Report: National Education Employer Dialogue (NEED) Seminar 4

Peer to Peer Mentoring within the Higher Education Sector in Jordan

Hosted by: Princess Sumaya University for Technology

19 January 2020

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Table of Contents

Introduction

Given the benefits of peer to peer mentoring within the higher education sector, the NEED seminars 3 and 4 focused upon the co-creation of a peer to peer mentoring framework that can be adopted in Jordan's universities. We define **mentoring** as a professional relationship characterized by an *exchange* of knowledge, experience and motivation between the mentor and mentee. The mentor role is not an advisor, but rather a *critical friend* who helps the mentee to explore options and make his/her own decisions whilst providing guidance and support.

NEED Seminar 4 Objectives

The overarching objective of this seminar is to design a peer to peer mentoring programme for Jordan's higher education sector, and to fulfil the following outcomes:

1. Enhanced knowledge of peer to peer mentoring models.
2. Enhanced appreciation of the importance of contextualizing peer to peer mentoring in higher education.
3. Design a locally relevant approach to peer to peer mentoring in HE in Jordan

NEED Seminar 4 Programme

9.00-9.30	Registration and Refreshments
9.30-9.45	**Welcome** Professor Mashhoor Al-Refai: President, Princess Sumaya University for Technology May Abuhamdia: Deputy Director, British Council Jordan Introducing NEED and the NEED 4 Seminar: Professor Haya Al-Dajani, British Council UK Consultant
9.45–10.45 Session 1	The Importance of Peer to Peer Mentoring in Jordan's Higher Education Sector Professor Abdelraheem Abualbasal / Princess Sumaya University of Technology The Need for Peer to Peer Mentoring in Jordan's Higher Education Sector Professor Moussa Habib / Al Hussein Technical University The Strategic Framework for Peer to Peer Mentoring in Higher Education Professor Nikolaos Tzokas / British Council UK Consultant
10.45-11.45 Session 2	Building the Peer to Peer Mentoring Programme Working Groups
11.45–12.00	*Refreshments*
12.00-13.00 Session 3	Groups Presentations
13.00-14.00 Session 4	Finalising the 'Peer to Peer Mentoring in Higher Education' Proposal Professor Haya Al-Dajani / British Council UK Consultant
14.00-15:00	*Lunch and Networking*

Highlights from NEED Seminar 3

1. The Importance of Peer to Peer Mentoring in Jordan's Higher Education Sector

   Dr Abdelraheem AbualBasal/ Dean, King Talal School of Business Technology, PSUT

Why Peer to Peer Mentorship

- Create a welcoming Environment.
- Higher faculty retention.
- Exchange expertise (two way)
- No need to reinvent the wheel.
- Stay competitive

Pay it forward

- It supports your advancement in research activity, conference presentations, publication, pedagogical skill, and grant-writing.
- The knowledge that someone is committed to your progress, someone who can give you solid advice and be your advocate, can help to lower stress and build confidence.

Peer to peer mentorship area

- New faculty orientation.
- Teaching pedagogy
- Research grant and publication
- Promotion and career progressing
- Work life balance.

Challenges

- Culture (old school)
- Keeping up with the new changes in higher education
- Support from leadership
- Role model

2. The Need for Peer to Peer Mentoring in Jordan's Higher Education Sector

Professor Moussa Habib / Al Hussein Technical University

Mentoring provides opportunities to discuss work-related issues and generate possible options/solutions to some of the challenges.

The purpose of mentoring is always to help the mentee to change something – to improve their performance, to develop their leadership qualities, to develop their partnership skills, to realize their vision, or whatever.

Benefits of pee-to-peer mentoring

Benefits to the organisation	Benefits to the mentor	Benefits to the mentee
Widening of skills base and competencies	Improves awareness of own learning gaps	Develops learning, analytical and reflective skills
Identifies new talent	Develops ability to give and take constructive feedback and feed-forward	Develops organisational and professional knowledge
Increased staff morale and job satisfaction		
Alternative to external training	Provides access to wider range of professional knowledge and other ways of doing things and other perspectives	Develops own practice
		Builds self-confidence
Develops habits of trust and confidentiality		Develops ability to accept criticism
Use for succession planning	Provides networking opportunities	Supports individuals through transition and change
Helps achieve strategic goals and mission/vision	Improves leadership, organisational and communication skills	Develops autonomy and independence

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Coaching Vs Mentoring

- A Coach tends to initiate and drive the relationship.
- The relationship is finite, ending when an individual has learned what the coach is teaching.
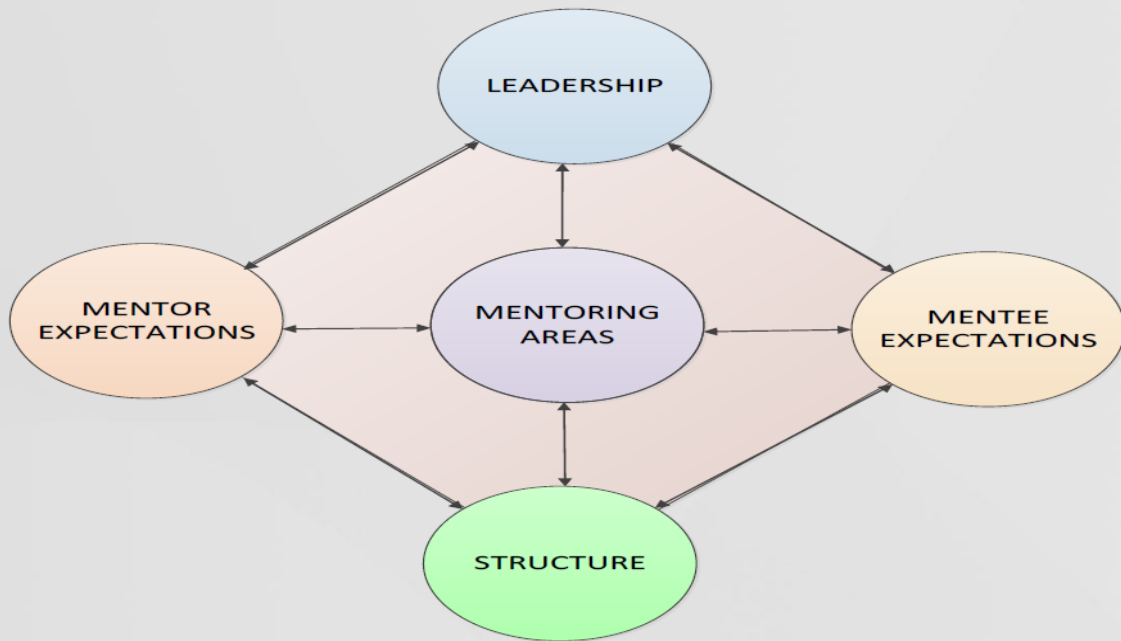
Coaching Vs Mentoring

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Designing the Framework for Peer to Peer Mentoring: Contributions from the Working Groups in NEED Seminar 4
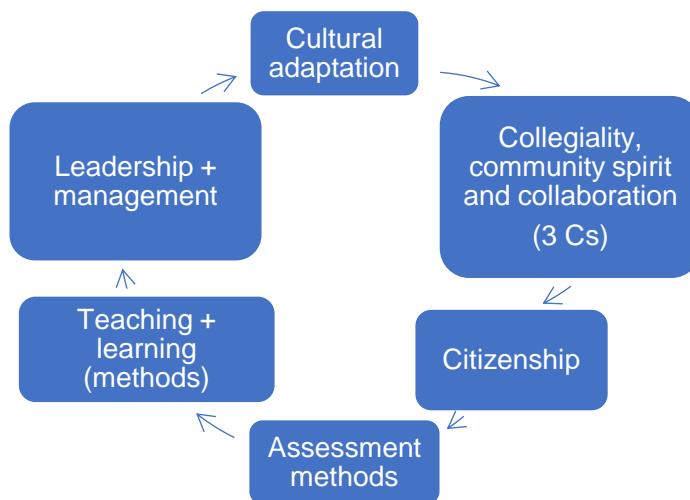

A framework for peer to peer mentoring

Group1

- Mentoring Areas

Topics for Mentoring
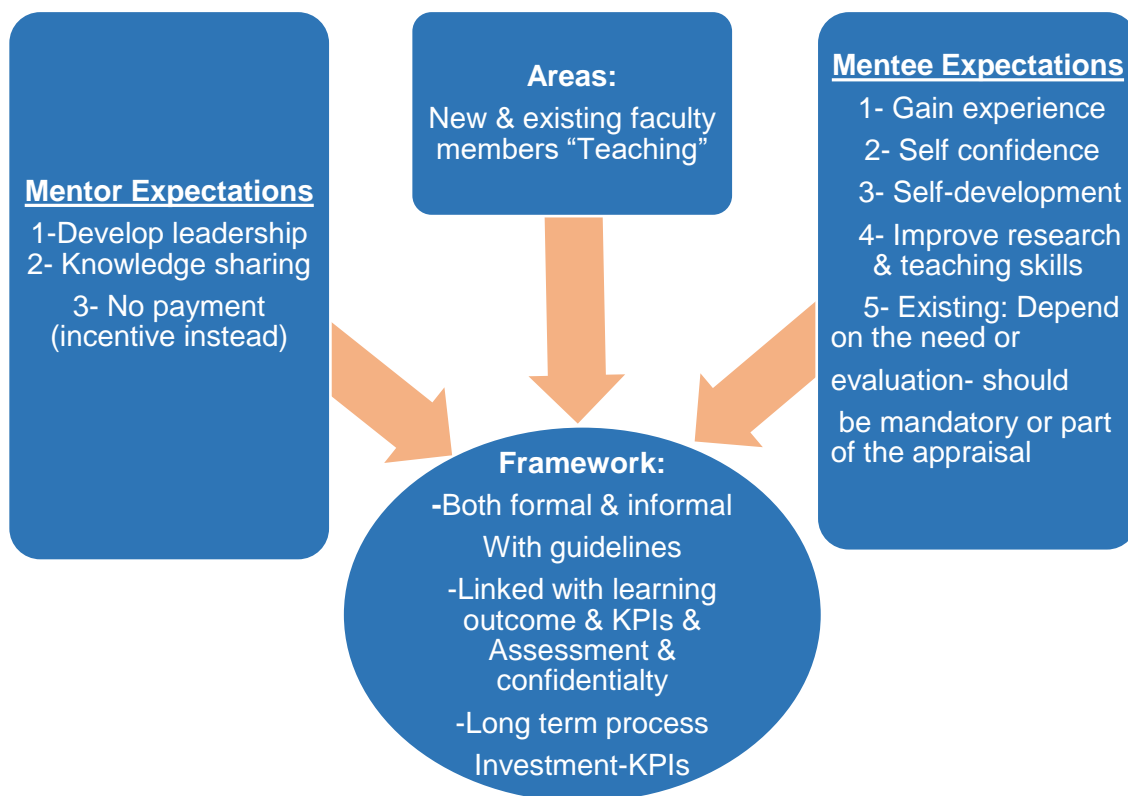
![British Council logo]

University Degree

- Every faculty member should be a mentor of 2-3 mentees in their area of expertise.
- Website on the university main site: website of mentors' network
a- The structure of this website is according to the area of expertise which can be developed through time as per needs

b- Proposed structure areas:

- Research ⟶ 1- title   2- proposal writing   3- journal selection
- E-learning
- Community service
- Program development

Mentor's Characteristics:

- Academic- specific /knowledge relevant and academic careers (experienced in academia)
- Knowledge in a specific area
- Soft skills: active listening, knowledge transfer, open mind, willingness to give unconditionally, decision making skills
- Trustworthy, honest, team player, transparency
- Hospitable, interactive (engaged)
- Management
- Time management
- Excellent communication, willingness, motivating
- Respectful-mutual
- Adaptable-flexible
- Mentoring should be one of the strategic objectives
- Top-down approach
- Budget (university level**)**

Group2

- Mentoring Expectations and Mentee Expectations

Mentor Expectations

1-Develop leadership
2- Knowledge sharing

3- No payment
(incentive instead)

Areas:
New & existing faculty members "Teaching"

Mentee Expectations

1- Gain experience

2- Self confidence

3- Self-development

4- Improve research & teaching skills

5- Existing: Depend on the need or

evaluation- should

be mandatory or part of the appraisal

Framework:

-Both formal & informal

With guidelines

-Linked with learning outcome & KPIs & Assessment & confidentialty

-Long term process

Investment-KPIs

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Group 3

Mentee Expectations
- Selling to the mentee "marketing self "
- Tangibles by case project
- Engage plenty by recognition, process

Mentor Expectations
- Mutual benefits
- Engagement
- Motivation
- Requirement for promotion – confidentiality should be assured for the mentee
- Creating healthy working community
- Training for mentors
- Mentoring skills
- Engagement via-acknowledge

Leadership
- Support from top management
- Operational support Dep. Level
- peer to peer support as a core value for the institution
- Facilitate resources
- Workload requirement
- Incentives

Structure
- Should have a manual
- There should be monitoring
- Confidentiality should be assessed for the Mentee

The Proposed Mentoring Framework for Jordan's Higher Education Sector
Professor Haya Al Dajani & Professor Nikolaos Tzokas / British Council UK
Consultants

Pillars of the Academic Peer to Peer Mentoring Programme Embedded Within the Framework

1. **A University Based Model**: Whilst the adoption of a peer to peer mentoring programme is encouraged nationally for all higher education institutions in Jordan, the management and implementation of the peer to peer mentoring programmes should be university specific. That is, each university should offer and run its own, independent peer to peer mentoring programme to its academic faculty members. Doing so ensures that the unique culture, organization and ethos of the university is reflected and embedded candidly within the peer to peer mentoring.

2. **Led by the Quality Assurance and Faculty Development Centre of the University**: Given the mandate of the Quality Assurance and Faculty Development Centres in Jordan's universities, they are well positioned to launch, manage, monitor and evaluate the peer to peer mentoring programme at their respective institutions. Doing so, will require offering training for mentors as well as regular induction / orientation sessions at the beginning of each mentoring cycle.

3. **Enhances Continuous Professional Development:** The aim of the peer to peer mentoring programme lies within continuous professional development focused upon the following areas:
   i.   Research
   ii. Teaching and e-learning
   iii. Programme development
   iv. Career management
   v.   Leadership

Given the extent to which the five focus areas outlined above combine technical knowledge, skills and competencies as well as personal effectiveness skills, the peer to peer mentoring framework combines elements that are purpose driven as well as those that are generic. To this extent, the peer to peer mentoring does not require a confined discipline approach. Instead, it can be offered across faculties and disciplines except where disciplinary expertise is essential as in the case of research outputs for example.

Characteristics of Academic Peer to Peer Mentoring Embedded Within the Framework

1. *Confidentiality*: To ensure a professional, truthful and frank relationship between the mentor and mentee, all content shared during the peer to peer mentoring must be treated confidentially unless there is mutual consent from both the mentor and mentee to share the content with others. The monitoring and evaluation of the peer to peer mentoring programme does not necessitate the disclosure of the content discussed and addressed within the mentoring relationship.

2. *Professionalism*: The academic peer to peer mentoring relationship is focused upon the mentor supporting the mentee in making her / his own decisions relating to professional academic career development. A mentoring 'code of conduct' highlighting the boundaries and expectations of the mentor and the mentee should be developed to maintain professional mentoring standards and to guide all parties participating in peer to peer mentoring.

3. *Time-Limited*: To avoid mentor fatigue and to ensure that mentees utilise their mentoring resource and time effectively, the peer to peer mentoring programme should be time limited. That is, a mentoring relationship should have a time frame and limit. For example, over the course of one academic year (time frame), the mentor will offer a maximum of 12 mentoring hours (limit). The time frame and time limit should be determined by each university independently as these will be governed by the university strategy, resources and faculty workloads.

The Components of the Peer to Peer Mentoring Framework

The five components of the framework as presented below provide the foundations for peer to peer mentoring within a university. The framework is introduced with a number of questions to be considered by each university wishing to create a unique response and one that is well aligned to the ethos, culture and strategy of the university. Questions are followed by viable answers that have emerged from participants of the NEED seminars. To this end the framework serves as a navigational mechanism towards successful peer to peer mentoring implementation while maintaining enough flexibility for each university to differentiate in their approach, thus supporting the unique sector/market positioning it is seeking to achieve.

1. *Mentoring Areas*:

At the centre of the peer to peer mentoring framework lie the 'mentoring areas. Although the five overarching focus areas for peer to peer mentoring and underlying continuous professional development for academic careers have been identified and outlined above (pillar 3), specific topics within each of these areas should emerge organically within the peer to peer mentoring as needed and agreed by the mentor and mentee.

While the mentoring areas covered within the mentoring relationship should not be related to performance evaluation, the **engagement** within the peer to peer mentoring as a mentor or mentee or both, can be included within the performance evaluation as an indicator of

community service and/or citizenship, and as such appreciated and rewarded accordingly by the university.

2. Leadership:

Key to the widespread adoption and diffusion of the peer to peer mentoring programme is the support from the leadership and top management of the university. Such support can take various forms, as illustrated below, but in all cases should reflect a clear appreciation by top management of the significant role that peer to peer mentoring plays in the achievement of the strategic and operational objectives of the university. Key questions to be answered here are as follows:

- *What is the university mindset that we need to put in place*?
  - A mindset that recognises the value of continuous professional and career development for faculty and staff.
  - A mindset where organizational citizenship behaviour is appreciated.
  - A mindset where mutual support and co-creation of value is imperative for achieving the academic purpose of the university.

- *How can we communicate widely such a mindset?*
  - By embedding it in the vision and mission of the University.
  - Mentoring becomes a highly valued activity and a strategic initiative.

- *How do we communicate the value of peer to peer mentoring and encourage its adoption?*
  - Through incentives and rewards: these may include tangible and intangible rewards such as mentors and mentees receiving workload points to account for their PEER TO PEER MENTORING engagement, certificates of recognition, special mentions and celebrations.
  - Through training and development: these may include specific training for mentors and mentees, operational manuals and handbooks.
  - Through institutional procedures: these may include designated operational support and embedding PEER TO PEER MENTORING as a requirement for promotion and/or career development.

- *What are the key performance indicators we need to set for the peer to peer mentoring?*
  - Leadership should consider operational and strategic KPIs so that they can monitor both the operational efficiency of the programme and its effectiveness against specific objectives of the university e.g. faculty and staff satisfaction with PEER TO PEER MENTORING, organizational citizenship attitude and behaviour, level of confidence and so on.
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3. Structure:

Whereas leadership and mindset as explained above support the adoption and diffusion of peer to peer mentoring, structure is a key foundation of the successful implementation of the

mentoring programme. Questions relevant to structure of the peer to peer mentoring programme are as follows:

- *Should we have an informal or formal approach*?
  - An informal approach may be ideal for the relationship development between mentor and mentee. However, a formal approach at the university/department level will warrant the smooth and traceable implementation of the programme.
  - Formality should be not confused with bureaucracy here.

- *Should we have a detailed manual*?
  - Guidelines for mentor and mentee will support implementation.
  - Embedding peer to peer mentoring in policies and procedures will enhance its visibility and legitimacy.

- *Should we be monitoring the activity?*
  - Annual reviews of the peer to peer mentoring can be implemented at the faculty/department level, and the results forwarded to the Quality Assurance and Faculty Development Centre as it should be the responsibility of the Center to monitor the peer to peer mentoring occurring across the university.
  - Ongoing seminars and workshops to reflect on lessons learned and continuously improve used approaches.

- *How do we operationalize the programme?*
  - Provide administrative support within each faculty/department to liaise with centralized faculty and career development office.
  - Regular cross-faculty meeting for joint learning.
  - Use technology wherever possible e.g. mentoring-specific software.
  - Central website e.g. 'Mentors Network' where bios of the mentors are listed, highlighting their areas of expertise on which they are willing to mentor colleagues.

4. Mentor Expectations & Responsibilities:

Clear expectations and role responsibilities for the mentors will enhance the effectiveness of the peer to peer mentoring programme. Relevant questions to consider here are as follows:

- *What is the benefit of being a mentor?*
  - Depending on the university's culture number of approaches (formal/informal, utilitarian/hedonistic; self-oriented/other oriented; remunerated/voluntary) and associated combinations can be used to answer this question.
  - These may include: mentoring as a learning and professional development activity for the mentor, mentoring as an organizational citizenship behaviour, mentoring as part of promotion and/or career development process.

- *How can we tangibilise these benefits for mentors?*
  - Through top-management support & acknowledgement.
  - By celebrating achievements widely
  - By providing workload support towards this activity for mentors
  - By investing through training and mentoring development programmes.

- *What are the mentor responsibilities* [1]:
  1. Commitment to the time required for meeting and advising
  2. Commitment to reviewing the mentee's work
  3. Providing guidance on setting realistic career vision/goals/ objectives
  4. Engaging in collaborative development of appropriate goals and strategies for achieving goals
  5. Offering support, guidance and resources for developing academic competencies, in scholarly research, teaching, scholarly presentations, and overall career management
  6. Facilitation in the development of academic networks
  7. Careful and active listening, ability to work across boundaries of gender/ethnicity/ culture/religion

5. *Mentee Responsibilities & Expectations*:

Clear expectations and role responsibilities for the mentees will enhance the effectiveness of the peer to peer mentoring programme. Relevant questions to consider here are as follows:

- *What is the benefit of being a mentee?*
  - Depending on the university's culture a number of approaches (formal/informal, utilitarian/hedonistic; required/voluntary) and associated combinations can be used to answer this question.
  - These may include: mentoring as part of promotion and/or career development process, and the mentoring relationship as key driver for the development of academic social capital and reputation.

- *How can we tangibilise these benefits for mentors?*
  - Through top-management support and acknowledgement.
  - By celebrating achievements widely
  - By providing workload support towards this activity for mentees
  - By investing through training and mentoring development programmes.

- *Mentee responsibilities* [2]
  1. Active engagement in the identification of specific developmental goals for which guidance is sought
  2. Commitment to setting meeting times and agendas to ensure a productive discussion

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[1] Adopted from Page 11, MentoringBestPractices Columbia.pdf
[2] Adopted from Page 12, MentoringBestPractices Columbia.pdf

3. Initiative and follow through in both setting and completing agreed-upon goals
4. Commitment to hard work and integrity
5. Preparation of agreed-upon deliverables in adequate time for review by mentors, with respect for the time constraints of mentors
6. Development of listening skills and willingness to work outside of "comfort zones," across boundaries of gender/ ethnicity /culture/religion
7. Ability to solicit and consider thoughtful feedback, both positive and negative
8. Active commitment to developing scholarly independence
9. Respect for personal boundaries

Universities and Organisations Participating in the NEED Seminar 4

1. Al-Ahliyya Amman University

2. Al-Hussein Technical University

3. Al-Zaytoonah University of Jordan

4. Ammon Applied University College

5. Education for Employment EFE Jordan

6. Khawarizmi University Technical College

7. Philadelphia University

8. Princess Sumaya University for Technology

9. University of Jordan