First Year Industrial Mentoring Scheme

Last academic year (2012/13) the Industrial Liaison Office (ILO) in the Faculty of Engineering launched a scheme to provide all first year engineering students with an industrial mentor. More than 70 companies provided over 170 mentors from a range of engineering and technology companies. As a result of this success we will be running the scheme again this year and are inviting new companies, as well as those who supported us last year, to provide mentors for this year’s students.

"The many companies who are involved with the mentoring scheme demonstrates how keen companies are to engage with Bristol engineers, while the amazing opportunity offered to students to see at first-hand and so early in their degree programme the realities of the workplace will, I am confident, inspire students to embark on careers in engineering.”
Professor Nishan Canagarajah, Dean of the Faculty of Engineering

What are the aims of the scheme?
- To help new students develop ideas about future career paths and receive support and guidance from someone working in a relevant industry.
- To help engineering and technology companies engage with relevant students early on in their studies and promote these sectors as a great career option.

What will be the benefits to my company and to individual mentors?
- Companies will get assistance with graduate recruitment as the scheme helps you to identify talent early on and to develop a long-term relationship with students.
- The scheme will help raise your company profile and enhance awareness of your organisation with both Faculty students (potential future employees) and academic staff (future potential research collaborators). Individual mentors may be able to use the mentoring as part of their own professional development and progress towards chartered status.
- The scheme will provide direct access to a number of other Industrial Liaison Office initiatives such as advertising graduate roles in our newsletter sent to all Faculty students.

What does being a mentor involve?
We are looking for engineers working in a relevant industry to provide our students with an insight into working in industry and inspire them to consider engineering or technology as a career option. We will introduce mentors to their students at an event at the University and then ask mentors to meet with their mentees on two further occasions, one of which should take place at the mentor’s place of work, or an engineering site location.

What do mentors say about the scheme?
“I like the idea of the scheme. It allows university students to understand what it is like to work in a real life engineering environment and also gives them an idea of whether the industry is right for them or not.”
Adam Wong, Jaguar Land Rover

What do students say about the scheme?
“I have had two very valuable meetings [with my mentor] which I thought were extremely beneficial in helping me see where my degree course is taking me and putting it in the context of a real job and real life engineering projects.”
Leo Youngman, Civil Engineering student
What are the exact requirements for the scheme?
We are looking for people interested in acting as a mentor to a small group of 3-5 students. Our students study the following subjects:

- Aerospace Engineering
- Civil Engineering
- Computer Science
- Electrical and Electronic Engineering
- Engineering Mathematics
- Mechanical Engineering.

We expect mentors to be graduates with a degree in a relevant subject, have at least two years’ work experience, be working in an engineering or technology company and be willing to meet with their students on three separate occasions: once at the University, once at their place of work or an engineering site location and for a third time at a mutually convenient location.

How does the scheme work and what are the timescales?

**Autumn 2013:** Companies and/or individual mentors enrol in the scheme and complete a proforma outlining the work of their company, their role and the subject they would like their mentees to be studying.

**October 2013:** Start of the new academic year. The ILO promotes the scheme to the new first year undergraduates and asks them to make a choice regarding the industry sector they would like their mentor to work in.

**November 2013:** The University matches students to mentors and students begin their mentoring research and goal setting preparation.

**February 2014:** Mentors and students meet at an introductory event at the University over a buffet dinner and drinks.

**March/April 2014:** Students visit their mentor at their place of work or an engineering site location.

**October/November 2014:** Students meet their mentor for the third and final time.

**December 2014:** Students submit their mentoring review course work for marking.

Is there a cost to participating in the scheme?
Participation in the mentoring scheme is free of charge. However, we do request that companies pay reasonable travel expenses to enable students to travel to the mentor’s place of work.

Where can I get more information and how can I enrol?
There is more detailed information on our website at www.bristol.ac.uk/engineering/ilo.

If you would like to take part in the scheme or have any specific questions, please get in touch with Lara Melhuish or Nic Woodhall: email engf-ilofbristol.ac.uk or telephone 0117 95 45161.

What other schemes can I get involved with?
The Faculty of Engineering is also running an Internship Scheme for first year Faculty of Engineering students and we work with companies on a range of student engagement activities. If you would like to find out more about the Internship Scheme or our wider work, please get in touch.