

RCN mentorship resources

3. The RCN mentorship development programme



RCN mentorship resources

The RCN mentorship development programme is the third part of the RCN mentorship resources. The complete list of RCN mentorship resources available is below.

1. An overview of the RCN mentoring framework
2. RCN mentoring relationship standards
- 3. The RCN mentorship development programme**
4. Lifelong learning in practice – achieving practice standards
5. The mentorship contract and toolkit
6. Strengthening working partnerships
7. RCN representatives' practice standards
8. Mentor and mentee relationship standards

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3. The RCN mentorship development programme

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Introduction

RCN mentors play a vital part in preparing and supporting representatives for competent practice. The *Mentoring development programme* enables mentors to develop the skills and knowledge they need to meet the expectations of this role. This briefing explains the role and the support mentors can expect to receive from the RCN.

Who can be a mentor?

RCN mentors are RCN officers/professional officers, RCN assistant officers or regional facilitators/advisors.

Why mentoring?

The mentoring element of the representative's learning and development enables the RCN to deliver a programme that is both:

- **comprehensive** – covering the foundation knowledge that all representatives need to provide a good service to RCN members; and
- **relevant to individual and local needs of representatives** – finding opportunities to develop a representative's competence within the local work setting in a systematic (and supervised) way.

Learning through experience by definition means that some of the challenges will be unforeseen as representatives learn from their experiences within the workplace. Mentors can help representatives at these times by providing a space for reflection and discussion. It also means that the RCN has a strategy for keeping in touch with, and guiding, the work of representatives as they develop their expertise in real situations. The mentoring framework also enables the RCN to work with those representatives who were accredited prior to 2008 in England, April 2009 in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and April 2010 in Wales, and who have not had the opportunity to participate in the *Representatives' learning and development pathway* (Modules 1 and 2).

How do mentors support representatives' learning and development?

RCN mentors may be working with newly accredited representatives or with representatives who were accredited prior to 2008 in England, April 2009 in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and April 2010 in Wales.

Mentoring a newly accredited representative

By mentoring a recently accredited representative, the mentor will provide support and encouragement to enable the representative to progress through Modules 1 and 2 of the *RCN representatives' learning and development pathway*. Mentors share the responsibility with learning and development facilitators to ensure that representatives are developing consistent skill sets, regardless of the pathway that they choose to follow or where they are working. At the same time, the skills that are being developed are closely linked to the representative's self assessment and the plans that they make for development on the basis of this assessment.

Once a representative has completed Module 2, the RCN mentor will be the primary source of support and will continue in this role for as long as the representative continues in office (for more detail about this, please refer to *1 An overview of the RCN mentoring framework*).

Mentoring representatives who were accredited prior to 2008 in England, April 2009 in Scotland and Northern Ireland, and April 2010 in Wales

When mentoring a representative accredited before the current Learning and development pathway was introduced, the mentor’s role is to support the representative in completing a personal development plan. The plan will enable the mentor to:

- assess how the mentee’s experience and skills can be mapped to the practice standards; and
- identify appropriate learning and development opportunities.

Mentoring all representatives for lifelong learning-in-practice

Mentoring a representative who has either completed Modules 1 and 2, or who (as a representative that received training prior to the introduction of the *Learning and development pathway*) has completed their personal development plan, the mentor will work in partnership with the mentee to achieve competence in relation to the *RCN practice standards*. This can involve learning opportunities such as Module 3 masterclasses, as well as workplace supervised practice to meet specific practice objectives. The process for this is explained in *4 Learning-in-practice: supporting the achievement of the RCN practice standards*.

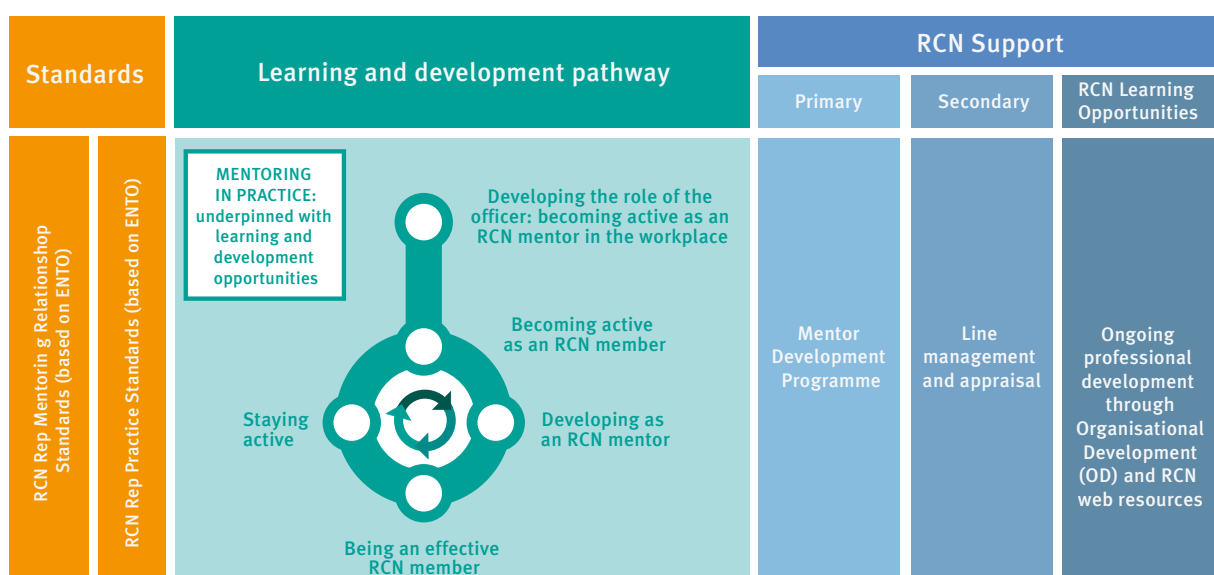
How the RCN supports mentors

The *Mentoring development programme* provides development and networking opportunities for mentors across the UK and aims to develop a specified set of professional knowledge and skills that a mentor will need to undertake their role. The programme is supported by and mapped to the *RCN relationship standards*, a set of nationally recognised occupational standards which are designed to be relevant to the specific role of mentoring RCN representatives. (See *Mentorship resource 2: supporting learning-in-practice – the RCN mentoring relationship standards*).

To mentor representatives, it is a pre-requisite that all mentors understand the process of the *Representatives’ learning and development pathways* and that they are familiar with the role descriptors and standards that guide each element of the programme. The *Mentor development programme*, however, gives particular weight to the *RCN mentorship relationship standards* and the *RCN practice standards*, as these are fundamental to both the process and purpose of your mentoring.

The *Mentoring development programme* follows a process that will be familiar to mentors that have already worked with the *RCN representatives’ learning and development pathways* (see Figure 1).

Figure 1 RCN mentorship development programme



Becoming active as an RCN mentor – getting started, understanding the role and responsibilities as a mentor.

Developing as an RCN mentor – developing knowledge and skills to progress in the role as a mentor.

Being an effective RCN mentor – putting learning into practice.

Staying effective as a mentor – monitoring and evaluating development as a mentor.

The mentorship development programme is specifically designed to prepare RCN mentors for their role. Additional professional development opportunities are offered by the Organisational Development Department – for further information on these email organisationaldevelopment@rcn.org.uk or visit the *Staff learning and development pages* on the RCN intranet.

The following sections provide an overview of the RCN mentorship development programme.

RCN mentorship development programme

1. Becoming active as an RCN mentor

Getting started: understanding your role and responsibilities as a mentor

Purpose	Knowledge and skills outcomes	Relationship standards
To enable you to become active as an RCN mentor by:		R1, R2, R3, R4, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R16
1. Developing the professional knowledge and skills you need to be an RCN mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand the RCN mentorship relationship standards • Understand the RCN practice standards • Describe the knowledge and skills required to perform competently in your role as an RCN mentor 	
2. Understanding and using the support and resources available to you to fulfil your role as a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify the key standards underpinning mentorship and how they can be used within the mentorship relationship • Identify the key resource materials available to you and how they can be used within the mentorship relationship 	
3. Taking ownership of your own learning and continuing development as a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify the key resources and learning opportunities you might use to develop 	

For further information about the relationship standards please refer to Mentorship resource 2: supporting learning-in-practice – the RCN mentoring relationship standards.

RCN mentorship development programme 2 – Developing as an RCN mentor

Developing knowledge and skills to progress in your role as a mentor

Purpose	Knowledge and skills outcomes	Relationship standards
To develop and apply the knowledge and skills you need in order to be competent and confident as a mentor by:		R5, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R16
1. Identifying the knowledge and skills you need to develop as a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how the mentorship relationship / practice standards inform your role as an RCN mentor • Identify and develop key learning opportunities that will enable you to demonstrate your competence as a mentor • Analyse and reflect on your confidence / competence to perform in your mentorship role 	
2. Applying your knowledge and skills to support RCN representatives' learning and development needs effectively in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify key resources and learning opportunities that will support you in your role as a mentor • Identify how you will support RCN representatives in their continuing professional development • Recognise and support the diverse learning and support needs of RCN representatives 	
3. Taking ownership of your own learning and continuing development as a mentor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to identify the key resources and learning opportunities you might use to develop 	

For further information about the relationship standards please refer to *Mentorship resource 2: supporting learning-in-practice – the RCN mentoring relationship standards*.

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3 – Being an effective RCN mentor

Putting your learning into practice

Purpose	Knowledge and skills outcomes	Relationship standards
To enable you to put into practice your knowledge and skills as a mentor to support RCN reps effectively in the workplace by:		R6, R7, R11, R12, R13, R14, R15, R16
1. Embedding mentorship to support a mentee's development in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key features of a mentorship agreement and contract Establish your role in negotiating the mentorship contract/agreement Explain how mentorship can be implemented to support a mentee's development in the workplace 	
2. Providing mentorship/support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the key steps in providing mentorship Describe good practice in implementing mentorship Identify how and where you can make a contribution to the RCN representative's learning and development Be able to advise and support RCN representatives about learning or development needs and know where to go for information and resources 	
3. Promoting mentorship in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify how RCN representatives can support other members in the workplace Identify sources of information for you, RCN representatives and the wider membership Describe the important role of the mentor in supporting others 	
4. Identifying further resources and learning opportunities to support you in your mentorship role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify other resources you may need in your mentorship role 	

For further information about the relationship standards please refer to *Mentorship resource 2: supporting learning-in-practice – the RCN mentoring relationship standards*.

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4 – Staying effective as a mentor

Monitoring and evaluating your development as a mentor

Purpose	Knowledge and skills outcomes	Relationship standards
To enable you to stay effective as a mentor by:		R8, R9, R10, R11, R12, R13, R14 R15, R16
1. Reviewing and reflecting on the knowledge and skills you have attained so far as a mentor, identifying and acting on the learning and development you still need	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on what you have learned from your role as a mentor • Identify further learning needs to develop your role as a mentor 	
2. Taking ownership of your own learning and continuing development as a mentor	Continue to identify the key resources and learning opportunities you might use to develop your mentorship skills	
3. Promoting mentorship in the workplace	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify how RCN representatives can support other members in the workplace • Identify sources of information for you, RCN representatives and the wider membership • Describe the important role of the mentor in supporting others 	
4. Identifying further resources and learning opportunities to support you in your mentorship role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify other resources you may need in your mentorship role 	

For further information about the relationship standards please refer to *Mentorship resource 2: supporting learning-in-practice – the RCN mentoring relationship standards*.



The RCN represents nurses and nursing, promotes excellence in practice and shapes health policies.

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