

# The role of the mentor in Accreditation

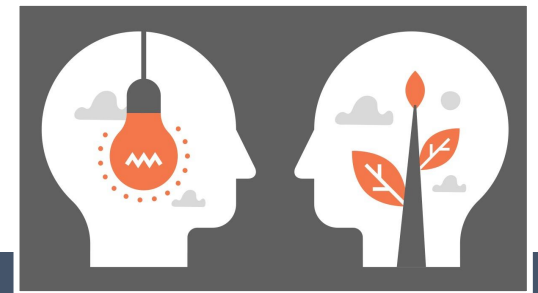
# Every Accreditation pathway is based on a dynamic relationship with an assigned mentor

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:

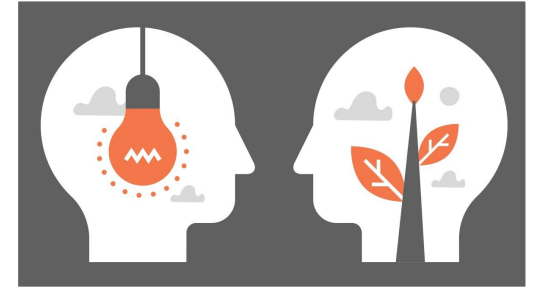
- Provides an opportunity to support and learn from each other in a relatively informal and strictly confidential arrangement
- Is best described as a professional working relationship that is conducted quite separately from day-to-day working relationships and in which there is an equal emphasis on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

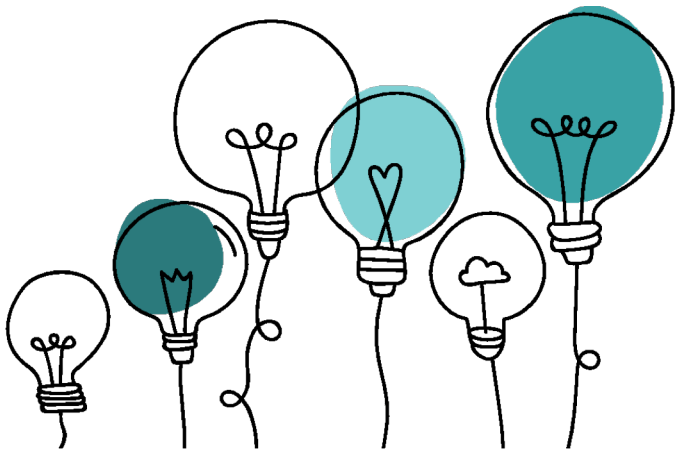
**AN IMPORTANT NOTE:**  
Mentors will always be clear with their mentees that they are not acting as **consultants** offering solutions to their presenting partnering or partnership brokering issues.

# The mentor's 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 is intended to be a **collaboration for learning**. It relies to a considerable extent on how fully mentees choose to engage so mentees are asked to consider the following questions before the first meeting with their mentor:



- *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 their operating scenario(s)
- **PARTNERSHIP BROKERING ACTIVITIES:** Clearly describing / illustrating what partnership brokering or related activities they expect to be undertaking during the period of mentored practice
- **APPROACH & SKILLS:** Thoughts on what they would like to achieve in terms of building their 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)

# The Seven Commitments to Ethical Partnership Brokering

Mentees who complete the Accreditation programme successfully, and are awarded Accreditation, will be expected to respect and abide by these commitments.



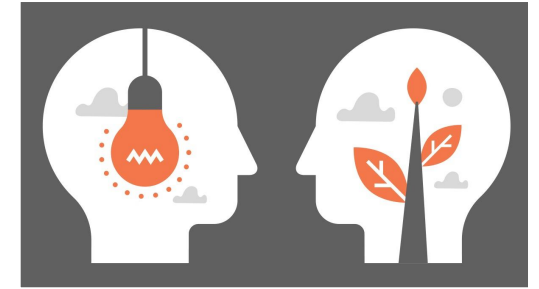
# Learning Agreement



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

# First call with your mentor



The mentoring process will be initiated by a call from your mentor.

As you are both likely to have many other commitments, do make contacting your mentor a priority.

## The first call is to provide an opportunity for:

- Getting to know each other and sharing some of your partnership brokering experiences
- Working through your Learning Plan
- Discussing the mentoring process and co-creating some form of Learning Agreement that will underpin your working relationship
- Clarifying any questions about the programme your mentee may have
- Agreeing any break / leave times that you or your mentee anticipate
- Covering anything else either of you feel is important and will aid your mentee's learning journey

# Interim check-in with PBA



An interim check-in will be undertaken by the Accreditation Team with both the mentee and mentor approximately **4 weeks after mentoring begins.**

The purpose of this is to ensure that the process is on track. It provides a somewhat more formal opportunity for both you and your mentor, to **consider the how things are going** at a relatively early stage and to make adjustments, if necessary.

There will be further checks to ensure that everything is on track during the period of mentored practice – either you or your mentee can contact the Accreditation Team at any time if there are issues that need addressing.

**Important  
information  
about  
completing the  
Programme  
within the  
given  
timeframe**



Mentees are expected to stay in **regular contact** with their mentor. If a mentee remains unresponsive to their mentor's requests for contact, they will be formally notified by PBA and if a response is still not forthcoming the mentee will be considered to have withdrawn from the Programme.

We do know, however, that there can be unexpected personal or professional challenges during the mentored period, which we will certainly take into account – so long as the mentee notifies either their mentor or the Accreditation team.

If a mentee feels they need to apply for an **extension** (of up to four weeks) or for a **deferral** (of more than four weeks), they should discuss the issue first with their mentor and then inform the Accreditation Coordinator of their request. If an extension or a deferral is approved by the Accreditation Lead, you will both be formally notified in writing.

**With either option, your mentor would not have contact with you during that period.**

Mentees should be advised only to apply for an extension or deferral if really necessary, since delays can lead to a loss of momentum and adversely impact the value of the experience.



**PARTNERSHIP**  
BROKERS ASSOCIATION