

CENTRE FOR WOMEN'S JUSTICE

Mentoring Scheme Policy and Procedure

Introduction

- 1.1. As part of our commitment to anti-racism we have developed a mentoring scheme to support and encourage more Black, Asian and minoritised women, to pursue a career in law. These women are currently underrepresented in the legal profession.
- 1.2. Mentoring can be a successful way to learn and develop. In our scheme we will match experienced lawyer 'mentors' with 'mentees' who will benefit from informal guidance to assist on their career path.
- 1.3. The scheme is open to all Black, Asian and minoritised women who are applying for training contracts and/or pupillage.
- 1.4. This mentorship programme forms part of our wider anti-racism strategy which can be read [here](#).

Responsibilities

- 2.1. CWJ will be responsible for the initial screening and matching of mentors and mentees. In-House Barrister, **Natasha Hermans**, will be running the mentoring scheme. If there are any issues or questions, please contact her by email: n.hermans@centreforwomensjustice.org.uk
- 2.2. As part of the scheme, mentees will be offered informal one-to-one meetings with their mentor to discuss applications, interviews, tips on writing CVs and other useful information. Mentors will be responsible for maintaining confidentiality and providing mentees with advice. Mentees will be responsible for arranging the meetings with their mentors. It will be up to each mentor and mentee to agree the frequency of meetings, we would suggest that the mentor and mentee meet in person and/or have a video conference call at least three times to develop mutual trust and respect.
- 2.3. If you have any concerns about the scheme, or the person you are matched with, please contact Natasha Hermans in the first instance.
- 2.4. To raise a formal complaint about this scheme or any other area of our work, please follow our complaints procedure [here](#)

Screening and Matching Process

- 3.1. Applicants will be offered a mentor on a first-come, first-served basis. We currently have approximately 20 female lawyers (with an equal number of barristers and solicitors) on our Legal Reference Panel who have volunteered to act as mentors. Applicants will be matched with a mentor subject to availability. Where there are no more mentors available, applicants will have the option to be put on a waiting list.
- 3.2. We will try to match applicants with mentors who practice in an area of law that the mentee intends to practice in. Where an applicant has also requested a mentor who is from a Black, Asian and/or minoritised background, we will endeavour to make that match, subject to availability. We cannot promise that we will be able to match applicants with a mentor that fits the requests they made at the time of applying for a mentor.
- 3.3. Mentors and mentees will be matched up for a period of 12 months to allow the mentors to guide mentees through the training application/pupillage process. If a mentee does not require a mentor for this full length of time, we ask that the mentee inform us of this as that will enable us to match a new applicant with the mentor once the guidance is no longer needed by the mentee.
- 3.4. Applicants will be able to apply to be matched with a mentor [here](#).
- 3.5. Lawyers on our Legal Reference Panel can offer to be a mentor [here](#)
- 3.6. In the event that either party finds the mentoring relationship unproductive and requests that it be terminated, we agree to honour that individual's decision without question or blame. It is the mentee's responsibility to notify CWJ.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- 4.1. Every six months, CWJ will check-in with both the mentor and the mentee to ensure that the mentoring relationship is being maintained and to discuss any issues or how to improve the scheme. We are committed to reviewing the scheme and would welcome any thoughts or suggestions at any time – mentors and mentees do not need to wait for the biannual check-in. Feedback can be given by email to Natasha Hermans – n.hermans@centreforwomensjustice.org.uk

Confidentiality and GDPR

- 5.1. A successful mentoring relationship will be one that maintains transparency, trust and confidentiality.
- 5.2. Mentors and mentees must agree to the following confidentiality conditions when entering into the mentoring scheme:
 - a) no specifics of discussions with mentor/mentees should be disclosed without permission from the other party
 - b) no sensitive information such as religion, sexual orientation etc, or personal information such as contact details can be disclosed without prior permission
- 5.3. CWJ will hold personal data of mentors and mentees for the purposes of screening, matching and evaluating the mentoring scheme.
- 5.4. If you believe a breach in confidentiality has occurred or if you have any concerns regarding confidentiality in the scheme, please contact Natasha Hermans.