



## **Court of Protection Bar Association Mentoring Guide**

### **Preliminary**

1. This Guide is a set of principles and guidelines for mentors and mentees of the Court of Protection Bar Association Mentoring Scheme ('the Scheme'). It sets out the roles and responsibilities of both parties, gives an overview of the application process and provides contact details of those running the scheme.

### **The Mentoring Scheme**

2. The Scheme provides structured and focussed support to members of the Court of Protection Bar Association ('CPBA') to help members develop their Court of Protection practices. It also has a wellbeing function: you may be happy with your practice and yet be experiencing a crisis of confidence or bullying – a mentor can be invaluable in such circumstances.
3. The Scheme pairs mentees with mentors who have the necessary skills and experience to provide the mentee with the type of help sought.
4. Mentors and mentees will be from different Chambers.
5. The mentor will usually have practised for at least five years longer than the mentee.
6. The mentee may seek a mentor for general and ongoing support and/ or to achieve a specific and defined goal, which may include the following:
  - a. Career development: starting or developing a CoP practice;
  - b. Managing work relationships;
  - c. Dealing with stress;
  - d. Work-life balance;
  - e. Dealing with inappropriate conduct (e.g. harassment or discrimination);
  - f. Returning to CoP work after a period away from practice;
  - g. Moving chambers; or
  - h. Silk, panel or judicial applications.
7. Mentoring through the Scheme is confidential, one to one, and there is an expectation of regular communication between both parties.

8. The Scheme is run by the Committee Members of the CPBA ('the Committee') and administered by the Mentoring Committee:

- a. Naomi Winston: [naomiwinston@tenoldsquare.com](mailto:naomiwinston@tenoldsquare.com)
- b. Thomas Jones: [TJones@9goughchambers.co.uk](mailto:TJones@9goughchambers.co.uk)
- c. Katie Gollop QC: [KGollopQC@serjeantsinn.com](mailto:KGollopQC@serjeantsinn.com)

9. Mentees should send their application form to:

- a. Naomi if you are a junior in Property and Affairs not currently aspiring to silk;
- b. Thomas if you are a junior in Health and Welfare not currently aspiring to silk;
- c. Katie for all other applications.

If the appropriate Committee member is a member of your chambers and you are concerned about confidentiality, the application should be sent to a different Committee Member.

### **The Application Process**

10. Members of the CPBA who are interested in being mentors should download and complete a Mentor's Form, which is available on the CPBA website.

11. Members who wish to be mentored should download and complete a Mentee's Form, which is available on the CPBA website.

12. Mentees are encouraged to be as specific as possible about their reasons for seeking a mentor and what they hope to achieve with the mentor's help. That is because the more information provided, the better the mentee/mentor match. If there is a specific issue which is particularly important to a mentee, it should be marked as being an 'essential requirement' on the form.

13. Completed forms should be sent to one member of the Committee.

14. Mentor forms will be seen by all members of the Committee. However, save in exceptional circumstances, only the person to whom the mentee sends their form will review the information therein and the process of matching mentor to mentee will be carried out by that person. Names of paired mentors and mentees will be available to all of the Committee.

15. Unless you request otherwise, completed forms will be retained by the CPBA for two years. All information on the form will be treated as confidential and will be used only for the purposes of matching mentors and mentees and otherwise administering the scheme, subject to the professional reporting obligations of the members of the Mentoring Committee.
16. The matching process will take place on a rolling basis throughout the year. Once an application by a mentee has been received by a member of the Committee, they will aim to acknowledge the application within seven working days, and will aim to provide the mentee with a proposed mentor within fourteen working days. If it is not possible for the relevant committee member to meet that deadline, they will communicate that fact to the applicant.
17. Once a mentee has been allocated a mentor, a member of the Committee will contact the mentee for permission to give out the mentee's contact details to the proposed mentor. If the mentee agrees, the member of the Committee will provide the mentee and the mentor with the relevant contact details and they will be asked to make contact. There is an expectation that the mentee makes initial contact and takes the lead on arranging the first meeting. If the mentee does not agree with the proposed mentor, the mentee is entitled to request a different mentor up to two times in total.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the mentee**

18. Mentoring is a flexible practice that is likely to be highly individual. Once an agreeable pairing is in place, mentees and mentors are expected to take the mentoring ball and run with it. That said, at the initial meeting, the mentor and mentee may want to discuss ground rules such as:
  - a. The mentee's mentoring goals;
  - b. How/where to meet – remote or in person;
  - c. The frequency of contact and whether you want time limited mentoring or a more open-ended relationship;
  - d. Whether there are any specific confidentiality issues, not covered by this Guide;
  - e. Any conversational no go areas or boundaries;
  - f. Who will be responsible for arranging meetings (note this will usually be the mentee unless you want to agree something different);
  - g. How to draw things to a close: either party should be able to terminate the mentoring relationship, without giving reasons or allocating blame, if they feel it is not working or is useful.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the mentee**


19. The CPBA expects that unless the pair agrees otherwise, the mentee will:
- a. Keep information shared by their mentor confidential (unless: the mentee has a regulatory obligation to report it; it is necessary to inform a third party to protect the mentor or a third party from harm; or the mentor consents);
  - b. Only enquire into the mentor's private life by invitation;
  - c. Be clear with their mentor about their expectations;
  - d. Drive the mentoring relationship forward;
  - e. Take responsibility for arranging meetings and setting the agenda.

### **Roles and responsibilities of the mentor**

20. The mentor will be the mentee's champion. The mentor will endeavour to provide guidance, advice and support that meets the mentee's stated aims in a way that is kind, empathetic and imaginative.
21. The CPBA would expect the following from the mentor:
- a. Information shared by the mentee will remain confidential (unless: the mentor has a regulatory obligation to report it; it is necessary to inform a third party to protect the mentee or a third party from harm; or the mentee consents);
  - b. The mentor would only enquire into the mentee's private life by invitation;
  - c. Be clear with their mentee about their envisaged timeframe for the relationship; and
  - d. Commit to regular meetings with their mentee.
22. It is not the role of a mentor to provide the mentee with advice about specific cases they are working on or to provide legal education.

### **Terminating the relationship**

23. Mentoring is an entirely voluntary process and it should be a positive one for both parties. If, for whatever reason, things do not work out and communication is difficult, the Committee will assist in whatever way it can and will (if possible) arrange for the mentee to be introduced to a new mentor.



24. The Mentoring Committee retains a discretion to refuse access to the Mentoring Scheme to any person who it reasonably believes is in breach of or who is likely to breach the BSB Handbook. If any mentor or mentee has concerns that there may have been, or is otherwise uncomfortable on conduct grounds, such a breach, they are encouraged to contact the Committee.

**Further information**

25. If you would like further information about the mentoring scheme, as either a mentor or a mentee, please contact a member of the Mentoring Committee. This email may be shared among the other members of the Committee but can be anonymised at your request.

January 2021