

UTS LSS

**A**DVOCATES  
**M**ENTORING  
**P**ROGRAM

HANDBOOK

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# 1. Program Administrators Contact Details

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## 2. Program Overview

The Advocates Mentoring Program (AMP) is a UTS Law Students' Society (UTS LSS) initiative founded in 2014.

The purpose of the Program is to connect high achieving UTS:Law students (mentee) who are interested in a career in advocacy to be paired with a leading member of the legal profession (mentor) to guide the personal and professional development of the mentee.

The role of the mentor is to provide valuable insights to the mentee regarding the day-to-day responsibilities of an advocate, including variations from law school to real-world law.

The Program Administrators acknowledge the ongoing threat of COVID-19 may prevent physical meetings at times; however, encourages parties to use electronic mediums where appropriate.

### 2.1 Eligibility

The Program is open to 3<sup>rd</sup> - 5<sup>th</sup> Year Undergraduate UTS:Law Students and 2<sup>nd</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> Year Juris Doctor Students.

### 2.2 Frequency

The structure of the mentor-mentee relationship will vary between participants. There is an expectation of meeting (either physically or virtually) at least six times throughout the Program, with regular email and/or phone correspondence throughout the Program.

The frequency of meetings between mentors and mentees will be subject to their discretion. It is the duty of the mentee to initiate contact with the mentor, and schedule mentoring sessions. At all times, the mentee must be respectful of the mentors time constraints and make reasonable attempts to accommodate the mentors work schedule.

Ideally, there should be a meeting at least once a month, lasting for 30-60 minutes. However, this is left to the discretion of the mentor and mentee. An **example** of a meeting structure includes: *the first Wednesday of each month from 8:00 am to 9:00 am.*

Mentees will be required to complete the Mid Program and End of Program survey. Mentors will also be encouraged to do the same.

Due to the competitive nature of the Program, any mentee found in breach of the Code of Conduct (see Section 6), or found not making reasonable attempts to communicate with their mentor may be removed from the Program.

## 2.3 Key Dates

Historically, the Program commences with an introductory breakfast hosted by the UTS LSS in the Law Faculty Boardroom. The breakfast is currently set on the **29th March 2021**, where mentors and mentees will have the opportunity to meet each other in an informal environment.

The Mid Program Survey will be due **6:00 pm 25 July 2021**.

The Closing Breakfast and End of Program Survey are to be advised, but will take place during **November 2021**.

## 3. The Role of a Mentee

As a mentee in the Advocates Mentoring Program, you have an invaluable opportunity to engage and learn from a mentor with significant experience in the legal industry. In order to be as effective as possible, please use this Handbook as a guide.

### 3.1 Consider your Opportunity

- a. Demonstrate an application to career and personal development throughout the program.
- b. Identify professional development goals, priorities and career interests.
- c. Exhibit a desire to improve in a particular area or learn a new skill, and demonstrate a genuine interest in being helped by your mentor.
- d. Have initiative and independence, and be prepared to take risks and follow through on agreed actions.

### **3.2 Structure and Focus**

- a. A recommended structure for each meeting is outlined in Section 5.
- b. You should enter each meeting with a clear idea of how your meeting will be structured and focused.
- c. Prior to your first meeting think of 2-3 key goals, these may not be your final goals although you should have some idea as to what you want to achieve.
- d. In your first meeting, focus on getting to know each other and set 2-3 key goals for your sessions.
- e. In your second through to fifth meeting focus on these key goals, and look at career planning and additional development.
- f. Your final meeting should review your progress and focus on your direction and next steps.

### **3.3 Tips and Tricks**

- a. Follow the Code of Conduct outlined in Section 6.
- b. Initiate first contact with your mentor (this should be done ASAP once you have your mentor's details).
- c. Try to schedule at least one meeting per month. It is your responsibility to schedule these meetings unless otherwise instructed or agree upon with your mentor.
- d. Reap the educational benefits.
- e. Be respectful of your mentors' time and commitments.
- f. Listen actively and communicate honestly with your mentor.
- g. Be willing to discuss failures and successes.
- h. Be receptive and open to any opportunities that may arise as a result of participation in the Program.

- i. Be responsive to and welcoming of any constructive criticism or feedback that your mentor may give you.
- j. Remain courteous and professional at all times.
- k. Respond punctually to emails and phone calls, in a manner that demonstrates your professional brand and commitment to the mentoring relationship.
- l. Demonstrate a genuine interest in the relationship with your mentor.
- m. Retain confidentiality with your mentor.
- n. Dress in corporate attire when meeting with your mentor unless otherwise specified.
- o. Meetings with your mentor are not a counselling sessions. See Code of Conduct for further information.
- p. Do not have unrealistic expectations of the relationship.
- q. Do not neglect or avoid your agreed commitments and obligations, or fail to communicate with your mentor without a prompt and reasonable explanation.
- r. Do not distribute details of your mentor or discussions with your mentor to classmates and friends.
- s. Do not expect a job out of your mentoring relationship.
- t. Mentees must attend the Closing Breakfast.
- u. Mentees must complete the Mid Program Survey.
- v. Mentees must complete the End of Program Survey.
- w. Above all, have fun!

### **3.4 Mentee Skills to Develop**

- a. Assists career development and personal learning.
- b. Provide access to targeted and constructive conversations in a safe environment.
- c. Building your profile and exposure.

- d. Opens doors to new opportunities and relationships.
- e. Assists in gaining a new or different perspective.

## 4. The Role of a Mentor

As a mentor in the Advocates Mentoring Program, you will play an essential role in your mentee's development. To be as effective as possible, please use this Handbook as a guide.

### 4.1 Consider your Responsibilities

- a. Act as a role model.
- b. Help your mentee to open doors that would otherwise be closed.
- c. Fulfil your time commitments and be accessible.
- d. Provide insight and inspiration to your mentee.
- e. Listen to what the mentee is saying.

### 4.2 Structure and Focus

- a. A recommended structure for each meeting is outlined in Section 5.
- b. Your mentee should enter each meeting with a clear idea of how your meeting will be structured and focused. It would be beneficial if the mentor aided the mentee to develop their structure.
- c. Prior to your first meeting, your mentee will think of 2-3 key goals. Collaborate with your mentee to refine these.
- d. In your first meeting, focus on getting to know each other and set the 2-3 key goals for your sessions.
- e. In your second through to fifth meeting, focus on these goals, and look at career planning and additional development.

- f. Your final meeting should review your mentee's progress and focus on their direction and next steps.

### **4.3 Tips and Tricks**

- a. Follow the Code of Conduct outlined in Section 6.
- b. Your mentee is responsible for scheduling your meetings; however, you should aim to meet at least once per month for six months.
- c. Be approachable and make time for your mentee.
- d. Track development and progress.
- e. Act with patience, and remain objective and professional when providing advice to your mentee.
- f. Create a safe environment, and guide your mentee with constructive feedback and encouragement.
- g. Promote a sense of trust and confidence such that the mentee is comfortable asking difficult questions.
- h. Challenge your mentee by encouraging new ways of thinking, acting and pushing your mentee to stretch.
- i. Demonstrate a genuine interest in the mentor-mentee relationship.
- j. Meetings are not counselling sessions. See the Code of Conduct in Section 6 for further information.
- k. If issues are raised that are outside the scope of the Program, you are encouraged to discuss this with the Program Administrators.
- l. Mentors are encouraged to attend the Closing Breakfast.
- m. Mentors are encouraged to complete the Mid Program Survey.
- n. Mentors are encouraged to complete the End of Program Survey.

## 4.4 Mentor Skills to Develop

- a. Improve leadership skills.
- b. Increase awareness of talent.
- c. Expand your professional network.
- d. Develop knowledge sharing skills.

# 5. Structure

## 5.1 COVID-19 and its Impact on the Program

As mentioned in the program outline, the Program Administrators acknowledge that present circumstances may prevent physical meetings at times; however, encourages parties to conduct meetings through electronic means.

Mentors and mentees are encouraged to use video conferencing software, such as Skype, Messenger, Zoom or Google hangouts. It is ideal for participants to find a quiet location where they will remain relatively undisturbed throughout the meeting's duration.

## 5.2 Meeting Structure

You are encouraged to develop your mentor-mentee relationship in a way that best suits the different working and communication styles of your mentor-mentee counterpart. *Please refer to the structure below as an example.*

### 5.2.1 Meeting 1: Forming the Relationship

Welcome to your first AMP Session! During this meeting, you will have the opportunity to meet your mentee/mentor, to establish those foundational skills to foster your professional relationship.

- a. Establish the relationship:
  - Initiate contact with each other.
  - Create a schedule as to when you will meet with each other.
  - Set out any expectations/boundaries each of you may have.
  - Be an exceptional listener and communicator.
  
- b. Build rapport:
  - Get to know each other's interests and establish a common ground.
  - You may be intrigued as to why your mentor sought to study law and steer towards a career in advocacy.
  - It is important to be genuine and sincere.
  
- c. Set 2 – 3 goals for the Program - some **examples** include:
  - Understanding the different areas and concepts which a Barrister would focus on compared to an instructing Solicitor.
  - How to develop case strategies, prepare legal documents, i.e., statements, affidavits and applications accurately and efficiently.
  - Develop an understanding of how 'real world' law is applied in a practical setting.
  - Provide a sense of direction and advice to showcase your passions.

### 5.2.2 Meeting 2 - 5: Building the Relationship

During these several meetings, participants are tasked with building on the goals established in Meeting 1, and consulting through career planning and future development strategies.

- a. Work through your goals
  - Discuss and map out any further objectives.
- b. Career Planning and Future Development
  - Discuss the magnitude of avenues available in a career in advocacy.
  - Mentors may give mentees minor tasks to complete
- c. Additional Development
  - Mechanisms to juggle work/life in the legal profession

### 5.2.3 Meeting 6: Finalising the Relationship

Welcome to your final AMP Session! During this meeting, you will combine the newfound skills provided by your mentor as you delve into the next stage of your professional journey.

- a. Review any actions and commitments
  - Review the program
  - Complete the End of Program Survey.
- b. Direction and next steps
  - Where does the relationship go next?

### 5.3 Sample Questions / Activities

- Questions about specific areas of law?
- What a day at the office looks like?
- Any clerkship tips?
- How do you cope with the added stress of the profession?
- What made you choose your speciality area of law?
- What are some alternative avenues in the legal profession?

Please note that these questions are merely examples and should be left to the discretion of the mentor if they wish to answer them.

## 6. Code of Conduct

By agreeing or undertaking to be a participant in the Advocates Mentoring Program, all participants agree to adhere to the following Code of Conduct within the scope of their mentor-mentee relationship.

### 6.1 Mentors and Mentees

- a. Maintain confidentiality of all items discussed within the mentor-mentee relationship either during the mentoring sessions or via email and telephone communication, and also personal and professional contact of the other party unless disclosure is required by legislation.
- b. The Advocates Mentoring Program is not a counselling session and the mentor will not give advice of this nature. Should any issues arise regarding this, the Program Administrators are to be contacted immediately.
- c. Adhere to professional standards or behaviour when communicating within the mentor-mentee relationship. Should any issues arise regarding this, the Program Administrators are to be contacted immediately.
- d. Do not engage in any commercial or financial agreement relating to the mentoring relationship. Should any issues arise regarding this, the Program Administrators are to be contacted immediately.
- e. There is an expectation that the mentor-mentee relationship will be conducted in good faith and with respect to both parties. This includes;

- i. Attending all scheduled mentoring meetings and events on time or providing reasonable notice as to you anticipate non-attendance to a scheduled mentoring meeting.
- ii. Complete all necessary pre-work for scheduled mentoring meetings before they start.
- iii. Follow up on all action items identified during scheduled mentoring meetings.
- iv. Be contactable by your program counterpart and respond in a timely manner as far as can reasonably be expected.
- f. Communicate regularly either verbally or in writing, regarding the progress of the mentoring relationship so as to effectively foster the personal and professional development of the relationship and to ensure the success of the program.
- g. Report any concerns to the Program Administrators as early as can reasonably be expected.

## **6.2 Mentee**

- a. Take responsibility for scheduling mentoring meetings.
- b. Be respectful of the mentor's time and schedule.
- c. Demonstrate a genuine interest towards development.

## **6.3 Mentor**

- a. Be approachable and make time for the mentee.
- b. Support and guide personal growth of the mentee.
- c. Demonstrate a genuine interest in imparting new skills.