

# The role of the mentor in Accreditation

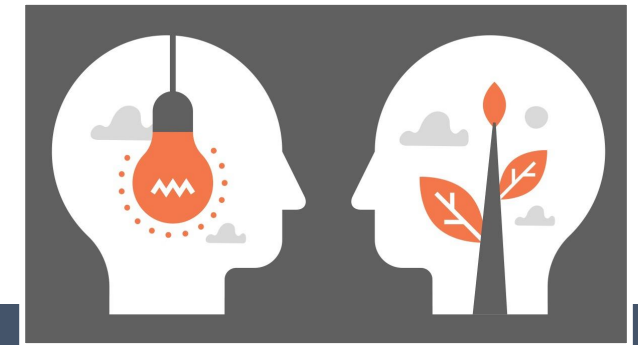
# Every Accreditation pathway is based on a dynamic relationship with an assigned mentor

Mentors **accompany** their mentees throughout their Accreditation journey. Working with a mentor is a key feature of the PBA's Accreditation programme and at the heart of its value, impact and influence.

All PBA **authorised mentors** are experienced partnership brokers and Accredited – so they understand the programme well from their own first-hand experience of being mentees.

Their role is to support and encourage their mentees to:

- Become ever more reflective practitioners
- Be courageous and push beyond their 'comfort zone'
- Commit to ethical and principled approaches – however tough the situation in which they find themselves working and
- Seize every opportunity for exploring new approaches during the period of mentored professional practice



# Mentor as a 'critical friend'



## Critical friendship:

- Provides an opportunity to support and learn from each other in a relatively informal and strictly confidential arrangement
- Is best described as a professional working relationship that is conducted quite separately from day-to-day working relationships and in which there is an equal emphasis on talking and listening (it is a two-way dialogue)

## Being a critical friend in the mentor role requires the following:

- Active listening (even in emails)
- Precise speaking (even when writing)
- Suspension of assumptions / preconceptions
- An unhurried, non-judgmental attitude

## AN IMPORTANT NOTE:

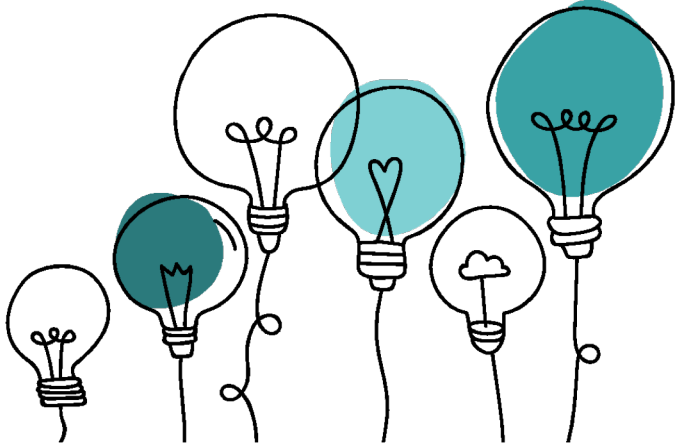
Mentors will always be clear with their mentees that they are not acting as **consultants** offering solutions to their presenting partnering or partnership brokering issues.

## Mentors understand that their task is to:



- **Support** a systematic, disciplined, imaginative and more 'self-aware' approach to the theory and practice of partnership brokering
- **Ask** provocative questions aimed at expanding horizons and options
- **Challenge** choices of action, for example, by inviting an exploration of alternatives
- **Prompt** reflection on, and analysis of, specific partnership brokering situations with the aim of helping their mentees to gain insight into their partnership brokering strengths and any areas for improvement
- **Provide** advice on: sources of additional information / assistance; how they document their experiences (through their Log Book or equivalent) and the choice they make on their contribution to the partnership brokering movement (through their Accreditation Project)

The relationship with your mentor is a **collaboration for learning**. It relies to a considerable extent on how fully mentees choose to engage. In considering the potential relationship to a mentor, it may be useful to ask yourself the following questions:



- *How do I best learn?*
- *Am I more comfortable with theory, practice or reflecting?  
Or a combination of these?*
- *Do I learn best with a more formal or informal structure?*
- *What would I hope for from a period of mentored practice?*
- *What would I expect from a mentor?*

# Prior to the first meeting, mentees are asked to compile a draft **LEARNING PLAN**



## This is likely to cover:

- **CONTEXT:** Some information about your operational scenario(s)
- **PARTNERSHIP BROKERING ACTIVITIES:** Clearly describing / illustrating what partnership brokering or related activities you expect to be undertaking during the period of mentored practice
- **APPROACH & SKILLS:** Thoughts on what you would like to achieve in terms of building your partnership brokering practice, skills and confidence
- **LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES:** An indication of what learning opportunities there may be for both personal and professional development
- **7 COMMITMENTS TO ETHICAL PARTNERSHIP BROKERING:** Some consideration of how these will underpin the partnership brokering work during the period of mentored practice (see next slide)

There is more detail on how to construct a learning plan in the **ESSENTIAL INFORMATION SLIDE PACK FOR MENTEES**

# The Seven Commitments to Ethical Partnership Brokering



If you complete the Accreditation programme successfully and are awarded Accreditation, you will be asked to abide by these commitments.

# Learning Agreement



At the outset of the professional practice period, the mentor and mentee will co-create a 'learning agreement' – a simple statement developed and agreed by both parties covering:

- **Learning objectives and learning styles preferences** of the mentee – both general and specific
- **Ground rules / principles** for the working relationship – to ensure that any 'no go' areas are clear and that the principle of mutual learning / benefit is clear
- **Any significant underlying issues** e.g. of culture / language / time-zone challenges / actual or potential power imbalance
- **Frequency and type of contact** – agreeing what is appropriate / manageable and clarifying issues to do with extensions or deferrals
- **Agreeing a simple review procedure** – to ensure the relationship is on track





**PARTNERSHIP**  
BROKERS ASSOCIATION