

MENTGEE

PEERMENT / CCI Mentoring Guide



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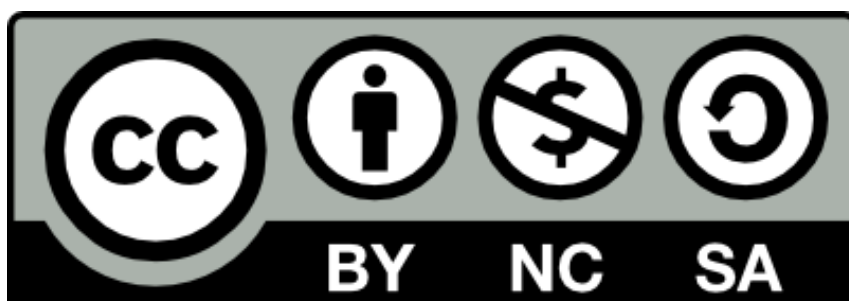
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PART A

Introduction





About Project

PeerMent Project Introduction

PeerMent is an Erasmus+ KA210 VET project developed to strengthen mentoring practice in the Creative and Cultural Industries. The project responds to a clear gap between education and real professional pathways, where emerging professionals often face uncertainty, non-linear careers, and limited structured support when entering the labour market.

Mentoring already exists widely in the sector, but it is often informal and inconsistent. Mentors are rarely trained for the role, expectations are unclear, and mentoring relationships can easily shift into advice-giving, emotional support, or decision-making on behalf of the mentee. These dynamics reduce learning, create dependency, and limit the long-term value of mentoring.

PeerMent addresses this challenge by establishing a structured peer mentoring model grounded in vocational education and training principles. The project focuses on professionalising mentoring practice by clarifying roles, responsibilities, and boundaries, and by supporting mentoring as a learning-focused process rather than a problem-solving service.

The PeerMent model is built around three interconnected elements:

- a structured mentor training programme that prepares mentors for real mentoring situations
- a practical guide that supports mentors during mentoring practice
- an online platform that provides structure, continuity, and documentation for mentoring relationships

These elements work together. Training alone is not sufficient without support during real mentoring. Tools alone are not effective without shared principles. PeerMent combines both to support sustainable mentoring practice.

A core objective of the project is long-term impact. PeerMent promotes a self-feeding approach in which mentees who successfully transition into employment can later take on mentoring roles themselves. This supports continuity, capacity building, and knowledge transfer within the Creative and Cultural Industries. PeerMent places responsibility, learning, and autonomy at the centre of mentoring. Mentors are supported in guiding learning processes, while mentees retain responsibility for decisions and outcomes. This balance is essential for ethical, effective, and sustainable mentoring practice.





About MENTGEE

Purpose and Scope

MENTGEE is a practice guide designed to support mentors while they are actively engaged in mentoring relationships within the PeerMent project. It is not a training programme and it does not replace MENTRA. Instead, it complements mentor training by providing practical guidance for real mentoring situations.

The purpose of MENTGEE is to help mentors apply what they have learned in MENTRA when mentoring becomes complex, unclear, or demanding. Mentoring often involves moments of uncertainty, pressure to give advice, blurred boundaries, or emotional intensity. MENTGEE exists to support mentors in these moments by offering clear reference points and practical responses grounded in the PeerMent mentoring approach.

MENTGEE is intended to be used throughout the mentoring process. Mentors may consult it before a first mentoring meeting, between sessions, or after challenging conversations. The guide is structured so that sections can be used independently, depending on what is happening in the mentoring relationship at a given time.

The scope of MENTGEE covers common mentoring situations rather than abstract topics. It focuses on how mentors position themselves, how they respond to mentee expectations, how they manage boundaries, and how they support learning and autonomy without taking responsibility for decisions or outcomes. Each section translates core mentoring principles into concrete action.

MENTGEE is written for mentors working in the Creative and Cultural Industries, where careers are often non-linear and uncertainty is common. The guide reflects these realities and avoids applying fixed or linear career assumptions. It supports mentors in maintaining a learning-focused approach even in unstable or transitional professional contexts.

By design, MENTGEE is concise, applied, and functional. It aims to strengthen mentoring quality during practice, support consistency across mentoring relationships, and contribute to sustainable mentoring within the PeerMent model.



Using the Guide

Purpose and Scope

MENTGEE is designed to be used during mentoring practice, not read from start to finish. Each section addresses a specific mentoring situation and can be consulted independently, depending on what is happening in the mentoring relationship.

You may use this guide at different moments:

- before a mentoring relationship begins
- between mentoring meetings
- after challenging or unclear mentoring conversations
- when mentoring feels difficult, stalled, or demanding

Each section is structured to support quick orientation and action. It highlights what is at stake in a given situation, common mentoring traps to avoid, and practical ways to respond while maintaining a learning-focused approach.

MENTGEE is most effective when used alongside reflective practice. Mentors are encouraged to pause, identify the situation they are facing, and use the guide to check their positioning, responsibilities, and next steps before acting.

This guide does not provide scripts or fixed answers. It supports mentors in making informed choices that align with the PeerMent mentoring approach and the principles developed through MENTRA training programme.



Methodology

MENTGEE is based on an applied, situation-oriented methodological approach. The guide is designed to support mentors in real mentoring moments, where decisions, responses, and boundaries matter more than theoretical knowledge.

The methodology builds on the principles developed in the MENTRA training programme and translates them into practical guidance for use during mentoring practice. Rather than explaining concepts in detail, MENTGEE focuses on action, judgement, and responsibility. Each section addresses a recognisable mentoring situation and supports mentors in deciding how to respond while keeping the learning process at the centre.

The guide follows a consistent internal structure across sections. Mentors are first invited to recognise the situation they are facing and what is at stake. Common mentoring traps are then highlighted, followed by practical alternatives that align with the PeerMent mentoring approach. Each section links back to core mentoring principles to reinforce consistency with the training programme.

MENTGEE supports reflective practice without requiring extensive time or preparation. It is designed to be consulted quickly and to help mentors pause before acting, especially in situations where there is pressure to give advice, solve problems, or take responsibility for decisions.

The methodological approach emphasises autonomy and sustainability. Mentors are supported in guiding learning processes while maintaining clear boundaries and preserving mentee responsibility for outcomes. This approach strengthens mentoring quality and supports long-term use within different organisational and professional contexts.





PART B

Mentoring Situations





Mentoring Approach and Core Principles

Situation

You are mentoring someone and feel pressure to be helpful, supportive, or effective. You may feel expected to give advice, confirm decisions, or solve problems quickly.

What is at stake

How you position yourself as a mentor shapes the entire mentoring relationship. If responsibility shifts away from the mentee, learning is reduced and dependency can develop. If you withdraw too much, mentoring loses value.

What to avoid?



Taking responsibility for decisions or outcomes

- Acting primarily as an advisor or problem-solver
- Offering reassurance instead of reflection
- Avoiding challenge to maintain comfort
- Letting mentoring drift without clear purpose

What to do instead?



Focus on supporting the learning process rather than outcomes

- Ask questions that help the mentee think and decide for themselves
- Make responsibility visible and explicit
- Use mentoring to explore options, not to select them
- Return to purpose and boundaries when expectations become unclear

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section reflects MENTRA Module 1 on mentoring foundations and responsibility, and Module 2 on communication and learning-focused mentoring practice.



Preparing the Mentoring Relationship

Situation

You are about to start a mentoring relationship, or a new phase of mentoring, and expectations have not yet been clearly discussed. There may be assumptions on both sides about roles, availability, or outcomes.

What is at stake

The way mentoring is prepared influences how responsibility, trust, and learning develop. If expectations remain implicit, mentoring can quickly become confusing, demanding, or ineffective.

What to avoid?



Starting mentoring without clarifying purpose

- Assuming the mentee understands what mentoring is
- Over-promising availability or support
- Avoiding discussion of roles and limits
- Letting the first meeting become problem-solving

What to do instead?



Clarify the purpose of mentoring from the outset

- Make your role and limits explicit
- Invite the mentee to reflect on what they want to explore or learn
- Agree on basic ways of working, including communication and frequency
- Use the first meeting to establish a shared understanding, not to solve issues

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section reflects MENTRA Module 1 on positioning, responsibility, and the design of the first mentoring meeting.



Conducting Mentoring Conversations

Situation

You are in a mentoring meeting and the conversation begins to drift, speed up, or move quickly toward advice, solutions, or reassurance. You may feel pressure to be useful or to respond immediately.

What is at stake

How mentoring conversations are conducted determines whether mentoring supports learning or simply provides answers. If conversations become directive or unfocused, the mentee's reflection and autonomy are reduced.

What to avoid?



Interrupting or finishing the mentee's thoughts

- Moving quickly into advice or examples from your own experience
- Asking questions that lead to a specific answer
- Filling silence to avoid discomfort
- Treating the conversation as problem-solving

What to do instead?



Listen actively and allow space for the mentee to think

- Use open questions that invite reflection and exploration
- Reflect back what you hear to support clarity
- Slow down the conversation when it becomes rushed
- Keep the focus on understanding before moving to action

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section reflects MENTRA Module 2 on active listening, reflective questioning, and learning-oriented mentoring dialogue.



Responding to Requests for Advice and Decisions

Situation

During mentoring, the mentee asks what they should do, seeks confirmation that a choice is right, or expects you to decide, prioritise, or validate a direction on their behalf.

What is at stake

This moment directly affects responsibility and learning. If the mentor provides answers or decisions, responsibility shifts away from the mentee. If the request is avoided or dismissed, trust can be damaged. How you respond determines whether mentoring supports autonomy or creates dependency.

What to avoid?



Giving direct advice as the default response

- Framing your own experience as a model to follow
- Confirming or rejecting the mentee's choice
- Answering quickly to reduce discomfort
- Treating the request as a problem to solve

What to do instead?



Acknowledge the request and name what is happening

- Clarify that decisions remain with the mentee
- Ask the mentee to articulate their thinking, criteria, and concerns
- Explore options, consequences, and trade-offs together
- Support the mentee in reaching their own conclusion

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "What makes this decision difficult for you right now?"
- "What options are you considering, and what matters most in choosing?"
- "What would help you feel confident about deciding this yourself?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 1 on responsibility and mentor positioning, and Module 2 on reflective questioning and non-directive communication.



Managing Expectations and Boundaries

Situation

Over time, expectations around availability, communication, emotional support, or roles begin to shift. You may feel stretched, unsure where mentoring ends, or uncertain how to respond without damaging the relationship.

What is at stake

Boundaries protect both learning and sustainability. When boundaries are unclear or repeatedly crossed, mentoring can turn into unpaid labour, emotional support, or ongoing dependency. If boundaries are enforced abruptly, trust can be lost.

What to avoid?



Being constantly available without agreement

- Allowing mentoring to replace other forms of support
- Avoiding boundary conversations to keep things comfortable
- Responding emotionally rather than deliberately
- Letting small boundary issues accumulate

What to do instead?



Notice early signs of boundary drift

- Name expectations clearly and calmly
- Revisit agreements on communication and availability
- Separate empathy from responsibility
- Use structure to protect the mentoring space

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "Let's clarify how and when we use mentoring time."
- "I want to make sure mentoring stays useful and sustainable for both of us."
- "What support do you have outside our mentoring relationship?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 1 on boundaries and responsibility, and Module 5 on sustainable and digital mentoring practice.



Addressing Challenges and Stagnation in Mentoring

Situation

Mentoring meetings begin to feel repetitive, unfocused, or unproductive. Progress is unclear, energy drops, or the relationship feels difficult to sustain. You may feel unsure whether mentoring is still useful.

What is at stake

If stagnation is ignored, mentoring can lose relevance or end without learning. If the mentor reacts by pushing for outcomes or control, mentoring shifts away from reflection and autonomy. How difficulty is handled determines whether mentoring deepens or disengages.

What to avoid?



Forcing progress to "fix" the situation

- Filling sessions with advice or activity to avoid discomfort
- Blaming the mentee or yourself for lack of movement
- Continuing mentoring without revisiting purpose
- Ending mentoring without reflection

What to do instead?



Pause and acknowledge that mentoring feels difficult

- Invite reflection on what has changed or stalled
- Revisit the purpose and focus of mentoring
- Adjust the mentoring approach rather than the mentee
- Use difficulty as material for learning

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "It feels like our mentoring has slowed down. How does it feel for you?"
- "What has changed since we started mentoring?"
- "What would make our sessions more useful right now?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 3 on mentoring dynamics, reflection, and working with difficulty in mentoring relationships.



Mentoring in Creative and Cultural Industry Contexts

Situation

The mentee is navigating uncertainty, non-linear career paths, project-based work, unstable income, or questions of professional identity that are common in the Creative and Cultural Industries.

What is at stake

If mentoring ignores sector realities, it risks reinforcing unrealistic expectations or applying linear career models that do not fit the context. At the same time, normalising insecurity without reflection can undermine confidence and agency.

What to avoid?



Applying fixed or linear career narratives

- Comparing career paths across different contexts or generations
- Framing instability as personal failure
- Offering reassurance without supporting reflection
- Projecting your own career experience as a model

What to do instead?



Acknowledge uncertainty as part of the sector context

- Support sense-making rather than certainty
- Explore multiple definitions of progress and success
- Focus on adaptability, learning, and agency
- Help the mentee identify patterns across experiences

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "What feels uncertain, and what feels stable right now?"
- "What have these experiences helped you learn?"
- "How do you define progress in your current context?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 4 on mentoring within Creative and Cultural Industry realities and non-linear career development.



Using Digital Tools and the Mentoring Platform

Situation

Mentoring takes place partly or fully online. Communication, scheduling, documentation, or reflection happens through digital tools or the mentoring platform.

What is at stake

Digital tools can either support structure and reflection or blur boundaries and increase pressure. Without clear intention, online mentoring often becomes reactive, fragmented, or overly demanding.

What to avoid?



Relying on constant messaging instead of structured mentoring

- Allowing digital communication to replace mentoring meetings
- Responding immediately to all messages
- Using the platform only as an administrative tool
- Blurring availability through informal digital contact

What to do instead?



Use digital tools to support structure, not constant contact

- Agree on communication channels and response times
- Schedule mentoring interactions intentionally
- Use the platform to document learning and next steps
- Treat digital mentoring with the same clarity as in-person mentoring

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "How would you like to use the platform between meetings?"
- "Let's agree on how we communicate and what we use meetings for."
- "What would be useful to document after today's session?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 5 on digital mentoring, platform use, and sustainable communication practices.



Supporting Development While Preserving Autonomy

Situation

The mentee looks to mentoring for growth, confidence, or direction and may seek reassurance, validation, or guidance on what to do next.

What is at stake

Development supported through dependence limits long-term learning. If the mentor becomes a source of validation or direction, the mentee's autonomy and capacity to navigate future situations are weakened.

What to avoid?



Becoming the main source of reassurance or confidence

- Defining development goals on behalf of the mentee
- Measuring progress only through outcomes or achievements
- Taking responsibility for next steps or actions
- Framing mentoring success as solving problems

What to do instead?



Support reflection on learning rather than performance

- Help the mentee articulate their own development goals
- Focus on capabilities, patterns, and decision-making processes
- Reinforce that actions and outcomes remain the mentee's responsibility
- Use mentoring to strengthen independence, not reliance

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "What do you feel you are developing through this experience?"
- "What capabilities are you strengthening right now?"
- "What feels like the next step you want to take ownership of?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 6 on professional development, agency, and future pathways.



Concluding the Mentoring Relationship

Situation

The mentoring period is coming to an end, or it becomes clear that continuing the relationship no longer serves its purpose.

What is at stake

How mentoring ends influences whether learning is consolidated or lost. Unclear endings can create dependency or uncertainty, while clear closure supports autonomy and confidence.

What to avoid?



Letting mentoring fade without acknowledgement

- Continuing mentoring out of obligation
- Ending the relationship abruptly
- Avoiding reflection on learning and progress
- Creating informal, ongoing dependency

What to do instead?



Name closure as a natural and necessary part of mentoring

- Reflect together on learning and development achieved
- Support the mentee in identifying next steps and resources
- End the relationship clearly and respectfully
- Reinforce the mentee's autonomy moving forward

Useful Questions for Mentors to ask;

- "What have you learned through our mentoring?"
- "What will you take forward from this process?"
- "What support or resources will you rely on next?"

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section applies MENTRA Module 6 on closure, reflection, and sustainable mentoring practice.



Final Reflections and Continuity of Practice

Situation

You look back on your mentoring experience and consider how it informs your ongoing professional practice and future mentoring relationships.

What is at stake

Without reflection, mentoring remains an isolated activity. With reflection, mentoring becomes a transferable practice that strengthens professional judgement and contributes to long-term mentoring quality.

What to avoid?



Treating mentoring as a one-off experience

- Separating mentoring from broader professional practice
- Ignoring learning gained through mentoring
- Repeating patterns without reflection

What to do instead?



Reflect regularly on your mentoring choices and their impact

- Identify what you would repeat and what you would adjust
- Carry learning into future mentoring relationships
- Contribute to a consistent mentoring culture within your organisation or sector

Link to MENTRA (Training Programme)

This section reflects reflective practice and sustainability principles embedded across all MENTRA modules



CONCLUSION

Reflection on the MENTGEE

MENTGEE is designed to support mentoring as an intentional, responsible, and learning-focused practice. It does not offer answers or ready-made solutions. Instead, it supports mentors in making informed choices during real mentoring situations, where clarity, boundaries, and judgement matter most.

Throughout the guide, mentoring is treated as a professional practice rather than an informal exchange. Mentors are encouraged to focus on learning processes, maintain clear responsibility boundaries, and support autonomy rather than dependency. This approach strengthens both mentoring quality and long-term impact.

MENTGEE is meant to be used over time. Mentors may return to different sections at different moments, depending on what is happening in the mentoring relationship. In this way, the guide functions as a practical reference that supports reflection, adjustment, and consistency in practice.

As part of the PeerMent project, MENTGEE contributes to a broader mentoring ecosystem that includes structured training, practical support, and digital tools. Together, these elements support sustainable mentoring practices within the Creative and Cultural Industries and encourage the continuation of mentoring beyond individual relationships or project timelines.

By applying the principles and approaches outlined in this guide, mentors contribute not only to individual learning outcomes, but also to the professionalisation and sustainability of mentoring practice within their organisations and sectors.



end.

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