

# ANH ACADEMY

# Mentoring Handbook



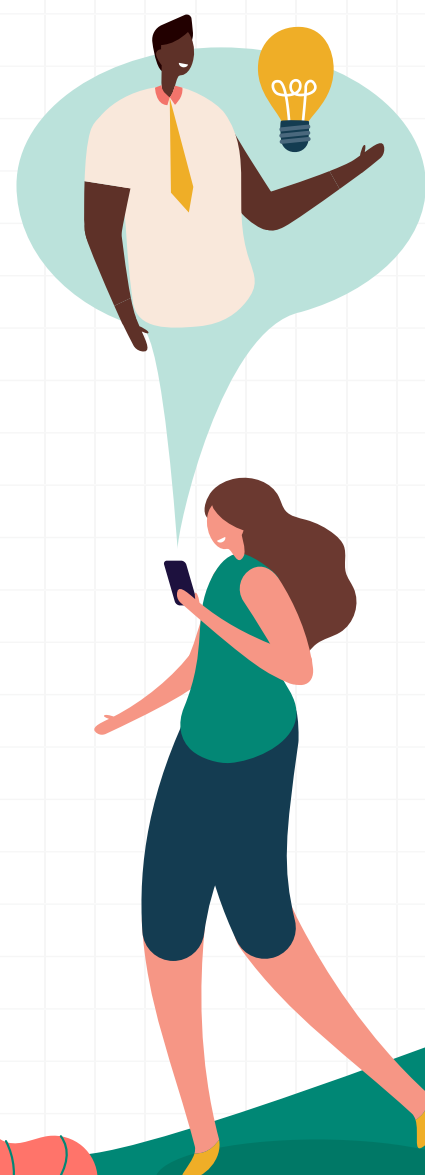
ANH  
Academy

Agriculture, Nutrition and  
Health Academy

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
ANH Academy mentoring	4
<b>2. Benefits of mentoring</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. Setting up a mentoring relationship</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>4. Guidelines for mentors and mentees</b>	<b>8</b>
The first meeting	8
Timing and regularity of meetings	8
The Mentoring Agreement and Action Plan	8
Notetaking and tracking progress	9
Cancelling sessions	9
Ending the mentoring relationship	9
<b>5. Key skills and attitudes for mentors</b>	<b>10</b>
Active listening	10
Asking good questions	11
Setting objectives	12
Being open to feedback from your mentee	12
<b>6. Key skills and attitudes for mentees</b>	<b>13</b>
Ask the right questions and actively listen	13
Be committed and take action	14
Be clear on your needs and don't be afraid to disagree	14
Respect your mentor	15
Be open to feedback	15
<b>7. Ethical considerations</b>	<b>16</b>
Conduct	16
Confidentiality	16
Awareness of equity and diversity	16
<b>8. Useful resources</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>9. Questions</b>	<b>17</b>

*Handbook last updated June 2021*



## SECTION 1

# Introduction

You might be reading this because you're interested in being a mentor, having a mentor, or have already signed up to participate in ANH Academy's Mentoring Scheme. This booklet introduces the scheme, how it works, and how participants can get the most out of their mentoring relationship.

Through ANH Academy activities such as the annual Academy Week Research Conference and Learning Labs, an appetite for mentoring within the ANH Academy community has become apparent.

One of the core aims of the ANH Academy is to facilitate capacity strengthening activities, and therefore **supporting researchers to build confidence, networks and career plans** is an important part of this strategy. Since the ANH Academy community has such **diverse and extensive collective experiences and wisdom**, we are launching a new peer-to-peer mentoring scheme, designed to facilitate support and lesson-learning between members.

This mentoring scheme has been designed through a consultation process with an external advisory group. ANH Academy would like to thank the advisory group for their input and support: Agnes Quisumbing, Andrew Thorne-Lyman, Bharati Kulkarni, Emily Fivian, Liz Bageant, Sophiya Dulal, Suneetha Kadiyala, Taddese Alemu, and Zachary Gersten. The mentoring scheme will be reviewed on an annual basis, with feedback from participants taken on board.

**Welcome to our mentoring scheme handbook!**



## ANH Academy mentoring

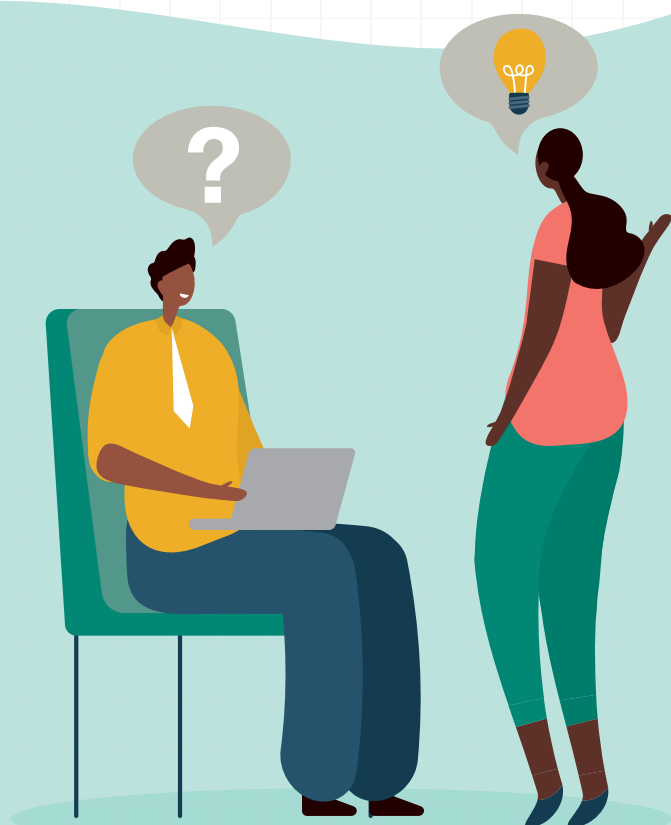
ANH Academy's mentoring scheme is about members supporting and guiding each other. It is open to all ANH Academy members. If you are not yet a member, you can sign up [here](#) for free.

Mentoring can be useful in a number of different situations, from settling into a new job, returning to work, or general career development and knowledge sharing. **The process is driven by the mentee and what they want to get out of it.** The minimum commitment from mentors is at least four meetings (quarterly) over a one year period.

The term 'mentoring' is often used interchangeably with coaching, counselling, and/or supervision. In the ANH Academy mentoring scheme, there are no deliverables. **Mentoring is a supportive form of personal and professional development,** and a way of helping individuals to reach their potential within the agriculture-nutrition-health research community. The mentee leads and manages the relationship, elicits advice, and gains support and confidence, while mentors empathetically listen, guide, and share experience (page 5).

"Mentoring involves primarily listening with empathy, sharing experience (usually mutually), professional friendship, developing insight through reflection, being a sounding board, encouraging."

- **DAVID CLUTTERBUCK,**  
[Author](#)



### ANH Academy mentors may offer mentees support and guidance on the following topics:

- ✓ Support and advice in current role
- ✓ Career development/career change advice
- ✓ Work/life balance
- ✓ Balancing caring responsibilities with work
- ✓ Maternity/parental leave and return to work
- ✓ Network building
- ✓ Confidence building
- ✓ Technical advice
- ✓ Advice on academic writing and getting published
- ✓ Managing relationships with colleagues
- ✓ Management and leadership skills
- ✓ Engaging with the ANH Academy

## Definition of the boundaries for ANH Academy Mentoring


*Other types of mentoring include coaching, counselling, academic supervision and line management.*

### ANH ACADEMY MENTORING






#### AIMS

-  Helps mentee **define** career and/or personal development goals
-  Helps mentee to **develop skills, confidence and contacts** that will enable them to progress their career.
-  May provide **some academic guidance** on specific topics, depending on the mentor's expertise.
-  Provides **support** defined by mentoring boundaries and the mentoring agreement.











#### EXPERIENCE

-  Mentor may be **more experienced** in their field, or may have **different experience** that is relevant and useful to the mentee (such as expertise from a different discipline, sector, organisation, or context).

#### WHO DOES WHAT?

-  Responsibility lies with the **mentee** to schedule the mentor-mentee meetings.
-  **Mentee** sets objectives for the relationship.
-  **Mentor** responds thoughtfully to the objectives set by the mentee, by listening, reflecting, and sharing experience
-  **Both mentor and mentee** understand that advice or experience shared by the mentor comes from their single perspective, and is not guaranteed to be universally helpful for all.
-  Responsibility lies with the **mentee** to act upon mentorship discussions.

### BOUNDARIES

-  Does not replace or fill the role of a PhD supervisor or line manager.
-  Does not focus on improving work performance.
-  Does not explore personal issues in depth.
-  Does not assign work or manage academic assignments.
-  Does not necessarily fill all mentoring needs - mentees are encouraged to find other mentors beyond the ANH scheme.
-  Mentor may not necessarily be more senior or older – we focus on the match rather than the age.
-  Mentor is not trained in counselling.
-  Mentor may not be more experienced in leadership and management.
-  Mentor does not focus solely on reflection, but also gives support and advice from their own experiences and perspectives.
-  Mentor does not provide feedback on academic assignments.

## SECTION 2

# Benefits OF MENTORING



## FOR THE MENTEE

Having a mentor will give you the **opportunity to reflect** upon your professional goals and discuss your successes, challenges, issues and next steps. Your mentor will be someone in the ANH research community who may have already experienced them or can offer a different perspective. It is a great opportunity to reflect on your strengths and areas that you would like to further develop with a 'critical friend', who is an **information source and sounding board**.

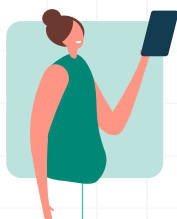
## FOR THE MENTOR

Being a mentor is a fun, rewarding **opportunity to share** your experience, skills and knowledge and to support someone's personal development. As a mentor you will learn to develop your active listening, questioning and feedback skills. As a more experienced colleague - or someone with expertise in a different discipline - being a mentor can give you a **fresh perspective** on issues and lead you to reflect on your own personal approaches and practices. You might also have a requirement from your institution to be a mentor, or to contribute towards external citizenship, which participation in this scheme may support.

## SECTION 3

# Setting up

## THE MENTORING RELATIONSHIP



We are really grateful to our mentors for sharing their valuable time to help others. If you would like to try mentoring, please sign up! **Mentors** are invited to submit a mentoring application by email to [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk), with the subject "Mentoring".

**Mentees** can apply at set times, which will be announced on our website and via our newsletter.



Both mentees and mentors will be asked to watch a short **training video** about the ANH Academy mentoring scheme, key expectations, and the 'dos and don'ts'. Mentees and mentors will then be asked to complete a series of scenario-based questions to ensure that they understood the video.



ANH Academy will **match mentees and mentors** based on subject expertise, location, career stage, mentor experiences and mentee goals.



With this, ANH Academy will **assign a mentor to the mentee** and introduce the two individuals by email. It is then up to the mentee to say hello and set up the first meeting.



At the first meeting, both parties will enter into a **mentoring agreement**.

### • Eligibility criteria

Applicants are invited to apply to the mentoring scheme based on the following criteria:

- Mentees must be aged 18 or over.
- Applicants are working within agriculture, nutrition and health sectors.
- Applicants are registered members of the ANH Academy. (To become a member of the ANH Academy, click [here](#))

## SECTION 4

# Guidelines

## FOR MENTORS AND MENTEES



### The first meeting

After an email introduction from the ANH Academy mentoring scheme organisers, the mentee is responsible for arranging the first meeting at a mutually convenient time. The first meeting is an opportunity to introduce yourself and what you hope you gain from mentoring. At the first meeting, complete the Mentoring Agreement and Action Plan\*.



### Timing and regularity of meetings

The suggested frequency of meetings is quarterly over a period of 12 months, and both parties must be willing to follow this level of commitment. Duration of meetings is suggested as 60-90 minutes over an online platform such as Skype/Zoom/Microsoft Teams/WhatsApp. We encourage participants to use their video if they feel comfortable doing so.

### \* The Mentoring Agreement and Action Plan

We don't want mentoring to be burdened with paperwork, but we have created a short **Mentoring Agreement** so you are all on the same page, and a very simple **Action Plan** form to help you structure to your meetings.

At the start of the mentoring relationship, it is important for both parties to discuss the purpose and agree on the practicalities of mentoring. Before the first meeting, the mentee and mentor should prepare a copy of the Mentoring Agreement and Action Plan. The mentee will discuss their preferences together with the mentor during the first

meeting and together they will complete the Mentoring Agreement.

The Action Plan is a living document to be updated during each meeting by the mentee:

- The mentee must complete the Mentoring objectives during the first meeting.
- During each meeting the mentee adds new Milestones to work on before the next meeting.
- After each meeting the mentee updates the progress summary.





## Notetaking and tracking progress

The mentee will update the Action Plan milestones, notes and progress sections to track progress.



## Cancelling sessions

We suggest that you provide at least one week's notice to cancel or rearrange a mentoring meeting. Sometimes mentoring relationships come to a natural end before the 12 months duration, or you may wish to extend the mentoring period. If you do decide to end the mentoring relationship, please email [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk) to let us know.



## Ending the mentoring relationship

Although a commitment of one year is recommended, mentors or mentees can end the mentoring relationship at any time. During the first meeting, participants will come to an agreement on how to end the mentoring relationship and record this in the Mentoring Agreement.

If you do decide to end the mentoring relationship, please email [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk) to let us know. We will ask you to provide some minimal, anonymised feedback to improve our mentoring scheme at the end of the mentoring relationship.



## Concerns about the mentoring relationship

Both mentors and mentees should adhere to the boundaries for ANH Academy Mentoring, as outlined on Page 5 of this handbook. If at any time you are concerned about the interactions with your mentor or mentee, please do not hesitate to contact us at [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk).



## SECTION 5

# Mentors

## KEY SKILLS AND ATTITUDES

The ANH Academy mentoring scheme aims to provide informal support between members across our friendly and inclusive community. It's important to put your mentee at ease, speak informally but respectfully and try to avoid a sense of hierarchy or authority in the conversation.

There are several key skills and attitudes which will help you to be an **effective mentor**. Actively listen to your mentee, ask good questions and help them to set objectives to get the **most** out of this relationship. By applying these key skills, the mentor guides the mentee to:

- ✓ Find their own solutions
- ✓ Develop their own skills
- ✓ Create new ways of thinking
- ✓ Change their own assumptions and perceptions
- ✓ Gain greater self-awareness
- ✓ Improve their personal and professional performance.



## Active listening

Active listening is a skill involving **listening attentively** and **responding empathically** so that the speaker feels heard. For example, if the speaker expresses frustration, the active listener might respond, “I can understand how that situation could cause frustration.”<sup>1</sup>

Here is a useful 90 second activity to help you practise your active listening skills:

<sup>1</sup> Weger Jr, H., Castle Bell, G., Minei, E. M., & Robinson, M. C. (2014). The relative effectiveness of active listening in initial interactions. *International Journal of Listening*, 28(1), 13-31.

- Actively listen to a family member, friend or colleague talk on a specific topic e.g. a special occasion, a holiday, a pet, for 30 seconds.
- For the next 30 seconds, STOP listening. Do everything you can to show the person speaking that you are not listening e.g. look away, hum, look at your phone.
- Notice the effect this has on the person speaking.
- Notice how actively NOT listening makes you feel.
- For the final 30 seconds, START actively listening again.
- At the end of the 90 seconds, discuss with the person speaking how you both felt when you stopped listening to them.



## Asking good questions

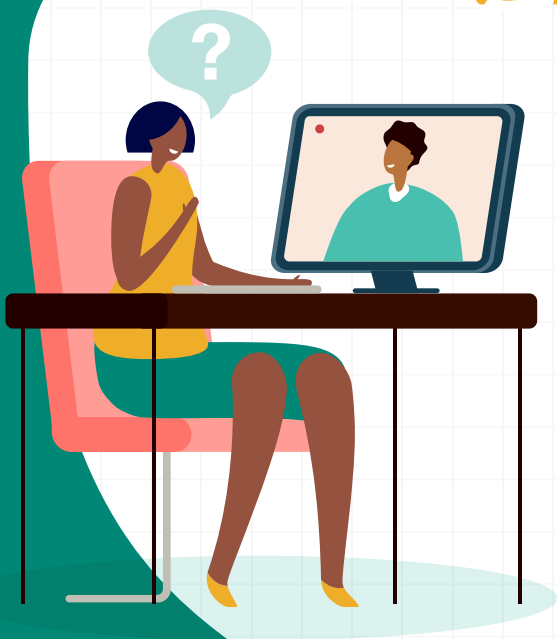
Asking the right question is at the heart of effective communication with your mentee. Knowing when to ask open or closed questions is an important skill.

### Open questions are useful for:

- Developing an open conversation: “What did you get up to during the holidays?”
- Finding out more detail: “What else do we need to do to make this a success?”
- Finding out the other person’s opinion or issues: “What do you think about that approach?”

### Closed questions are helpful for:

- Testing understanding: “So, if you get this qualification, will you get a pay rise?”
- Concluding a discussion: “Are we all agreed this is the right course of action?”
- Frame setting: “Are you happy with the progression opportunities at work?”



## 3

### Setting objectives

To support your mentee in setting objectives, the following steps can be taken:

- Ask your mentee to identify a problem or issue that they are currently experiencing.
- Apply active listening and questioning skills to encourage your mentee to describe and explore the issue or problem.
- Encourage your mentee to set a SMART objective to resolve the issue (*see section 8: Resources for a link to a SMART objective resource*).



## 4

### Being open to feedback from your mentee

It's important to recognise that advice or experience shared with your mentee comes from your single perspective, and is not guaranteed to be universally helpful for all. Encourage your mentee to reflect on your advice and open a dialogue where they can express their thoughts.



## SECTION 6

# Mentees



## KEY SKILLS AND ATTITUDES


## 1


### Ask the right questions and actively listen

Make the most of your meetings with your mentor by asking the relevant questions. Spend 5-10 minutes before each mentoring session listing out the points you would like to cover, specific examples from your past week, and general discussion topics. Refer to the Action Plan to refresh what you discussed at the last meeting.

Four types of questions to ask a mentor:

-  **Stories.** To break the ice, have your mentor tell a story from his or her own career.
-  **Situations.** Now that the conversation is flowing, get more granular in your requests and bring a specific situation to your mentor - one that you'd like help navigating.

 **Self-awareness.** One of the greatest gifts you can give yourself is the gift of self-awareness, meaning the ability to see yourself as others view you. Ask questions to understand how others might perceive you. Your mentor can assist by providing feedback on how your actions and communication might be impacting the way others see you.

 **Skill-building.** Is there a skill you're currently working to enhance, such as project management or public speaking? Use questions like these to ask your mentor for advice and resources to help you polish that skill.

Active listening is an important skill for both mentors and mentees (see *Mentors: Active Listening*).

## 2

**Be committed and take action**

Mentees must be **committed** to achieving the objectives of a mentoring relationship. Persistence is an important part of the process. The more the mentor is able to trust in the mentee's ability and willingness, the more committed they will be to the partnership.

Successful mentees must have a **willingness to learn** from their chosen mentors. A mentoring relationship is interactive and requires the mentee to be committed to setting goals and working towards them. After each meeting, ask yourself what you learned from the meeting and how you can apply your new knowledge. Mentoring conversations are greatly enhanced if participants begin and end them with their ultimate objective for the mentoring relationship in mind.



## 3

**Be clear on your needs and don't be afraid to disagree**

Practice **active communication** – never assume the other person knows or understands! If something isn't working the way you want it to, say so.

Different people learn new ideas and concepts differently: for example, some people learn through verbalization while others learn through reflection. Since mentoring is a **tool for learning**, it is important for mentees to understand what their preferred **learning style** is and identify how they will use this knowledge to aid and support the mentoring process. Take a free online quiz to quickly determine your preferred learning style (*see Section 9: Useful Resources*).

If your mentor gives you advice that you don't agree with, don't follow along because you think you should. **Open a dialogue.** Express your thoughts, communicate, and use any available opportunities to build rapport and learn from one another.

## 4

## Respect your mentor

Be **respectful** of your mentor's time and experience. Building a mentoring relationship takes time. Good mentees recognise that a mentor's time is **valuable** and ensure that they adequately prepare for each face-to-face meeting. Finding time to do the many things required as a professional is often difficult. Time management is an acquired skill that comes with experience, but can be augmented with appropriate time-management training. If mentees have difficulty meeting the **time commitments** of the mentoring relationship, they could ask the mentor for advice on this.

**Trust** develops over time as the mentor observes appropriate behaviours on the part of the mentee. To become trustworthy, mentees must:

- Keep confidences shared with their mentor
- Spend quality time together
- Listen well
- Refrain from criticizing their mentor to others
- Respect boundaries set by their mentor
- Admit errors and take responsibility to correct them
- When they disagree with their mentor, they should tactfully explain why. It is not productive to be a "yes-person"



objectives

## 5

## Be open to feedback

Mentees need to be willing to **assess their skills objectively** and evaluate potential opportunities for **self-development**. They should feel motivated to identify specific goals whilst remaining **realistic** about current realities. This self-evaluation is necessary in order to be able to discuss and agree on objectives with your mentor.

## SECTION 7

# Ethical

## CONSIDERATIONS



### Conduct

ANH Academy takes safeguarding considerations seriously. The mentoring scheme is designed to be **informal and supportive with appropriate boundaries for a peer-to-peer relationship**. The short training video shared with each yearly cohort will provide basic guidance on appropriate behaviour and boundaries. If you wish to end the mentoring scheme due to the behaviour of your mentor or mentee, please let us know as soon as possible at [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk).



### Confidentiality

Confidentiality and mutual trust are fundamental to mentoring. If a mentee has cause to doubt a mentor's commitment to this principle, the trust essential to the mentoring relationship will be lost.

All mentoring sessions should be treated in **strictest confidence**. Exceptions would only arise where there are serious ethical or legal requirements to disclose information. Examples include but are not limited to: risk of harm to self, risk of harm to others, and issues covered by your mentor or mentee's home institution safeguarding legislation.

We suggest that you discuss confidentiality during the first meeting as part of the Mentoring Agreement. If you have any cause for concern regarding your mentor or mentee, please contact [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk) as a first action.



### Awareness of equity and diversity

At its core, the ANH Academy's goal of fostering sharing and learning is about **bringing people from diverse disciplines and backgrounds together** – offering opportunities for people to exchange knowledge and experiences with those who might find it useful but otherwise might not have sought it out. Beyond interdisciplinary collaboration and learning, we deeply value our diverse membership and are committed to promoting equity and diversity within the ANH Academy as an essential tenet of our community and programming.

Our aim is to foster a **supportive, enabling and inclusive environment**, where all individuals are treated with dignity and respect, and where there is equality of opportunity for all regardless of characteristics or background. For a copy of the full ANH Academy Ethics and Equity Statement, please email [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk).



## SECTION 8 USEFUL resources

➤ Hover over and click the following titles to access the resources online.

[What type of learner are you?](#)

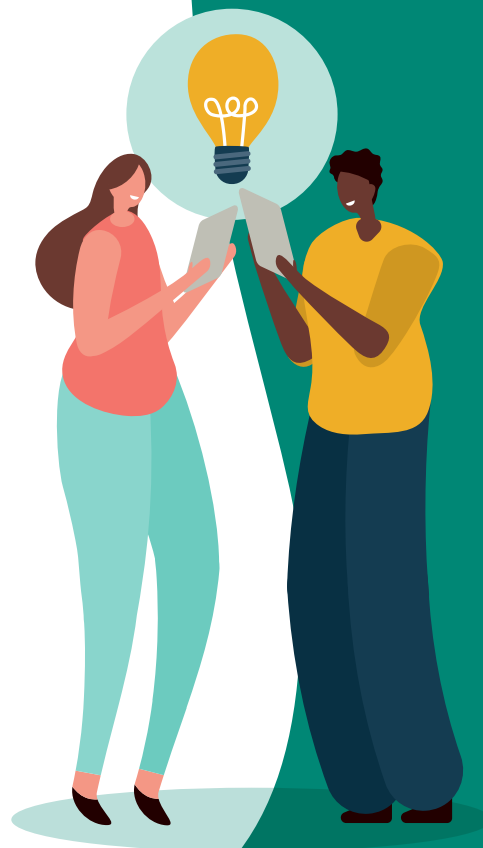
[S.M.A.R.T. Goals Worksheet](#)

[The GROW Model of Coaching and Mentoring - Skills From MindTools.com](#)

[Modern day mentoring: What distance mentoring looks like](#)

[How to be a Great Mentor | Kenneth Ortiz | TEDxBethanyGlobalUniversity - YouTube](#)

[No One is Talking to the Mentees | Victoria Black | TEDxTexasStateUniversity - YouTube](#)



## SECTION 9

# DO YOU HAVE questions ABOUT ANH ACADEMY MENTORING?

Mentoring at ANH Academy is coordinated by **Lauren McIntyre** (Research Uptake Manager) and **Dr Helen Harris-Fry** (Assistant Professor of Nutrition). For up to date information visit the mentoring pages on our website, and if you have any feedback or would like to talk to someone, please contact [anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk](mailto:anh-academy@lshtm.ac.uk).

At the annual **ANH Academy Week Research Conference**, there will be a special event to bring together the yearly mentee cohort, to network with one another and take part in a fun group-based activity. This will be in the format of a Zoom interactive meeting. Further details will be shared with mentees prior to the event.

**ANH  
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**Tufts**  
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