

RCOphth Reverse Mentoring Scheme

What is reverse mentoring?

Traditional mentoring involves the education and sponsorship of junior employees by senior colleagues who have themselves already made career advances. However reverse mentoring inverts the paradigm with junior doctors mentoring the senior staff and in this instance with the aim of addressing differential attainment. This will involve inviting junior UK and International medical graduates from BAME backgrounds to be paired with our President, Vice President, senior committee leads and examiners.

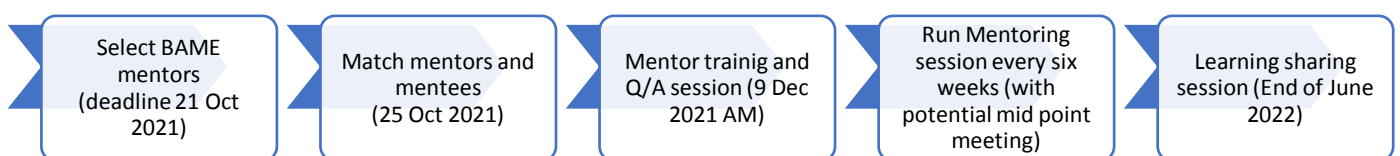
What are the benefits of such a program?

Similar reverse mentoring work has been introduced in other industries and organisations. There are envisaged benefits for the participating trainee mentors, the senior staff mentees, and at an organisational level. The scheme aims to embed the experiences of Black, Asian and minority ethnic team members within the leadership consciousness. It offers an opportunity to explore and challenge systematic biases, thereby promoting a more inclusive training culture.

In addition to effecting positive changes on an organisational level, the participating trainee mentors will also have the opportunity to learn from the experience and leadership journey of their paired senior educator mentee. Mentors will also develop their professional networks, gaining career development insights and a more intimate understanding of how our College works. We hope that this project will mirror the success of similar schemes in which participants valued the close relationships that form and lead to bi-directional learning. At HEE Yorkshire and Humber, similar work has already led to commitments, and action, in addressing inequalities in training. Differential attainment is now a priority item in our organisation's agenda and is a personal priority for our leaders.

How the scheme works

After recruiting mentors, a pairing exercise will be carried out to match them to RCOphth senior leadership mentees with compatible goals. We anticipate that mentor-mentee meetings will occur approximately every six weeks over a period of six months (four or five meetings) with each meeting lasting around 45 to 60 minutes.



Prior to the first mentoring meeting, there will be a 'kick-off' event where mentors will participate in mentoring training and get an overview of the scheme. This will also be an opportunity for mentors to meet one another to share their goals and questions.

During the mentoring period there will scope for the reverse mentors to share ideas and experiences during a mid-point review meeting.

At the end of the six-month reverse mentoring period, the project will culminate in a 'wrap-up' session where participants come together to reflect on what has been learned and achieved. You will have guidance throughout the process.

As far possible, our aim is to structure participation within your salaried 'work time' rather than asking that you sacrifice your personal time. By aiming to hold mentoring sessions six weeks apart, this should facilitate planning to use study or professional leave to participate within working hours. The College will provide you with a letter, from President Bernie Chang, to support your professional leave.

We recognise that given a high level of interest in this project we may not be able to pair every volunteer mentor in time. If there are more applicants than required for the mentee pool, we will select purely on the pairing exercise described above. For those we are unable to pair, we hope to offer further opportunity to participate in the differential attainment project, as our work moves into different areas.

To apply for this reverse mentoring program, please use the link below to complete a 'Mentor Profile' by 21 October 2021.

<https://healtheducationyh.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/rm>

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References:

1 Annoh, R., & Mensah, E. (2021). Lived experiences of UK Black Ophthalmology Trainees in the NHS. *Eye (London)*, 35(7), 1811-1814. doi:10.1038/s41433-021-01473-6

2 GMC Progression report. *Speciality exam pass rates for candidates in Ophthalmology for PMQ and ethnicity*

3 Woolf, K. (2020). Differential attainment in medical education and training. *BMJ*, 368. doi:10.1136/bmj.m339