

N.B. This document relates to the 10 week Business Enterprise Model, but can be adapted to semester or full year programmes as required.

NOTES FOR BUSINESS MENTORS:

Business mentors work with small groups of up to 5 students over a 10-week period as they go through a business set-up experience – researching a business idea, then developing and selling their own products and services, to then wrap up the business and distribute any profits. Students will also visit their mentor's workplace to find out about their mentor's business and see first-hand how what they were learning in the classroom applies in the real world.

The role of the mentor is to be a sounding board and 'coach' the students through the process.

PLEASE NOTE: The mentor should not provide any financial assistance to their student group. If you are able to help students make connections or networks, or happen to be able to source something for a group's product please treat it as you would any other business transaction and support your group through the process of contacting people or sourcing materials as part of their learning experience. Along with the practical business knowledge and skills they will gain during the programme it is also an opportunity for students to develop confidence, communication and professional presentation skills. Encourage your students to behave and communicate in a business-like manner – this may require some examples and modelling.

We ask mentors to commit to a minimum of three face-to-face meetings with their student groups, with at least one of them being a meeting held at your workplace. Mentors generally find that 3 face-to-face connections is not enough and elect to catch up with their groups more regularly. The teachers you will be working with will provide you with the dates and times of their weekly classes – you are welcome to come into those classes whenever it suits you to catch up with your group, just let the teacher know that you're planning to come in. Alternatively, if it suits you and the students for them to come to your workplace for meetings please feel free to organise this, again just keep the teachers informed and cc them into any communications with the students.

Sometimes students can be reluctant to initiate contact with mentors, but you should be hearing from them via email at least weekly with a progress update. If you don't hear from them weekly, are not receiving replies to your messages or otherwise have any questions or concerns **please let the teachers know as soon as possible so this can be addressed**. Your teacher will also provide you with a checklist of due dates so you can keep an eye on where your group should be at.

Workplace visit

During the course of the programme please schedule a meeting with your group at your workplace. You may wish to do this more than once – this can be organised directly with your group but **please keep the teachers informed.**

Some ideas for what you can do during the workplace visit (this is usually around an hour during class time or at a time that suits you that has been pre-arranged):

- Have a business/catch up meeting with your students about their project and progress/issues
- Talk about your business and show them examples of what you do along the lines of the concepts of what they are learning (e.g. marketing plans/materials, invoices, spreadsheets, costings, point of sale presentation etc)
- Talk about your industry, business, customers and career paths.
- Talk to the students about their career aspirations and any advice you might be able to give them
- Introduce them to your colleagues and ask them to speak to the students about their jobs and career paths
- Take students on a tour around your workplace or a site visit of something you are working on
- Encourage the students to ask lots of questions

Health & Safety

Treat your students as you would any other visitors to your workplace. Ensure they are aware of any necessary H&S requirements and of their obligations. If you work in a higher-risk environment and they need to wear closed in shoes, hair tied back etc, please let them know in advance. Keep students at a safe distance from any hazardous areas – the opportunity to observe from a safe distance can be just as valuable as being in amongst it if you explain to the students what's going on – and why you can't get any closer!

As we are working with young people through this programme we also need to be mindful of our obligations under the Vulnerable Children's Act to keep students safe. Please read the Good Child Safety Practices sheet attached to the Memorandum of Understanding. Most of it is just common sense, but it's good to be mindful of these practices for the safety and wellbeing of the students, and yourself. Also please ask the teacher if there is anything you should be aware of in terms of students with extra needs or any potential behavioural issues.

If you would prefer to have a parent or teacher present during workplace visits please let the teacher know so this can be organised in advance. The school holds ultimate responsibility for the students including any disciplinary measures. As you will be working with smaller groups of students there have not been any issues to date, but as you get to know your students or **if you have any concerns or feel uncomfortable for any reason please speak to the teacher as soon as possible.**