

Pathway to Chartership

The Pathway Toolkit

July 2013

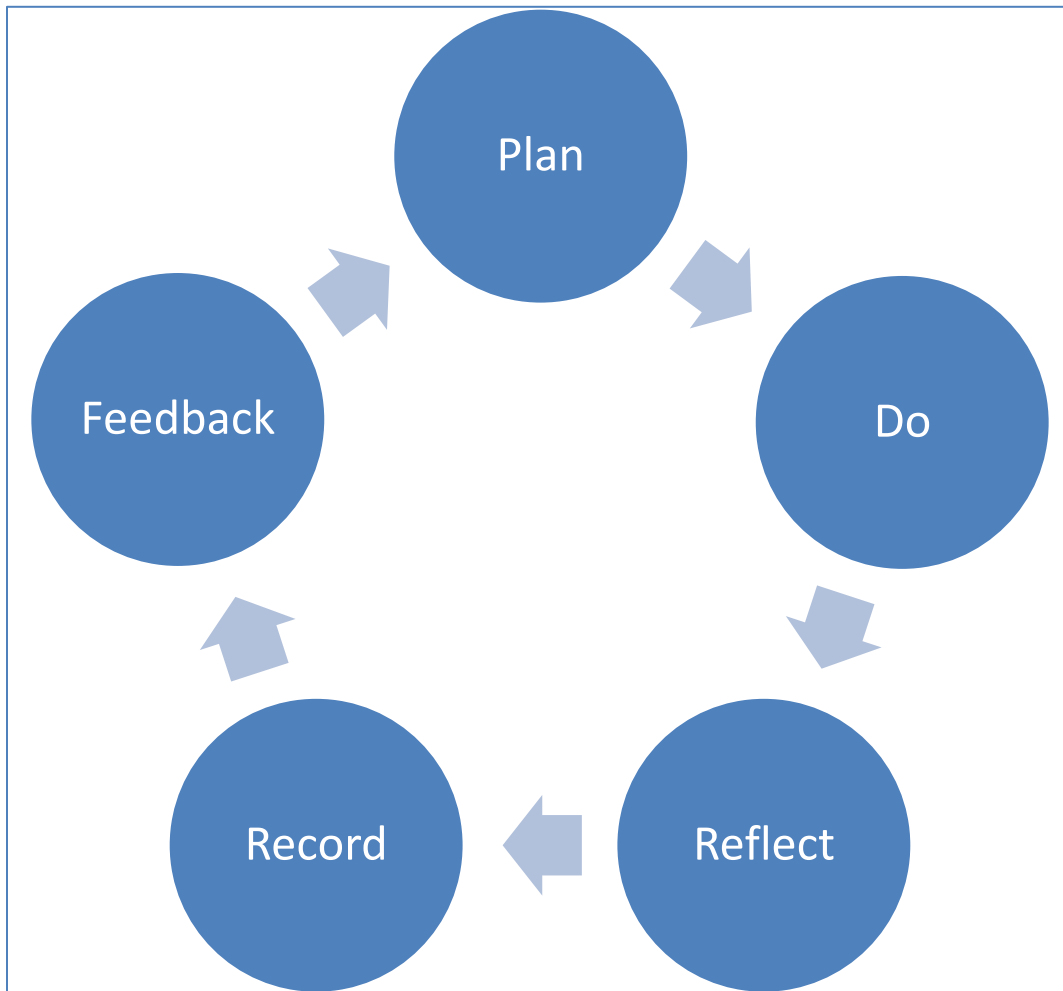
Introduction

This Toolkit focuses on the people who make the Pathway work: the Candidate working towards Chartership and the Mentor who has a key role in helping them to develop (although it is important to note that the Mentor is by no means the only person who can help the Candidate in their progress along the Pathway).

It looks at the concept of active learning which underpins the Pathway, and the practical ways in which Candidates and Mentors can establish and then maintain an effective working relationship throughout the Pathway and on into professional life.

Active Learning and the Pathway

The Pathway to Chartership and the Oral Examination are about more than simply acquiring specific knowledge in relation to a syllabus.



The process of active learning within the Pathway gives Candidates the tools they will need for professional life – a framework for lifelong learning. The skills and knowledge learned on the Pathway bring benefits to individuals, employers and the profession as a whole.

Becoming a Candidate

First steps

By choosing to follow the Pathway, you are embarking upon a process which will shape and set the scene for the rest of your professional life.

From the moment you take the decision to begin on the Pathway, you will be personally responsible for your progress, development and learning. Others will help you along the way, in particular your Mentor, but full ownership of the process and the outcomes rests with you.

WHAT DO CANDIDATES NEED TO DO?

There are no hard and fast rules about being a Candidate. You really will learn 'on the job' - how to work most effectively on your own, as part of a team and with your Mentor. The process should be ongoing and develop all the time. Neither you nor your Mentor should be afraid of change as you learn new ways of working together.

As a Candidate

- you need to develop clear and distinct ownership of your learning and development;
- you must be active in bringing new ideas and ways to develop to the relationship and to your progress;
- being a Pathway Candidate will involve many new challenges, both personal and professional. You need to be open to these challenges and committed to the idea and practice of being Mentored;
- you will need to work hard with your Mentor from the outset to develop and maintain a relationship based on trust, confidence, honesty and most of all, openness;
- you and your Mentor will need to work together to ensure that you are both open to new ideas and, at times ,not afraid to take risks;
- you need to realise and accept that there are many ways of learning and that it is your job as well as your Mentor's to see learning as a process of continuous development, one in which you need to be creative and willing to look for opportunities;.
- practical, day-to-day experience of the working environment, if approached in a thoughtful and considered way, is your best learning opportunity.

Choosing your Mentor

Your choice of Mentor is a very important decision.

If you think back through your life thus far, you will already have had experiences which have involved Mentors. If at any point anyone has helped you to develop by sharing their experience and knowledge with you, then they have been a Mentor. You might well have found that these relationships have had a profound effect on your personal or professional development. These Mentors may have been role models, coaches, teachers or anyone who has helped you to develop skills and talents or face challenges. It is important to remember that the Mentor you choose must be appropriately qualified, according to the procedures and guidelines set out in Section One, the Pathway Process.

Remember that your Mentor will be the main person with whom you will discuss areas for professional and personal development. You will spend a great deal of time on the Pathway and they will be the person who reviews your progress and later on will be making recommendations about whether you are ready to go forward to the Oral Examination. This means that at the very beginning of the Pathway, you will need to think very carefully and responsibly about your choice of Mentor.

Who should I choose?

Many people will tend to choose a Mentor who is either their manager or, in smaller practices, their employer. The benefits of this include the following:

- your Mentor has an interest in furthering your professional development as a member of their organisation.
- you will naturally be in regular contact with your Mentor as part of your work.
- you may already have a working relationship with your Mentor and know them well.
- because you are part of the same organisation as your Mentor, issues of business confidentiality should not arise.

There are other factors to consider when choosing a Manager as your Mentor:

- the role of a manager or employer involves being primarily concerned with the organisation, its objectives and interests;
- managers may have responsibility for targets, planning and policy for a team or for the organisation as a whole;
- managers may already be familiar with procedures such as appraisal, coaching and training within their organisation or in the context of other professional bodies;
- managers may not be readily available, may be closer to strategic issues and not the detailed knowledge.

All these factors will mean that, when you are choosing a Mentor, you will need to bear in mind that you will be looking to establish a different kind of relationship to that you may already have with your Mentor as a manager or an employer.

Candidates may not have someone suitable within their organisation or may prefer to ask someone who is outside their immediate work context. This can work very effectively although will naturally require more effort on both sides to ensure regular communication takes place.

It is always best for a Candidate to choose their Mentor from among their network of colleagues or contacts, but sometimes this is not possible. The Landscape Institute has created a network of

volunteer Mentors on Talking Landscape who can act in this role for Candidates without a suitable contact. More information can be found at <http://talkinglandscape.org/group/mentors>.

CANDIDATES, MENTORS AND ACTIVE LEARNING

How can a Mentor help me?

As a Candidate, you will need to take responsibility for and assume ownership of your learning process and professional development. Mentoring can help you to develop professionally and personally because you will be in regular, open contact with an experienced member of the profession, whose role is to guide you towards the Pathway and becoming a qualified and rounded professional person.

You might look for help from a Mentor in the following ways:

- they can help you to develop confidence in situations which might at first seem intimidating or overwhelming;
- they can help you to develop new learning techniques;
- they can help you to become a more effective practitioner;
- they can help you to see things in different ways;
- they can help you to develop appropriate behaviours and working practices;
- they can help increase your knowledge and understanding of your organisation and of the profession;
- they can help you to develop your understanding of ethical issues and values associated with working as a professional;
- they can help you to develop knowledge and skills;
- they can pass on the benefit of their knowledge and experience.

Considerations when choosing a Mentor

There are a number of considerations involved in choosing a Mentor:

- **Practicality** – How far away is your Mentor? Obviously you can keep in touch but where others might have face-to-face meetings you may need to use Skype or some other video conferencing technology. Do you have access to the necessary facilities and will you both be comfortable 'meeting' that way? Or if you are going to travel to see your Mentor, have you considered the costs of this in money and time?
- **Personality** – How do you relate to your potential Mentor? You will need to communicate well with them at a time of significant change, development and opportunity in your life. You need to be able to have an open relationship, based on trust and being able to say what you think you need to develop.

- **Confidentiality** – If you choose a Mentor who is not within the organisation for whom you work, you need to consider the implications for employee confidentiality. Your employers may not be comfortable with the idea that you are discussing issues which may be professionally sensitive with someone outside their organisation and you may need to reach an agreement about how this would be handled.

You are responsible for your choice of Mentor as part of the active learning process. Carefully weigh up the options and make an informed decision because your relationship with your Mentor will help you throughout the Pathway and on into your professional life.

Becoming a Mentor

It is not only Candidates who need to make decisions about the Mentoring relationship and its implications. Potential Mentors also need to consider whether they are able to take on the role and what it will mean for them.

The criteria for eligibility to be a Mentor and the procedure for acceptance by the Institute have already been discussed in Section One, the Pathway Process. There are however other factors to consider such as your interests, your other commitments, your aptitude and your existing relationship with the Candidate. (**See box 'Mentors and Managers'**). Reading these guidelines should help you decide if you have the qualities needed to be a Mentor: patience, experience, knowledge and most importantly a desire to help younger or less experienced practitioners learn and develop.

It is worth remembering that Standard 7 of the Landscape Institute Code of Conduct places an obligation on Members of the LI to support less experienced members of the profession over which they have a professional or employment responsibility. Even if you choose not to Mentor a particular Candidate, playing a part in developing others in some way, according to your abilities and expertise, is a professional obligation, as well as contributing to your CPD.

Don't forget that there are direct benefits to Mentoring, not least of which is the opportunity to look again at your own learning, knowledge and experience and to learn new things.

WHAT IS A MENTOR?

A Mentor is someone who helps others to develop personally and professionally. Using their experience a Mentor guides others forward while helping to develop their potential and equip them for the future.

Within the Pathway, a Mentor will be responsible for guiding a Candidate or Candidates through a very important period in their development and also for helping them develop attitudes, strategies and skills which will shape their futures as professionals.

Mentors will help Candidates deal with new challenges, provide a role model, discover and develop their abilities, help them negotiate difficult situations and steer them towards ways of working which will be the foundation of a successful career.

In the context of the Pathway, the Mentoring role is key. Please bear in mind though that you are not responsible for the success or failure of the Candidate. Your responsibility lies in facilitating the Candidate's ownership of and responsibility for their own active learning on the Pathway, and pointing them in the right direction, when required.

MENTORS AND MANAGERS

It is likely that many Mentors may also be managers. Candidates will naturally seek a senior member of the profession as their Mentor, often a line manager or manager within their company. As a Mentor your responsibility is to guide your Candidate towards ownership of and responsibility for their learning and progress as part of an ongoing and supportive relationship. This may not always fit exactly with your management role.

The following are all areas which have something in common with Mentoring but which nonetheless differ from it in key respects:

Appraisal is a system of assessing change in a work context, and can be used to determine a rating or eligibility for pay enhancement. It is concerned with specific targets and goals over a fixed period of time and may be linked to processes such as disciplinary procedures.

Coaching often involves preparing a Candidate for certain specific and usually short-term goals such as a meeting with a particular client or the delivery of a presentation.

Training is usually related exclusively to the workplace and managers may have a role in deciding what training employees receive or in the delivery of parts of that training.

Mentoring involves a wider responsibility to the Candidate. You will deal with both professional and personal issues. Candidates may ask you for advice or help in all sorts of areas. As a Mentor, you can help them either directly from the benefit of your own experience or by guiding them towards help, advice and support from other sources.

First Meetings: setting the scene

Once a Candidate is registered on the Pathway, the first task is the initial meeting.

At the first meeting or meetings the Candidate and Mentor establish the starting point for the Pathway – what knowledge and understanding the Candidate already has, at what level and how the Candidate is going to move forward. The first meeting sets the tone for the ongoing relationship so it is therefore important to consider your aims and expectations, your responsibilities and the practicalities of the relationship

There is more information about the first meeting in Section One, the Pathway Process (p **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

Candidate responsibilities and expectations

In the first meeting, as in all that will follow, it is important to develop an understanding of what both parties – Candidates and Mentors – will need to bring to the process.

Candidate Responsibilities

- Start from the assumption that you are responsible for your own learning and professional development.
- You need to think about an agenda for the first meeting. What do you want to talk about the first time you meet officially with your Mentor?
- You will need to prepare in advance to discuss your current knowledge and experience in relation to the Pathway.
- You will need to think about what the next step(s) might be for you.
- Think about what you want, need and expect from the Mentoring relationship.
- Developing a relationship with your Mentor starts here so make sure that there is time to talk about experiences and things in common.
- Consider how long your meetings should be. You may want a fixed amount of time for quarterly meetings but be more flexible at other times.
- Give some thought to what to do if problems arise. You will need to develop an approach which is open and direct so that if there are difficulties, you can deal with them clearly.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions and seek clarification.
- Answer questions fully but don't feel you have to waffle or try to impress. If you don't know something, be honest and say so.

Candidate Expectations

- You should expect to own and be responsible for your active learning from the outset.
- You should expect support and encouragement.
- You should expect to develop professionally and personally.
- You should expect to benefit from the knowledge and experience of your Mentor.
- You should expect to make mistakes and learn from them.
- You should expect to listen.
- You should expect your Mentor to listen to you.

- You should expect to become aware of and work hard on developing your strengths and addressing your weaknesses.

What you shouldn't expect

If you're not used to being in a Mentoring situation then you might well expect that your Mentor will simply put you on the path to successfully completing the Pathway, solve any problems you might have along the way and shake you by the hand once you've finished. This is not the point of Mentoring. Before you start, take time to think about your role and try to identify what your expectations are.

- Don't expect to be given any easy answers to problems – expect to be helped to discover the means to solve them.
- Don't expect to be told what to do – expect to work out a course of action together with your Mentor.
- Don't expect a free ride – expect your Mentor to challenge you and have realistically high aims and objectives.
- Don't expect just to chat – expect to work hard on making your time together useful.
- Don't expect your Mentor to be able to meet with you at the last minute, even if it is the end of the quarter.

Mentor responsibilities and expectations

Mentor Responsibilities

To get the most out of the relationship, Mentors also need to consider their responsibilities while preparing for the first meeting. You may find the following checklist useful (there is also further information in the Pathway Guidebook).

- You will need to establish the current situation of your Candidate in terms of their knowledge and experience in relation to the Pathway.
- You will need to start thinking about how best to help the Candidate take responsibility for and ownership of their active learning process.
- You will need to think about targets and objectives for subsequent meetings.
- Reflect on your own Mentoring style and be prepared to be flexible.
- Get to know your Candidate. This meeting is about more than just finding out what they need to know in order to progress through the Pathway.
- Allow enough time. Initial meetings may be quite lengthy. As the relationship continues some meetings may vary in length, depending on the topics being discussed.
- Be prepared to let the Candidate ask questions.
- Be open and honest in your answers.
- Be prepared to brush up on your own knowledge. It will help your Candidate and can count towards your own CPD.
- Address difficulties if they arise.
- Make sure the Candidate knows they can trust you.
- Use open questions to allow the Candidate to give a full picture of their knowledge and experience. (See Box – 'Asking Effective Questions')
- Create a relaxed and informal atmosphere so that the Candidate feels comfortable.

Mentor Expectations

- To use OPEN QUESTIONS rather than CLOSED QUESTIONS wherever possible.
- To ACTIVELY LISTEN to Candidates' responses.
- To see your Candidate on a regular basis (where possible), both formally and informally.
- To be honest and open with your Candidate and for them to behave likewise.
- To guide your Candidate in their progression on the Pathway towards the Oral Examination.
- To provide your Candidate with clear aims, targets and boundaries.
- To maintain a confidential relationship.

What you shouldn't expect

- To provide your Candidate with answers all the time.
- No problems.
- To be able to leave it all until the end of the quarter.
- An easy ride while the Candidate gets on with it.

Assessing knowledge and understanding at the beginning of the Pathway

This is an extremely important stage at the beginning of the Pathway. Both Mentor and Candidate have a responsibility to be as thorough and honest as possible about the level of knowledge and experience a Candidate has in relation to the Pathway syllabus, right at the beginning of the process.

Candidates must be assessed as to their current levels of knowledge and understanding of the various areas described in the Syllabus.

There are 4 Stages:

0	<i>Little or no knowledge or understanding of the areas encompassed by the learning objective.</i>
1	<i>You have acquired some basic knowledge of the areas encompassed by the learning objective and understand basic concepts, but have yet to learn any substantial detail in respect of some or all of the areas. You have not yet explored how the areas are applied in practice in any depth.</i>
2	<i>You have a general knowledge and understanding across the areas encompassed by the learning objective. You may have some experience of applying your knowledge and understanding in your practice but you would need to apply your expertise under supervision and may need to ask for advice or approvals on the steps you are taking from a more experienced practitioner or senior member of staff.</i>
3	<i>You have a thorough knowledge of the areas encompassed by the learning objective and have often applied your knowledge in your practice. You understand the implications of your actions and can take responsibility for most decisions in these areas. You are capable of working within the scope of this learning objective with little supervision/need to seek advice.</i>
4	<i>Within the areas encompassed by the learning objective, you fully understand the implications of your actions, are able to foresee problems and come up with effective solutions and strategies. Other people may come to you for decisions, advice and guidance; you are capable of handling decisions in these areas entirely alone and are fully prepared to take personal responsibility for your decisions.</i>

In making an assessment of a Candidate's position the Mentor should:

- be careful and considered;
- review all areas thoroughly with the Candidate;
- be objective about the standards you expect from the Candidate in relation to the three Stages. It is better to be cautious than generous in relation to standards;
- seek advice from the Supervisor if unsure – they will be in regular contact with other Mentors and will have a wider view;
- talk to other Mentors about how they assess standards;
- use a variety of questions and allow the Candidate to discuss and describe their experience as freely and fully as possible;
- only judge the Candidate on their current level of knowledge or understanding, not that predicted for some future date.

The aim is to assess, as fully as possible, the strengths and weaknesses of the Candidate in relation to the Syllabus so the more you can get from them, the more fully you can work out what

needs to be done. As a Mentor, you have a responsibility to guide the Candidate through this process and establish the picture of ways to progress on the Pathway.

Landscape Architecture is an evolving profession and one which is becoming both increasingly diverse and specialised. Candidates do not need to achieve Stage 3 in all areas to be successful in the Pathway. There may be some areas in which a basic understanding at Stage 1 is all they need for their current specialisation or orientation of work. Candidates should be aiming to achieve, by the end of the Pathway, a profile in which they have reached Stage 2 in the majority of areas, and Stage 3 in area relating to their day to day work.

If you are unsure about a Candidate's progress or readiness, you can contact your Supervisor for further guidance.

ASKING EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS

1. Open and Closed Questions

As a Mentor, your role in getting information out of the Candidate is vital. You will need to establish their starting point in terms of knowledge, understanding and experience and then, as time goes by, to assess on a continuous basis their progress towards readiness to go forward to the Oral Examination. Essentially, your role as a questioner is to use OPEN rather than CLOSED questions whenever you can.

Open questions

These are often the most effective way of ensuring that your relationship with the Candidate and their learning development remains positive. For example, if we asked:

'What do you think might be a few basic ground rules for dealing with clients?'
or
'Tell me about your experience of dealing with clients.'

we will open up the answer and hopefully elicit much more information on which to base further questions and stimulate thought and learning.

Closed questions

These usually begin with a verb 'Did you..? Can you..? Have you ever..?' and can be answered 'yes' or 'no'.
'From what you've said, you've had plenty of experience of dealing directly with clients. Is that correct?'

These can be useful questions if the meeting has begun to drift or the point at issue is in danger of being lost. Questions like this can clarify a situation and check mutual understanding.

However they should generally be avoided when trying to elicit information or encourage thought and discussion for example:

'Have you ever had to deal directly with a client?'

'Yes.'

'Was it a success?'

'Yes.'

'Did you work with them again after that?'

'No.'

Part of the problem here is that the Candidate may have dealt with one client or 100, they may have been successful from their point of view but a disaster from the client's, but this line of closed questioning is not as effective in finding this out as the open questions in the first example.

Some useful hints

In terms of open questions, here are one or two more things you might find it useful to think about. Using 'why' in a question could sometimes be interpreted as aggressive by the Candidate, especially if you happen to be asking about a situation where they might feel they under performed or if you are asking about areas where their knowledge is sketchy.

'Why did you send a copy of that letter to the client?'

The key with this type of question is to make sure the tone in which the question is asked is positive.

Try to avoid asking an open question then closing it with a subsidiary question.

'What do you think about dealing with subcontractors? Is it always a problem?'

ASKING EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS

2. Discovery Questions

These are open questions which require answers based on the actual experience or knowledge of the Candidate. They allow Mentors to actively listen to Candidates. Candidates will find it difficult to speculate or invent knowledge. These questions provide a springboard for further investigation.

'When did you prepare your first planning application?' (Candidate responds)

'Tell me about anything you feel you learned from your experience.'
(Candidate responds)

'What problems did you encounter?' (Candidate responds)

'How did you solve them?'

This series of questions will provide the Mentor with a great deal of food for thought and an insight into how the Candidate dealt with a particular experience. If the aim of the session is to look at preparing to make a planning application then by actively listening and using open questions, the Mentor has a great deal of information on which to base an assessment of any areas the Candidate might need to consider.

Discovery questions can slip into cliché. Unsure or unconfident Candidates may respond in the abstract:

'Tell me about how you prepare for a meeting with a Planning Officer.'
I think being organised is the key. If you're not organised then nothing really gets decided.'

However, if you then add: 'Give me an example of how you organise yourself prior to a Design Team meeting.' you have given the Candidate the chance to tell you something about their experience.

The tendency to cliché is also present for the Mentor:

'How do you deal with clients?'

The temptation for the Candidate to answer in an abstract way is obvious. If you change the question however, you have an excellent opportunity for the Candidate to open up and tell you about their experience without feeling judged:

'Which client did you find the most satisfying to deal with?' (Candidate answers)

'What did they do that made you so positive about them?' (Candidate answers)

'Why was that such an important factor?'

Effective open questions avoid cliché and any need to speculate or invent. They will enable both the Candidate and the Mentor to fully examine issues through exploration and active listening. They are non-judgemental and should allow both Candidates and Mentors to get the most out of a discussion.

Ground rules, boundaries and working practices

During the first meeting, you are going to make a positive start on the relationship between Mentor and Candidate. As well as establishing levels of Candidate experience and generally getting to know more about each other, it is important to set out a few ground rules for the ongoing Mentor/Candidate relationship.

Trust and Confidentiality

This is vital to the ongoing good nature of the relationship. Always make sure that you are completely clear about your responsibilities and roles with everyone concerned.

As part of the process, Mentors will need to share information about a Candidate with their Supervisor and at times with the LI but other than that, care should be taken when discussing anything from within a Mentoring meeting with anyone outside that relationship. Before the first meeting, Candidates should take time to think about what the boundaries of the relationship should be and then discuss those limits in the initial meeting. In general, if you are in any doubt about whether or not to discuss something, ask first. In situations where a Mentor is a line-manager or an external Mentor, it is essential that both Mentor and Candidate fully understand the implications of confidentiality. **See box 'Mentors and Managers'.**

If you choose an external Mentor, be aware that there will be issues of business confidentiality, competition or sensitivity in discussing the business in which you are placed with someone outside that business.

Time

Your Mentor's time is valuable. The responsibility for managing time effectively and efficiently lies with the Candidate.

Certain meetings such as the Initial Meeting(s), Quarterly Reviews and so on will require more time in order that all the issues involved can be fully explored. The Mentor has a responsibility to ensure that they give adequate time to these meetings but it is the Candidate who should be responsible for arranging meetings, organising a venue, getting the most from the time available and so on.

In practice, the number of meetings and the length of time involved is likely to vary from Candidate to Candidate and Mentor to Mentor and also according to the stage of the process, the experience of the Candidate, the nature of the meeting and so on. Some Candidates and Mentors may feel that a regular meeting of a fixed duration is the best way to proceed while others may want a less formal arrangement. In practice, both Candidates and Mentors will need to be creative and flexible in managing time as effectively as possible.

Place

Where do you think you should meet? Obviously Quarterly meetings will need a setting which gives you enough time and space for an in-depth conversation with documents and so on. However,

more informal meetings might be almost anywhere. Once again, agree a few basic principles and then be flexible as the relationship progresses.

Recording

There are certain formal procedures to do with recording achievement and outcomes. Quarterly meetings, for example, will need to be formally recorded and documented using the Mentor Review in the way described in Section One of this Guidebook. However, you will also meet more informally as part of the Mentoring relationship and you will need to develop a system for documenting these informal meetings. The Development Log might be used or you might choose to keep a diary offline. Whatever happens, you will need to agree how to record the meetings so that you can effectively keep track of progress.

Changes

The Pathway will take different amounts of time for different Candidates. It is a flexible system in terms of learning, development and progression. Candidates take responsibility for developing innovative and flexible ways to learn. This system makes taking career breaks and maternity leave simple and lets Candidates deal with personal or domestic issues without jeopardising their development. There is more information about this in the section on Dormancy (page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**).

During the Pathway there will be both planned and unplanned changes. Don't forget that if you need to take a break from the Pathway for an extended period of time you will need to let the LI know, or you may find yourself suspended from the system. There is more information in "Recording Qualifying Experience" on page **Error! Bookmark not defined.**.

You can make sure that you are prepared for changes by thinking ahead right at the beginning of the Candidate – Mentor relationship.

- **Unplanned changes.**

Think about how you will deal with these when they occur. What will you do if one of you changes jobs for example? Or if you are not able to communicate as effectively as you had hoped? Or if you find you have other commitments which are causing problems? It can be difficult to deal with change but establishing some ground rules may make it easier to raise and discuss these issues. Perhaps you will agree to include an opportunity to suggest improvements or raise concerns at every meeting.

- **Planned changes.**

The point of the Pathway is to move Candidates from one stage of their professional career to the next. Once you achieve this the Mentor/ Candidate relationship may finish, or it may continue on a different basis. Either way, you should take time at this stage to discuss your expectations.

ASKING EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS

3. Some more open questioning techniques

Reflective questions

'I'm having trouble advising the client about this claim; on the one hand I can see what is in their best interest but on the other hand I have a contract to run and I have to be fair to the contractor'

'Right. So you can see two sides to the issue?'

By responding in this way you are inviting the Candidate to expand on what they feel is a negative experience. This type of question can help to prevent a situation from becoming negative or confrontational. Rather than feel that you as Mentor need to respond personally and immediately solve this perceived difficulty, you have invited the Candidate to say more about their situation. This might encourage the Candidate to think of ways in which the problem might be solved and thereby further their ownership of their own progress and learning.

Probing questions

'When the Habitat Survey found Great Crested Newts, what did you do?' (Candidate answers)

'When you did that, what specifically happened?'

Checking questions

Minimise misunderstanding and potential disagreement. Particularly useful in terms of recording meetings and agreeing targets or objectives for discussion at the next meeting.

'Is it OK if we say that you will contact the Planning Officer personally and arrange a date and time for a meeting?'

Behavioural questions

Based on previous behaviour. You can get an idea of how a Candidate might behave in the future by assessing together some past experience.

'During your MA, you were asked to design a garden for nudists. How did you respond to their request for Berberis hedging?'

Hypothetical questions

On the basis of a response to a behavioural question you might want to get a Candidate to expand hypothetically.

'If you received a complaint about injuries caused by a casual encounter between a nudist and a Berberis hedge, what would you do?'

The Ongoing Relationship

Expectations and responsibilities

As your relationship progresses you will develop ways of working which suit both of you. There are however certain things which need to be given careful consideration in order for the relationship to continue effectively:

Candidates

- Be responsible for your own Active Learning.
- Claim ownership of your progress towards the Pathway. You have to assume responsibility with your Mentor as your guide.
- Be open, honest and realistic about your progress, the Mentoring relationship, aims and objectives.
- Make sure you are pro-active in arranging, preparing for and attending meetings with your Mentor, whether formal or informal.
- Value the time your Mentor gives you, and use it wisely.
- Be clear about what you need to do before your next meeting.
- Be open-minded about new challenges, ways of learning and working practices.
- Work hard on developing and maintaining a trusting relationship with your Mentor.
- Don't expect your Mentor to come up with all the answers. If there is a problem, take risks, think imaginatively and be creative when it comes to seeking a solution. Be prepared to offer your Mentor alternatives.
- Actively seek out ways of learning and find what works for you; arrange study groups with your peers; visit other practices; attend study courses; set up a routine of planned study/ reading; visit other projects; ask questions of other professionals with whom you come into contact; arrange seminars with people with specific expertise for your colleagues.
- Let your Mentor know if you have any concerns about the way things are going.
- Be active in managing your own learning. The processes and habits you establish during this relationship will equip you for continuing professional life.

Mentors

- Work with the Candidate to ensure that they are responsible for their own learning.
- You need be aware of the importance of the Mentoring role. Reflect on the benefits of what you are doing for you, your organisation, the profession and your Candidate.
- Remember you are a Mentor, not (just) a manager. Your role is to help the Candidate gain the skills and knowledge to work out the professional way to do things for themselves, not only to learn how you do it.
- Continue to be open and approachable.
- Ask open questions and listen actively to the answers.
- Avoid being judgemental. This can occur either negatively in terms of deciding a Candidate has done something wrong or positively in terms of a 'halo effect' where because a Candidate has shown strength in certain areas, you assume strength in other areas.
- Be clear and honest about progress and problems. Try to be realistic about how things are going. Get into the habit of discussing any concerns you may have and make it as easy as possible for the Candidate to be honest with you about their concerns.

- Retain an objective standpoint on your Candidate's progress. Resist the urge to simply solve problems for a Candidate. Develop ways of guiding Candidates and working together with them on finding solutions.
- Make sure you maintain regular contact, both formally and informally with your Candidate.
- Ensure that you set aside quality time for meetings.
- Be prepared to seek help and support from your Supervisor, the LI, your branch or other Mentors if you need it.
- Encourage Candidates to think creatively and to innovate in order to broaden their knowledge and experience. Don't simply expect them to do what you did.
- Try to maintain perspective; with your greater experience, you will probably have a bigger picture of your Candidate's development. They will be immersed in the detail of their particular experience or project.
- Help your Candidate to prioritise effectively. Deciding what is most important can be extremely difficult so use the benefit of your experience to guide choices and progress.

ASKING EFFECTIVE QUESTIONS

4. Some further techniques

Specific questions

Asking questions to which there is a certain, specific answer can be a way either to stop someone talking or to give them something concrete to talk about.

'What day did you send the letter to the Designer?'

Leading questions

If you lead a Candidate then they are not being self-reliant and the amount to be learnt in these situations is reduced:

'Would you send a copy of that email to the Designer, the Planning Office and the Architect?'

To use a question like this to confirm an agreed course of action is fine but to simply present the answer is pointless.

Multiple questions

'How did you establish the connection with the environmental assessor, why did you agree to that system and what were the outcomes?'

This is simply bewildering. Decide what you want to know and the order in which you want to know it. Then ask.

Reviewing progress and moving forward

As a Candidate moves forward in the Pathway, there will be an ongoing process of review and reflection involving the Candidate and the Mentor. This review process should be regular, open and honest and be centred around the regular and quarterly meetings.

Over time, Candidates will build up a core of knowledge in all areas of the Study Guidance Notes. There will probably be some areas where they will develop a greater depth of knowledge and understanding by virtue of the kinds of experience undertaken in their immediate work environment, and others in which they will need to actively seek opportunities for learning and development.

The Mentor and Candidate will need to set targets as part of the ongoing process of development and review. Targets should be clear and attainable. Some might be relatively narrow in scope such as being aware of a specific piece of legislation or be much broader such as dealing effectively with clients.

Planning Ahead

Every quarter some Candidates and Mentors struggle to meet the Pathway submission deadline. Use this simple checklist to make sure this doesn't happen to you.

Candidates

1. Mark the submission deadlines in your diary.
2. Regularly update your record during the quarter. Weekly is a good idea.
3. Plan ahead to make sure you have completed your submission by the last day of the quarter.
4. Arrange dates and times to meet your Mentor as far in advance as possible. Remember to book a longer review meeting either just before or just after the quarter ends to go over your progress during those 3 months.
5. Occasionally your mentor may be unavailable at submission time – perhaps because of holiday or a project deadline. You may need to agree to submit a few weeks early to allow them to do the same.

Mentors

1. Mark the submission deadlines in your diary.
2. It is your Candidate's responsibility to 'drive' the process by arranging to meet with you, but you can remind them to do this if they are occasionally forgetful.
3. Hold update meetings with your Candidate during the quarter.
4. Review your workload as the deadline approaches – will your Candidate need to complete their Development Pack earlier than planned so that you have time to submit?
5. Submit your Mentor Review by the deadline.

Regular meetings and quarterly reviews

Both Candidate and Mentor will need to make sure that progress towards the Pathway is accurately recorded using the online system. In order to do this, you should have regular meetings to check interim progress and then Quarterly Meetings to officially review and record your status in the Mentor Review.

Taking it forward - Candidates

The Candidate needs to drive and own these processes, recording experience and making sure they are prepared for meetings and have done some thinking in advance.

Once again, the emphasis for the Candidate should be on preparation and clarity. Make sure that you are clear in your own mind about exactly how and where you have fulfilled the targets you agreed with your Mentor the last time you met. Be honest with yourself about this. If you can, put yourself in the position of the Mentor and ask whether or not they should accept your evidence. The online development pack will be an excellent way of keeping track of evidence and experience so make sure you keep it fully up to date by giving it time and attention.

When talking with your Mentor, be clear, open and honest about what you think you have achieved, experienced and learned. Try to be specific and avoid the hypothetical and if you don't feel confident about any aspect, say so. Ask questions if anything is unclear and don't be afraid to say if you feel your Mentor has missed something. The aim of the review process is to agree, as clearly as possible, an outline of your progress to date and whatever next steps are appropriate. Both Candidate and Mentor have responsibility for this but the greater your ownership of the process, the better.

Taking it forward - Mentors

These are processes which are owned and driven by the Candidate. Your role is to act as an objective partner in the continuous learning process.

You are not simply marking their homework. During any session, your Candidate will need someone to use as a sounding board, someone to encourage them, an honest critic, someone who's knowledge and experience they can use and respect and a guide to help them develop their own learning and working processes.

Again, you should use open questions wherever possible to encourage the Candidate to open up about what they think they have experienced, known or learned since you last met. If you feel a Candidate is sketchy on any point, ask more specific questions and if they are waffling, ask a closed, direct question to bring them back to the point. Listen as actively as possible to your Candidate so that you can identify areas of strength and weakness.

You have to agree progress, achievement and the next step(s) with the Candidate as a cooperative process so be prepared for discussion and disagreement. When discussing next steps, make sure that they are clear and attainable and that both you and the Candidate fully understand what is required before you finish the meeting.

REVIEWING CANDIDATE PROGRESS

This is an extremely important role for the Mentor, but one which can only be fully realised once the Candidate is fully responsible for their own Active Learning. The role of the Mentor is, by using open questions and actively listening, to objectively assess the attainment and progress of the Candidate against the criteria set out in the Study Guidance Notes in terms of level achieved.

- **Co-operation:** Yes, you must work with the Candidate - but it is not your responsibility to lead them towards effective answers.
- **Standards:** The danger is setting standards which are too low, rather than too high. Be rigorous and make sure that the Candidate fully satisfies any criteria you may have before moving on to the next stage. You are not helping the Candidate if your standards are low.
- **Care and Consideration:** Take your time when assessing a Candidate's experiences and achievement. Beware of the 'Halo Effect', both positive and negative so that if a Candidate has previously performed well, don't take further positive performance for granted and vice-versa.
- **Ask Questions:** If you are unsure of how to proceed in a particular instance, seek help and advice. Your Mentor Supervisor will be happy to discuss issues with you if you aren't sure and don't forget that other Mentors may be happy to talk in general about their methods. You can also share ideas through the Pathway discussion forum on the LI website.

The Active Learning Process

The Candidate is responsible for the development and management of their active learning. The Mentor can assist and guide the Candidate towards good practice but it is the Candidate who owns the process.

From the outset, the Mentor should focus on helping the Candidate to foster the habit of active learning. There are essentially three stages to the process:

- **Exploration**

Look at the experience and analyse it.

'What do you think are your strengths in terms of knowledge and experience for the Pathway?'

'Tell me about your Stage 2 HLF application. What did you experience in terms of dealing with the Conservation Architects?'

- **Agreeing understanding**

Agree clearly what conclusions Mentor and Candidate might draw from this experience.

'I can see that you're strong on planning applications so let's talk about moving on the next stage with it.'

'I can see why you might feel like that about engineers. I had a very similar experience ...'

- **Action Planning**

Decide together on a next step.

'I understand where you want to go with this so let's assess the potential benefits and drawbacks.'
'Can you suggest any ways that I might help next time you have to agree a Valuation and draft a Payment Certificate?'

As they work together to put this into practice, the Candidate and Mentor will need to develop a way of discussing experiences, learning from them and using them to improve the Candidate's skills as a professional. What ever way you chose to do this, it needs to be comfortable and not threatening. You may find it helps to have a loose structure in mind. **See box 'The Learning Cycle'**.

THE LEARNING CYCLE

One model of how you use experience to develop the Candidate as a professional could work like this. (This is a guide so feel free to experiment and find what works for you.)

1 – Have an Experience – *'Let's talk about working with Hardhat Bros'*

2 – Consider the Experience – *'How did this affect your overview of the project?'*

3 – Draw General Conclusions – *'What other areas of your work might be affected by this experience?'*

4 – Apply the Experience – *'You're back on site with the Hardhats next week. What are your thoughts about preparing to meet them?'*

5 – Start Again!

Remember that if you can develop an effective way of learning on the Pathway, you will be able to apply that throughout your career

Changes to the Mentoring Relationship

There may be circumstances in which it is necessary to change Mentors, such as sickness or other changes of circumstance, or a Candidate or Mentor moving away. Section One, the Pathway Process, sets out the procedures for dealing with changes to the Mentoring relationship. Candidates and Mentors should have set out ground-rules for discussing change.

Candidate. Be clear about what you are entitled to expect from a Mentor, and remember that this is a professional relationship with a specific purpose and objective. Use this as an opportunity to develop your standards of professional behaviour.

Mentor. Be honest with yourself and with the Candidate about the situation and try to give objective, professional advice to the Candidate on the best course of action from their point of view. Do not be afraid to refer the matter to your Mentor Supervisor or to ask for advice or support from a more experienced Mentor.

REMINDERS

Candidates:

- Own their learning and development.
- Are not afraid of new challenges.
- Are prepared to learn from the experience of their Mentor.
- Are not afraid to make mistakes and then learn from them.
- Are active in seeking to develop personally and professionally.
- Are prepared to deal with problems or conflict in a mature, open and honest way.
- Are prepared to work to maintain a positive relationship with their Mentor.

Mentors:

- Are Active Listeners who ask Open Questions.
- Are enthusiasts who take a real interest in the personal and professional progress of their Candidate.
- Are not afraid of innovation and change and prepared to think creatively to help a Candidate progress.
- Are prepared to keep working on their relationship with the Candidate to ensure long-term success.
- Are happy to accept that there may be problems and that they should be dealt with professionally, openly and honestly.
- Are not afraid to seek help and advice in relation to their Mentoring.

ACTIVE LEARNING AND INNOVATION

As a Candidate on the Pathway, as in your professional life, you are responsible for your own progress.

During your normal day to day work you will probably not have direct exposure to every aspect of the Study Guidance Notes. This will be particularly true if your practice specialises in a particular type of work. You will need to be prepared to look beyond your immediate environment, and make contact with other professionals who can help you widen your knowledge and understanding.

A major factor in effective progress and also in managing the time you will need to spend with your Mentor is your ability to be innovative and think creatively about ways to gain further knowledge and experience. The following are a few ideas for gaining the necessary skills, knowledge and experience but this is by no means an exhaustive list:

Branch Events	The LI's branches run a range of events and activities. Stay in touch or offer to help. Make the most of the networking opportunities available to you through your branch.
LI Pathway Discussion Forum	Exchange ideas and tips with other Candidates, Mentors and Supervisors
Study Groups	Arrange to meet other Pathway Candidates and discuss your experience.
Study Courses	Find practices or organisations who arrange formal or informal courses.
Government Websites	For example their websites carry updates on planning legislation and guidelines.
Practice Swaps	Arrange to spend time in another practice with different specialisms.
Work Experience	Go and work for a subcontractor or specialist firm.
Visits	Museums, The National Trust, new cities etc.
Structured reading	Use the Pathway Reading List for recommended texts.
Email Forums/ Discussion Groups	Find or set up your own Group.
Conferences and CPD events	Either run by the Landscape Institute or other organisations
Sister Organisations	RTPI, RIBA, ICE, RICS etc.
Journals and Publications	'Landscape' etc
Other Mentoring Resources	Don't just rely on your 'official' Mentor, ask other people in the office or experts in other fields.

Continuing Professional Development

There is no reason why the Candidate/Mentor relationship has to end once the Candidate has successfully completed the Pathway and become a Chartered Member of the Landscape Institute (CMLI). Obviously the nature of the relationship will change but the value of having an experienced reference point or Mentor within the profession remains. The Candidate and Mentor should consider the benefits and opportunities involved in carrying the relationship forward into the Candidate's professional future.

Once the Candidate has achieved CMLI status, it will be useful to set aside time for both Mentor and Candidate to reflect on the relationship. This will be useful for the Mentor if you intend to continue as a Mentor to other Candidates, or if you already have other Candidates it will inform your relationship with them. For the Candidate, reflecting on the relationship will help you think about your attitudes to professional life and learning processes, and give you an insight into the Mentoring role should you wish to consider becoming a Mentor at some point in the future.

Review your progress and achievement in terms of the Pathway but also try to discuss wider issues. Did your aims and objects change throughout the process? Did you find yourself taking more responsibility for your progress and if so, at what point? Did you have problems or conflicts? If you did, how were they resolved?

Carrying forward best practice into your professional life

Successfully completing the Pathway is a significant achievement. By electing you as a Chartered Member, the Institute has put its trust in you to be a credit to the Profession and to advance the status of Landscape Architecture.

In doing so, you will have broadened your knowledge and experience both professionally and personally. You will have looked hard at what you know and how you learn. You will have had a fruitful relationship with a Mentor who is an experienced member of the profession. Ultimately you will be ready to join the LI as a Member and continue to develop and learn.

However the Pathway is just one part of the process of becoming a useful and productive professional Landscape Architect. This is a process which you will continue to work at for the rest of your professional life. You will use the skills you have learned to keep up to date with developing best practice, legislation and Institute procedures; to increase your knowledge and expertise in your chosen specialities; to become a more rounded professional and to become someone to whom others will look for advice and guidance. You may one day take on formal or informal Mentoring roles yourself to help guide the next generation of landscape professionals.