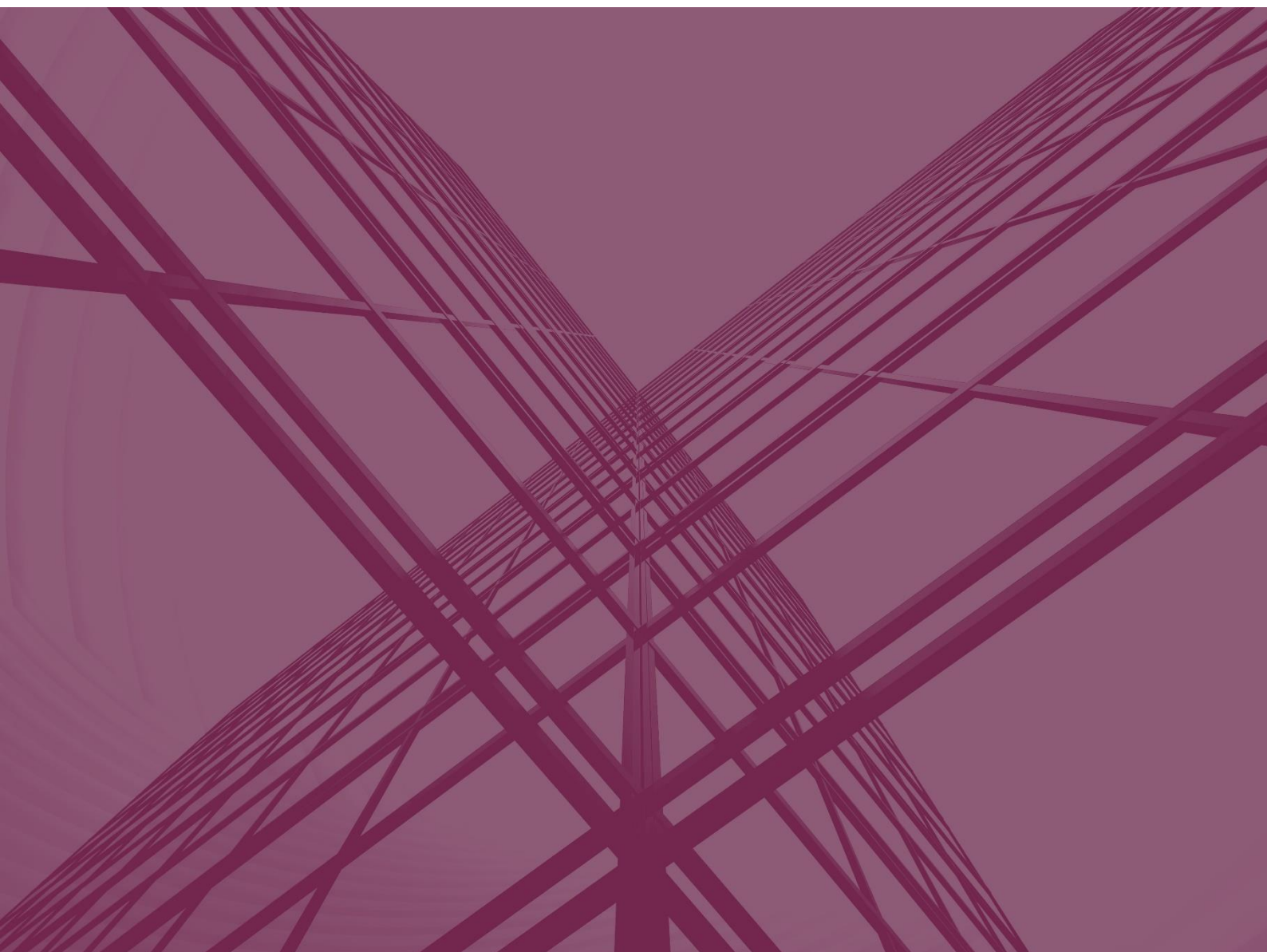


Elevate Mentoring Handbook

A guide for mentors and mentees
Version: 2024



Introduction

Elevate mentoring is designed to inspire and support mentees in their professional journey by connecting them with experienced members who act as expert, impartial mentors.

It is intended for those seeking mentoring to help them achieve their career goals, rather than mentoring to achieve professional membership/registration through the IPD mentoring relationship. If this is needed, please refer to the separate [Professional Mentoring Handbook](#).

Purpose of *Elevate*

- ***Making connections:*** *Elevate* creates meaningful connections that drive personal growth, leadership development, and career progression. It is designed to be flexible, and to meet the needs of both mentors and mentees.

Through this programme, mentees will work with mentors to gain insights, develop skills, and receive guidance on career progression / goals, and apply EDI principles to their work and development as part of a professional career.

Mentors will have the opportunity to refine their leadership abilities, share their knowledge, and contribute to the development of future leaders in structural engineering.

- ***Creating next steps:*** *Elevate* fosters a culture of continuous learning and collaboration in structural engineering. Mentoring bridges the gap between academic learning and practical application to help encourage lifelong learning.
- ***Driving inclusivity:*** *Elevate* is designed to be inclusive. It welcomes mentees from all levels of experience in structural engineering. It emphasises the importance of diverse backgrounds, actively encouraging individuals with various experiences to participate.

This diversity enhances the mentoring process by integrating different perspectives, enriching the overall experience for both mentors and mentees. IStructE is committed to fostering an inclusive environment where every member feels valued and supported. *Elevate* plays a crucial role in this commitment by providing equitable opportunities for professional development.

What is a mentor and what is mentoring?

A mentor is defined as “an experienced and trusted adviser”. Mentoring is when two individuals agree to spend time sharing questions, insights, knowledge, ideas and experiences, for the development of the mentee (and in many instances, also the mentor).

Who can be a mentor?

Elevate is designed to be inclusive, so we therefore invite professionally qualified members to be a mentor. This includes [Incorporated-Member](#), [Technician Member](#), [Chartered Member](#) (MIStructE), [Associate](#) (AIStructE) or [Fellow](#) (FIStructE), with the experience to provide guidance, advice, and training to mentees.

Mentors should possess key attributes, notably strong mentorship skills, which enable them to effectively guide individuals through personalised career goals and professional challenges. This involves providing flexible and tailored support.

Mentors are expected to have a comprehensive understanding of technical, leadership, and industry-related topics. Such broad expertise means they can offer meaningful and effective guidance, ensuring that mentees receive the support they need to progress in their careers.

What are the benefits of *Elevate*?

For mentees

- A chance to test ideas and strategies.
- Gain insights into their own organisation's goals, structure and values.
- Assist in defining personal career and other developmental objectives.
- Someone to talk to outside of the day-to-day work environment.
- Transfer of knowledge, skills and/or expertise.
- Personal growth and reflection.

For mentors

- Enhance communication and coaching skills.
- Enhance leadership abilities.
- Professional development opportunities (CPD).
- Contribute to the ongoing development of less experienced professionals.
- Promote and supporting equity, diversity, and inclusion within the context of mentoring.

Roles and Responsibilities

Mentors

Responsibilities may include the following, agreed with the mentee as part of the Mentoring Agreement:

- Offering insights based on personal experience.
- Assisting mentees in setting and achieving goals.
- Providing feedback and constructive criticism.
- Sharing knowledge about industry trends and best practices.

Mentees

Mentees seek guidance and support in their professional journey. Responsibilities include:

- Being proactive in the mentoring relationship.

- Setting clear goals and objectives.
- Being open to feedback and willing to learn.
- Respecting the mentor's time and expertise.
- Follow tips for making the most of a mentor, including:
 - Set a regular time for meetings.
 - Maintain regular contact.
 - Prepare for mentoring meetings: plan or structure the discussion around the issues that need to be covered.
 - Respect the mentor's time: give timely notice for mentoring meeting cancellations and be reasonable about contact during the working day or personal time.
 - Be open to suggestions and trying new things: tell the mentor if their advice has been acted on, and what the outcome was.
 - Give the mentor feedback: it's essential for a successful relationship.

Inclusivity Programme Manager/The Institution

The Inclusivity Programme Manager will:

- Ensure *Elevate* aligns with IStructE's commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion (EDI).
- Match mentors and mentees, considering factors such as background, experience, and specific needs.
- Facilitate the onboarding process for both mentors and mentees.
- Provide support and resources to mentors and mentees, especially from underrepresented groups.
- Monitor and evaluate the mentoring relationships to ensure they are beneficial and inclusive.

Elevate – the logistics

- Overview:** Mentees will be matched with a mentor, who will provide support and guidance through agreed objectives listed in a Mentoring Agreement (see *f below*). Mentees may have a number of mentors if they wish – some mentors may have relevant experience in analysis and design, whilst another mentor may have detailed knowledge about how to become a Fellow.
- The mentoring timeline:** Typically, a mentoring relationship lasts between six to 12 months, depending on the agreed goals and objectives. However, this timeframe can be adjusted to fit the specific needs and schedules of the participants.
- Onboarding Process:** IStructE will offer development sessions/modules to include:
 - *Orientation Session:* An initial meeting to introduce the programme, outline expectations, and discuss goals.
 - *Training for mentors:* Workshops on effective mentoring techniques, active listening, goal setting, and providing constructive feedback.
 - *Training for mentees:* Sessions on how to make the most of the mentoring relationship, setting realistic goals, and receiving feedback.

- d. **Mentoring meetings:** Mentors should meet with the mentee regularly (at least once every six weeks) and complete the mentoring report form.
- e. **Mentoring and CPD:** If mentors wish to count mentoring towards their CPD, then this needs to be logged in your annual submission to the Institution. Please refer to our [CPD regulations](#) page for more information about how CPD works.
- f. **Agree mentoring objectives and aims together:** Mentors and mentees will be sent a Mentoring Agreement when the matching has been finalised.

Mentees and mentors will outline in the Agreement the scope, goals, objectives, and timeline of the mentoring relationship. These could include:

- technical skills relevant to structural engineering.
- industry trends, best practices, and professional standards.
- guidance on career development within the field.
- encouraging self-reflection and personal growth.
- build confidence and improve communication skills.
- enhance problem-solving abilities.

Mentees and mentors will then set a regular meeting schedule (as mentioned above), and co-create an agenda for each meeting to ensure productive discussions. Maintaining clear and open communication will be essential throughout the process.

The completed agreement should then be sent to mentoring@istructe.org.

- g. **Recording success:** *Elevate* includes two progression reports – a midpoint mentoring form and a mentoring outcome form (these will be sent to the mentor and mentee alongside the Mentoring Agreement).

These forms record the agreed mentoring objectives and activities, the lessons learned, and the progression achieved. They are designed to list brief details of the activities undertaken. Although the Institution does not require lengthy reports, mentees should keep notes of their discussions, plans of action, implementation, and experience – and these forms are designed to do just that.

- **The midpoint form** should be completed at a convenient mid-point by the mentor and mentee. If mentees wish to add further information, they may use additional sheets, providing each sheet is signed by both the mentee and the mentor. Electronic signatures will be allowed.

Mentees may also wish to use a personal development diary linked to *Elevate* mentoring. This can be updated regularly as needed to help with the mentoring process and completion of the forms. This diary could be used to record all mentoring and related activities.

- **The outcome report** should be completed with the mentor at the end of the mentoring agreement.

It includes a mentee's statement summarising how the mentoring process has helped them meet their agreed objective(s) with the mentor. Mentors should also add their brief comments in this form, supporting the statements made by the mentee and confirming that objectives have been explored.

These forms will then be held on file by the Inclusivity Programme Manager, so that the reviewers (the mentor, the Inclusivity Programme Manager and the EDI Steering Group) can gauge how the mentoring has performed. It will not be shared with anyone else and will be treated as personal information and data.

Conclusion

We hope this *Elevate* Mentoring Handbook has explained the process for a rewarding mentoring experience.

If you need IPD mentoring, then please refer to our [Professional Mentoring Handbook](#).

If you have any questions about Elevate mentoring, please contact mentoring@istructe.org or please refer to our [Mentoring website page](#).