General information

Q: Where can I find the recording of this session?

https://stemlearning.wistia.com/medias/27omm7mu8l

Q: How long does the mentoring programme go on for and are there fixed start and end dates?

Please see below for a table relating to the different cohorts inc. length of mentoring and relevant dates.

Cohort 1	Years 10 & 11 (or equivalent S3/S4, Year 11/12 NI)	6 weeks	8th Nov – 17th Dec 2021
Cohort 2			24th Jan – 4th Mar 2022
Cohort 3	Years 12 & 13 (or equivalent S5/S6, Year 13/14 NI)	10 weeks	24th Jan – 1st April 2022
Cohort 4			4th April – 10th June 2022

Q: Can I pick which cohort I would like to be involved with?

Yes, and you are free to participate in more than one cohort if you wish.

Q: How can we be alerted for recruitment deadlines for the next cohorts?

If you sign up on the Google form now and mark which cohorts you are interested in we will send out info to anyone registered for them.

Q: If you don't get picked for the first cohort then do we not attend the training on 26th October?

You would only know if you had been matched after attending the training on the 26th October, 5:30-6:45pm as matching will take place in the first week of November. If you do not get matched for this cohort you would be encouraged to offer to mentor the next cohorts if you can.

Live training for mentors will happen before every cohort starts so you would be welcome to join a later training session if you are not able to be a mentor for the first cohort.

Q: Can I get a hard copy or alternative copy of the sign-up form as I can't access Google applications?

Email London-hub@stem.org.uk and we will support you in signing up.

Q: Are all mentees interested in STEM activities or is there a chance to mentor anyone and show how exciting STEM is?

Schools have been advised to encourage all students within the relevant school years to sign up who may benefit from online mentoring therefore there may be a scenario where a student who is

not currently particularly interested in STEM signs up and a STEM Ambassador can help talk about the benefits of a career pathway in STEM.

Q: Is the scheme targeting any particular demographic, e.g., under-represented groups, or is it available to any student at any school?

It is available to any students at any school providing they fall within Years 10-13 (or equivalent).

Q: Will we be able to specify the regions we can mentor in? e.g. I'm based in Scotland and may not know all the answers to questions about the English school system for example

Every STEM Ambassador has to create a bio for the students so you could specify in your bio that you are most familiar with the Scottish school system.

Q: Will we be able to find out how a student has done after the mentoring programme has ended?

I'm afraid for GDPR purposes we would be unable to share non-anonymised information. STEM Ambassadors should feel reassured, however, that their involvement is highly likely to have a positive impact on the student and any aggregate evaluation data that we have collated following the conclusion of the programme we would be happy to share.

Q: Do schools have to register with Brightside in order for a mentee to approach selection? I already do some mentoring for year 11, 12 and 13's directly with one local school but I'm wondering if they'd be better off using Brightside as an education provider?

Schools should get in touch via students@stem.org.uk if they would like to put their students forward for this particular programme. Alternatively, they can share the mentee sign up form directly with their students.

STEM Ambassadors: platform & logging hours and mentor profile

Q: Do I need an up-to-date DBS and what should I do if mine is about to expire?

Yes you will need a current DBS. If yours is about to expire please contact your local hub to get it renewed https://www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassadors/local-stem-ambassador-hubs. If you are not sure of your local hub, contact stem-ambassadors@stem.org.uk.

Q: Please can you provide me with some support regarding logging my hours? Including how to input participating school details.

The best way to log your hours is via your dashboard on the STEM Ambassador portal. On the left-hand side, under 'Activities', click 'Add a past activity'. From there, you can fill out the activity details, including the type of activity (mentoring) and the number of hours you have done.

If you're having trouble logging your hours, you can revisit the induction, where it is explained in more detail, or contact your local hub who will be happy to help with this https://www.stem.org.uk/stem-ambassadors/local-stem-ambassador-hubs.

Q: What scheme should these activities fall under when I'm logging my hours on the STEM Learning platform?

The 'scheme' should be left blank, but the activity type is 'Mentoring'

Q: Can staff members at my organisation get involved if they are not yet a STEM Ambassador? How do they do this?

This programme is only open to STEM Ambassadors as mentors. Anyone else interested can sign up to be a STEM Ambassador at www.stem.org.uk and press register in the top right-hand corner. They probably won't have their DBS process finished in time for this cohort, but they can join future cohorts in the new year.

Q: Am I ok to be a mentor if I'm not a teacher?

Yes, you do not need to be a teacher or have any teaching experience. This programme is about mentors providing insight to students about the world of work, STEM careers and qualifications and spending time listening to the young person and helping them find answers to their questions.

Q: If your job is not directly STEM related but you work in a STEM company and industry, would it still be okay to mentor?

Yes, absolutely. You are representing different careers and promoting the fact many types of jobs are available in STEM companies

Q: I'm at the very start or towards the end of my career, can I still become a mentor? And will we receive help and support regarding how to talk about UCAS and personal statements etc.?

Everyone has something to give to young people whether they have years of experience in a career or have just started out. There is information on the Brightside platform (Bright Knowledge) to support your conversations or you can find articles on the internet to send to the young person that may be of interest. In addition, if you are finding it challenging to find answers to your mentees questions or want to get a second opinion feel free to send your query in to project support on the Brightside platform.

Brightside platform

Q: How can I access the Brightside platform?

Once you sign up via the Google form you will be sent a unique log in to the Brightside platform to create your profile. This will be between the 21st – 25th October so you receive it ahead of the training session on 26th October, 5:30-6:45pm.

Q: Do you use our STEM Learning profile for matching or is it a new one we need to create with Brightside?

You need to create a new profile on the Brightside platform. You could copy and paste your STEM Ambassador one, but you may want to create something more tailored for young people i.e., with less acronyms and more info about hobbies outside of work.

Q: Can I use my LinkedIn profile for my Brightside profile?

You could copy and paste your LinkedIn profile, but you may want to create something more tailored for young people i.e., with less acronyms and more info about hobbies outside of work.

Q: I took part in the first Brightside mentoring scheme. Can I use the same profile and login details?

Yes, you can use the same profile and log in details. However, it may be worth reviewing your profile to make sure it is suitable for the project aim and age group.

Q: Can I be involved in more than one mentoring scheme at the same time with Brightside?

Yes, do feel free to take part in multiple projects at the same time in line with your capacity.

Q: What's the guidance around response times to messages from students? Can I respond outside working hours?

Yes, you can respond at whatever time suits you. Obviously the sooner you respond the better for the young person. We advise that you respond within 3 days of the young person sending you a message. If you need more time to respond send your mentee a holding message so that they are aware that you've seen their message.

Q: Does the Brightside platform send an email notification when there's a message from a student?

Yes.

Q: What is the time commitment per week and does this change depending on how many mentees I am matched with?

We advise that your time commitment does not exceed 1.5 hours per week, but this is for a mentor who would be mentoring the maximum of 3x young people.

Q: Can I ask how Brightside as a charity is funded?

Brightside is funded through Collaborative Partnership Agreements with a broad portfolio of partners that include businesses, universities and charities. Brightside works with nearly 80 partners a year. Occasionally Brightside receives grant funding for very specific programmes e.g., Schools Network.

Accessing training and support

Q: How can I sign up to receive the Brightside training and become a mentor?

Once you sign up via the Google form you will be sent a unique log in to the Brightside platform to create your profile.

Q: Are there alternative dates for the training?

There will be a recording of the training session made available. When you sign up on the Google Form you will be asked whether you can attend in person or would like the recording. There will be future training sessions for the cohorts in the new year.

Q: How can I get support whilst I'm mentoring? What happens if I have a problem or question during my mentoring?

If you require support or have any issues, please get in touch with Brightside via project support on the platform.

Q: Will Brightside provide some conversation topics to help with what to write about? What type of conversations would we be having with the students?

Yes, Brightside will provide you with a mentoring guide which includes conversation topics as well as send you communications with the conversation topics whilst you are mentoring as a reminder. The types of conversations that you'll be having with the mentees depends on the project model (Sector Insight/ HE explore), come along to the mentor training to hear more about the specific conversations you'll be having for the project you are available to mentor for.

Q: Can we support students on writing their CVs and/or personal statements?

Yes, you can provide students with guidance around CVs, personal statements and other applications.

Q: Are there a list of topics we need to cover as a mentor?

There are suggested topics to cover that will be in the mentoring guide that you'll receive before the mentoring starts.

Q: During mentoring, can I provide named examples of the types of companies which work in the sectors in which they are interested in?

Yes, providing this information would be useful for the mentees!

Matching process

Q: What do students see when they are looking to pick a mentor to be matched with? What information do I need to provide for this matching process?

You'll provide information around your area of expertise in STEM, educational background and hobbies and interests. We recommend mentors upload a photo of themselves as well. Mentees will see all of this information to be able to make an informed selection.

Q: How many Mentees are expected to be assigned to one Mentor? Can I specify how many mentees that I feel I can support?

For our programme mentors can be assigned to no more than 3x students at a time. You may have the option to specify if you would like a maximum of 1 or 2 mentees. However, this option may not be provided if there are more mentees than expected taking up the mentoring. If you have any issues during the mentoring and would like to further discuss your capacity please feel free to get in touch via project support.

Q: Is mentor experience taken into account when matching mentors with mentees?

As mentees select their own mentor and there is no obligation to share if this is your first time mentoring or if you have done this before in your profile, it is unlikely that mentoring experience will play a large role in mentees selection of mentors.

Q: Does the matching process cover if you wish to deal specifically with science or engineering or maths etc.?

The matching questions will ask you what area of STEM that you have particular experience and knowledge of, but this does not mean that only mentees that are interested in the same area will be able to pick you. The mentoring guide should provide you with adequate guidance to support your mentees regardless of their interests.