MAKING THE MOST OF CHEVENING MENTORING

Guidance for participants
CONTENTS

OVERVIEW .............................................................................................................................................3
GETTING STARTED ..................................................................................................................................4
  Step by step instructions ..........................................................................................................................4
  (a) ALUMNI: To become an alumni adviser or guide ..............................................................................4
  (b) CURRENT SCHOLAR/FELLOWS or ALUMNI: To find an alumni adviser or guide ............................4
WHAT KIND OF ‘MENTORING’ DOES THIS SCHEME INVOLVE? ......................................................6
  What we expect from you ..........................................................................................................................6
FINDING A MENTOR OR GUIDE ............................................................................................................7
  Top tips for finding a mentor ....................................................................................................................8
BEING AN ALUMNI ADVISER ..................................................................................................................9
QUESTIONS, ISSUES AND FEEDBACK ................................................................................................10
CONCLUSION .............................................................................................................................................10
OVERVIEW

One of our aims as a programme is to facilitate alumni to scholar, alumni to fellow, and alumni to alumni contact for the purpose of advice and knowledge sharing.

Participating in the Chevening Alumni Advisers Scheme is a great opportunity to make good use of the wealth of expertise and experience within the Chevening Alumni community. It should be a beneficial experience for both parties, bringing personal and professional growth.

This guide is designed to help you whether you are looking for advice, or want to become an alumni adviser.

Please note that we are running the adviser scheme through our exclusive community platform Chevening Connect. Matches will not be made by the Chevening Secretariat.

“If you light a lamp for someone it will also brighten your own path.” – Buddhist proverb
GETTING STARTED

How it works

Alumni can register on Chevening Connect as an adviser (mentor) or to seek advice (mentee). Current scholars and fellows will only be able to use the system to seek advice (mentee).

Step by step instructions

(a) ALUMNI: To become an alumni adviser or guide

- Register on Chevening Connect. Not sure how to do this? Take a look at the Access guide.
- Tick the ‘Willing to be a mentor’ option during registration and select what your mentoring preferences are:

![Hello Aba]

Get started

(b) CURRENT SCHOLAR/FELLOW or ALUMNI: To find an alumni adviser or guide

- Register on Chevening Connect. Not sure how to do this? Take a look at the Access guide.
- Go to the ‘Directory’ tab and search under the ‘Willing to help’ criteria to find willing mentors
TIP: narrow down your search by using other search criteria such as, how the alum is willing to help, subject area studied, country of origin, industry type, current location, or current employment by ticking the boxes you are interested in.

Once you begin communicating in a mentoring relationship, you can continue to send, receive, and monitor mentoring messages through your Chevening Connect mailbox:

Please note: We keep the mentoring relationship confidential. It won’t show up on your profile.
WHAT KIND OF ‘MENTORING’ DOES THIS SCHEME INVOLVE?

Scholar/Fellow to alumni advising will usually cover questions about university experience, accommodation, being a Chevening Scholar or Fellow, subject areas, and moving away from the home country to live and study in the UK. Any other topics of conversation may also be answered, at the mentor’s discretion.

Alumni to alumni advising will usually be initiated where the alumni mentee wants to find out more about a particular career path or industry, or for advice on how to advance within a particular sector.

Unlike traditional mentoring, this scheme does not have strict requirements. However, there are some expectations around it that you should be aware of as a participant.

What we expect from you

1) If you volunteer to be a mentor, you should ensure that you are able to dedicate time to assisting your mentee and answering their questions without long delays.
2) By volunteering to be a mentor, you agree to be contacted by people looking for advice.
3) Mentors do not have to accept every mentorship request they receive – both sides need to agree a match, but do send a response to each request.
4) Communications should always be polite and respectful.
5) This is a private relationship, so unless the other party agrees to you sharing, do keep the details of your communications confidential.
6) There is no set timeframe for this alumni adviser scheme. We want it to be flexible to suit the needs of both parties. Ensure you agree in your initial communications how long you will be corresponding, and agree how and when you will end the mentoring.
7) Current scholars and fellows are expected to comply with the terms of their Chevening Award, and the conditions of their UK visas and should not use this scheme to seek advice on how to avoid their obligations.
8) Be respectful of one another’s time. If you arrange a time to speak, be punctual.
9) However, be understanding if plans have to change – student life and professional life can bring unexpected situations that interfere with even the best laid plans.
10) Do use the mentoring message box (not LinkedIn or Facebook) and log on to Chevening Connect regularly to check and reply to new messages promptly.
FINDING A MENTOR OR GUIDE

We have put the power in your hands to find your own mentor or adviser. Please use that power responsibly. Here are suggestions for how to find a mentor.

1) **Search** the alumni directory on Chevening Connect and identify possible mentors. Please do not request mentoring from an alumnus who has not signed up to be a mentor. Respect their decision.

2) When searching, **think** carefully about what you want advice on and what your goals are for the mentoring experience.

3) **Be realistic.** You may not find a perfect match but all Chevening alumni can advise on the experience of living and studying in the UK, and progressing their careers afterwards. So be flexible and open-minded in matching to your criteria.

4) Send a mentoring **request** message to your preferred mentor, but do keep it short – no more than two or three paragraphs (150 words maximum) so that a busy person can review it quickly. Include a bit of background about yourself, explaining why you are contacting them and why you think they would be a good mentor for you.

5) **Use follow up** messages to establish whether this would be a good mentoring match. Discuss how much time you and your adviser can give to the mentoring relationship and how you will communicate with each other. If you are both keen, try and arrange a date and time for a face to face conversation (online or in person).

6) **Be confident** in telling the other person if you do not believe this would be a good match, but do explain why, and thank the potential mentor for their time in interacting with you. If the alumnus decides it is not a good match, still thank them for their time, and move on.
Top tips for finding a mentor

• Make sure your subject heading is ‘Request for mentoring’.

• It is fine to contact more than one alumnus at once, but we recommend no more than three.

• The best way to ensure a good match is to do your research before contacting a potential adviser.

• Do not make a mentorship request just to ask for a job or internship.

• Make sure you check your Chevening Connect inbox regularly for replies.

• You have approached the alumnus, so be eager to accept advice and be positive about constructive feedback.

“Successful people never reach their goals alone” – Anonymous
BEING AN ALUMNI ADVISER

What will you gain from registering to be a mentor?

**Enhanced skills**: The skills involved in being an adviser include leadership and management, coaching/development, and influencing.

**Share experience**: You will share with others your knowledge, experience and wisdom about postgraduate study in the UK, and advancing in your career.

**Give back**: Giving back is a part of the Chevening programme, and this is a simple way to do it. You can help someone who is starting on an academic or professional journey, and be involved in their success. As well as personal satisfaction, it can enhance your professional profile.

**Gain new contacts**: And although your mentee may be a new scholar or fellow, or junior to you in your industry, they have contacts they can introduce you to who may become a useful resource for you.

**Top tips for being an effective adviser**

- We recommend you say in your profile summary how many people you are willing to be in touch with as an adviser.
- You can change your ‘Willing to help’ status at any time through your profile settings, for example, if you have reached your maximum number of mentees.
- Remember to switch your ‘Willing to help’ preferences back on when you are able to accept new mentees.
- Be clear about what you can offer, in time and in information, and what you are not willing to discuss or do. This should be an honest and open relationship.
- Give constructive feedback to your mentees, but always keep it professional and be sensitive to the other person’s feelings, especially as words can be misinterpreted in online communications.

Unless you have indicated that you are willing to open doors at your company, you are not expected to offer jobs or internships to your mentee.
QUESTIONS, ISSUES AND FEEDBACK

Please contact us with any questions about this scheme. If you have any issues or complaints about the behaviour of your mentor or mentee, email alumni@chevening.org with details of the issue and we will investigate.

Please also share your feedback with us on how you find this new style of alumni advising.

CONCLUSION

Cheveners are bright, enthusiastic, and interesting people, so have fun and enjoy yourself too! We hope that you have a valuable experience, and perhaps make new friends along the way.