Making Connections
TRAINING BOOKLET FOR STUDENT MENTEES

A collaboration between:
Academics for Refugees–Macquarie University Node
Learning Skills, WriteWISE
Widening Participation Unit
Making Connections Student Mentee Training Booklet July 2018

The information in this booklet has been developed and written by the Making Connections Steering Committee of Macquarie University:

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July 2018

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About the **Making Connections** Program

We would like to warmly welcome you to the **Making Connections** program. This booklet provides information about the program, including the program aims, a Student Mentee Code of Conduct, information about the mentoring process and what you might discuss with your mentor.

**What is the Making Connections program?**

**Making Connections** is a mentoring program that has been designed to help you succeed at university. The program links you to an academic mentor: someone you can talk to for support and help. Your academic mentor can help you understand the complexities of studying at university, discuss any difficulties you experience, and share information and expertise with you. Your mentor will most likely be from your faculty, so he or she will be familiar with many of the challenges you might face.

In addition, you will be able to access one-on-one writing support with a WriteWISE Leader to discuss your writing assignments. WriteWISE Leaders are trained senior students with excellent writing skills who can assist you at any stage of the writing process.

**What does the program involve?**

Joining the program means that you:

- commit to one meeting per month with your mentor between August and November 2018 (you and your mentor may choose to extend this).
- attend debriefing sessions with other mentees to discuss how your mentoring sessions are going. These sessions will help us to understand what you need and make any changes that are appropriate.
- can make up to two appointments with a WriteWISE Leader for writing support (Weeks 3-12)

You can ask to change your mentor at any time during the program, for any reason.
More about the program

This new program has been created by the MQ Academics for Refugees network, in collaboration with the Learning Skills' WriteWISE program and the Widening Participation Unit. Funding through the LEAP Partnership Engagement Grant is appreciatively acknowledged. The evaluation of this program will determine future funding and potential expansion to support other student groups.

Thank you for participating and we look forward to learning and working with you.

Anina, Amanda, Rifaie & Phillipa, on behalf of the Making Connections team
Program aims

The program links students from a refugee background with an academic staff member (preferably in their home faculty), with the goal of providing support to master the complexities of university life and developing the knowledge required to succeed at their studies.

The program aims to assist you to:

- form a supportive bond with a friendly academic in your own Faculty
- feel more comfortable and at home at university
- be knowledgeable about university services and feel confident to use them
- develop your writing skills through individual consultations with a WriteWISE leader
- use the Library more actively through connection with Library and Learning Skills Unit staff

The program aims to increase the cultural awareness of academic staff and support staff, and to foster a culture of integrity, compassion, empowerment through best practice mentoring and continuous reflection and evaluation.
Program Touchstones

Mentees as capable learners

• Bring insights and experiences
• Bring strengths and knowledge
• Guide discussions

Connections with academics

• Be respectful
• Nurture and engage
• Reciprocate
• Connect regularly
• Share academic culture
• Build academic capital

Library as the hearth

• Library as a warm space
• Connect with Library and Learning Skills Unit staff
• Develop expertise in using library resources
• Develop writing skills through WriteWISE

Feeling at home at university

• Know where services are located
• Make connections with university services
• Flourish at university
Student Mentee Code of Conduct

The aim of this Code of Conduct is to ensure that you are clear about what the mentoring involves and can engage in appropriate discussion and behaviour. We provide these clear guidelines so that you know the conduct and behaviour that is expected.

Respect for privacy and confidentiality

Be mindful only to share personal information about your mentor with permission. Likewise, your mentor will not share personal information about you with their colleagues, family or friends without your permission.

Respect for culture and diversity

One of the aims of the program is cultural exchange. Respect must be shown for diversity, and it is not appropriate to engage in religious or cultural debates or criticisms about lifestyles. One of the reasons your mentor has volunteered for this program is because of an interest in diversity and other cultures.

Being reliable

Both mentors and mentees make a commitment to the mentoring relationship. Ensure you make a time to meet that is convenient to both you and your mentor. Please ensure you are on time and give notice if you need to change the mentoring time.

Contact outside mentoring sessions

You may exchange emails and mobile phone numbers with your mentor if you wish, and this will assist effective communication. Don’t contact your mentor by phone after 5pm or on weekends or email your mentor on weekends. We ask you check and reply to emails within two days.

Money and gifts

Small gifts such as a card, book, flowers or chocolates may be appropriate at the end of the mentoring, but don’t give expensive gifts to your mentor.
Referral to university services

Situations may arise where you need to seek help, or your mentor might suggest that you ask for assistance. As an adult you have the choice whether to seek help or not. An exception would be the situation where you may be at risk of harming yourself or other people, in which case the mentor is obliged to seek help on your behalf.

Social media

Don’t invite your mentor to join your Facebook page or Instagram. It is appropriate to invite your mentor on professional social media such as LinkedIn if you wish.

Attending debriefs

Each month we will hold a one-hour debrief with the mentee group where we check in with you about how mentoring is going. We expect you to attend and we encourage you to see this an opportunity to give the organisers feedback on how the program is going for you.

Voluntary program

This is a voluntary program. You are free to stop participating at any time with no fault or blame, although if you are willing, we would appreciate feedback on your reasons for ceasing the relationship.

Program support

Please don’t hesitate to contact Anina, Rifaie or Phillipa If you are having problems or feeling uncomfortable. We are here to support you have a productive and meaningful experience.

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<th>Signature</th>
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<tr>
<th>Name of Student mentee</th>
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This Code of Conduct is adapted from Crows Nest TAFE Outreach Mentoring Code of Conduct, 2012
The first meeting with your academic mentor

We have emailed you general information about your mentor and given you their email, and soon they will email you to arrange a meeting. We have tried where possible to match you with an academic from your own faculty. Your first meeting should take place in August and we encourage you to meet twice in August. You could meet in the Y3A cafe the Library cafe or another quiet place on-campus. We will give you coffee vouchers, so you can buy yourself and your mentor a coffee or tea.

At the first meeting you might find it useful to agree on discussion topics for your mentoring sessions. Topics might include:

- your goals and progress at university
- areas you want to work on and improve in the short and long-term
- time management and dealing with stress
- services at university
- tips on communicating with tutors, lecturers and staff.

You should also discuss meeting times and boundaries. We recommend you meet at the same time, day and place each month. It is good to discuss expectations around contact and email. For instance, be clear if you prefer email and do not want phone contact. We recommend no email contact on weekends.
Checklist: The first meeting

Your meeting should be relaxed and informal. You may like to try and cover the following areas in your first meeting:

- identify mentoring goals
- discuss the timeframe – August to November 2018 (with the possibility of extension)
- establish mentor role and responsibilities
- establish mentee’s role and responsibilities
- agree on frequency and place of meetings
- discuss the voluntary nature of the mentoring– no-fault, no blame if it does not work, but give it a fair go
- share some things about yourself if you like; about your family, where you have studied before you came to Macquarie
- discuss the education background of your mentor and why they chose to work at Macquarie University.

(Adapted from Cahir, Harvey, & Ambler, 2010, p. 17)

Subsequent meetings

It’s a good idea to work out a structure for your meetings that works for you both. It might look like this:

- discuss how things have been going
- review what has gone well and what has been challenging or hard
- look at what is coming up in the next month
- set a realistic mini goal for the month. Remember to set something achievable.
- review your longer-term goals.

Common discussion topics and concerns

- Cultural understanding
- Goal-setting
- Time management
- Wellbeing and coping with setbacks
- Education pathways and unit selection
Key points about mentoring

• This is a voluntary relationship. Either party can end the relationship if it is not working out. No fault-no blame applies if the relationship does not work out.

• Discussion should be guided by you, but your mentor will help if you’re not sure how to begin or what to talk about.

• Be reliable and consistent. Schedule meetings on the same time and day each month if you can.

• Mentoring can be therapeutic, but is not therapy or counselling.

• Each mentoring relationship is unique.

• Be fully there for the one hour of mentoring. Don’t take phone calls, text or check emails during your mentoring. Don’t have discussions with other people during this time either – your mentor has taken the time to be with you, so make the most of it!

• Talk, listen and explore – pauses and silences are OK.

• Don’t take it personally or blame your mentor if the first session is not very helpful or is uncomfortable. However, do contact Saya, Phillipa or Rifaie if you have any concerns.

• Don’t worry if you don’t feel an immediate connection with your mentor. Over time your connection will deepen.

• It’s fine to have email contact between sessions and it will strengthen your bond.

• Your goals will change over time. Setting mini goals is a good strategy.
Stages in the mentoring relationship

In any mentoring relationship, there are some key phases. Below, we outline these stages.

Meet and get to know each other

Define the relationship and set goals

Conduct regular meetings and provide support

End mentoring or re-negotiate to extend

Reshape the relationship
WriteWISE consultations

As part of the Making Connections program, you are entitled to two consultations with a WriteWISE Leader. WriteWISE Leaders are trained senior students with excellent writing skills who can assist you at any stage of the writing process. Here is all the information you need about this opportunity.

How can a WriteWISE leader help me?

A WriteWISE leader can:

- discuss your assignment with you
- help you brainstorm your assignment task
- talk you through key steps in the writing process
- suggest strategies for tackling research and referencing
- give you tips and advice for improving your writing
- encourage you when you’re finding writing difficult.

A WriteWISE leader can’t:

- proofread your assignment
- edit the content of your assignment
- give you advice relating to course content.
- complete an assignment on your behalf
- predict what grade an assignment will achieve

When can I see a WriteWISE leader?

Each student in the Making Connections mentoring program is entitled to 2 x 30-minute WriteWISE consultations in Session 2. WriteWISE leaders will be available from Week 3 (Monday 13 August) until Week 12 (Friday 2 November). Consultations will be available at selected times between 11:00am to 4:00pm (Monday—Friday).
How do I arrange a WriteWISE consultation?


You can also meet with a WriteWISE leader on a drop-in basis at the WriteWISE Desk. The Desk runs from 11:00am to 12:00pm and 2:00pm to 3:00pm (Monday—Friday). Just turn up at the Info Desk in the Library foyer; no booking is necessary!

Will my booked consultation be confirmed?

Yes. Your appointment will be confirmed via email. This email will also include location details for your consultation.

What do I need to do to cancel or reschedule my consultation?

Please use the links contained in your confirmation email to cancel or reschedule your consultation. You can also manage a booking by downloading it to your online calendar.

Who do I contact for further information?

Email the WriteWISE team at [learningskills@mq.edu.au](mailto:learningskills@mq.edu.au) (NB: put WriteWISE in the subject line). We’d love to hear from you.
**Goal Setting**

Set simple and achievable goals for Session 2. These are examples. They may be suitable for you, but you might write new ones that are relevant and important for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example Goals</th>
<th>Example Actions</th>
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<tr>
<td>Passing all your units of study</td>
<td>Attend all classes and tutorials unless sick.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Make a time to see your tutor to discuss the assessment.</td>
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<td>Improve writing skills</td>
<td>Book into WriteWISE sessions.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Allow time to write and then review your draft.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Improving referencing skills</td>
<td>Ask about and research your referencing style.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Learn how to use a referencing system e.g. Endnote.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Selecting appropriate units</td>
<td>Make a time to see a relevant staff member.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Coping with set-backs</td>
<td>Identify strategies to assist you to keep physically and mentally well e.g. regular exercise, diet, regular social contact, self-kindness.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asking a question in a lecture or tutorial</td>
<td>Practise asking questions with your mentor and friends.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Do it! Ask a question in a tutorial or lecture.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Giving a presentation in class</td>
<td>Learn how to use PowerPoint.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Practise your talk beforehand with a friend or your group.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Join a public speaking group or class.</td>
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Mentee debriefs

At the mentee debrief we will meet as a group and spend an hour reflecting on how the mentoring is going. The process usually goes like this:

- We discuss what has gone well or what is not going well, and any questions you might have. Everyone is encouraged to talk freely as these sessions are confidential. They are recorded but you will never be identified in any publication or forum.
- We summarise and reflect on positive and negative aspects of the program.

We strongly encourage you to attend the debriefs, as they help you to reflect on how things are going, and they help us to make any changes that might be needed. *Making Connections* is a pilot program, so suggestions are welcome. We are here to help you reflect on the experience and to answer or explore practical issues. Hopefully, the debriefs will assist you to grow and thrive as a mentee.

Program Evaluation

*As Making Connections* is a new program, we are keen to evaluate whether the program achieves its aims and how to improve the experiences of everyone involved. Associate Professor Amanda Wise will be overseeing the program evaluation and will be assisted by a student from the Social Research Sociology Unit.

We will be using the following evaluation strategies to evaluate the program:

- Speaking with mentors and mentees at debriefs where your stories and experiences of the program will be discussed. We would like to hear about any changes you make as a result of participating in the program. The debrief meetings will be taped and transcribed but please be assured that you will not be individually identified.
- A short survey of mentees at the start and end of the program

The material gathered in the evaluation will be analysed and written up into an evaluation report for the purposes of improving the program. This will not be available to the general public and will be used for internal program improvement purposes and to meet the requirements of the funding body.
Questions you might ask your mentor

Questions you might ask about your study

These are some suggestions to give you some ideas.

- I’m having difficulties with [something]. Can you suggest a solution?
- I don’t understand [something] about studying here. Can you explain?
- I notice that Australians [do or don’t do something]. Is this part of Australian culture?
- How can I start a conversation with a student in my class?
- I feel uncertain about speaking up in class or asking a question. How can I feel more comfortable doing that?
- I would like more help with [assignments, unit content, homesickness or something else]. Can you suggest a service that can help me?
- This is what I’d like to do in the future. What educational pathway should I follow? What units should I take?
- I received some feedback on an assignment. I’m not sure what the lecturer meant by it.
- I’m doing well in two of my units but having trouble in this one. Can you suggest any way that I can get help/improve?
- I seem to get all of my assignments due in the same week. How can I cope with that and still get them all done?

Questions you might ask to get to know your mentor

It takes time to get to know someone and build rapport and trust. Here are some questions that might help you get to know your mentor better.

- How long have you worked at Macquarie?
- What do you do here?
- What kinds of units do you teach?
- What is your educational background? (e.g. did you just study at one university or have you studied at several universities?)
- What do you like best about working at Macquarie?
- Have you worked at other universities?
• What countries have you visited? Was it for work or a holiday?
• Where were you born?
• Have you worked with refugee background students before?
• Do you have hobbies or sports you like to play or watch?
• What motivated you to sign up for the mentoring program?
• What is your favourite type of music?
• What challenges did you face as an undergraduate student?
University resources

The Widening Participation Unit – Refugee Transition Support
Building Y2A, Level 2, Hadenfeld Avenue
saya.hussain@mq.edu.au
Phone: 9850 7394
Drop-in centre every Tuesday from 9am-5pm. Free use of computer, printer, scanner, and study space.

Library Learning Skills WriteWISE Program
Two sessions are available to students as part of the Making Connections program. If extra sessions are needed please contact Carol, Robyn or Brenda at Learning Skills learningskills@mq.edu.au (put WriteWISE in the subject line).

Learning Skills Workshops
These one-hour workshops are free and available to all students. There is no need to book – just show up. They are all held in the Library on Level 4. Check out the schedule on the Workshop Calendar.

Learning Skills StudyWISE
StudyWISE is an online resource on starting university, study skills, writing assignments, and English language.

Academic Integrity Module
Learn all about academic integrity, plagiarism, and academic honesty in this short iLearn module.

Student Connect – Muse Building
Submit a question about anything at Ask MQ

Academic Advisors
- Faculty of Arts: 9850 6410
- Faculty of Business & Economics: be.mq.edu.au/advising or 9850 1050
- Faculty of Human Sciences: 9850 6360
- Faculty of Science and Engineering: 9850 8348
• Faculty of Medicine & Health Sciences: 9850 4535
• MUIC: 9850 5055

**Campus Wellbeing**
16 Wally’s Walk, Building C8A, Level 2
Phone: 9850 7497
campuswellbeing@mq.edu.au
For counselling about mental health, stress, anxiety, refer for financial assistance, tenancy advice, legal issues and student advocacy.
1800CAREMQ: 1800 2273 67 – 24-hour information and support service for Macquarie University students and staff

**Disability Services**
If you have a disability (physical or mental), you can register with disability services and receive additional support. To register, you need to complete an application form, provide specific documentation about the impact your health condition has on your studies, and meet with a disability advisor from Campus Wellbeing.
After you register, an advisor will develop an Individual Education Access Plan for you and implement 'reasonable adjustments'. These adjustments are changes to the learning environment/situation, so that you have equitable access to subject content and testing.

**Career and Employment Service**
Level 2, C7A MUSE Building
Phone. 9850 7372
careers@mq.edu.au
Employment advice and assistance with careers and resumes

**iLearn**
Please check the iLearn site for further resources on mentoring. This is also a place where you can ask questions about the program.
Macquarie University is a vibrant hub of intellectual thinkers, all working towards a brighter future for our communities and our planet.

A PLACE OF INSPIRATION
Macquarie is uniquely located in the heart of Australia’s largest high-tech precinct, a thriving locale which is predicted to double in size in the next 20 years to become the fourth largest CBD in Australia.

Our campus spans 126 hectares, with open green space that gives our community the freedom to think and grow. We are home to fantastic facilities with excellent transport links to the city and suburbs, supported by an on-campus train station.

RENOVED FOR EXCELLENCE
We are ranked among the top two per cent of universities in the world, and with a 5-star QS rating, we are renowned for producing graduates that are among the most sought after professionals in the world.

A PROUD TRADITION OF DISCOVERY
Our enviable research efforts are brought to life by renowned researchers whose audacious solutions to issues of global significance are benefiting the world we live in.

BUILDING SUCCESSFUL GRADUATES
Our pioneering approach to teaching and learning is built around a connected learning community: our students are considered partners and co-creators in their learning experience.

FIND OUT MORE
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