

Mentoring

A PRACTICAL GUIDE





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Introduction

RACS has developed and run several of its own facilitated mentoring programs over a number of years with mixed results. In developing this resource, RACS has consulted with Mentoring experts and reviewed the mentoring programmes offered by other medical Colleges in order to provide a practical toolkit for surgery. This resource is aimed for use by Trainees, International Medical Graduates and Fellows for any stage that may be appropriate for them.

The foundation of this resource is based on the adapted components from the Australasian College for Emergency Medicine Mentoring Framework. This guide provides support to both a mentor and mentee. The website provides tools, templates and articles which will assist the mentor or mentee to understand their roles and responsibilities, helping to frame any mentoring relationship.

Mentoring is a great way to support the learning and career development that occur within surgery. Mentoring is complementary to the supervision which occurs within the surgical unit. The mentor may be a surgeon whom the mentee has met within the workplace, but is usually not the supervisor, even if this is how the career relationship may have commenced. The guide is designed to support mentors and mentees who may be taking part in formal mentoring scenarios, as well as those in quite informal mentoring relationships. It is recommended that this guide be used as a toolkit for the various stages of the 'cycle' that mentoring can involve, as the mentee may have several mentors within their career.

You may not use all of the forms/templates that are available, but you are invited to use what will be useful and customise to your needs.

This guide will follow the four stages of mentoring:

- Preparing for mentoring
- Building the relationship
- Developing the mentee
- Transitioning the relationship

Each mentoring stage will begin with a list of tasks to give you an idea of your role and what is expected during that stage. There is a selection of forms to assist you with the tasks at the end of each stage.

Editable versions of forms and templates are available to download from the RACS website at www.surgeons.org

Preparing for mentoring

This initial stage is about making sure that you are informed about mentoring and understand your own motivations for taking on this role.

Tasks

Here are some ways you can prepare, beginning with the first meeting:

- 1. Familiarise yourself with mentoring, your role and expectations.
- 2. Consider the time that you will have available for mentoring and some options to discuss.
- 3. Reflect on why you decided to volunteer or agreed to be involved in mentoring:
 - Mentee: give some thought to what you would like to achieve during the mentoring process and begin to plan your goals.
 - Mentor: consider your strengths and your life and work experiences that you may want to share with your mentee.
- 4. Mentee: begin communication by setting up the first meeting with your mentor. Try to allow at least one hour for this meeting.
- 5. If you feel comfortable to do so, share your CV with each other before the first meeting.

There are forms at the end of this section which may assist your preparation. Write down the things you want to discuss so that you don't forget.

What is Mentoring?

Mentoring is a professional relationship in which an experienced person (the mentor) shares knowledge, skills and perspective to develop the personal and professional growth of another (the mentee).

Mutual trust, respect and communication are important elements of successful mentoring. The mentoring pair will need to meet regularly to set goals, exchange ideas and discuss progress. A mentor doesn't need to know all the answers; instead they guide the mentee to identify their own solutions and meet their goals.

People come to mentoring for a number of reasons. It could be that you are progressing well with your career and feel ready to take on a leadership role. Someone you respect in the profession may be the ideal person to quide you as you prepare for this progression. Or it could be that you are experiencing some difficulties and could benefit from the support of someone with experience who you can work through these issues with you and help you to gain confidence.

Mentoring vs. coaching – what is the difference?

The focus of mentoring is the mentee and their personal and professional development. A mentoring relationship is usually long-term and is driven by the goals of the mentee.

Coaching is more focused on performance and benefits the individual. It is task-driven and in most cases has a short timeframe, whilst task performance improves.

If a mentee identifies a particular area in which they would benefit from coaching it may be possible through the mentoring relationship for them to receive coaching for that particular task. Coaching could be either from their mentor, or depending on availability, from another colleague skilled in that area.

Benefits of mentoring

Everyone involved in well-planned mentoring has the potential to benefit from the experience.

The mentee gains in personal and professional development, by having a role model and being able to work through issues in a non-threatening environment.

For the mentor it can be a chance to share their experiences, to develop self-awareness and a greater understanding of other cultures. Mentoring provides an opportunity to give back to the profession.

Improved employee engagement, better workplace culture and communication can be positive outcomes for a department, where mentoring is encouraged.

Roles and expectations

Mentee

To make the most of this opportunity it is important for you have a clear idea about what you want to achieve through being mentored. Your role is to:

- Be responsible for your own development.
- Identify developmental goals, priorities and career interests.
- Communicate clearly and honestly when sharing your concerns and achievements.
- Use your mentor as a 'sounding board' to discuss issues and review your own progress.
- Respectfully listen to feedback with an open mind and expect to be challenged with alternative points of view.
- Treat your mentor with courtesy and respect.
- Maintain confidentiality.

Mentor

The mentor's role is to empower the mentee to take charge of their own development. Your role includes:

Relationship building

- Build trust and a strong rapport with your mentee.
- Support and encourage your mentee to build confidence.
- Be respectful of and sensitive to individual differences.
- Respond promptly to requests for meetings.

Information sharing

- Share your knowledge of the department, profession, networks and experiences.
- Offer career advice.
- Refer to third-party services for issues outside your expertise.

Facilitative

- Actively listen and question to elicit facts.
- Assist your mentee to achieve short and long-term goals by encouraging them to find their own way.
- Encourage your mentee to take responsibility for their development and decision making.

Challenging

- Constructively and respectfully challenge your mentee's expectations and ideas allowing them to gain insight into their decisions and actions.
- Encourage your mentee to listen, to clarify understanding, review and consider different perspectives.
- Stimulate your mentee's critical thinking and develop problem-solving skills.

Modelling

Be a role model for your mentee by sharing life experiences and thoughts.

Visionary

Help them to envision their future and build their career by exploring options and offering opportunities.

Personality types

Everyone has a unique personality which affects the way they communicate and learn. Several models exist which broadly categorise personality types to help you understand your strengths and preferred ways of doing things. Having this self-awareness can help you to better relate to each other.

Some personality type tools that may be worth exploring include Strengths Finder and Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

The medical approach vs. mentoring approach

Mentoring requires a different approach to that which doctors are accustomed to using. Here are some examples of the differences:

The medical approach	The mentoring approach			
Doctor as expert, patient needing medical treatment. Doctor leads and patient follows instructions. Doctor asks questions to diagnose and problem-solve.	Mentee leads by determining what they want from the mentoring relationship. Mentor assists mentee by asking questions to understand their needs, then using a facilitative approach to enable the mentee to find their own solutions.			
Clinical supervision or an expert training a novice. Performance management or assessment. Supervisor determines deficiencies and advises on correct approach.	Personal and professional development. Mentor stimulates mentee's critical thinking and develops their problem-solving skills. Mentor respectfully challenges the mentee with different values and ideas to gain insight into unproductive strategies and behaviours and gives mentee options. Allows mentee to learn by trial using low risk strategies.			
A culture of competition where high achievement is expected and feelings are not shared or discussed amongst colleagues for fear of being seen as weak or incompetent.	Collaborative and supportive culture where discussing feelings and experiences is accepted by both mentor and mentee in a confidential and non- judgemental environment.			
Intellectual intelligence by being right. Senior doctor corrects and provides junior doctor with answers.	Emotional intelligence. Mentor learns mentee's strengths and preferred learning styles and interacts with them appropriately. Mentor empowers mentee with their knowledge, experience and networks and guides them to find their own way.			
Source: Doherty, C 2004, 'Introducing mentoring to doctors', Development and Learning in Organisations, vol. 18, no. 1, p 7				



Mentee self-reflection

As you prepare for mentoring, take some time to consider your future and what you would like to achieve during the mentoring process. Consider some short and long-term goals to discuss with your mentor.

What would you like to achieve over the next 5 years?
What would you like to achieve over the next 12 months to 2 years?
What do you consider to be your areas of strength?
What do you consider to be the areas in which you need to improve?
What are you hoping to learn or achieve as a result of the mentoring experience?
Reflect upon your answers above and consider what might be useful information to share with your mentor in your first few sessions.

Take this completed form along to your first meeting



Mentor self-reflection

As you prepare for mentoring take some time to reflect on your reasons for deciding to take on this role. Consider the skills, knowledge and experiences that you would like share with your mentee.

Why did you volunteer or agree to be a mentor?
What events have you experienced in your life/career that has had a significant impact on you?
How might these events influence who you are as a mentor?
What are you hoping to learn or achieve as a result of the mentoring experience?
What skills, knowledge and insights do you have that would be valuable sharing with your mentee?
Reflect upon your answers above and consider what might be useful information to share with your mentee in your first few sessions.

Take this completed form along to your first meeting

Building the relationship

This stage of the mentoring process is about getting to know each other and beginning to establish a sense of trust and rapport.

Tasks

- 1. Here are some ideas for building your mentoring relationship, starting with the first meeting:
- 2. Break the ice with some informal chat about yourself, your interests and hobbies. Discuss why you decided to be involved in mentoring. For the mentee: what you hope to achieve and for the mentor: the experience and skills you have to offer.
- 3. Agree on the terms of your mentoring relationship:
 - Specify a timeframe
 - How often you will meet, for how long and where
 - Confidentiality of discussions
 - Mutual feedback and evaluation of progress
 - Key mentee goals to focus on during this timeframe. It may take longer than one meeting to finalise the goals.
 - Rules for termination of this agreement
- 4. Begin a discussion about the mentee's broader short and long-term goals and ambitions.
- 5. Agree on any actions to be taken before the next meeting and record a summary of the session.
- 6. Organise dates and times for the next few meetings.
- 7. Increase your understanding about this stage of mentoring about the importance of confidentiality, building trust, setting goals and culture and communication.

There are forms at the end of this section which may assist you with these tasks.

Confidentiality

To enable the mentee to speak openly about issues that may be of concern to them it is vital that all discussions between mentee and mentor remain confidential. Much more can be achieved when working through workplace issues in an environment where you know that information will not be shared with your colleagues or supervisor. There are some exceptional circumstances where legal obligations may require you to break this confidentiality. Ensure that you are both aware of your current legal reporting obligations.

A factsheet can be found on the Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency website http://www.ahpra.gov.au

Trust and rapport

It takes time to build trust and rapport within a mentoring relationship and to be successful it must be a shared pursuit. Some ways to work towards a trusting relationship are:

Be predictable and consistent

- Turn up to meetings on time and be prepared.
- Follow through on promises.

Establish confidentiality

Agree that discussions can be open and honest and that they will remain confidential.
 This will begin to build trust and the feeling of security to allow for difficult conversations.

Show respect and remain focussed on the mentee's goals

- Mentor: encourage your mentee to lead discussions, actively listen and encourage mentee to problem-solve rather than you offering answers.
- Mentee: Lead discussion and then listen and take time to question and understand feedback.

Respect differences

• It is important for both the mentor and mentee to respect and understand any differences in background, culture and styles of communication. Take the time to discuss differences sensitively and learn more about the other person in the process.

Setting goals

Setting clear goals that are relevant and achievable will help you to be organised and to commit to achieving those goals. The **SMART** goal model may be a useful guide to follow:

S	Specific	Shouldn't be too broad
M	Measurable	Should be measurable to determine when the goal has been achieved
A	Achievable	Needs to be realistic and achievable
R	Relevant	A goal should be relevant to overall personal or professional goals
Т	Time-framed	An expected timeframe should be decided on to achieve the goal

Culture and communication

Differences in culture and communication may present challenges in a number of ways:

- It may be that the mentee and mentor are from different cultures. You each may have communication styles, an accent or body language that differs. This could cause misunderstandings. or you may feel offended by comments made or the tone of voice used.
- It could be that the mentee has recognised that they need to improve their communication style with patients from other cultures and this may be something that is worked on during the mentoring process.
- A mentee who is an Overseas Trained Doctor may be having difficulty communicating with colleagues or feeling that they just don't fit in and are unable to take part in social discussions.
- These situations should be explored and discussed. It is an opportunity for both the mentee and mentor to learn about other cultures and expectations as you work through the challenges.

The mentor may have some past experience in dealing with these issues that they can share. They may also have contacts with other colleagues who may be willing to give support to the mentee as they build their confidence in dealing with communication difficulties.



Mentoring agreement

	ment we both agree that we nent to the mentoring relation		derstan	ding of
Mentee name		Mentor name		
Start date		End date		
Meetings				
Frequency		Meeting length		
Venue				
Future meeting dates				
	In between meetings we will email phone Tick to choose one or both. The day/s that suits us both			
Confidentiality	We agree to keep the conten	t of our meetings o	onfiden	tial.
	These are the key goals that period of agreement.	we have agreed to	focus o	n during the
	Goal			
	Goal			
	Goal			
Review	We will review the mentee's	goals and progress	s every .	weeks
Cancellation policy	If for any reason the mentori discuss any issues and make cancelling this agreement.			
Mentee signature			Date	
Mentor signature			Date	



Mentoring session summary

Mentee			Mentor	Date	
Session age	enda				
What we dis	cussed				
What we wil	I do before our next	meeting			
What we mig	ght do more of next	time			
Next Meetin	g Date				

Both mentor and mentee should keep a copy of this summary for future reference.



Mentee SMART goal setting and action plan

Mentee			Mentor		Date	
S M A R T	Specific Measurable Achievable Relevant Time-framed	Should Needs to A goal s	o be realistic a	ad e to determine when th and achievable vant to overall persona ne should be decided o	l or professio	nal goals
Describe you	ır long-term goals					
Goal 1 Statement						
Goal 2 Statement						
Goal 3 Statement						
Describe you	ur short term goals				Tin	neframe
Goal 1 Statement						
How do	Goal 1 Actions					
you plan to achieve this goal?						



Describe your	short term goals	Timeframe
Goal 2 Statement		
How do	Goal 2 Actions	
you plan to achieve this goal?		
Describe your	short term goals	Timeframe
Goal 3 Statement		
Statement		
How do you plan	Goal 3 Actions	
to achieve this goal?		
Who else can	support you to achieve your goals?	
Name	How might they support you?	

Developing the mentee

This is the most productive stage of the mentoring process, it is where the mentee and mentor work together to achieve the planned goals. On-going commitment and communication are critical for you to maintain momentum as you work toward successful outcomes.

Tasks

Here are some ways to help you both to remain committed during this important stage:

- 1. Ensure that you continue to meet and communicate regularly. Record the actions from each meeting and report on achievements next time you meet.
- 2. Remain committed even if there are setbacks. If work or other restraints on time or commitment are getting in the way, discuss it as soon as possible to avoid resentment or lack of interest.

3. Mentors:

- Challenge your mentee to move beyond their comfort zone and to develop their independence
- Provide thoughtful and constructive feedback. Remain positive and encourage progression.
- Be open to sharing your experiences, including mistakes and failures, as these are often where lessons are learned.

Mentees:

- Express your thoughts clearly and be receptive to constructive feedback.
- Be prepared to make decisions and take responsibility for achieving your agreed goals.
- 4. Regularly review the goals and progress made.
- 5. Celebrate success.

There are forms at the end of this section which may assist you with these tasks.

Feedback and difficult conversations

Providing feedback is an integral part of the mentoring process and should be continuous throughout the relationship.

- Be clear that you are giving feedback.
- Use specific and non-judgmental language.
- Ask clear questions to understand the other person's experience, their assessment of the situation and point of view.
- Mentors can use feedback opportunities to encourage their mentee to understand other
 perspectives and to consider ways to improve and make positives out of a negative situation.
 For example, "I need you to help me to understand why you are no longer willing to work with
 Doctor X."; "What are two things you could do to change that situation?"
- Follow up later to see how things are working out and to encourage progress.

Some conversations can be confronting and some questions difficult to ask. They still should be asked, but sensitively and with some thought.

Using questions effectively

To understand your mentee or mentor's point of view and why they may react in a particular way you may need to enquire further by questioning.

- Use open-ended questions, for example, "What is it that you dislike about working late shifts?" Will require an answer that is more than just yes or no.
- To ensure a shorter, to-the-point answer use open/closed questions; for example, "Give me the two
 most important things that could be improved for people working late shifts?" This will require an
 answer that is more than yes or no, but is restricted to two things. This allows you both to focus
 quickly on what is most important and begin to work on the solution rather than the problem.
- Once you have asked a question be prepared to actively listen to the answer. Give the other person
 your full attention. Make eye contact and show that you are listening by nodding or mirroring to
 indicate that you understand a point; for example, "I understand from what you are saying that you
 feel let down by... and the first step you are going to make is... Is that correct?"



Mentoring reflective log

Reflective practice involves the thoughtful consideration of an experience, situation, or topic, both positive and negative, which results in an outcome of a changed perspective (Spalding 2004). One of the most useful resources mentoring pairs can call upon is a reflective log - a record of your learning experiences, thoughts, feelings and reflections. It can be reviewed from time to time to assess how much progress has been made.

Personal Fulfilment: What has really frustrated you/pleased you lately? What has encouraged you or
discouraged you?
Completion: What tasks/actions have you completed lately? What did you leave incomplete? What did you avoid doing?
Insight: What things do you see differently now? What have you learned about your self?



Resourcefulness: What skills and knowledge have you gained or learned? Who did you add to your networks?
Behaviour: Have you conciously changed the way you behave in some way lately?
Goal Fulfilment: What have you done that will take you towards your longer term goals?



Decisions: What significant decisions have you made lately? How do you feel about them?
Challenge: Who or what have you challenged lately?
enancinger inne en uniar nave year enancinger iaitery.
Next Steps: What do you need to do now? What do you need to learn next?

99 powerful coaching questions

The following coaching questions have been taken from Whitworth et al, Co-Active Coaching¹, and are part of their toolkit. They are also relevant to **Mentoring Conversations**.

"Powerful questions are provocative queries that put a halt to evasion and confusion. By asking the powerful question, the coach invites the client to clarity, action, and discovery at a whole new level. As you can see from the following examples, these generally are openended questions that create greater possibility for expanded learning and fresh perspective."

ANTICIPATION	What is possible? What if it works out exactly as you want it to? What is the vision? What is exciting to you about this? What is the urge? What does your intuition tell you?
ASSESSMENT	What do you make of it? What do you think is best? How does it look to you? How do you feel about it? What resonates for you?
CLARIFICATION	What do you mean? What does it feel like? What is the part that is not yet clear? What do you want?
ELABORATION	Can you tell me more? What else? What other ideas/thoughts/feelings do you have about it?
EVALUATION	What is the opportunity here? What is the challenge? How does this fit with your plans/way of life/values? What do you think that means? What is your assessment?
EXAMPLE	What is an example? For instance? Like what? Such as? What would it look like?

EXPLORATION	What is here that you want to explore? What part of the situation have you not yet explored? What other angles can you think of? What is just one more possibility? What are your other options?				
FOR INSTANCE	If you could do it over again, what would you do differently? If it had been you, what would you have done? How else could a person handle this? If you could do anything you wanted, what would you do?				
HISTORY	What caused it? What led up to it? What have you tried so far? What do you make of it all?				
IMPLEMENTATION	What is the action plan? What will you have to do to get the job done? What support do you need to accomplish it? What will you do? When will you do it?				
INTEGRATION	What will you take away from this? How do you explain this to yourself? What was the lesson? How can you make sure you remember what you have learned? How would you pull all this together?				
LEARNING	If you had free choice in the matter, what would you do? If the same thing came up again, what would you do? If we could wipe the slate clean, what would you do? If you had it to do over again, what would you do?				
OPTIONS	What are the possibilities? If you had your choice, what would you do? What are possible solutions? What will happen if you do, and what will happen if you don't? What options can you create?				
OUTCOMES	What do you want? What is your desired outcome? If you got it, what would you have? How will you know you have reached it? What would it look like?				
PERSPECTIVE	What will you think about this five years from now? How does this relate to your life purpose? In the bigger scheme of things, how important is this?				

	,
PLANNING	What do you plan to do about it? What is your game plan? What kind of plan do you need to create? How do you suppose you could improve the situation? Now what?
PREDICTIONS	How do you suppose it will all work out? Where will this lead? What are the chances of success? What is your prediction?
RESOURCES	What resources do you need to help you decide? What do you know about it now? How do you suppose you can find out more about it? What kind of picture do you have right now? What resources are available to you?
STARTING THE SESSION	What's occurred since we last spoke? What would you like to talk about? What's new/the latest/the update? How was your week? Where are you at right now?
SUBSTANCE	What seems to be the trouble? What seems to be the main obstacle? What is stopping you? What concerns you the most about? What do you want?
SUMMARY	What is your conclusion? How is this working? How would you describe this? What do you think this all amounts to?
TAKING ACTION	What action will you take? And after that? What will you do? When? Is this a time for action? What action? Where do you go from here? When will you do that? What are your next steps? By what date or time will you complete these steps?"
¹ Whitworth, L et al, 2007 (2nd ed), Davies-Black P	, Co-active Coaching: new skills for coaching people toward success in work and life ublishing, California

Transitioning the relationship: mentor & mentee

During this stage you will be evaluating and bringing the formal mentoring process to a close.

Tasks

- 1. Organise a time to meet to evaluate the outcomes of the mentoring relationship.
- 2. Discuss:
 - What was achieved?
 - Were all of the mentoring goals achieved? If not, why not?
 - Were there unexpected achievements?
 - Were there disappointments?
 - Where to from here?
- 3. This is also an opportunity for both the mentee and mentor to reflect on what you have personally gained from the experience of mentoring. What worked well and what would you change next time.
- 4. Consider further opportunities. For the mentee: to independently work towards new goals with the confidence gained from this mentoring experience; or perhaps to one day become a mentor yourself. For the mentor: if you have found this experience valuable you may want to consider other mentoring opportunities.
- 5. Celebrate the achievements and the end of a rewarding experience.

There are forms at the end of this section which may assist you with these tasks.

Preparing for the final meeting

As the agreed end date for your mentoring nears it will be useful to reflect on the process as well as the outcomes of this experience for you. What worked, what didn't work so well and why? Did you achieve together what you set out to? And was it overall a valuable experience?

You may wish to transition to a collegial relationship where the mentor still keeps an interest in the mentees progress but not in the same formal arrangement. Neither of you should feel a commitment to do this if time nor circumstances allow.

Evaluation

Document a brief evaluation of the mentoring experience that you can refer to in the future. This will provide you with reinforcement of the process, the benefits and perhaps tips or warnings you can pass on to colleagues who may also be considering mentoring as a way of self-improvement.



Final meeting checklist

Give some thought to the items on this list before your final meeting so that you are prepared for this important discussion
Reflect on your reason for participating – was it a good decision for you?
Revisit the mentee's goals
Consider what was achieved
Were there unexpected achievements?
☐ Were there disappointments?
☐ Briefly discuss how any outstanding goals might be achieved following the end of the mentoring relationship.
Discuss whether you would like to remain in contact in the future and under what circumstances.
Celebrate the achievements.



Mentoring evaluation

Mentee		Mentor		Date			
Reflect on your reason for participating in mentoring – was it a good decision for you? Why/Why not?							
What has	been the greatest benefit yo	ou have rece	eived from this experience?				
What were	e the greatest challenges?						
	, tilo g. outoot e						



Were all of the mentoring goals achieved? If not, what was the reason?				
What recommendations or advice would you give to other mentoring pairs?				
What were the greatest challenges?				

Both mentor and mentee should keep a copy of this evaluation for future reference.

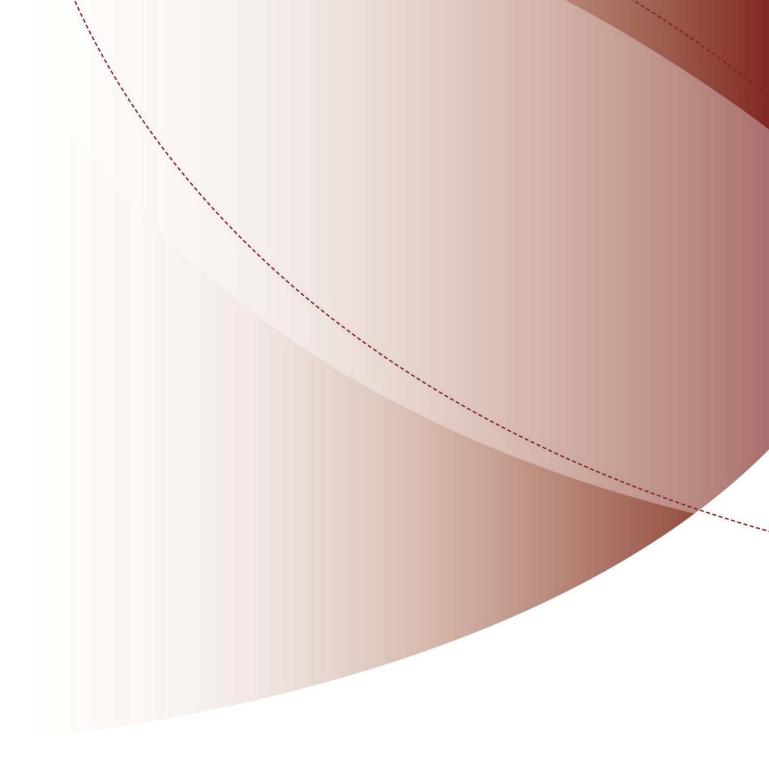
Notes	



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