



## Aurora – selecting a mentor

If you have not yet selected a mentor I thought I would provide some additional guidance as below to help you make your selection, with answers to some commonly asked questions. I would suggest giving this consideration now and looking to have someone in place a minimum of 2 weeks before your cohort begins.

AdvanceHE have created some [guidance for mentors](#) which you should share with your chosen mentor.

**Who can be an Aurora mentor:** Aurora mentors may be male or female. The mentor should ideally be more senior/ experienced than the mentee and have an understanding of internal politics and organisational culture. They need to get on well with the mentee, have sufficient time available to work with the mentee, have strong listening skills and be able to ask good, open questions to help the mentee develop their problem-solving skills and develop further. Their role is to facilitate learning and support development.

**What is the time commitment to be an Aurora mentor:** Ideally, you should meet for a minimum of 4 one hour conversations aligned to the 4 Aurora development days. This can be done virtually or in person and you can decide between yourselves who arranges the meetings. An introductory meeting before the mentee begins the Aurora initiative is useful, to get to know each other and discuss objectives and boundaries for the meetings. A further meeting at the end of the cohort to wrap up conversations is also beneficial. This means a minimum of 6 hours of development discussion. However, should you both agree to continue the discussions beyond the end of the Aurora initiative then this is also encouraged and should be agreed between yourselves.

**What to look for in an Aurora mentor:** before beginning Aurora or selecting a mentor you should consider your reasons for attending this particular development initiative, what are your learning objectives and what do you wish to achieve. From this you may gain insight in to the type of mentor you would find beneficial. This is a great opportunity for you to reach out with your usual network or subject area. Bear in mind that Aurora is a *leadership* development opportunity so you do not need to look for someone within your School/College or professional services area.

Before approaching someone to be your mentor, try to be clear on what you would like from them and how you would like to be supported. Many Aurora mentors have not completed the initiative themselves and this shouldn't make any difference. They are there to impart their knowledge on leadership and management, navigating the politics of the institution and to challenge you to make the most of your development opportunity.

**Does my mentor need to work for the University of Edinburgh:** not necessarily. If they are able to support you as above and work in a relevant organisation which relates to your role i.e. NHS or another university then this is fine – as long as you are happy with your selection.

We do not manually assign you a mentor and instead encourage you to reach out through your local networks, using your local area contacts or the university's mentoring connections [Platform One](#). We have hundreds of mentors available on the platform and anyone who has specifically joined to support as an aurora mentor can be identified by using the search function and looking for the #AuroraMentor tag.

Further support and guidance is available on our [Mentoring Connections website](#) including a [guide to using Platform One](#).