



## Association of Women Solicitors

*Essential for Success*

# AWS MENTORING SCHEME MENTOR DOCUMENTATION

Thank you for contacting the Association of Women Solicitors mentoring scheme. We have prepared this documentation to explain further how the scheme works. Please read this document in conjunction with the mentee documentation.

### What is mentoring?

Mentoring is a one-to-one non-judgemental relationship in which an individual (the mentor) voluntarily gives of his/her time to support, advise or encourage another person (the mentee). The AWS mentoring scheme offers an opportunity for mentees to have two conversations with a mentor to discuss specific issues.

### What is expected of a mentor?

Mentors agree to:

- contact a mentee within 2 weeks of receiving her contact details;
- have a first conversation with the mentee;
- have a follow-up conversation with the mentee if this is considered beneficial;
- keep all information received via the scheme in strict confidence; and
- fill in the evaluation form (which does not request details of particular mentees) to help the AWS to improve the scheme.

### What is not expected of a mentor?

The AWS makes it clear that mentors do not offer work experience, training contracts, job placements or psychological counselling. We also state that this is not a developmental mentoring scheme offering long-term support, but rather is designed to provide two conversations to target a specific issue.

### Volunteering as a mentor

You will receive a form to fill in with your professional background and your areas of expertise. The information you supply is kept in a database until a mentee makes a request for the type of advice which could be provided by that particular mentor. You may receive one or two queries a year. Mentors often tell us how satisfying it is to help another women solicitor and to give something back to the profession.

### What happens next?

When a mentee makes a request for advice which you might be able to provide, the scheme administrator will contact you to ask whether you are available to speak to that mentee. If so, the administrator will forward the mentee's C.V. and request to you.

### What should I do next?

Please contact the mentee, within 2 weeks of receiving her contact details, to set up a suitable date and time for the first conversation.

### The first and follow-up conversations

These are usually done by phone and can last up to an hour. We state in our documentation that mentors are not trained consultants but rather are volunteers who give their time generously. Mentors may speak from their own personal and professional experience or from experience gained through managing others. Where for example a mentor returned to work after a career break, the mentor may be able to advise on how she managed the transition, how she negotiated her return to the office, how difficult she found it and whether she could have made it any easier. A single conversation may be all that is required, but it is a matter for the mentor and the mentee together to decide whether a follow-up conversation would provide further benefits.

### Evaluative study

After a few months you will be sent a form that will ask you for an anonymous evaluation of the scheme. Please complete it and return it in the stamped-addressed envelope provided.

Most of all, *thank you* for volunteering to be a mentor. It really does make a difference.