

About mentor support at SLU

Mentor support can be offered students who, due to a disability, find it difficult to plan and structure their studies independently. The purpose of the support is to help students develop effective techniques and strategies, enabling them to become more independent in their studies.

The need for support varies between individuals and may also change from one situation to another. Students may, for example, need support with:

- Setting clear short- and long-term goals and sub-goals.
- Developing the ability to plan, structure, and organise their studies.
- Reviewing the syllabus, course instructions, reading list, and schedule.
- Prioritizing course content and study tasks.
- Understanding information, instructions, and assignments.
- Getting started with and/or completing assignments.
- Navigating digital platforms, such as Canvas or Ladok Student.
- Finding strategies when motivation is low.
- Following up on and evaluating planning and study work.

Getting started with mentorship

Mentor support is a collaboration between two people – a student and a mentor. The collaboration begins with a start-up meeting, which can vary in format. Often, the student and mentor meet with the coordinator either on campus at SLU or in a digital Zoom meeting. We discuss what mentorship entails, and both the student and the prospective mentor can get to know and understand each other. Ideally, it is a good match, and the mentor-student pair will continue to meet on their own.

The student and mentor have great freedom to design their collaboration. It is important that both parties understand the expectations and feel that the arrangement works. Openness, clarity, and communication are crucial for a successful partnership.

Time limits

At the start of the mentorship, you agree on different time limits:

- The mentorship is initially set for a limited period. It may cover a specific part of a course, an entire course, a semester, or an academic year.
- Either party may choose to end the mentorship early, for any reason. If so, contact the coordinator.
- If both the student and mentor wish to extend the collaboration, it may be possible. Contact the coordinator to discuss.
- The mentorship covers an average of 1 hour per week. The time is arranged according to need and what suits both the student and mentor.
- The mentor may need time for preparation. Talk to the coordinator about what applies.

Important regarding meeting times

Scheduled meeting times should be respected and cancelled as early as possible in case of inability to attend. This applies to both parties.

- It is a good idea to schedule the next meeting at the end of each session – or confirm that the time and place of the next meeting still work if you have a standing agreement.
- If the student fails to show up or cancels late, the mentor's time is considered spent.
- If the student cancels or misses several meetings, the mentor should contact the coordinator.
- If the mentor cancels or misses meetings, the student should contact the coordinator.

Structure and content of the meetings

To get the most out of the mentorship, both parties should come well-prepared to the meeting.

- It can be helpful if the student informs the mentor in advance about what they would like to address during the meeting.
- One format could be to go through the priorities for the coming week and then follow up and plan again the following week.
- You may also have meetings with different focus areas, such as goals, motivation, or study techniques.
- Make check-ins and have a constructive dialogue about how the collaboration is working. Do you want to continue in the same way or make changes? Work together to make the mentorship as effective as possible.

Responsibilities of the student

- To be well-prepared and bring what is needed to make each meeting with the mentor valuable.
- To reflect and write down what you want help with before your meetings.
- To be active between meetings by trying out the tools and strategies agreed upon with the mentor.
- To contact the coordinator if problems arise or if you have questions regarding the mentorship.

Responsibilities of the mentor

- To sign a confidentiality agreement and not share any information about the student with outsiders. The exception is that the mentor may consult the coordinator, who is also bound by confidentiality.
- To spend one hour reviewing the Mentor's Handbook – and send a few short reflections to the coordinator, as agreed.
- To come well-prepared to the meetings with the student.
- To follow through on the tasks agreed upon in your role as a mentor.
- To contact the coordinator if problems arise or if you have questions.

What is not included in mentor support?

- Responsibility for the student's studies.
- Providing answers to course assignments.
- Thesis supervision or extra teaching.
- Proofreading or reviewing written content.
- Basic instruction in Swedish or academic writing.
- Therapeutic conversations.
- Housing support or personal assistance.

Materials to use in the mentorship and studies

Here you find links to materials that may be helpful for both student and mentor:

- The Mentor's handbook: [Välkommen som mentor \(spsm.se\)](https://spsm.se)
- Tips on developing study strategies: [Develop your study strategies](#)
- Support services at SLU: [Support for students | Studentwebben](#)

Decide on meeting place and communication methods!

Finally, it is important to clarify practical matters. Both the student and the mentor should have a clear understanding of expectations and responsibilities. Decide on:

- How will we communicate – by phone, chat, text message, or email?

- When, where, and how will we hold our mentoring meetings?

- Who is responsible for booking a meeting room or sending an invite for a digital meeting?

- How do we notify each other if we are delayed or need to cancel a meeting?

- Anything else?