

Mentors for Women

CODE OF ETHICS

Introduction and Purpose

Mentors for Women are committed to maintaining and promoting excellent practice in mentoring. All our members, in their roles as mentors and/or mentees, as part of their continuing membership, agree to adhere to the elements and principles of this Code of Ethics.

The Code aligns with the content and requirements set out in the Professional Charter for Coaching and Mentoring. The Charter, drafted in accordance with European law, is registered on the dedicated European Union database, which lists self-regulation initiatives in Europe.

The Code is a guidance document rather than a legally binding one that in detail spells out what a member can and cannot do. The Code sets the expectation of best practice in mentoring promoting the development of excellence. Its purpose is to:

- Provide appropriate guidelines, accountability and standards of conduct for all our members
- Set out how our members are expected to act, behave and perform when working together
- In conjunction with our competences, guide our members' development and growth
- Be used as the basis of any complaint or disciplinary hearing and action following our complaints procedures.

The Code of Ethics

The Code is arranged into three sections and covers Mentors for Women's general expectations of members behaviour and conduct:

1. Working Together
2. Conduct
3. Excellent Practice

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1. Working Together

1.1. Context

1.1.1. When working together in any capacity, members will conduct themselves in accordance with this code, committing to deliver to a level of service that may reasonably be expected.

1.2. Mentoring

1.2.1. Before they start working together, members will review this Code, and commit to its contents as part of their membership Terms and Conditions.

1.2.2. Before starting to work together, members will ensure that they each know, and fully understand, the nature and terms and conditions of the mentoring agreement, including financial, logistical and confidentiality arrangements.

1.2.3. Members will agree expectations of each other and reach agreement on how they plan to meet considering the needs and expectations of each other.

1.2.4. Members will be open about the mentoring methods they may use, and on request will be ready to supply any information about any processes involved.

1.2.5. Members will ensure that the duration of the contract is appropriate to achieve the client's and sponsor's goals and will actively work to promote the client's independence and self-reliance.

1.2.6. Members will ensure that the setting in which any mentoring takes place offers optimal conditions for learning and reflection and therefore a higher likelihood of achievement of the goals set in the contract.

1.2.7. Mentors should always put their mentees interests first but at the same time safeguard that these interests do not harm the interests of the mentee.

1.3. Integrity

1.3.1. In communication with any party, mentors will accurately and honestly represent the value they provide as a mentor.

1.3.2. Mentors will ensure that no false or misleading claims are made, or implied, about their professional competence, qualifications or accreditation in any published, promotional material or otherwise.

1.3.3. Members will attribute ownership of work, ideas and materials of others to the originator and not claim it as their own.

1.3.4. Members will act within applicable law and not in any way encourage, assist or collude with conduct which is dishonest, unlawful, unprofessional or discriminatory.

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1.4. Confidentiality

1.4.1. Members will maintain the strictest level of confidentiality with all member information unless release of information is required by law.

1.4.2. Members will have a clear agreement with each other about the conditions under which confidentiality will not be maintained (e.g. illegal activity, danger to self or others) and gain agreement to that limit of confidentiality where possible unless the release of information is required by law.

1.4.3. Members will keep, store and dispose of appropriate and accurate records of their work including electronic files and communications, in a manner that ensures confidentiality, security and privacy, and complies with all relevant laws and agreements that exist in their country regarding data protection and privacy.

1.4.4. If the member is a child or vulnerable adult, members will make arrangements with their sponsors or guardian to ensure an appropriate level of confidentiality in the best interests of the member, whilst also complying with all relevant legislation.

1.5. Inappropriate interactions

1.5.1. Members are responsible for setting and maintaining clear, appropriate and culturally sensitive boundaries that govern all physical and virtual interactions with each other.

1.5.2. Members will avoid any romantic or sexual relationship with each other. Further, members will be alert to the possibility of any potential sexual intimacy and take appropriate action to avoid the intimacy or cancel the engagement in order to provide a safe environment.

1.6. Conflict of interest

1.6.1. Members will not exploit a client or seek to gain any inappropriate financial or non-financial advantage from any interaction with each other.

1.6.2. To avoid any conflict of interest, members will distinguish a professional relationship with each other from other forms of relationships.

1.6.3. Members will be aware of the potential for conflicts of interest of either a commercial or personal nature arising through the working relationship and address them quickly and effectively in order to ensure that there is no detriment to either party.

1.6.4. Members will consider the impact of any mentoring relationship on other member relationships and discuss any potential conflict of interest with those who might be affected.

1.6.5. Members will disclose any conflict openly with each other and agree to withdraw from the relationship if a conflict arises which cannot be managed effectively.

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1.7. Terminating relationships and on-going responsibilities

1.7.1. Members will respect each other's right to terminate an engagement at any point in the process, subject to the provisions of the mentoring agreement.

1.7.2. Mentors will encourage the mentee to terminate the mentoring engagement if it is believed that they would be better served by another practising member or a different form of professional help.

1.7.3. Members understand that their responsibilities continue beyond the termination of the relationship. These include:

1.7.3.1. Maintenance of agreed confidentiality of all information

1.7.3.2. Safe and secure maintenance of all related records and data that complies with all relevant laws and agreements that exist in their country regarding data protection and privacy

1.7.3.3. Avoidance of any exploitation of the former relationship, which could otherwise call into question the integrity of the member or Mentors for Women

1.7.3.4. Provision of any follow-up that has been agreed to.

1.7.4. Members are required to have a provision for transfer of current and dissemination of records in the event of the member's incapacitation, or termination of practice.

2. Conduct

2.1. Maintaining the reputation of Mentors for Women

2.1.1. Members will behave in a way that at all times reflects positively upon and enhances the reputation of Mentors for Women.

2.1.2. Members will demonstrate respect for the variety of practising mentors and for the different approaches to mentoring.

2.2. Recognising equality and diversity

2.2.1. Members will abide by Mentors for Women's diversity statements and policies.

2.2.2. Members will avoid knowingly discriminating on any grounds and will seek to enhance their own awareness of possible areas of discrimination.

2.2.3. Members will be cognisant of the potential for unconscious bias and seek to ensure that they take a respectful and inclusive approach, which embraces and explores individual difference.

2.2.4. Members will challenge in a supportive way any members who are perceived to be using discriminatory behaviour.

2.2.5. Members will monitor their spoken, written and non-verbal communication for inadvertent discrimination.

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2.2.6. Members will engage in developmental activities that are likely to increase their self-awareness in relation to equality and diversity.

2.3. Breaches of conduct

2.3.1. Members accept that any breach of the code that is upheld in a complaints procedure may result in sanctions including loss of accredited status and/or membership.

2.3.2. A member will challenge another member if they have reasonable cause to believe that the member is acting in an unethical manner and, failing resolution, will report that person to Mentors for Women.

2.4. Legal and statutory obligations and duties

2.4.1. Members are obliged to stay up to date and comply with all relevant statutory requirements in the countries in which their professional work takes place and work within any organisational policies and procedures in the context in which they are working. Mentors for Women will highlight relevant policies and changes which members are required to abide by in the area of mentoring.

2.4.2. Members should have the appropriate professional indemnity insurance to cover their mentoring work for the countries in which they operate where their sole occupation is mentoring and coaching.

3. Excellent Practice

3.1. Ability to perform

3.1.1. Mentors will have the qualifications, skills and experience appropriate to meet the needs of the mentee and will operate within the limits of their competence. Mentors should refer the mentee to a more experienced or suitably qualified practising member where appropriate.

3.1.2. Mentors will be fit and healthy enough to practice. If they are not, or are unsure if they are able to practice safely for health reasons, they will seek guidance or support from Mentors for Women. Where necessary or appropriate, the member should manage the termination of their work with the mentee and in conjunction with Mentors for Women.

3.2. Continuing Mentoring development

3.2.1. Members will develop their level of mentoring competence by participating in relevant and appropriate training and/or continuing professional development.

3.2.2. Members will systematically evaluate the quality of their work through feedback from mentees and other relevant parties.