Handbook

SSE MSc Mentorship Program 2022/2023

All over the world, students from top business schools need help with the transition to professional life. The SSE MSc Mentorship Program seeks to provide that help through connecting our Master students with alumni. This brief guide provides information about what you can expect from your mentorship experience and how to make the most of this opportunity.

Welcome to mentoring!

What is mentoring?

Mentorship is a supportive relationship established between a mentor and a student where knowledge, skills and experiences are shared. It is a relationship designed to help the student build confidence and realize their potential, so that they are able to take control of their own career/personal development.

Mentorship is a clearly structured, time-bound and self-managed process with clear, mutually agreed-upon roles and goals. A successful mentoring relationship is based upon encouragement, constructive feedback, openness, mutual trust, respect and a willingness to learn from and share with. Therefore, both mentor and student need to be active and thoughtfully contribute their time, experience and opinions.

Being part of the program, you can:

 • Interact with some of the best professionals in the industry

 • Develop communication skills and increase knowledge in your professional field

 • Learn about different industries, organizations, and various career opportunities.

 • Enhance career readiness skills

 • Gain fresh insights into organizational culture

 • Build professional networks

 • Acquire an open and flexible attitude to learning

The MSc Mentorship Program is interdisciplinary and collaborative by definition. As mentors and students, you will learn and develop together. Let mentoring become a journey for personal development and learning, laughter and reflection.

Feel free to use this handbook as a practical guide to a successful mentorship. As you are already aware, no two mentoring relationships are identical: students have different needs, and you and the mentor you are matched with will build your own mentorship relationship with a structure that works for you both.

The student role

What is your role as a student in mentorship?

A student is someone who actively seeks support and guidance in their personal and professional development from an experienced mentor. As a student, you can drive the mentoring relationship forward by asking questions and reflecting on your personal objectives and desired career path.

Who is the mentor to you?

A mentor is defined in the Oxford Dictionary as an "experienced and trusted adviser". The mentor's role is to provide support, knowledge, encouragement, guidance, and constructive feedback that will guide you in the achievement of your own objectives.

The student's needs and goals determine what the mentoring relationship is about and what topics are covered when the mentor and the student meet. Therefore, it is important that you as the student are clear about what you want to get out of the mentoring relationship, what goals and expectations you have and how you want to communicate throughout the program.

You can contribute to a successful mentorship by:

- Initiating contact with your mentor and hold the responsibility for continuing to engage
- Organizing an agenda (informal or formal) of discussion topics for and being adequately prepared for each meeting
- Communicating openly and clearly about your goals, needs and expectations
- Telling your mentor how they can be the most helpful and giving feedback throughout the process
- Contributing to the discussion and resolution of issues raised in meetings
- Having trust and confidence in your mentor, and demonstrating appreciation for their guidance and support
- Discussing and developing your personal and professional goals
- Taking responsibility for your own learning process and reflecting on your goals and development after each meeting
- Making time to work on action points
- Always keeping an open mind

Skills and qualities required for a productive mentoring relationship:

- ✓ Being motivated to learn
- ✓ Being willing to listen actively
- ✓ Having the ability to undertake self-analysis
- ✓ Being realistic about what is achievable
- ✓ Being honest and willing to seek feedback
- ✓ Being open-minded and appreciative when receiving advice and feedback
- ✓ Staying committed to the mentoring process
- ✓ Having trust and confidence in your mentor, and be willing to discuss issues openly
- ✓ Accepting challenges and changes willingly and not being afraid of taking risks

" I feel both mentors and students should be open to adapt to the styles and personalities of the each other. Both mentors and students should be open about their objectives right from the start. I think it makes it much more tangible and human if the motives are clear. "

Raghuraman, Student

Practicalities

Structure of the program

We host the formal programming from October 17, 2022 to June 2023. The mentor and student should meet at least **4** times during the academic year but can meet more frequently if they choose. Meetings can be in-person, via telephone or by other virtual means.

How often should you meet?

Students should reach out to mentors for first point of contact **no later than October 26, 2022**.

You make the decision together on when and how often to meet. Generally, every 6-8 weeks is a good rule of thumb. It is highly recommended that the mentor and the student develop a meeting schedule for the 8-month period at their first meeting.

How long should a session last?

A mentoring session is not just two people having a conversation. It is a process that has a structure and needs time for talking through ideas, issues and situations. Therefore, the suggested meeting length is 50-90 minutes, including time to agree on action points for the next meeting.

Both mentor and student should respect each other's time and other responsibilities, ensuring that they do not impose beyond what is reasonable.

Suggested program framework

It is wise to make an overall plan for the mentoring process and to agree on an approximate structure, as it creates a clear focus for the program and also makes it easier for both mentors and students to engage. We recommend setting goals and expectations during the first meeting and then outlining different areas to focus on during subsequent meetings. However, do not be afraid to let the relationship flow naturally, for example do not feel bound to talk about something outlined at a previous meeting if a more interesting subject or focus has come up.

The following program is a suggested framework for mentoring pairs to follow throughout the Mentorship Program. Participants may choose to follow part of the framework or may choose to create their own.

Meeting	1	2	3	4
Discussion points	-Getting to know each other -Review past experiences -Explain your roles -Identify goals, objectives and expectations -Agree on the format and focus areas of the meetings	-Student's agenda and questions - Discuss personal/ professional strengths and weaknesses -Identify areas of development -Mentor can coach on specific areas if required -Explore options for actions together -Agree on an action plan	-Follow up on goals, objectives and expectations -Student's agenda and questions -Mentor can coach on specific areas if required -Activities/exercises for the student to gain experience -Make adjustments and set new targets if needed	- Follow up on goals, objectives and expectations - Self-reflection and review on the effectiveness of the relationship by both parties -Identify and discuss the next steps for the student -End of the program and keep in touch!

Tips for a successful mentorship

There is no "right" way to mentor. The best technique is the one that is right for the individuals involved – that helps the mentor understand the student's needs and concerns and allows the mentor to effectively share their knowledge and expertise.

Here are some suggestions to help ensure that the mentoring process is as effective as possible:

Have a clear structure and purpose
Having a clear structure and purpose in mind will be the best and most efficient use of both parties' time. These should be agreed upon during the first meeting.

Start with practical goal setting

Discuss expectations and goals in the first meeting and review as meetings progress. At every stage of the relationship, make sure the goals for both parties are clear and realistic and include timelines for established benchmarks.

Identify potential obstacles

Identify in advance any obstacles that would prevent the implementation of the established goals, such as limitations in time, organizational change, commitment issues and personality differences.

Be curious about each other and seek common areas of interest

Engaging with the Mentorship Program will expose you to people with entirely different skills, experiences, and interests. It is important to take a genuine interest in each other and look to find common interests that can bring yourselves closer and enable a mentorship relationship built on trust and personal support.

Document your meeting

It is recommended that you keep simple meeting notes to help keep track of what you have talked about and agreed to do the next time you meet. Feel free to spend a few minutes at the end of each meeting to sum up together what you have discussed and what the next action points are.

Expect support, not miracles

Your mentor is a guide. You can expect a certain level of support and advice from a mentor, but they cannot solve your challenges for you. The mentor can put the situation in perspective, offer feedback, serve as a sounding board and identify resources that will be helpful to you. As a student, you should set realistic goals and expectations from the beginning to anchor the mentorship on a solid foundation.

I learned the importance of summarizing my thoughts before our sessions. This allowed us to maximize the time we spent together during the session and it also enabled us to focus on topics and questions that I really needed to think more about.

Marc, Student

Prepare for your meetings

Know ahead of time what issues you want to discuss and what questions you want to ask, so that you can properly set an agenda with time allotments for each one. This increases the chance that the meetings will be constructive. The better you can describe what you need, the bigger the chance that the mentor can help you.

Share your progress

Your conversations should not only be about challenges, setbacks, and advice. Try to keep the dialogue open by also sharing updates, realizations, and breakthroughs. This will create a more powerful feedback loop and keep your mentor engaged in your progress.

Own the relationship

Being a student is not a passive role. When you have a mentor, it's your job to define your own goals, cultivate the relationship, seek out advice, etc. You must be willing to take charge of your learning by asking questions and actively participating in the conversations to make the mentoring relationship effective.

Reflect and follow through

It's important that you reflect on feedback and your goals and take action on the roadmap you co-create with your mentor. When you decide to act on your mentor's suggestions, act in a timely manner and then report back to them.

For a successful mentorship both the mentor and student MUST...

• Maintain a friendly and approachable demeanor and respond in a timely fashion.

• Be respectful of each other's time and make sure they are both on time for virtual or in-person meetings.

• Let each other know if life gets busy and set up a future time to connect.

• Be open-minded and non-judgemental.

• Be generous with your time, attention, and resources.

• Keep commitments to attend all prearranged meetings.

• Communicate with the Mentorship Program Project Manager at mentor@hhs.se if there are any questions or concerns.

Recommended topics and activities

Prior to your first meeting, take some time to reflect on these questions and share your answers with your mentor when you meet:
 • What strengths do I bring to the table as a student? What are some weaknesses I think this mentorship will help me improve?
 • What are some areas, subjects, or networks I would like to learn about from my mentor? What knowledge can I offer to my mentor?
 • How much time am I realistically able to set aside per week/month to this mentorship?

Below are some recommended topics or activities to address during your meetings:
 • Have your mentor review your CV and personal letter and ask for suggestions for improvements
 • Discuss personal/professional strengths and skills you feel are important to develop further
 • Discuss future goals and ask how your mentor prepares themselves for their own goals.
 • Identify career role models you and your mentor have and discuss what characteristics you find admirable in these individuals.
 • Discuss the dynamics needed to work in a team, have your mentor share their experience of adaptation for different cultures, teams, workplaces, etc.
 • Discuss potential job possibilities and the skills needed for each. Talk about how you can seek out additional skills while at school.
 • Discuss books to read/potential courses which could be useful for you.

Code of Conduct

The SSE MSc Mentorship Program Code of Conduct ("Code") aims to define and maintain a standard of behaviour that is expected of participants in the program as mentors and students.

- All participants are expected to treat others with respect and consideration, keeping relationships free of discrimination and harassment in all their forms.
- Participants shall not disclose, share, duplicate or distribute each other's personal information without consent; unless otherwise agreed to, all information shared in the course of mentorship discussions shall remain strictly confidential.
- Participants in a mentoring relationship may develop friendships over time. However, it is important to maintain professional boundaries throughout the entire mentorship program.
- Participants must ensure all communications and interactions are pursued at all times in a professional, business-like and respectful manner.
- Exploitation of the relationship in any manner to seek an inappropriate advantage is strictly forbidden.
- All participants have a duty to report to the Mentorship Program Project Manager if they notice any breaches or violations of the Code.