Nga Taumata Matauranga O Aotearoa

HIGHER EDUCATION IN NEW ZEALAND

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Academic Mentoring: A Pilot Success at Victoria University of Wellington

Jacquie Harper

&

Theresa Sawicka

Syndicate of Educational Development Centres of New Zealand Universities

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Jacquie Harper
Theresa Sawicka

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Executive Summary

- This paper describes an initiative for a mentoring pilot scheme for academic women at Victoria University of Wellington (VUW) in 1999. The paper was written after the final evaluation of the pilot and the training session for participants in the following year. Thus, it reports on the initial pilot with the training section focusing on later modifications.

- The VUW scheme owes its existence to a prior Association of University Women mentoring scheme, a Training Needs Analysis for mentoring at VUW and the initiative of three general staff women who serendipitously came together with a common intent. While it has had the backing of Senior Management, the scheme is not a top down initiative and has developed on a shoestring budget from the outset. The authors offer their experience and knowledge as an encouragement to those involved in academic professional development, that mentoring schemes are possible on slim resources. Much can be achieved to break down the barriers of isolation and to promote staff potential even with limited resources.

- The aim of the mentoring pilot was firstly to see whether mentoring (as reported in the literature) could ameliorate some of the difficulties that under-represented groups experience in the university environment. Clearly isolation and a lack of time for passing on experiential knowledge about academic life have made a significant impact on the careers of those who have no mentors. Thus breaking down the barriers created by isolation is both a short term and long term objective of this scheme. In finding a mentor, mentees make a connection with someone beyond their department/school and are offered the opportunity to put their experience in a university context.

- The scheme started as a programme for women academics. They were perceived to have the greatest need for breaking down isolation, needing support in research and teaching and in preparation for promotion. Furthermore, by necessity, the pilot had to begin modestly.

- Comprehensive evaluations of the scheme – training evaluations, a telephone evaluation three months into the scheme and a written evaluation at the end of the six months – enabled the early collection of data to establish the viability of continuing the scheme and opening it up to include all academic staff. Findings from the VUW pilot indicate that formal mentoring appears to be an excellent way of providing support in an academic context and breaking down isolation. Mentees spoke approvingly of the benefits and the majority of participants enjoyed the experience.

- The long-term objective of the VUW scheme is not just to ameliorate difficulties but to help under-represented groups to advance into senior positions in the University – women, Maori and Pacific peoples. From 2000 onwards, the scheme has included men as mentees for the following reasons:
  - There is a need to support early career academics, regardless of gender, and this is exacerbated in an organisation with many new academic staff (often foreign to New Zealand).
  - Opening the scheme wider to include men is essential for promoting an institutional cultural environment that values professional development for all staff.

- Finally, the authors maintain that incorporating men into the scheme does not impair the opportunities for women. The scheme is structured, for example, so that women have the choice as to whether they wish to be paired with a male or female colleague.

Introduction

Victoria University of Wellington (VUW), like other universities, has long recognised that its women academic staff face barriers in advancing their careers. Women staff members often experience the isolation and the competitive environment of higher education more intensely than their male colleagues. There are relatively few women in senior academic or management positions in the University, and other female staff, therefore, lack role models. Several attempts have been made to eliminate some of these barriers, including observers from the Association of Victoria University Women (AVUW) in the promotions round, a draft Equity Plan in 1999, and the inclusion of equity goals in the statement of objectives.

This paper describes a pilot mentoring scheme developed at VUW in 1999 as a means of addressing some of the difficulties women academic staff face. Mentoring is not a new practice in academia; what *is* new to VUW is the recognition of the important role mentoring plays in advancing academic careers. The authors see the workplace pressures like emphasis on individual performance and accountability, competition with colleagues, and work overload as constantly creating isolating social practices. Making academic life a little easier for academics means that for some there might be the encouragement to reach for one's potential: to apply for promotion, to ask for help with research and publication. In this way both the individual and the institution gain and quality overall is enhanced (see Gardiner, 1999 p18). The enhancement of the quality of academic life is a longer-term objective for a scheme based on a successful pilot.

The attempt was made at VUW to formalise mentoring so that all academic staff can benefit from it, not just the fortunate few who find mentors informally. This paper outlines the process for setting up the scheme (including the predominant findings in the literature on mentoring), the evaluation process, and the outcomes of the pilot (including changes made to the scheme in its second year of operation). Preliminary results indicate that a structured mentoring programme offers real benefits for individuals and the institution.

Why mentoring?

Individuals who seek to be high performers in their profession have a number of effective strategies available to them – refocussing their direction, improving their motivation, reflecting on their self-image, improving their willingness to learn, and using the support systems available to them. Mentoring can support all of these strategies and is one of *the* most effective ways employees can attain optimum performance in organisations (MacLennan, 1995). Mentoring is also promoted in a wide range of workplaces as a mechanism for coping with the constant pressure to adapt to changing circumstances and to assimilate new 'cultural' conditions created by this change. It can provide a form of continuous workplace learning, which assists staff coping with change and integration.

Mentoring defined

While all mentoring programmes have a common set of core values, in the literature definitions vary. Confusion often exists between mentoring and coaching, and, some authors refer to the two interchangeably. Coaching is more problem, issue, or task orientated and has a very specific focus on acquiring a particular skill or piece of knowledge. Mentoring is broader and career or life focussed, with an emphasis on listening to the mentee to help them clarify their learning needs. Given that coaching is an appropriate way to learn a skill, which has been identified as necessary or desirable, the mentor may coach the mentee in a particular

area, or help them find another to do so. Therefore, coaching may become just one aspect of mentoring.

The VUW mentoring pilot adopted the following definition of mentoring:

> …a complex, interactive process occurring between individuals of differing levels of experience and expertise which incorporates interpersonal or psychosocial, career and/or educational development, and socialisation functions into the relationship (Carmin, 1988 - cited in Carruthers 1993, pp. 10-11).

The emphasis is on a collegial relationship in which one person encourages and guides another. Encouragement is a key element of the relationship. Academics, who have personally invested a great deal in their careers, require courage and encouragement to keep expending the energy needed to excel. In a climate of perceived declining employment conditions, loss of salary parity with other sectors, higher teaching loads, tighter research funding, and a general loss of morale among many university staff, the incentive to improve may be lost.

The pilot centred on a process in which an experienced academic shared their skills and knowledge of workplace practice with a less experienced member of the institution. Successful mentoring fosters a relationship based on trust and confidentiality, which opens doors to new ideas, information, and people, through personal and practical support. It plays a role in motivating both parties: the mentee is encouraged to reach their potential and the mentor is given an opportunity to share their wisdom and expertise.

Mentoring relationships can vary greatly depending on the needs of the mentee[1], the capabilities and experience of the mentors, the time commitment available and the level of emotional involvement of both parties. These relationships evolve over time, reflecting the changing needs of the participants. Most importantly, mentoring is *not* about workplace or professional supervision, *nor* should it be used for performance appraisal.

Reported benefits of mentoring

The initiators of the pilot scheme were looking to test the reported benefits of mentoring and to identify a rationale for setting up such a scheme for academics. A number of general benefits of mentoring reported from various workplaces are relevant to a university environment. They are listed below in order to place Victoria's scheme in context.

Benefits to mentees encompass a wide variety of results from psychosocial support to practical work-related outcomes, including the following:

- growth and development of skills (Marshall, Adams & Cameron, 1998);
- provision for receiving constructive criticism and encouragement regarding workplace performance (Kelley, 1998);
- enhanced access to organisational, professional, and technical knowledge, cultural norms, and specialist information (Quinlan, 1999);
- creation of networks and ongoing work relationships, which help to break down isolation (Marshall, Adams & Cameron, 1998); and
- enhanced opportunities for personal support (which acts positively on confidence and motivation and therefore a decrease in stress levels).

[1] The terms protégé or mentoree are often used as synonyms for mentee.

Mentors also benefit from the mentoring relationship as opportunities arise for them to reflect on their own performance and career directions through the sharing of ideas and supporting others. The sense of satisfaction gained from assisting in the development of less experienced colleagues cannot be underestimated and can be a powerful motivator in a mentor's approach to their own work. Furthermore, Quinlan (1999) reports that mentors may enhance their own reputation through exposure and service to others.

Mentors are often leaders within the organisation, and the fine-tuning of managerial skills (communication, goal setting, providing feedback, planning) may result from taking on this important role. Additionally, male academics mentoring their female colleagues may gain an awareness of some of the difficulties faced by women in a predominantly male profession.

Mentoring is primarily directed at the energies of individuals, but the whole organisation may benefit from mentoring schemes as they can act as agents for change at an institutional level (Kelley, 1998) by providing opportunities to improve organisational communication and enhance relationships between colleagues. The positive outcomes can be seen in the retention of staff (Marshall, Adams & Cameron, 1998, Quinlan, 1999), a decrease in absenteeism and a generally more contented, productive workforce. Mentoring can also save an organisation money, as it is a highly cost-effective way of providing customised staff development for individuals (Hoy & Race, undated) drawing on resources from within the organisation.

Problems associated with mentoring

The literature also identifies factors that jeopardise the effectiveness of mentoring schemes. Problems result from ill-defined objectives, vague or unarticulated expectations of the roles and responsibilities of both parties, and a lack of a clearly agreed duration for the relationship. These weaknesses may give rise to:

- a state of dependency of the mentee on the mentor (Messervy, 1989);
- poor matching and/or relationship problems (Johnsrud & Wunsch, 1991);
- sexual exploitation or harassment (Johnsrud & Wunsch, 1991);
- time pressures on mentors who are already heavily burdened (Quinlan, 1999); and
- problems concerning dual roles which arise when the mentor is the mentee's direct supervisor and also responsible for their performance appraisal.

With formal mentoring schemes, compulsory participation is not always successful. When the roles and expectations of the mentoring relationship are not clearly understood by both parties, mentoring can be experienced as a purposeless intrusion, or an excuse for remedial intervention for poor performance (McKay, 1998).

Academic mentoring: identifying potential target groups

In the academic environment, mentoring involves a well-established teacher/researcher offering advice, guidance, and encouragement to a less experienced colleague (Johnsrud & Wunsch, 1991; Hall, Higgins & Anderton, 1995). A mentoring relationship may be used to support the many and varied roles an academic is expected to fulfil in the course of a career. Mentoring is particularly valuable in acquainting new academic staff with the campus environment, helping them establish their career, and nurturing a sense of professional identity. It may also play an important role in supporting academic staff to improve their performance (Blaxter, Huges & Tight, 1998).

Mentoring also offers a means of supporting the 'research culture' of a university (Bergen & Connelly, 1988). It can be particularly valuable for new staff who are publishing for the first time (Clifford, 1999) or who are having trouble satisfying research-related criteria for promotion. There are also benefits for established academics who wish to develop their research interests but have not been active in research for a period. Organisational factors such as access to training (for writing research proposals, for example), resources and support are critical factors in research productivity (Fox, 1985; Gardiner, 1999).

Evidence in the literature indicates that social factors like loneliness, intellectual isolation, and lack of collegial support are significant in the research output of inexperienced researchers (Johnston & McCormack, 1997). Mentors may provide advice on questions of research methodology, targeting appropriate journals, or formulating research proposals. Mentors may also comment on drafts, offer advice on internal procedures for grant applications, and put researchers in touch with those who have related interests.

Mentoring for women in an academic context

A number of themes recur in the analysis of women's academic careers: social isolation, lack of networks and competing demands on time. Vasil (1996) argues that academic women, in contrast to academic men, experience greater isolation, higher levels of stress, lower self-confidence, and more difficulty in establishing relationships with colleagues.

The literature reports that many successful academics have had mentors (Kelley, 1998). However, research has also shown that informally arranged *ad hoc* mentoring schemes do not necessarily reach women as they do not have the same informal networks as their male colleagues (Quinlan, 1999; Kelley, 1998). Johnsrud & Wunsch (1991, p. 879) note that:

> …faculty women…are less likely to be integrated into the male networks (Kautman, 1978) that allocate resources such as research support, travel monies and opportunities to review or edit journals, spend less time in research related activities and more in teaching (Finkelstein, 1984), spend more time in service to the University (Carnegie Foundation, 1990)…

Furthermore, the 'balancing act' associated with women's workloads may preclude a mentoring relationship evolving. For example, the competing pressures of balancing heavy workloads (teaching and committee/service work) are magnified for women raising young families. Although family pressures are not significant over an entire career, they are significant over the period of time that is critical in the development of an academic career. In their article "Junior and senior women: commonalities and differences of academic life," Johnsrud & Wunsch (1991 p. 879) write:

> Despite slight numeric gains in access to academic positions by women, the academic community continues to be "chilly" for women (Sandler & Hall, 1986); faculty women report that they feel like "outsiders", that they do not belong (Aisenberg & Harrington, 1988) and that those who do succeed are described as survivors who have weathered an 'accumulative disadvantage' of lack of sponsorship, exclusion from the collegiate culture, and role overload (Clark & Corcoran, 1986).

In an academic environment where promotion depends on research success (Gardiner, 1999) rather than teaching excellence, women who invest too much of their time and energy in teaching and student mentoring are at a disadvantage. The work of Allen (1994, cited in Kelley, 1998) indicates that the best predictor for research success is early interest in research output rather than a focus on teaching. Nevertheless, a focus on teaching remains the first priority for many academics.

In a report describing the affirmative action taken at Monash University (1987–1996), Kelley (1998) writes that participation in the mentoring programmes encouraged the participants to look more broadly at work and study opportunities, improved their skills, helped them with work related issues and career planning, increased their knowledge, provided opportunities for networking and for some, advanced their careers. As indicated, mentoring schemes can be particularly useful for women academics to assist them in developing a research profile and establishing the appropriate workload balance.

The rationale for mentoring at VUW

In recent years, there have been concerns expressed with the results of women in academic promotions rounds. Vasil (1996) reports that male academics have a stronger sense of self-efficacy than females when it comes to matters of promotion. At VUW, the aggregated data from the 1997, 1998 and 1999 promotion rounds indicate that male and female staff have been promoted equitably. Nevertheless, historical data based on the amount of time an academic sits at one point on the scale before being promoted to the next level, and the frequency with which they seek promotion, differs markedly between female and male academics.[2] Anecdotal evidence collected by the Equal Employment Officer (EEO), and the relatively few members of female academics in senior positions, reinforces the perceptions that women have difficulty achieving promotion.

In universities generally, in spite of some progress over the past 20 years, women are not represented equally at all academic levels (Vasil, 1996), and VUW is no exception. Evidence from North America indicates that women take two to ten years longer than men to get promoted and, even where the hiring of women is increasing, the overall rate at which they achieve promotion is declining (Caplan, 1994). Mentoring is one way to address this issue.

At VUW the promotion performance criteria used for assessing academic merit are classified into four major areas: teaching responsibilities and performance, research and scholarship, administrative responsibilities and community service (1999 Promotion Criteria Document). Mentoring can be an invaluable aid to providing a range of professional development strategies to help assist staff in these areas. Guidance may focus on:

- promotion and probation procedures;
- advice on research-related issues;
- sharing ideas on different learning and assessment techniques;
- ensuring opportunities for feedback and suggestions for improvement in teaching practice;
- encouraging staff in a non-threatening environment to engage in peer review;
- providing opportunities for a second opinion before decision making; and
- answering questions about university policies and procedures.

Background to mentoring at VUW

The current scheme builds on the foundations of earlier attempts to begin mentoring at VUW. In 1993-94, the Association of Victoria University Women (AVUW) established a mentoring scheme for women staff (academic and general). However, the AVUW scheme relied on the

[2] The data supporting these claims existed in the office of the AVC (Equity and Human Resources) but unfortunately, despite the authors' best efforts, the data cannot be traced as the position has been disbanded.

voluntary work of a small group of dedicated women and never became administratively embedded in the organisational structure of the University.

In 1995, the Staff Development Policy Committee, led by the Director of the University Teaching Development Centre (UTDC), conducted a "Training Needs Analysis: The Academic Mentor at Victoria University of Wellington." Three workshops were held with: i) experienced (senior) university staff, ii) Maori Staff and, iii) staff who had taken up employment at VUW in the past 1-5 years. The analysis of results from the workshops culminated in recommendations for the establishment of mentoring at VUW (Hall, et. al., 1995).

In anticipation of a formal mentoring scheme being developed, the AVUW scheme was abandoned, although some mentoring relationships may well have continued. The Training Needs Analysis (TNA) proposal recommended that the scheme be located within the then Central Human Resources Section and that the Staff Development Officer be responsible for co-ordinating the programme. Unfortunately, the introduction of devolution of administrative functions to faculties created uncertainty as to how a pan-university project would be organised under the new structure, and consequently the mentoring scheme was put on hold.

In late 1998, several different University-wide initiatives came together. With the increasing need to support academic staff in their teaching role, the Project Manager from the UTDC began reviewing the possibilities for continuing with the project initiated by the TNA. Early in 1999, a staff member from the Research Policy Office produced a paper for the University Research Committee (URC), entitled "Research Productivity and Mentoring: Issues for Discussion." From this paper, the URC produced mentoring guidelines, which were distributed to all academic staff through Heads of Schools and Departments. While these two new initiatives were taking place, the EEO Officer expressed concerns from her involvement in the Promotions Rounds and saw mentoring as one strategy to support not only women, but also Maori, Pacific People, and disabled staff into more senior positions within the University.

Together, staff from these three offices became the Mentoring Reference Group (MRG)[3]. The organisational chart (Figure 1) makes clear the MRG's place in the institutional structure of the University in 1999.

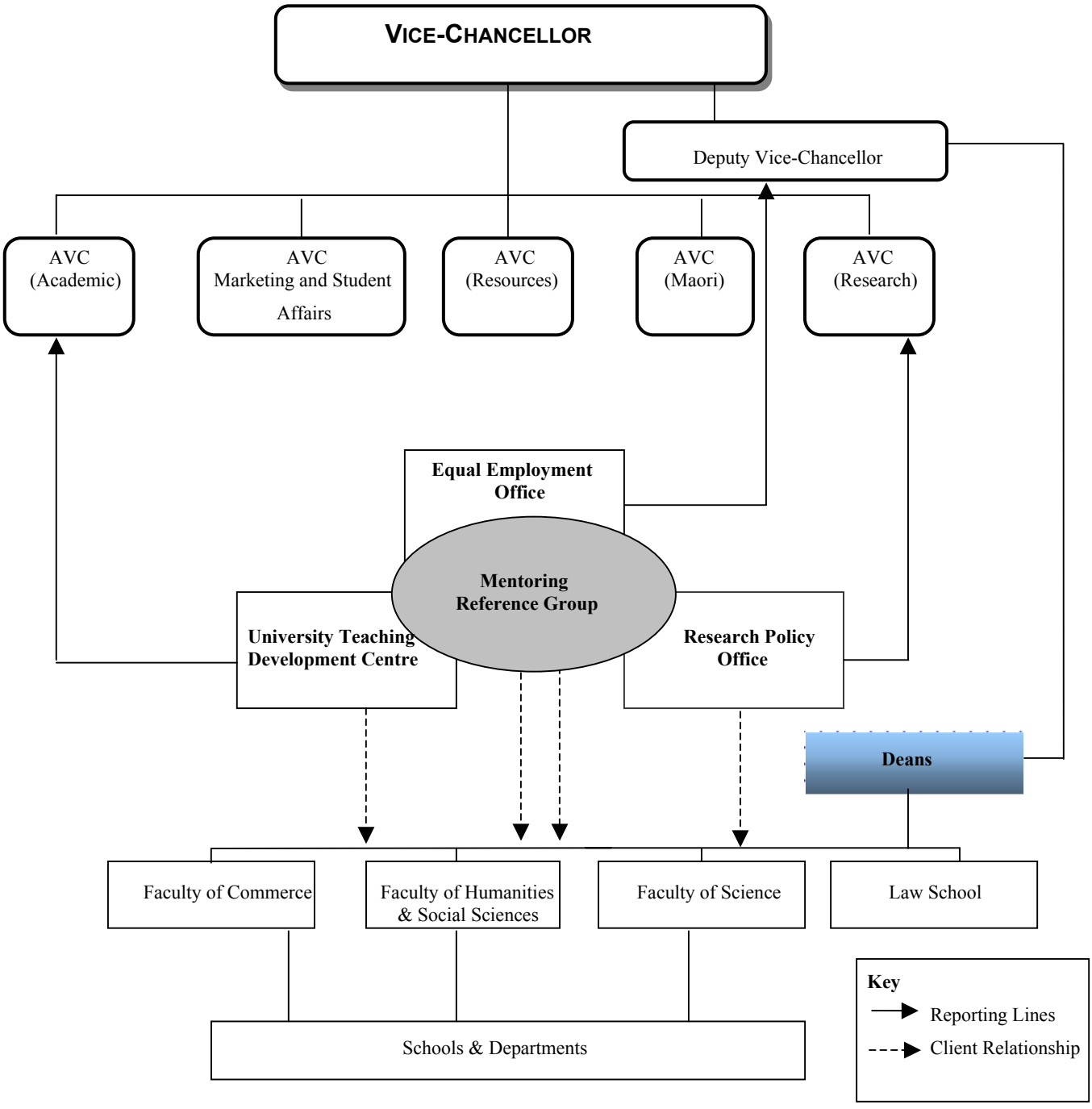

Figure 1 VUW organisational chart (1999).

[3]The MRG is made up of Jacquie Harper, Project Manager, UTDC; Theresa Sawicka, the Research Policy Manager, the Research Policy Office; and Hilary Smith, EEO Officer (during 1999, Philippa Branthwaite was part of the MRG while Hilary was on parental leave).

The mentoring pilot scheme for academic women

The collaboration between the offices/centres enabled a pooling of resources and a comprehensive pilot mentoring scheme was implemented at VUW during 1999. The MRG targeted academic women because the evidence from the literature and the EEO Office identified them as being disadvantaged, particularly in the promotions round. The MRG worked together to conduct research on other mentoring schemes, match the pairs in mentoring relationships, organise and provide training, provide advice and support for members in the scheme, monitor progress, evaluate the scheme, and write recommendations for future schemes.

Initially the MRG targeted Science Faculty women, who were perceived to be in the greatest need of support. Many women in the Science Faculty were frustrated over a number of issues: low representation at higher levels, difficulties being promoted, lack of support in their departments and a lack of encouragement for female students to pursue higher degrees.

Responses to the proposal indicated that Science staff were interested in the scheme, but work commitments or planned leave meant many were unable to participate. At that point, the scheme was opened to include all academic women at VUW. It was entirely voluntary as the research clearly indicated that mentoring relationships that are imposed on individuals do not necessarily provide benefits for either party or the institution (Hall, et. al., 1995).

Prior experience of mentoring in the University demonstrated that it was extremely important to gain the support of Deans, Heads of Schools and Departments (HOD/HOS), and senior managers if the scheme was to succeed. Therefore, throughout the process, letters were written to the above people to keep them informed. The primary intention was to summarise the benefits to all and ask for their support by recommending and encouraging staff within their discipline to take advantage of the programme.

Concurrently, the MRG sent a letter to all academic women at VUW inviting them to join the pilot mentoring scheme. A brief description of the benefits of such a scheme, the professional interests of the organisers, and training commitments and times were outlined. An attached enrolment form was designed to elicit the mentoring requirements of staff. Items covered general information about themselves, whether they wished to be a mentee or mentor, paired with someone from inside or outside their department, and whether they preferred to work with a male or female. A list of possible areas that the mentoring relationship could cover was identified from the literature and staff were asked to indicate areas where they thought they could provide knowledge (mentors) and areas where knowledge was sought (mentees). Academic qualifications and research interests were canvassed, along with time commitments (the frequency and length of meetings, and the best time for meetings).

To facilitate a compatible match, staff were then asked a series of personal questions (entirely voluntary): marital status, whether they were raising children, the number of years they had lived in New Zealand, whether they wanted to work with someone from their own ethnic background, and any special interests or activities that they thought would be useful in pairing. Mentors were asked for a brief history of their experiences with mentoring and whether they were interested in presenting a workshop on an area of their choice. (See Appendix A for the 2000 scheme application form).

Pairing

Information from the applications formed the basis for the pairing. Following the initial analysis, where people were tentatively matched according to required needs, and the skills

and experience offered, the members of the MRG held lengthy discussions. In most cases, one or more of the members of the MRG knew or had some knowledge of the staff members signing up for the scheme. This became an essential part of the process, because matching people according to the pooled knowledge of potential pairs ensured a more satisfactory relationship.

As each mentee was assigned a mentor, a member from the MRG rang the mentor first to advise them of their mentee (name, department, number of years in academia, and information on matters they were seeking help with). This gave the mentor an opportunity to decline working with that person. Subsequently, the mentee was approached with details of the mentor (again they were free to decline the pairing). The MRG stressed that pairing was primarily based on the information provided and therefore was not foolproof. The relationship had to work for both partners, and participants were encouraged to contact the reference group at any stage if they felt the match was not appropriate.

Twenty-three people volunteered for the scheme and, as anticipated, significantly more mentees than mentors signed up (16 as mentees and seven as mentors). Consequently, the MRG invited as mentors nine senior academics in the University who were known by the MRG and were felt to possess the kinds of skills that would make them good mentors, making a total of 16 pairs. The mentees were all women and the mentors consisted of 13 women and three men.

Individuals came from all four faculties - Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Science, Commerce and Administration, and Law. Within the Faculties, a wide range of different disciplines was represented. Only one pair came from the same disciplinary area, and the rest were from different schools. Three pairs were known to each other before their mentoring relationship began. Research had shown, and initial contact with mentees reinforced this view, that the majority saw having a mentor from outside their department of utmost importance for reasons of trust and confidentiality.

The pilot ran for a period of six months at which time the formal arrangement ended. Pairs were welcome to continue working together if they wished, but were asked to complete a formal evaluation at the end of that time. The MRG recognised that the six-month time frame was too short to achieve all the outcomes envisaged. Nevertheless, it was imperative to gather data on the perceived benefits to staff, and to provide feedback for the MRG in order to implement a full-year programme for 2000.

Administration

The Project Manager, UTDC, undertook the administration of the scheme as this project was seen as a priority in her workload. The UTDC is responsible for organising the Orientation to Teaching Programme for new academic staff to VUW (held twice yearly) and, as new staff are a major target group for the mentoring scheme, contact with them has proved invaluable. From 2000 onwards all staff are invited to join the scheme.

Training

Research indicates that training is essential to the success of any formal mentoring scheme (Gardiner, 1999; Hall et al, 1995). From the 1999 training experience, the MRG found that offering the right mix of skills/ information and pitching the training at the appropriate level required knowledge of the participants' experience of mentoring as well as research about effective training for mentoring.

The evaluation of the 1999 scheme and consultation with experts outside the University helped the MRG refine the training. Academics are under a lot of time pressure, and difficult to mobilise for training. Nevertheless, it was important to bring mentors as a group together, as well as mentees as a group, and similarly all participants, to establish the guidelines for the scheme and offer them an opportunity for networking. Despite considerable expertise on the part of all those involved in the scheme, there was added value in coming together for reassurance and group support.

Given the complexity and uniqueness of each mentoring relationship, it is important to establish an awareness of the responsibilities, expectations, goals, and limitations of the roles for both the mentees and mentors. Separate training sessions were held for each group because they have different needs. One of the objectives of these sessions was to foster open and honest discussion about their roles (see Gardiner, 1999 pg 8).

Modifications and enhancements are continuously made to the training, which has made reporting difficult in that the authors have been reluctant to report on practices that have already been enhanced through experience and implemented. Consequently, the training described in this section is the enhanced 2000 training modified after the 1999 evaluation. Compulsory training[4] sessions (arranged in mid April, within a week of each other) consisted of:

- a two-hour session for mentors;
- a one-hour session for mentees; and
- a two-hour pairing session for both, ending with a shared lunch.

Eventually, the MRG conducted four extra sessions to accommodate people who were unable to attend the main training sessions. Wherever possible, we would discourage this as it was not only very time-consuming but individuals also miss out on the opportunity to meet other staff members and share ideas and experiences.

The focus of the mentor training was to support mentors in developing a clear understanding of their role in guiding and encouraging their mentees and to help them develop skills in communication, listening and providing constructive feedback. Mentee training focused on helping mentees clarify what they wanted to gain from the mentoring relationship.

In order to effectively utilise the group meeting time, the MRG prepared a three-page handout as pre-training reading material to familiarise the participants with the scheme. The reading covered a statement on the definition of mentoring, a brief outline of the history of mentoring at VUW, with particular reference to the interest of the MRG members offering the scheme, the benefits of mentoring for mentees, mentors, and the institution. The final page was drawn from the TNA, "Key roles and their description" (Hall, et. al., 1995), which emerged through a series of workshops to define the keys roles of the academic mentor and to identify guidelines on the professional training that should be offered to support mentors in their roles. The TNA formed an important part of the thinking behind the operation of the pilot scheme.

[4] For the full training information, including the pre-reading handouts, please contact either Jacquie.Harper@vuw.ac.nz or Theresa.Sawicka@vuw.ac.nz

Key Roles for an Academic Mentor[5]

Academic adviser:
this is the role of listening to, supporting, advising, and challenging the mentee so as to encourage reflection and professional development in the academic aspects of the mentee's work.

Career guide:
this is the role of assisting the mentee to clarify career goals and promotion opportunities and to provide advice on strategies for fulfilling these goals and opportunities.

Facilitator:
this is the role of smoothing the path of the mentee to assist her/him in understanding and operating both within the University structure and culture and the wider academic, professional and community contexts.

Confidant(e):
this is the role of providing professional and personal support to the mentee on matters which are private or sensitive.

Cultural adviser:
this is the role of providing cultural advice on matters related to teaching, student learning and the conduct of research in order to enhance the mentee's understanding of VUW's commitment to bi-cultural and multi-cultural education. This role also includes advice to staff appointed from outside of New Zealand on matters that will enable them to adjust to a different social, cultural and educational context. This could also include working within a predominantly male organisation.

Cultural mentoring for Maori staff:
in addition to the above, Maori staff may seek particular advice from senior Maori academics, elders or other significant people on a range of culturally related matters.

Cultural mentoring for other ethnic or national groups:
there may be a need by some groups to focus on their own cultural beliefs and to create a supportive climate within the University.

Mentor/mentee training

The training for both sessions began with a welcome, introductions, the setting of ground rules, an explanation of the pairing process and the MRG's expectations for the scheme. The objectives for the training were:

- to ensure that all participants have a common understanding of the concept of mentoring;

[5] Adapted from Cedric Hall, Te Ripowai Higgins and Joy Anderton, *Training needs analysis: the academic mentor at Victoria University of Wellington,* (Wellington, UTDC, 1995), pp12-16.

- to enable participants to define the role of mentoring within Victoria University;
- to provide a framework for establishing the relationship and its boundaries; and
- to provide skill practice in goal setting, listening and providing constructive feedback (note mentors only).

The first exercise in both training sessions involved working in pairs to discuss and record what participants thought a mentoring relationship did and did not involve. Key points are summarised in the boxes below:

Mentoring involves:

- establishing, with the mentee, what the mentor's role is and what it is not;
- maintaining an open, confidential and beneficial relationship;
- helping to establish and clarify the mentee's professional goals and providing advice on career development;
- assessing whether present behaviour is consistent with long term goals;
- providing support, encouragement and guidance in an institutional context;
- acting as a sounding board;
- providing ongoing interaction relative to need;
- providing information about university 'ins' and 'outs,' how things work and the culture;
- practical help, such as teaching observation;
- being open to new ideas;
- acting as a catalyst;
- helping academics cope with institutional pressures;
- being a facilitator;
- providing honest feedback and the chance for the mentee to reflect on their performance;
- being available for regular meetings;
- showing respect for the mentee;
- challenging the mentee;
- providing two-way communication; and
- providing advice on managing relationships with heads of departments etc.

Mentoring does not involve:

- setting goals for, or managing, the mentee's career;
- assessment or appraisal;
- doing work for the mentee;
- personal/problem counselling;
- an intimate relationship;
- departmental politics;
- providing a substantive discussion on specialised field of knowledge; and
- subject advice.

The next exercise focused on a mentoring model (adapted from Clarke, 1996). Mentees and mentors – in their separate sessions – were asked to think about and discuss the cyclical process of: *evaluation* (identifying strengths and weaknesses, long term aims, training/support/development needs), *stimulation* (encouraging, motivating, and guiding), and *facilitation* (providing access to learning opportunities, information, people and resources). This exercise provided a framework for thinking about the mentoring process as an ongoing cycle of identification and improvement for working towards the mentee's goals.

It was reinforced that the first meeting between mentor and mentee is critical to the establishment of a successful relationship. Imaginatively putting oneself in the other's shoes demonstrated that both parties were aware of the hopes and fears of the other. In the training sessions, participants explored the expectations and anxieties of each role, regardless of their eventual role in the scheme. The outcome of this exercise was the reassurance for both mentees and mentors that the other party perceived their hopes and the fears. The lists below are an amalgamation of the hopes and fears from both groups about each role.

Mentees hope to:

- enjoy a good relationship with their mentor;
- receive positive support and encouragement;
- be challenged and stimulated;
- learn new ways of approaching issues;
- benefit from the relationship;
- enjoy a confidential relationship; and
- gain direction from it.

Mentors hope to:

- establish a personal/professional relationship;
- gain satisfaction from being helpful; and
- be stimulated to reassess their own position.

Mentees fear:

- an unsympathetic and/or patronising mentor;
- their mentor will be too busy to help;
- they will not get on with their mentor;
- their mentor will not respect differences;
- being pushed in an undesired direction;
- lack of confidentiality;
- more work and pressure will be placed on them;
- their weaknesses will be exposed;
- a power dynamic in which they may feel subordinate or inferior to the mentor; and
- that it will be a waste of time.

Mentors fear:

- having a lack of appropriate knowledge and experience;
- having insufficient time;
- a bad relationship;
- exposing their deficiencies to mentees;
- over-dependency of mentees;
- the relationship will be one-sided with mentees not following up;
- having no guidance;
- the relationship will involve more work and pressure; and
- that it will be non-productive.

As the mentoring relationship depends on clear and effective communication from both parties, a significant part of the *mentor* training focused on revisiting the basics of good communication. The following aspects of communication were addressed through good practice guidelines (see Appendix B):

- listening – focusing attention, active listening and retaining information; and
- feedback – when feedback is appropriate/not appropriate.

In pairs, the mentors used case studies to role-play listening and giving and receiving feedback. Giving the right kind of feedback was stressed as the most important aspect of communication for a successful mentoring relationship, since it offers the mentee a chance to reflect on their desired outcome without having that outcome imposed on them.

Finally, emphasis was placed on discussing the value of using a contract (example provided to both groups) to:

- establish the boundaries of the mentoring relationship;
- agree on the terms of the relationship at the beginning to avoid issues arising from having different expectations of each other;
- ensure the success of the mentoring relationships;
- prevent issues being overlooked or repeated;
- help set realistic goals bearing in mind the limitations of time and commitment to the relationship;
- to set the direction for how parties will communicate with each other; and
- establish the first meeting, time, place and date.

A written record gives both parties an orientation to what needs to be achieved, which can be reviewed as the relationship progresses. Mentors were encouraged to use the Clarke (1996) model from the earlier exercise to help gauge the starting point for the mentee, and agree on goals for the relationship and the level of support needed to reach these goals. Mentees were encouraged to focus on their own goals for the mentoring relationship.

The essence of the contract is described in the box below:

Agreed timetable for meetings:

- frequency
- duration
- time of day

Agreed process for cancelling or postponing meetings:

Agreed boundaries of the relationship:

- definition/limitation of areas both parties are prepared to discuss.
- duration of the relationship – up to one year.

Agreed general/overall objectives:

Agreed commitment to complete confidentiality

Agreement to seek help from a member of the Mentoring Reference Group should problems arise that cannot be solved.

Combined training

The final training session brought the mentees and mentors together in a facilitated introduction. Participants met their partners, spent some time getting to know one another, and then introduced each other to the group. The remainder of the session was spent working together to clarify goals and expectations and shape them into the written agreement.

All workshops ended with an anonymous evaluation comprising three closed and two open-ended questions. Closed items focussed on the degree of familiarity with the materials/ideas covered, the value of the session and the presentation of the session. Respondents rated their opinions on a five-point Likert scale. Open-ended questions asked participants what they found to be most useful and what wasn't covered that would have been useful. The results of training, though favourable, are not presented, as the training described in this paper is the updated 2000 training. The 2000 training was not evaluated due to a major upgrade of the evaluation system at that time which made the service unavailable for several weeks.

Professional development

A number of workshops/seminars on a range of professional development themes were offered to support mentees and mentors in their roles. The first seminar in June – "Mentoring Yourself: Strategies for Research Productivity" aimed at identifying and clarifying methods and strategies used in research to increase productivity within tightly defined schedules. The

seminar was well attended by academics from the VUW community, including a number of women from the mentoring scheme. Comments from participants indicated the session was extremely valuable and hence the MRG ran it again in 2000.

During August 1999, two workshops were held for participants in the mentoring scheme (though both workshops were open to the wider VUW public): "Goal Setting," which explored motivational goal development, and "Giving and Receiving Feedback," which emphasised the development of skills to enhance confidence in communication and to open up new learning opportunities. Feedback indicated that participants found the sessions valuable, although the numbers were small. The MRG were not sure why attendance was low given the expressed desire for workshops of this nature (see the Training section of the final evaluation 28).

Academic professional development workshops continued to be held by the UTDC, to which all mentoring staff were invited. Themes included Peer Review, Evaluating and Improving Teaching, and several Education Technology Workshops. Because of an expressed need to support staff in research proposal writing, the MRG organised a workshop on Writing a Research Proposal, which aimed at providing first hand experience by successful (Marsden) grant holders. The workshop emphasised the process, including rejections, and demonstrated the persistence and determination of the researchers.

The MRG set up an email list for all those involved in the scheme to share ideas and information, to seek advice, and to keep in contact. In practice, only the MRG used the email list to advertise workshops, provide mentoring for research guidelines, and to pass on information.

Finally, a social dinner was organised to encourage staff to get together in an informal setting (12 participants attended). Certainly, one of the most pronounced reported benefits of the scheme has been the friendships that have developed as a result of meeting new people.

Interim evaluations

Participants (including at least one member of each pair) were contacted by telephone for an interim evaluation four months into the 1999 scheme. Questions were asked about the effectiveness of the programme, with particular emphasis on the suitability of pairs, number and length of meetings, the benefits that had been experienced by both the mentee/mentor and any other issues individuals cared to raise about the scheme in general. Interviews took between five and 20 minutes to complete, depending on the willingness of participants to provide information.

The telephone evaluation was time-consuming. It was often difficult to get hold of staff; nevertheless, the MRG was persistent, believing that making direct contact with the individuals was essential. Over a period of six weeks, 28 individuals were interviewed.

Findings from the interim evaluation

The authors acknowledge that in research of this kind there is a potential for bias (the Hawthorn Effect). The very fact that participants are involved in a programme on a voluntary basis, could result in them giving higher ratings than otherwise might been the case.

Nevertheless, results were favourable and consistent with the fact that the MRG had not been contacted by any staff member experiencing problems with the pairing. The number of

meetings per pair varied from one to eight with an average of four. The length of meetings spanned one to two and a half hours, with an average of one and half hours. When asked whether the relationship was a productive one, all responses bar one (due to limited meeting time) were positive.

One pair had not actually held meetings, due to time pressures, but was committed to begin working together in the new year. Two pairs had met only once. In the first case, the relationship had been beneficial as the mentee had received the institutional knowledge that she required, and the other pair had regular contact via email.

To a question about what benefits had been experienced the following responses were recorded below:

The following benefits were experienced by more than one *mentee.* They:

- gained strategies for completing research-related work;
- were encouraged to finish their PhD;
- gained insight into what other staff were actually achieving and hence were more realistic about their own achievements;
- received guidance and help with defining and achieving goals;
- used their mentor as a sounding board for ideas;
- focussed on effective time management, project and planning skills;
- gained useful coping and staff management strategies in a difficult environment;
- were able to focus on publication with promotion in mind;
- gained insight into where to obtain resources at VUW;
- found it valuable to know they were not alone in the obstacles they faced;
- found the relationship excellent for motivation;
- were encouraged and provided with moral support;
- were able to talk to someone without any fear of appraisal; and
- gained friendships.

Individual *mentees* reported the following:

- was assisted to get a computer on her desk (previously she was sharing with a colleague);
- gained ideas about how to advance in the University structure;
- was able to receive feedback on teaching through peer observation;
- was encouraged to make the most of opportunities with other senior staff; and
- was assisted with goal setting, resulting in the completion of a paper, which was contingent on being granted research leave for 2000.

***Mentors* reported the following benefits from the programme:**

- it helped them define their own goals and career plans;
- it provided insight into how difficult it is to get over hurdles in first academic year;
- it built relationships across the University;
- participants gained knowledge of funding resources in a different department;
- they gained friendships; and
- one mentor found a mentor for herself because she could see how useful the programme was.

The final question focussed on any other issues individuals would like to raise. Responses included the following general areas:

Mentees:

- excellent scheme, would highly recommend it to others;
- one of the best initiatives at VUW;
- initial support from MRG valuable;
- good opportunity/incredibly helpful, particularly for new staff, women;
- time constraints created difficulties with continuity;
- feelings of guilt/stress at not having always achieved the set goals by the next meeting;
- not sure of the benefits for mentors; and
- scheme of six months far too short.

Mentors:

- very valuable programme;
- time commitment was not a problem;
- voluntary basis important for the scheme;
- realised the importance of having someone to talk to;
- not completely sure about being in a different discipline;
- continuity a problem; and
- time constraints a problem.

Final evaluation of the mentoring pilot scheme

A final written evaluation was sent to each 1999 participant at the end of six months. Of the 26 evaluations received, **all staff indicated that they would like the scheme to continue**. Fifteen participants signalled they would like to keep working with the same partner, which was not surprising given the short timeframe of the pilot scheme. Eight indicated they would like to continue in the scheme, but were unable to in 2000. Nobody ticked the box indicating that they did not wish to have any further involvement in the scheme.

Quantitative results

The following tables indicate results for mentees and mentors for the quantitative questions (see Appendix C for the questionnaire) based on a 1 – 5 scale, 1 being 'yes, definitely,' 3 'somewhat,' and 5 'no, definitely not.' The final question used a more appropriate stem, 1 being 'excellent,' 3 'neutral,' and 5 'poor.'

Table 1: Evaluation results for *Mentees* – 13 sets of questionnaires

Questions	Item responses (1) yes, definitely	(2)	(3) somewhat	(4)	(5) no, defin. not	median response
Belief that overall the pairing was successful.	7 58%	3 25%	1 8%	1 8%	0 0%	1.4
Training by MRG provided skills/ideas for a successful relationship.	3 27%	6 55%	1 9%	1 9%	0 0%	1.9
Objectives met through involvement in the scheme.	3 25%	6 50%	2 17%	1 8%	0 0%	2.0
The overall effectiveness of programme.	5 42%	6 50%	0 0%	1 8%	0 0%	1.7

Note: The rating of 4 given to these questions came from the same individual.

Table 2: Evaluation results for *mentors* – 13 sets of questionnaires

Questions	Item responses (1) yes, definitely	(2)	(3) somewhat	(4)	(5) no, defin. not	median response
Belief that overall the pairing was successful.	8 57%	3 21%	2 14%	1 7%	0 0%	1.4
Training by MRG provided skills/ideas for a successful relationship.	4 29%	5 36%	5 36%	0 0%	0 0%	2.1
The overall effectiveness of programme.	3 23%	9 69%	1 8%	0 0%	0 0%	1.9

Qualitative results

Participants were also given the opportunity to write comments about their experience. The following section provides information gathered from their responses with verbatim quotes to illustrate the points.

The short-term objectives set by the MRG for the pilot mentoring scheme for academic women and reiterated in the final evaluation were to:

1. Provide confidential support and encouragement on a range of personal and professional issues;
2. Provide information about the university culture, facilities, and resources;

3. Help individuals set goals focusing on research and publication; and
4. Provide opportunities to gain insight into teaching practice.

Participants were asked (using the above framework) whether their individual objectives were met through their involvement in the scheme. In hindsight, this was a difficult question to ask the mentors (hence no qualitative data for this question). Many felt some or all of the objectives had been met, but obviously did not really feel they were in a position to comment.

Mentors

> "This seems to be more a mentee question but I got so much out of the meetings I was inspired to find my own mentor (within my faculty). I personally feel that the goals my mentee set at the beginning (i.e. what was planned to be covered during the 6 months) did actually happen – were met."
>
> "I can't judge. I hope the mentee felt it helped."
>
> "As a mentor, I didn't have specific objectives. However, I think the MRG's were met!"
>
> "I hope so. As a mentor, I didn't really have any objectives other than to help my mentee – and she will have to comment."
>
> "Goals 1 and 3 were what we concentrated on and, I believe, achieved fairly well."
>
> "There wasn't much I would add to my mentee's evident abilities across the range of these objectives. We had enjoyable meetings and got on well but I don't think they added much to her existing knowledge. If it confirmed a direction already set then it was satisfactory in that respect."
>
> "Mentees objectives changes."

The majority of mentees reported that the first and third objectives were the focus of their meetings and that in most cases these objectives were indeed met.

Mentees

> "My mentor provided me with an impetus to get serious about organising and writing a schedule – I had someone to share it with which made it more legitimate. She also supported me through a very difficult situation with a colleague and her advice worked wonders!"
>
> "Both mentor/mentee identified many objectives around particular issues. Though we dealt with some it seems at the end of the relationship period a whole lot still remain to be taken up should the relationship continue."
>
> "Goals included: 1. Assessing research supervision skills. 2. Funding applications. 3. Planning study leave. 4. New research collaborations. 5. Becoming a better role model."
>
> "Mainly my objectives related to the first point and this had implications for the 3rd. The 2nd point wasn't really addressed. Neither was the 4th point a priority."
>
> "I just enjoy having contact with a senior staff member outside my area: gave me a new perspective on the university as a whole."
>
> "Also provided insight into managerial practice."
>
> "I think that my objective of having someone to discuss professional issues with outside of my department was met."

Given that acquiring skill in teaching is a longer-term goal and works against the prevailing ethos of the University (essentially, research outputs gain promotion not teaching excellence), it was not the focus of the relationships.

Time commitment

The number of meetings held between mentees and mentors in 1999 ranged from two to 12, with an average of six. Understandably, the number of meetings increased from the interim telephone evaluation. Many participants were also in phone and email contact.

Pairing

Twenty four participants indicated that they were paired with someone from outside their School or Department. Eighteen positive comments about this aspect of the pairing were recorded. Most comments fell into the following two categories:

- The physical distance provided a sense of confidence (nine responses)
- Participants were able to benefit from a broad perspective of knowledge (five responses).

Mentees

> "It definitely helped to have someone from 'outside' to whom I could talk freely and openly. Their emotions and loyalties were not involved. It was also helpful to learn about situations in another dept."
>
> "I especially wanted help with "admin" (vs academic) issues so it was great to have someone who was a head of school and in the same Faculty – she understood but wasn't too involved."
>
> "Better if another dept, yet she was still very familiar with my field, so it was ideal."
>
> "Helped to have different perspective on publishing, research, etc. I found my mentor's comments on the promotion round and interactions with management etc. useful."
>
> "She brought wisdom, objectivity and compassion to my outpourings, and thanks to her patience and perceptiveness I did not resign, take further stress leave or implode completely."
>
> "Superb combination as we are both so utterly different!"

Mentors

> "I think it helped because in that way we looked at universals rather than specifics and got a new perspective on things."
>
> "My view is that it was very helpful to mentor someone who I did not know – that is, no expectations and the relationship was clearly set up as a mentoring one from the beginning..."
>
> "It was easier to be frank with someone from a different department."
>
> "Very helpful and she wasn't even in the same Faculty – no knowledge of individuals concerned, although interest in subject area/theoretical approach was good too."

Four respondents were neutral as to the value of being paired outside their School/Department. Three non-favourable comments centred on the issue that non-specific information was of little value:

Mentee

> "I was aware when I went into the scheme that there was no suitable/available mentor in my department but I do think I would benefit from more specific mentoring within my department... There are clear advantages to having someone outside such as the feeling of confidentiality and lack of conflict of interest but I probably am coming to need more specific concrete suggestions that are easier for someone in my discipline..."

Mentor

> "I just don't see how my experiences in research standards, organization and productivity can help across disciplines."

Other general comments about the pairing included the following:

Mentees

> "The similar life histories – e.g UK based move to NZ really helped – provided me with a sense of being known and understood culturally which was important."

> "Need to have staff who have started within the last 5 years as mentors. Need to have clearer guidelines & concept of reality of new lecturer."

> "I think the match has been partially successful. My mentor is willing and helpful. However, I think that I need someone who is prepared to be more directive and not wait for me to come up with what I need from her. That is, more proactive than reactive. Because I don't often know what I don't know I suppose."

Mentors

> "Seem to have lost contact – mentee not responding"

> "I didn't feel I really was needed much, except perhaps to add some confidence. But I enjoyed it."

> "I think that the pairings were well made – all those I have talked to seem to have got on very well with their "partner" – as did I. It was really nice to converse with other women outside my own faculty (also forced me to spend time on the main campus!)"

Two participants indicated that they were paired with someone from inside their department, stating that this enabled a specific understanding of the relevant issues, and hence provided opportunities for direct assistance.

Training

When asked whether they would like to add or change anything with regard to the mentoring training, participants made varying responses. The challenge here is in providing a comprehensive training programme to suit the needs of all the participants. Three mentees made no comment and four commented that it should be left as is. Other comments included:

Mentees

> "I think I may have missed it – unless the very brief 50 min. session, including 15 min. to talk to the new mentor, was the training? In which case, I learned little from it."

> "No, it was good. Set up expectations well and set tone for the relationship.

> "I'd like more chances to discuss/workshop issues generally with other participants – it was supportive."

Three mentors made no comment and four commented that it should be left as is. Other comments included:

Mentors

> "It is tricky to decide how much training is needed, some mentoring is a bit like counselling but training for this would probably go too far. I found it very useful to meet other mentors and get new ideas from them."
>
> "I don't think there's anything to change – to some extent I think you can either be a good mentor or you can't."
>
> "Seemed to take longer than necessary for the points to be covered – otherwise OK."
>
> "I think the training was as good as it could be, but could never meet all the requirements of the job. Those just need to be explored between the parties."
>
> "Maybe another meeting of mentors some way into the process to exchange practical ideas etc."
>
> "Still need some help with regard to offering of advice re: grants, applications/ research funding etc."

Participants were asked for suggestions on the kinds of workshops/activities they thought would be useful during the year to support the mentoring scheme. Interestingly, suggestions they made were essentially the same as the workshops organised by the MRG and held during the year at the end-of-programme evaluation. Our conclusion is that there are significant time management issues here, as only some of the participants in the scheme attended the workshops. The emphasis on more interaction with participants is not surprising given the isolation and loneliness often associated with academia. The following themes emerged from the evaluation as being important:

- Workshops on writing skills, time management, goal setting, and giving and receiving feedback;
- A continual facilitation programme to share experiences;
- More social opportunities, shared lunches, dinners, etc., to share ideas and support one another; and
- Introduce the scheme more widely, through promoting and publicising more.

The final question asked participants to provide any information that they believed would be helpful for the MRG. The following comments were useful:

Mentees

> "My only problem was finding time to meet."
>
> "My goals were research orientated. I found the generic stuff, life goals etc, very valuable. Time management would be a good extra for women."

Mentors

> "I think the personal chemistry of the people involved is the vital ingredient. If this works everything's OK. If it doesn't, change partners."
>
> "I think the idea of a joint dinner once or twice a year is a good one. Thanks for organising it!"

The following points highlight the success of the scheme:

Mentees

> "A worthy initiative. Expand it and keep up the good work."
>
> "...I am delighted that the mentoring pilot has been set up. I have already benefited from it in the small time I have been involved, and I would like to continue to have a mentor for longer as I am still somewhat uncertain about what I am doing sometimes and need someone to sound ideas out with."
>
> "Just amazing – … – kia ora!"
>
> "Thank you! Keep it up ☺."
>
> "Great potential."
>
> Thanks!

Mentor

> "…thank you for the opportunity of participating. I really enjoyed the programme (and wish to carry on in the future – 2001?)"

Conclusions

The VUW pilot has demonstrated that mentoring offers the opportunity for a mentee to meet frequently with a senior, experienced academic who has been especially paired according to the mentee's needs. The scheme also shows that formal mentoring can help to ameliorate the difficulties that early career academics experience in an isolating workplace.

The current programme grew from two prior attempts at initiating mentoring. The first, a scheme only for women and the second, an all-inclusive University wide study of mentoring needs. The pilot has tried to maintain the impetus and institutional knowledge involved in both initiatives by preliminarily focussing on women but later with the inclusion of men.

The benefits of mentoring take time and effort. There are several phases to mentoring and most personal and career benefits for mentees are thought to come two to five years after starting a mentoring relationship (Gardiner, 1999). Follow-up studies will be required to test this assertion. In any viable long-term scheme, recognition should be made of the mentors' commitment in terms of workload allocation.

Finally, to be successful, the scheme needs to be institutionally integrated. Experience from the AVUW scheme, and insights from the VUW pilot mentoring indicate mentoring requires support from HOSs and senior management and in some sense an ownership by them as to the important part it plays in the professional development of academic staff.

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Appendix A

VUW Mentoring Scheme Application Form

Mentoring is a process where a more experienced staff member provides confidential personal and professional advice and practical support to a less experienced colleague. After a very successful pilot-mentoring scheme run in 1999 for academic women, we would like to broaden the scheme to include all academic staff.

As it is not possible at this stage for us to gauge demand, priority will be given to finding mentors for new staff, staff at key transitional points in their careers, and under-represented staff, if necessary. Previously there has been a high demand for mentors, therefore, if you are an experienced academic please consider being a mentor. The range of experience and commitment required varies, from an ongoing relationship to a one-off meeting with a mentee to provide specific information.

For those who are interested in being a mentee or a mentor, please complete ***all*** of Section A and then Section B as appropriate and return the form to Jacquie Harper, UTDC. This information will help us with the pairing of mentees with mentors. Please note, members of the Mentoring Reference Group - Jacquie Harper (UTDC), Theresa Sawicka (Research Policy Office) & Hilary Smith (EEO Office) - will treat all responses to this questionnaire with the strictest of confidence.

Section A

Name:_____
Gender:_____
Nationality:_____
Position:_____
Department:_____
Year of appointment:_____
Phone Ext:_____
Email:_____

1. Please tick the appropriate box (*only one*) to indicate the position you see yourself in when working with a colleague in the mentoring scheme.

- ☐ Mentor (experienced academic)
- ☐ Mentee

2. Would you prefer to work with a colleague:

- ☐ Inside your department
- ☐ Outside your department
- ☐ Either

3. Would you prefer to be paired with a:

- ☐ Female
- ☐ Male
- ☐ Either

4. The literature identifies the following areas as being fundamental to a mentoring relationship. Please tick those activities in which you can *provide* (mentor) or for which you *seek* (mentee) guidance.

- ☐ defining and meeting career goals
- ☐ adjusting to VUW academic life
- ☐ working with your HOD/HOS
- ☐ working with senior academics in your department/school
- ☐ acquiring funds for research
- ☐ writing for publication
- ☐ preparing course outlines and assessment tasks
- ☐ using educational technology in your teaching
- ☐ feedback on teaching practice
- ☐ instructional methods and resources in teaching
- ☐ making use of student evaluations of teaching
- ☐ managing and balancing time efficiently
- ☐ dealing with dual career issues
- ☐ other (please specify)_____

5. Academic qualifications:

Highest degree earned _____
Institution giving the degree_____
Discipline_____
Research interests_____

6. What time commitment suits you?

Frequency:

- ☐ Fortnightly
- ☐ Monthly
- ☐ Two monthly
- ☐ Quarterly
- ☐ Other_____

Time:

- ☐ One hour
- ☐ Two hours
- ☐ Other_____

The best time to participate in activities is:

- ☐ 8:30 am - 11:30 am
- ☐ 12:00 noon
- ☐ 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- ☐ Evenings
- ☐ Weekends

We recognise that some staff members may have concerns about a range of academic, personal, and family responsibilities. In order to facilitate a compatible match, we would appreciate responses to the following questions. *Please feel under no obligation to answer these questions if you think they are not relevant.*

7. Are you married/living with a significant other?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

8. Are you raising children?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

9. How long have you lived in New Zealand?___

10. Would you like to work with a colleague from your own ethnic background?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

11. Are you keen to be paired with someone with similar interests? If so, please list those interests.

Section B - Mentors/Senior Staff

11. If you have been a mentor previously, please give a brief description (i.e., Where? How long were you involved? What were the benefits/detractions?)

13. In addition to mentoring an individual, would you be interested in presenting a workshop/seminar on career development on a topic in your area of interest/expertise such as teaching skills, time management, research, writing for publication etc?

- ☐ Yes (please specify topics)
- ☐ No

Appendix B

Mentoring Guidelines[6]

1. Mentoring should be treated as a natural and integral part of personal and professional development. Mentoring is not a sign of weakness or an activity undertaken simply to redress a deficiency.

2. There should be no hidden agendas. The effectiveness of mentoring depends upon the willingness of the mentor and mentee to engage in open dialogue about the strengths, weaknesses, and goals of the mentee. The relationship must be based on mutual trust.

3. Mentoring should be treated as a two-way process, which brings about change and development in both the mentor and mentee. This is analogous to the teacher who learns from her/his students.

4. Mentorship requires a clear understanding by both mentor and mentee of each other's roles and responsibilities. Initial meetings should clarify mutual expectations. Clutterbuck (1992)[7] identifies the following list as a starting point for developing a contract between mentor and mentee:
   - The mentor will only enquire or intrude into the mentee's personal life by invitation.
   - Mentors will respect the confidentiality of matters discussed with the mentee.
   - The mentor and mentee will not make excessive demands of each other's time.
   - The mentee will not use the mentor's authority without the mentor's consent.
   - The mentor will assist the mentee in achieving his/her objectives, but will encourage the mentee to make decisions for him/herself.

5. Mentorship should involve periodic reviews to ensure that the relationship is still useful or productive and whether a new focus is needed. The relationship should also recognise the point of separation when the mentee no longer seeks support. It is important to identify when a relationship is not productive and allow for separation without negativity.

6. Mentors should recognise the appropriate form of mentoring activity for assisting mentees: they need to know when to listen and when to advise, when to intervene and when to stand back, when to coach and when to challenge, and when to facilitate and when to encourage self-assessment.

7. When working with new staff, mentors should consider ways of fostering the mentee's visibility while protecting the mentee from wide-scale involvement in too many academic, administrative, and professional activities.

8. Lastly, mentors should resist the temptation to become involved in matters for which they have insufficient expertise; an effective mentor is one who knows when to be involved and when to direct the mentee to other sources.

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[6] Taken from Cedric Hall, Te Ripowai Higgins and Joy Anderton, *Training needs analysis: the academic mentor at Victoria University of Wellington,* (Wellington, UTDC, 1995), pp 18-19.

[7] Clutterbuck, D. *Mentoring.* Henley Distance Learning, Ltd, 1992.)

Appendix C

Evaluation of Mentoring Pilot Scheme

To assist the Mentoring Reference Group (MRG) with planning and writing recommendations for the programme next year, please complete this anonymous questionnaire and return it to Jacquie Harper at the UTDC. Thank you in advance for your thoughtful responses.

The objectives of the pilot mentoring scheme for academic women were to:

- provide confidential support and encouragement on a range of personal and professional issues
- provide information about the University culture, facilities, and resources
- help individuals set goals focusing on research and publication
- provide opportunities to gain insight into teaching practice

Involvement

1. Would you like the scheme to continue?

☐ yes ☐ no

2. Which of the following statements describe your interest in the mentoring scheme for 2000 (please tick as many as appropriate).

☐ would like to be a mentee
☐ would like to be a mentor
☐ would like to continue working with the same partner
☐ would like to work with a new partner
☐ would like to continue, but am unable to in 2000
☐ do not wish to have any further involvement
☐ other (please comment)

Pairing

3. Overall, I think the match was successful.

yes, definitely		somewhat		no, definitely not
1	2	3	4	5

4. Was your partner in your School or Department?

☐ yes ☐ no

Please comment on the extent to which you think this helped or hindered the mentoring relationship.

5. Please add any other comments about the pairing.

Orientation and Training

6. Upon reflection, the mentee/mentor training provided me with the skills/ideas to ensure a successful relationship.

yes, definitely		somewhat		no, definitely not
1	2	3	4	5

7. Would you like to add or change anything with regard to the training?

8. What kinds of workshops/activities do you think would be useful during the year to support the mentoring scheme?

Participation

9. Please indicate the number of times you met with your mentee/mentor.

10. Within the framework of the objectives set by the MRG (see first page), were your particular objectives met through your involvement with the scheme?

yes, definitely		somewhat		no, definitely not
1	2	3	4	5

Please explain.

11. On balance, how would you rate the overall effectiveness of the programme.

excellent		neutral		poor
1	2	3	4	5

12. Please add any other information you believe would be helpful for the MRG.