

# HORIZONS WALES MENTOR STANDARDS & POLICIES

Ensuring students receive the best from our trusted mentors

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## OVERVIEW

Horizons Wales is committed to supporting young adults from West Wales into the career path of their choice. The purpose of this document is to inform our trusted mentors of our values, standard practices for communicating with students and to impart our advice on how to give the best advice to inspire our eager students.



## SAFE COMMUNICATION

### All Communication

When communicating with students via all means it is our standard practice to:

- Refer to yourself and the student on first-name terms.
- Not request personal details such as full name, age, address or other means of identification.
- Use pseudonyms to protect any students who wish to remain anonymous.
- Do not exchange personal details or seek to communicate outside of the Horizons Wales framework.
- Communicate under the supervision of a Horizons Wales trustee or a prescribed member of school staff.
- Always abide by the Horizons Wales Safeguarding Policy



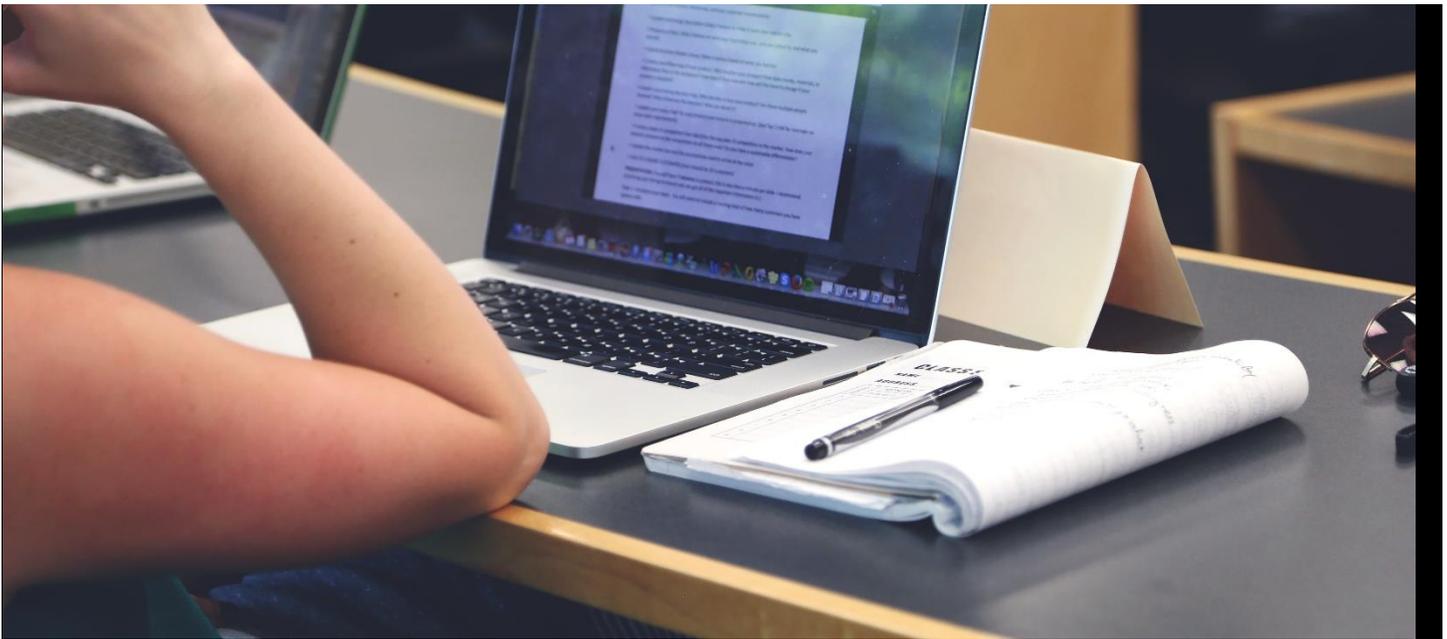
## GIVING ADVICE

### General advice about your sector

**i** *How do I give advice which will make a difference to this student?*

When talking to a prospective student about their subject area, it can be difficult to know what to discuss. Below is our summary of the best topics you can discuss with a student, based on student feedback!

- **Your experiences** along the path you took from school to university and briefly to where you are now. Knowing the challenges you faced along the way and your advice to deal with them can be some of the most inspiring, specialist advice you can give a budding student.
- **A day in the life.** For example, a student wishing to study law with the view to becoming a barrister, with little understanding of what exactly a barrister does in their day-to-day life, getting a breakdown of real-life projects you might be working on can be invaluable.
- **Suggestions of good work experience opportunities.** Sometimes students can face barriers in gaining the ideal and most sought after work experience opportunities. Suggestions of work experience opportunities which you would consider useful for gaining the skills needed to enter your field can prove useful. Even if you don't have any insider tips, discussing the skills you require in your workplace, work experience in general can be a good way of motivating students to take ownership over their future!
- **Suggestions of relevant wider reading.** According to Oxford professors, the number one thing they look for in their prospective students is a motivation to study their subject. This is exemplified by demonstrating wider reading and genuine enthusiasm. Don't be afraid to pass on interesting examples and tips of where to read more!



## Personal statement & UCAS support

**i** *If a student asks you to read their personal statement, it can be difficult to know what help they're expecting. It will have been made clear to them that we do not offer a free professional writing service so don't get drawn into any kind of plagiarism. Instead try and follow some of our pointers below on how to better refine it to your specific field.*

When editing or discussing the personal statement, try not to dwell on grammatical or spelling errors, even though it's helpful to point them out. Instead, try to focus on imparting subject-specific subject matter. Here's a couple of things to look out for and useful tips you can share:

- Look out for **subject specific spelling errors**.
- Point out any **misinterpretations** of subject specific matter and any bold or dubious statements.
- Pass on **recent developments** and themes which are highly topical in your field and tips on where to read about them further e.g. Ted talks or recent news articles.
- Highlight their **best experiences** and how they might better demonstrate the skills they gained. Equally point out anything which is irrelevant.
- Point out any **skills they need in their field** of choice which they've failed to exemplify.



## Interview Preparation Support

**i** *We probably won't ask you to give advice on interviews unless you have interviewed for a similar course or at the same institution, or if you have experience of course admissions.*

We believe the best interview advice is certainly a face-to-face practice interview. Therefore we hope our mentors will let us know when they are available to offer this advice. Without being present, we think it is better to simply pass on some of these good tips:

- Share your experience of the interview structure and question style so the student knows what to expect.
- Ask open ended questions about current affairs in your field and talk through their ideas. This will help your student become more confident in discussing their subject with an experienced individual.
- Discuss the skills and values which are paramount to your sector and ask how the student has exemplified them in the skills section of their personal statement.
- Promote the 'STAR' (Situation, Task, Action, Result) system for answering competency-based questions.

## HORIZONS WALES CORE VALUES



### APPROACHABLE

*We have an open door to any student from West Wales looking for support and guidance with their career. We will always be friendly, and open to any questions.*



### IMPARTIAL

*Provide informed and objective advice and never attempt to influence a student's choices in accordance with opinions or views which are unsubstantiated. We also will never make a decision for a student, we will only ever offer advice.*



### PROFESSIONAL

*Always provide advice which is of a consistent standard, is your genuine views as a mentor and is given with the best interests of the student as the ultimate priority.*



### INTEGRITY

*Always act in accordance with the student's rights, wishes and our safeguarding policies. Our work and all outcomes must always be 100% transparent.*

