

# Mentor Guide

## Women Lawyers' Mentor Program



### What is WLMP?

The UC Women Lawyers' Mentoring Program (WLMP) is a student-run initiative, partnering later-year female law students with experienced female practitioners. The program was developed by a group of UC law students with assistance from ANU Women in Law Organisation (WILO). With support from the Women Lawyer's Association ACT (WLA ACT), our aim is to empower women in a profession where we comprise over half the graduates, yet are significantly underrepresented at the higher levels.

### What is the role of the Mentor?

The role of the mentor is to inspire female university students to think about the range of work options available to them in the private and public sectors. The mentor will share knowledge and experience to equip the student to meet the challenges often experienced by women in their chosen industry.

### How should sessions be run?

Mentors have the flexibility to decide how and when sessions will be run. However, mentors must hold at least two sessions with their mentees during the remainder of the University semester. These sessions can take place over coffee, lunch, in your office or even as a tour of your workplace. For reasons of convenience for both you and your mentee, it is suggested that any sessions take place at either your workplace, somewhere in central Canberra, or even on campus at the UC.

### Program Dates

**6 September 2016**

Formal applications open

**16 September 2016**

Formal applications close

**19 September 2016**

Students notified of their mentor 'match'

**19 September - 28 October 2016**

Mentor program conducted between Student and Mentor.

**Late October 2016 (TBA)**

WLMP participants join with ANU WILO participants and the Women Lawyers Association ACT for a celebratory function.

**November 2016 (TBA)**

Program experience evaluations are distributed to participants.

### CONTACT US

WLMP committee and co-founders are responsible for managing the mentoring program. They are: Karen Blake, Alex Caughey, Caitlin Jacob, Alicia Prest, Peta Sutton, Katie Toleafoa.

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## What will happen during a mentor session?

Like most relationships, the mentoring relationship will develop incrementally. While you will only have a short amount of time with your mentee, however that does not mean the relationship will be without structure. There are four key stages that the mentor should aim to work through.

### 1. Outlining the expectations of the relationship

Ideally in your first meeting you will get to know each other and begin to establish trust. This could involve asking basic questions of your mentee such as: what have been your favorite law subjects? Why did you choose to study law? What would you say are your strengths and weaknesses?

Additionally, you should establish how often, and in what form, you expect to communicate with your mentee such as via email, phone or pre-arranged face to face meetings.

### 2. Exchanging Information and Setting Goals

Once you have gotten to know your mentee it will be appropriate to assist your mentee to set goals and focus on what they hope to achieve from the mentoring relationship. Goals are helpful for your mentee to envision beyond the day-to-day demands of student life. You should coach your mentee to refer to their goals periodically as a means of staying on track and measuring progress.

### 3. Working Towards Goals/Deepening the Engagement

It is important, once goals are clarified, that the mentor helps their mentee work towards achieving their goals through conversations, sharing of material, career knowledge and maybe even introducing your mentee to your colleagues. There may be other things that you think of that may be of assistance. Be conscious that your mentee may feel that they are burdening you with their problems, so it is important that you are aware that you may need to take the lead once in a while.

### 4. Ending the Formal Mentoring Relationship

At the end of the semester, planning for the mentee's future is balanced with bringing the formal mentoring relationship to a close. You should reflect on the accomplishments, challenges and progress to goals achieved during the relationship. This may mean discussing future challenges, and potentially providing your mentee with additional material such as introductions to colleagues or relevant people, writing out a future plan, or anything else which could be useful. You may also wish to discuss the potential of continuing the relationship, either formally or informally by correspondence.

### 5. A Final Word

There is not right way to have a mentoring relationship. This guide only offers a potential framework and of course mentors are free to develop a method which works best for them. It goes without saying the most important aspect of a mentoring relationship is the willingness to participate and keeping an open mind!