requirements.
2. Planning tools and techniques can help your mentee stay on track so that they progress and achieve their goals. Helping a mentee learn how to plan effectively gives them a key skill to use in work and life generally.
3. Feedback must be provided in a way that is sensitive to the needs and characteristics of the mentee.
4. Effective feedback is supportive and non-threatening and is a skill to be practised and refined.
5. Inappropriate, misdirected or poorly given feedback can negatively affect your relationship with the mentee.
6. Feedback can be supportive or corrective. All feedback should be given as soon as possible, but consider the timing from your mentee's perspective.
7. Monitoring and reflecting on the mentoring relationship allows a mentor to identify changes to the relationship, initiate a discussion of developments with the relevant people, and review the mentoring agreement.
8. If there are changes in the mentoring arrangements, all relevant stakeholders should be informed according to agreed processes.
9. The closure of a mentoring arrangement can be part of a formal agreement or a natural outcome of the evolution of the relationship. There should be a final session or meeting that gives both parties an opportunity to acknowledge the ending of the relationship.
10. The mentor is likely to be responsible for ensuring that closure is correctly managed and sensitive to the needs of all parties.

### Some aims of reflecting on the personal benefits

- ▶ Acknowledging that the relationship has been a mutual one whereby you have both benefited
- ▶ Being able to articulate exactly what those benefits are to you
- ▶ Being able to assess whether you will continue to participate in the mentoring program
- ▶ Providing evidence of your own personal and professional development relevant to your training and work performance assessment

The following example shows how reflecting on the benefits gained from a mentoring relationship helps to Rosa to be more positive about mentoring.

### Example

#### Reflect on the personal benefits gained from providing mentoring

Rosa is pleased that Jamal has acknowledged some of the benefits of the mentoring relationship for him as the mentee. She feels it has been a challenging relationship and isn't sure whether she will accept a mentoring role next year. She has recently received a promotion, meaning that her workload has increased, and feels that she needs to focus on her new role for a while.

As part of the organisation's process for ending a mentoring relationship, Rosa is required to reflect on the relationship and complete the following form.

Benefit of mentoring relationship	Example
Would you be interested in being involved in the mentoring program again? Why or why not?	
What have you learnt during this mentoring relationship?	

Rosa spends some time reflecting on her relationship with Jamal and realises that despite its challenges she has learnt a great deal about cultural differences and communication styles.

She also realises that her new role is quite likely a direct result of her involvement in the mentoring program, as it gave her the opportunity to get to know the senior manager in that department. Based on the benefits she has identified through reflection, Rosa decides that she would like to be involved in the next mentoring program.