

SPECIALIST PEER MENTORING PROGRAM



Program Information

NB: We will be using both identity first and person first language as we acknowledge that preferences with language can vary amongst individuals.

What is the Specialist Peer Mentor Program?

The Specialist Peer Mentor Program (SPMP) is for any student on the Autism Spectrum who would like to participate. The SPMP is available for both new and ongoing students throughout their studies at UON. The program can assist in navigating the challenges that University can entail to ensure the best possible University experience. The Mentor team is made up of current UON students who are passionate and dedicated to helping support other students and sharing their own wealth of university experience. Mentors are friendly, approachable and reliable. Mentors and Mentees meet up on a fortnightly basis, this can be via zoom or at a comfortable place on campus.

Social Groups

There are two social groups running fortnightly via zoom or on campus. The social groups are for mentees involved in the program to make connections with other students, share interests and knowledge and discuss shared experiences of Autistic students. Students are welcome to attend the social groups on a drop in basis and do not have to stay for the full two hour duration. There is no expectation to participate in activities or discussion. Mentors can also attend the social groups. Your mentor can provide more information on what is involved and how to participate at your first meeting.

Why was the program developed?

The Specialist Peer Mentor Program was developed in response to the limits in traditional academic supports for students on the Autism Spectrum and was guided by the Curtin University Specialist Peer Mentor Program and research demonstrating the benefits of providing individualised and flexible support on an ongoing basis [1].

The SPMP acknowledges the Neuro-typical dynamic of the traditional University structure and aims to provide an inclusive service that recognises the challenges this structure may present for its students.

[1] Siew, C. T., Mazzucchelli, T., Rooney, R., & Girdler, S. (2017). A specialist peer mentoring program for university students on the autism spectrum: A pilot study. PLoS ONE, 12. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0180854>

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Mentee Consent Form

Appointment of advocate and disclosure of information

About

The University of Newcastle, a body corporate established under section 4 and 5 of the University of Newcastle Act 1989 (NSW) (University/we/us), is pleased to offer peer mentoring services to its students via the Specialist Peer Mentor Program (Mentor Program). The Mentor Program is run by the University's 'AccessAbility' team.

Collection of information

To participate in the Mentor Program, the University will need to collect and record some personal information about you. This information is primarily needed to assess the areas that you may need support with while at University.

Participating in the Mentor Program, and providing your personal information to us in connection with the Mentor Program, is voluntary. However, if you do not provide certain personal information to us, we may not be able to allow you to participate in the Mentor Program.

Confidentiality

All of your personal information collected by the University for the purpose of the Mentor Program will:

1. be managed pursuant to University's Privacy Management Plan (copy here: [Privacy Management Plan](#)); and
2. only be provided to those persons employed or otherwise engaged by the University on a 'need to know' basis (for example, the Mentor Program Coordinator and your assigned mentor).

We may disclose your information to other persons or entities if:

1. required or permitted by law (for example, if the information is subpoenaed by a Court or if a failure to disclose the information would place you or another person at risk); or
2. you have consented to the disclosure (for example, if you agree that we can provide your information to a medical professional, your parent or your employer).

Generally, the University maintains files for each participant in the Mentor Program for a minimum of 5 years.

Access

You may be able to access and/or correct the personal information we maintain in your file pursuant to the University's Privacy Management Plan. The Mentor Program Coordinator will be able to help you with a request.

Reasonable Adjustment Plan

As part of your involvement with AccessAbility, a 'Reasonable Adjustment Plan' may be developed to assist you while at University. The Reasonable Adjustment Plan is likely to include your personal information and other sensitive or confidential information. From time to time, it may be helpful for your assigned mentor (or other University staff) to have access to your Reasonable Adjustment Plan for the purposes of the Mentor Program.

You can choose whether you would like your assigned mentor to have access to your Reasonable Adjustment Plan, and you can withdraw your consent at any time.

Advocate

You may wish to nominate a person to be your advocate for the purposes of the Mentor Program. Your advocate can be any person you trust and is generally someone who understands your particular circumstances. It could be your parent, other relative, friend, caseworker or other trusted person.

Your advocate cannot (unless they also have appropriate legal authority) make decisions for you or on your behalf, but they can help us understand you and your needs so that you can get the most out of the Mentor Program.

You are not required to appoint an advocate to participate in the Mentor Program and you can withdraw your consent for a person to be your advocate at any time.



Consent to use and disclosure

I, _____ (print full name) hereby acknowledge and agree that:

1. I have read and understood this Mentee Consent Form.

2. I: (mark and complete as appropriate)

Consent to my assigned mentor being provided with my Reasonable Adjustment Plan.

Do not consent to my assigned mentor being provided with my Reasonable Adjustment Plan.

3. I: (mark and complete as appropriate)

Do not wish to nominate a person to be my advocate for the purpose of the Mentor Program.

Nominate the following person to be my advocate for the purpose of the Mentor

Program (Advocate):

Name: _____ (print full name)

Relationship to you: _____ (e.g. parent, partner, friend)

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

4. If I have nominated an Advocate in paragraph 3 above, I consent to:

(a) the University providing information about me (including personal, sensitive and confidential information) and my participation in the Mentor Program, to my Advocate via any medium (including verbally, in writing or electronically); and

(b) the University receiving information about me (including personal, sensitive and confidential information) from my Advocate via any medium (including verbally, in writing or electronically).

5. I will provide notice to the Mentor Program Coordinator if I wish to revoke or vary the consent in paragraphs 2, 3 and/or 4 above.

Student Signature: _____

Student ID: _____

Date: _____



Mentee Intake Form

General Information

Full name:

Preferred name:

Student number:

Age:

Birth date (DD/MM/YYYY):

Gender:

Pronouns (he, him, she, her, they, them, etc):

Home address:

Phone number:

Email address:

Preferred contact method: Phone Text Email

Education

What is the highest level of education you have completed?

High School

Diploma

TAFE

Bachelors Degree

Postgraduate Qualification

Current degree studying:

How many years have you studied at University?

Years

Interests and Goals

Goals: (Examples: join social groups, learn a new skill, develop study habits)

Areas of interest or hobbies: (Examples: sports, crafting, gaming, physics)

Health Information

When were you diagnosed with Autism?

Are there any other health conditions/diagnosis that you would like your mentor to be aware of?

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Do you have a current psychologist? Yes No

How would someone know if you are becoming anxious, stressed or upset? (Examples: fidgeting, becoming quiet)

What methods do you use to calm yourself if you are anxious, stressed or upset? (Examples: going for a walk, talking things through with someone)

What can others do to help you if you are anxious, stressed or upset? (Examples: regular mental health check ins, offer to change the environment)

Areas of Impact

Please tick the areas that may be challenging or that you are interested in getting support with. This will enable your mentor to understand your individual needs and provide support in the required areas.

Flexibility and Change

Example: Uncomfortable with change, difficulty adapting to new situations.

Social

Example: Joining social groups and clubs (e.g. chess club, drama society), making friends.

Sensory Function

Example: Sensitivity to loud noises, crowded areas, fluorescent lighting, bright colours.

Housing

Example: Housing arrangements, finding accommodation.

Transport

Example: Lengthy travel via public transport, depend on lifts from others to/from university.

Planning and Organisation

Example: Developing a study plan, balancing study with work, social commitments and leisure activities.

Communication

Example: Expressing thoughts, staying on track, asking for help.

Memory and Learning

Example: Missing assessment due dates, difficulty remembering appointments, assessment items being unclear.

Focus

Example: Maintaining attention, procrastination, staying motivated.

Finding work

Example: Interest in finding employment.

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