



Education and Culture

Leonardo da Vinci



WorkMentor

Inventory of Needs

**Leonardo da Vinci III
Transfer of Innovation**

PROJECT N° 2011-1-IS1-LEO05-01263

October 2011 - October 2013

***Verkmenntaskólinn á Akureyri
Hringteigi 2
600 Akureyri
Iceland***

Contents

	Page
1. Background	3
2. Results from Employer Questionnaires	4
3. Conclusions	9
Appendix 1 Employer Questionnaire	10
Appendix 2 Summary of Employer Responses	11

1. Background

WORK MENTOR builds on the relationship between learner, teacher and employer by providing an innovative mentoring skills course for work supervisors. The project takes a learner-learner peer mentoring project IMPLEMENTOR and transfers it to the work place for employer-learner relationships.

General aim of WorkMentor:

The aim is to provide work supervisors with greater understanding of vocational learning and mentoring skills to support young people in vocational education and training. This will improve the effectiveness, retention and achievement of on-the-job learning for Apprenticeships and wider placements.

The project is broken down into 8 work packages extending over two years. Work Package 3 has direct relevance to the Inventory of Needs:

1. To design a questionnaire to conduct a survey of employers
2. To conduct a survey between 1st November 2010 and 31st January 2011 of all partner employer representatives to determine current practice and areas for improvement in the role of employers as mentors.
3. To collate findings and recommend the key requirements of an employer mentoring scheme by March 2012.

Partner Meeting 1 (October 2011 Gorseinon College, Wales):

Launch of the project took place at Gorseinon College to confirm the aims, objectives and work packages; establish working arrangements and protocols. The meeting included a presentation of IMPLEMENTOR by Gorseinon College on mentor training and comparison to the employer/ apprentice relationship. The outcome of this meeting was to agree a questionnaire to use with employers as the Inventory of Needs (Appendix 1).

At the end of PM 1, the partners each carried out an Inventory of Needs (Work Package 3) between 1st November 2011 and 31st January 2012. This was collated by Riverside Training and a report circulated to the group prior to Partner Meeting 2 to be held in May 2012 in Norway.

The partners participating in the project were as follows:

Iceland	VMA, Akureyri Comprehensive College	Jóhannes Árnason Oskar Ingi Sigurdsson Ketill Sigurðarson
Finland	Axxell Utbildning Ab	Tanya Haltunen
France	CFPPA Jules Rieffel, Agricultural College of Ministère d'Agriculture	Mireille Rioual Nicolas Bizeul
UK (Wales)	Gower College, Gorseinon, Swansea	Carrie Townsend Jones Don Hawkins
Netherlands	IFSAT Foundation	Bas Timmers
Norway	Skjetlein Ressursenter, Leinstrand	Ingivild Espelien Bente Ryen
UK (England)	Riverside Training	Philip Broomhead

2. Summary of Employer Responses to questionnaires (Appendix 2)

Scope of the Survey

Country	No: Responses	Size of company (No: employees)				Sector
		0-10	10-50	50-250	Over 250	
Iceland	8	0	5	1	2	Catering
Finland	13	2	11	0	0	Health & Social Care
France	15	15	0	0	0	Agriculture
Nederlands	13	4	5	3	1	Catering/ various
Norway	17	16	0	1	0	Equine
UK (England)	12	2	9	0	1	Hospitality & Catering/ Business
UK (Wales)	5	2	2	0	1	Motor Vehicle Coal Mining
	83	41	32	5	5	

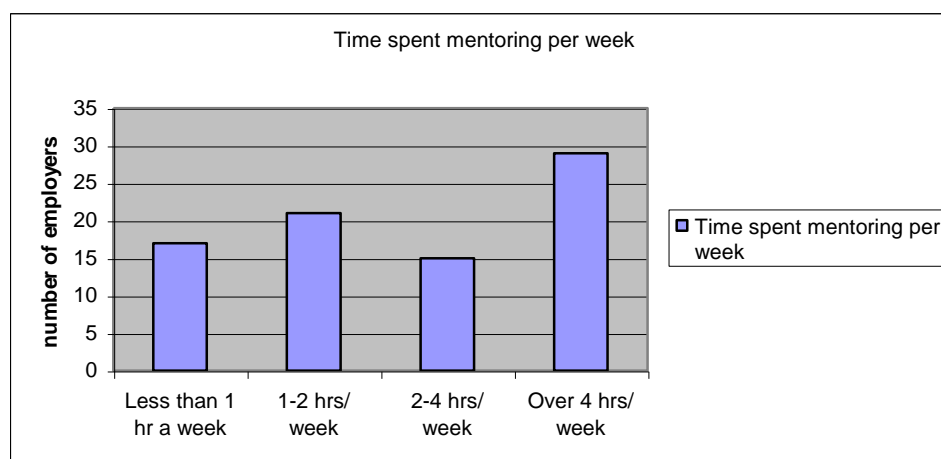
1. In total, 83 surveys were completed from 7 countries covering a range of enterprises including: Agriculture; Equine; Hospitality & Catering; Health & Social Care and a scattering of various businesses.
2. Half of the employers surveyed were SMEs with less than 10 employees being predominantly Agriculture and Equine businesses.
3. 38% of employers employed between 10-50 employees. These were mainly Care homes in Finland and Restaurants in England and Holland.

2.1 Support for a new employee

2.11 Responses to this question highlighted what employers thought was important about starting a new employee. These can be summarised as:2.21

- a. Introduce the company, its staff, objectives and culture
- b. Make the learner feel welcome and part of the team
- c. Identify expectations of the learner
- d. Give structured induction to H&S and working practices
- e. Identify a structured approach to shadowing and evaluation of learner progress.

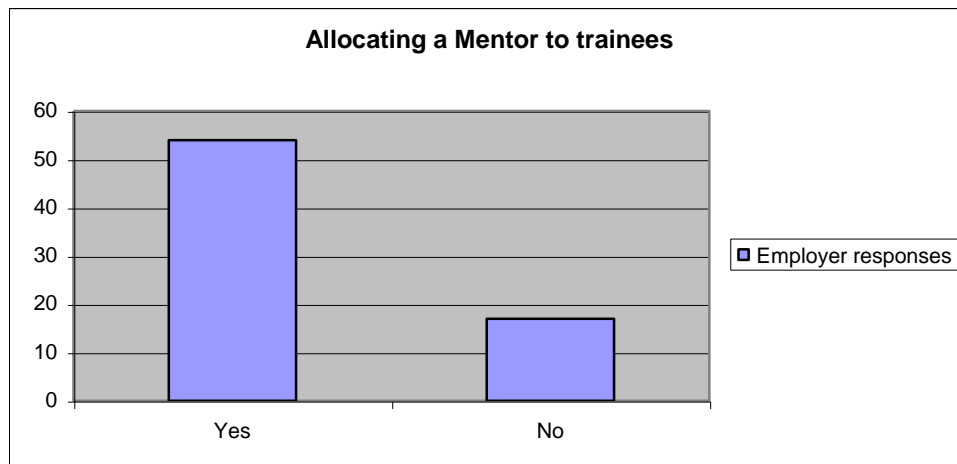
2.2 Time spent supporting a trainee on a one-to-one basis



2.21 This question produced a range of answers, in Health & Social Care where it is most structured, the need to supervisor a trainee exceeded 4 hours per week. IN these cases, there was a significant amount of time spent work shadowing.

2.22 For SMEs, the responses were more in the, "less than 2 hours per week" bracket.

2.3 Do you allocate a mentor to new employees?



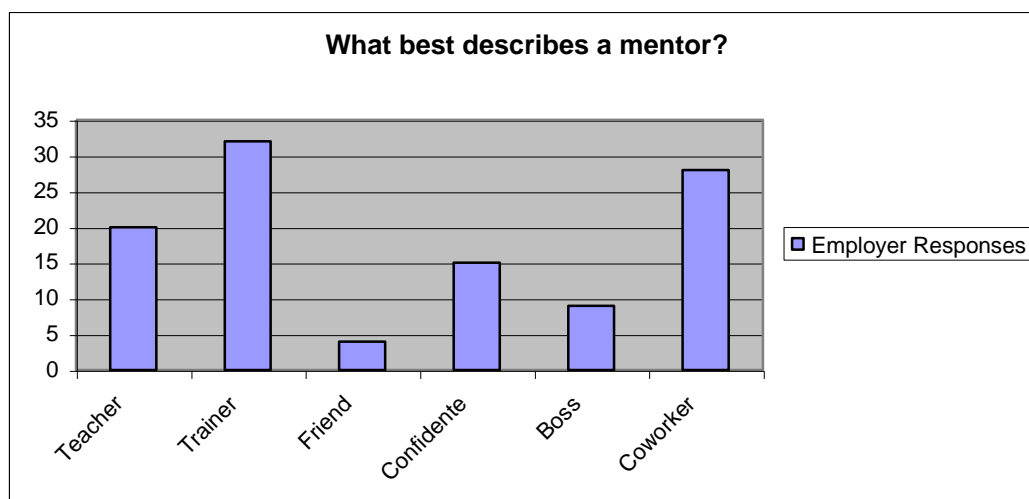
2.31 76% of employer responses stated that they did allocate a mentor to an employee; 24% did not.

2.32 When asked how the mentor was selected, there was a significant number of employers state that this was done through a line management system. Other responses were based upon the availability of staff such as shift patterns. It was also stated that it was also done on a suitability based upon matching teh learners personality with a co-worker.

2.33 In order to carry out the mentoring duties, one employer stated that the mentor must have at least 2 years of work experience in the job role.

2.34 This question sets out some useful protocols for the selection of mentors at work.

2.4 What best describes a mentor?



- 2.41 This question contradicts question 3 in that, only a small number agreed a mentor was a "boss". In these cases, it may have been in agriculture where the employer is only one person so has to be the mentor and boss.
- 2.42 The highest response was identifying a trainer, this may be due to the formal training that is given in Health & Social Care where mentoring is provided by the trainer.
- 2.43 28 responses identified a mentor as being a coworker.
- 2.44 The survey also recognised the importance of the confidential nature of mentoring which may come into conflict with the relationship of the boss as a line manager.

2.5 Benefits of Mentoring

2.51 Benefits were clearly identified including:

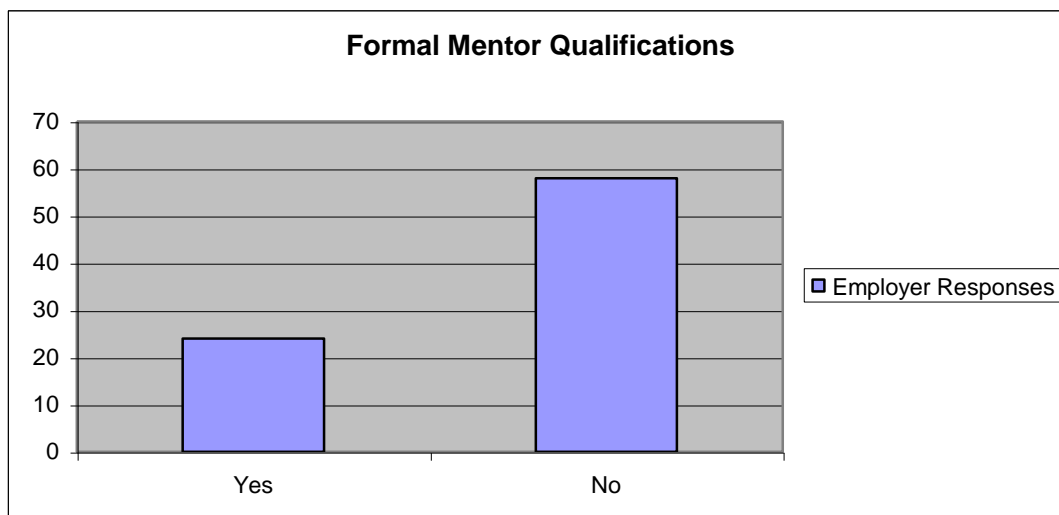
- a. Learners settle in quicker, it builds confidence
- b. Learners know what is expected, it gives a professional approach
- c. It encourages safe working with greater success for the learner
- d. It encourages self reflection and development of both staff in a two way development giving channels for feedback in a secure and confidential relationship
- e. It can be an inspiring and rewarding relationship encouraging new ideas and rewarding mentor with the learner's success.
- f. You get to know the whole person and those personal social issues that may affect the learner's performance.

2.52 Disadvantages include:

- a. It is time consuming for a member of staff who may already have a full workload
- b. It could take away responsibility from the learner as they rely on the mentor
- c. It relies on a personal relationship built on rapport and trust ensuring that the mentor does not become too friendly and the learner does not become too reliant on his/her mentor.

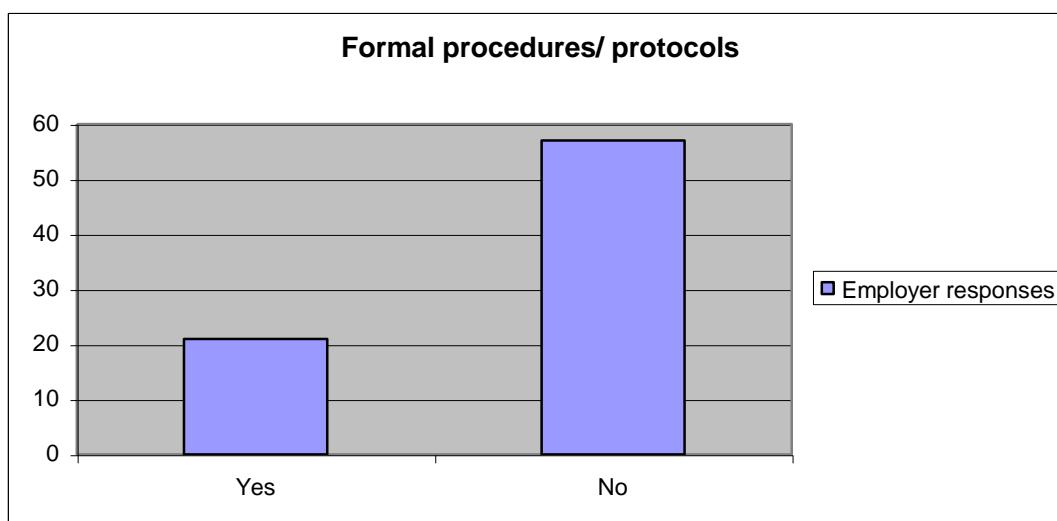
2.53 The benefits clearly recognise this as a personal relationship and that protocols should be set up to ensure that those disadvantages do not hinder the success of the mentoring.

2.6 Formal qualifications of mentoring?



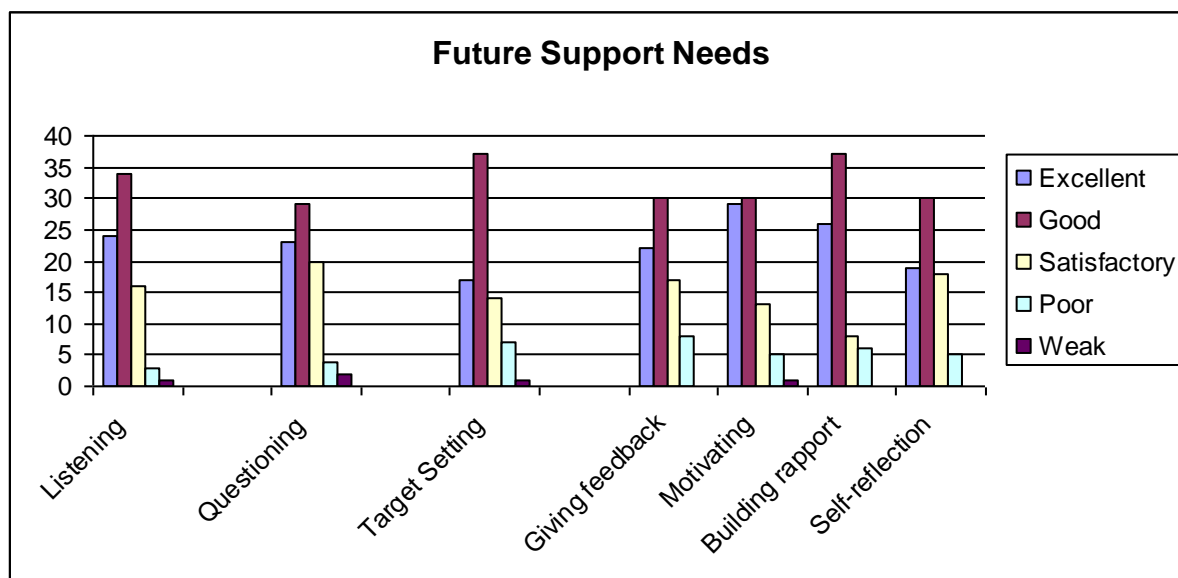
30% of employers replied that they had mentoring qualifications. These included Teaching qualifications, dedicated mentoring courses for nursing and trades along side mentoring qualifications for trainers/ instructors

2.7 Formal procedures/ protocols for mentoring



2.71 73% of respondents stated that they did not have any formal procedures and protocols for mentoring. Of those that did identify such protocols, activities include weekly meetings organised and formal reports to management of learner progress.

2.8 What future support do you need?

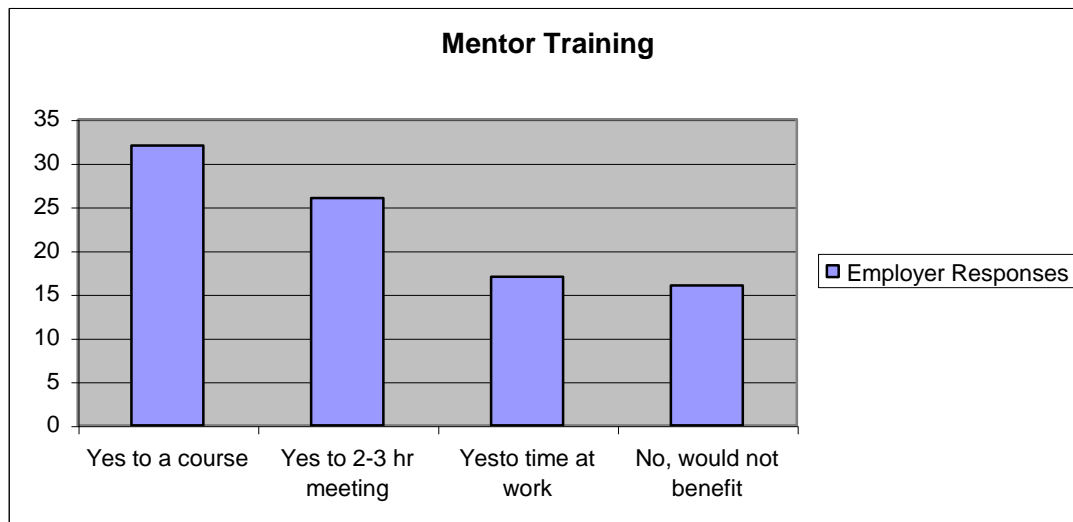


2.81 The area where an employer felt they had the most skills were in motivating and building rapport with young people. Employers therefore felt they were good with young people.

2.82 The area where the employers felt they had the least skills were in encouraging self-reflection and questioning. These two parameters are similar in that good questioning skills will encourage the learner to reflect on their own performance and discuss their approach.

2.83 This is supported by the need for more support in giving constructive feedback and target setting in order to move the discussion into a place of action for the learner

2.9 Giving time for mentoring?



2.91 Of the 91 responses (some employers gave more than one response), 35% said that they would attend a course on mentoring; no length of course was specified.

2.92 Of the three positive choices, there was an even spread of responses to the delivery method. This suggests that any course should have the flexibility to be delivered as: a discrete course; as a discussion meeting or delivered in the workplace.

2.93 16 respondents suggested that they would not benefit from additional training, these may have been from employers who already held a mentoring qualification.

2.10 Additional Comments

2.101 Several comments were made about employers understanding the qualification requirements in terms of the assessment process and the performance criteria.

2.102 Some employers felt that there needed to be due consideration of the communication between employer, learner and provider especially where some information is not made available to the employer in cases of data protection.

2.103 Some employers wanted further guidance on specific learner issues that might go beyond the bounds of mentoring and enter the field of professional counselling. In such instances, it is important to establish clear boundaries between the two types of service.

3. Conclusions

- 3.1 It is clear that employers have some understanding of mentoring skills but there is a need to clearly establish protocols and procedures to ensure that expectations are managed accordingly.
- 3.2 By including examples of a mentoring contract or agreement in the course, the basis for a professional relationship should be established from the onset.
- 3.3 Employers understand the benefits of a mentoring system but in some cases, it often falls upon the line manager to act as mentor. In such cases the relationship may not be truly confidential and employers need to ensure that learners feel at ease to express themselves in front of their boss.
- 3.4 Any mentoring course needs to be designed to be flexible enough for the diversity of employer surveyed. This would include a mixture of traditional course, discussion group and one to one support to employers.
- 3.5 Within the survey group, there were some employers who felt they were accomplished mentors; the choice of the group for piloting a course needs to be identified to ensure that only those that need the support are offered it.

Appendix 1 Employer Questionnaire



WorkMentor

Thank you for taking part in this survey – It is designed to investigate the range of support given to learners/ students in the work place and what help we can provide to support our employers.

Mentoring at Work Survey



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Section 1: About You

Name		Company	
No: employees		Occupational area	

Section 2: Current practice

1. For a new employee/trainee, identify the three most important things you do to support them.	
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2. How much time is spent supporting your student/ trainee on a one-to-one basis (please tick)							
Less than 1 hr/wk		1-2 hrs/ week		2-4 hrs/ week		Over 4 hrs/ wk	

3. Do you allocate a mentor to new employees/ trainees (tick)	Yes		No	
If yes, how was the mentor selected?				

4. Tick which of the following best describes a mentor?							
Teacher		Trainer		Friend			
Confidante		Boss		Coworker			

5. What do you see as the benefits of mentoring?	
.... And disadvantages?	

6. Have you any formal qualifications in mentoring:	Yes		No	
If yes, please give details:				

7. Do you have any formal mentoring procedures/ protocols at work?	Yes		No	
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Section 3: Future Support

8. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is good and 5 is weak) identify how effective your skills for the mentoring:						
Skill	Please tick ✓					I need further development ✓
	☺ 1	2	3	☹ 4	5	
Listening						
Questioning						
Setting targets						
Giving feedback						
Motivating learners						
Building rapport						
Encouraging self-reflection						

9. Would you be prepared to give time for mentor training? ✓	
Yes, to attend a course on mentoring	
Yes, to give 2-3 hours to attend a meeting to learn more	
Yes, to spare time at work to learn more	
No, I/we do not feel we would benefit from any training	

10. Are there any particular issues you would like to know more about regarding supporting your learner in the workplace?	
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Thank you for your support

Appendix 2

Work Mentor Summary of Employer Responses



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Section 1: About You

Name	Overall results	Company
No: employees	0-10: 40 10-50: 32 50-250: 5 >250: 5	Occupational areas Agriculture 15 Equine 17 Motor Vehicle 4 Coal mining 1

Section 2: Current practice

1. For a new employee/trainee, identify the three most important things you do to support them.	occurrence
<i>Provide information about the organization, its goals, culture and values</i>	14
<i>Explain the work as well as expectations</i>	3
<i>Most important: make them feel at home in the company</i>	3
<i>Make time available</i>	2
<i>Introduction to colleagues</i>	2
<i>Ensure the learner is at ease and welcomed to the company</i>	
<i>Introduce learner to key clients</i>	3
<i>Be very accessible to learners: they may come with just about anything</i>	
<i>Instruction about safety and prevention</i>	
<i>Finding out the objectives of the learner</i>	2
<i>Together create an approach to realise his objectives</i>	
<i>Set regular evaluation points to compare objectives and achievements and re-redirect when needed</i>	2
<i>Identify the culture of the company, positive values</i>	
<i>Explain rules and health & safety</i>	2
<i>Set up shadowing with colleagues</i>	

2. How much time is spent supporting your student/ trainee on a one-to-one basis (please tick)	17	1-2 hrs/ week	21	2-4 hrs/ week	15	Over 4 hrs/ week	29
Less than 1 hr a week							

3. Do you allocate a mentor to new employees/ trainees (please tick)	Yes	54	No	17
If yes, how was the mentor selected? Line manager, shift manager, foreman, co-worker, someone with experience of the job Based upon availability and suitability Only permanent staff Should fit the learner's personality, common background/ interest At least 2 years experience Depends upon shift patterns				

4. Tick which of the following best describes a mentor?	20	Trainer	32	Friend	4
Teacher					
Confidante	15	Boss	9	Coworker	28

5. What do you see as the benefits of mentoring?			
Learners settle in quicker Keeps the learner motivated – gives a professional approach to the work Learners know what is expected of them Allows confidentiality Confidence building Allows for safe working practices Mentor may have had formal training Learner gets direct feedback Good mentoring leads to good work Increases success of the learner Self development of both Gives fresh ideas and inspiration back Very rewarding for the mentor Tool for self reflection An outlet for someone to speak to who is not your line manager You get to know the whole person			
.... And disadvantages?			
Time and cost Different expectations What if the mentor is not motivated Can take responsibility away from Learner onto mentor Ties up a second member of staff who may already be busy Relies on the personal skills of mentor Reliance by learner on mentor Mentor may not get a break Mentor getting too friendly with learner Mentor having to think and prioritise their work load on top of their own – having space for themselves			

6. Have you any formal qualifications in mentoring:	Yes	24	No	56
If yes, please give details: ILM L2 Coaching and Mentoring Teacher qualifications Equine instructors course Master of Trade Course at Akureyri University RGN Nursing Course at Mjolbolsta to train nurses				

7. Do you have any formal procedures/ protocols for mentoring at work?	Yes	21	No	57
Weekly reports discussed with management.				

Section 3: Future Support

8. On a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is good and 5 is weak) identify how effective your skills for the mentoring:						
Skill	Please tick ✓					I need further development ✓
	☺ 1	2	3	4 ☹	5	
Listening	24	34	16	3	1	6
Questioning	23	29	20	4	2	2
Setting targets/ goals	17	37	14	7	1	6
Giving constructive feedback	22	30	17	8	0	4
Motivating young people	29	30	13	5	1	4
Building rapport with young people	26	37	8	6	0	3
Encouraging self-reflection	19	30	18	5	0	5

9. Would you be prepared to give time for mentor training?	
✓	
Yes, to attend a course on mentoring	32
Yes, to give 2-3 hours to attend a meeting to learn more	26
Yes, to spare time at work to learn more	17
No, I/we do not feel we would benefit from any training	16

10. Are there any particular issues you would like to know more about regarding supporting your learner in the workplace?	
Matching work opportunities to meet the qualification criteria How to create good communication between the three parties How to deal with personal and social issues (feeling mentally ill) How to motivate employees to take on a mentoring course How to tell a student that they are not fit for the course How to work around the fact that information from the school is not allowed to be shared How adults take and receive feedback How to evaluate students	

Thank you for your support