

IT ambassador scheme – safeguarding measures

1. All mentors are BT employees. At present this is a BT-only scheme.

2. All mentors must join the STEM Ambassador programme operated by STEMNET. This requires an enhanced CRB disclosure which is vetted by STEMNET along with an initial face-to-face induction/training session. Only when STEMNET tell us that they have approved an individual (i.e. that they have sight of a satisfactory CRB disclosure and that an individual has completed the initial induction session) is that person allowed to act as an on-line mentor for young people. The fact that the CRB is independently vetted by a respected third party is important - i.e. it is STEMNET, not BT, saying that an individual has a recent acceptable CRB disclosure.

3. The e-mentoring platform we use is provided by BrightsideUNIAID <http://www.brightsideuniaid.org/> who have considerable experience and background in the provision of on-line mentoring capabilities. Their platform is used to provide e-mentoring services by organisations such as of Aimhigher, the Institute of Physics, The Royal Academy of Engineering etc. along with many local authorities and Education Business Partnerships. See:

http://www.brightsideuniaid.org/what_we_do/ementoring/our-ementoring-projects

3. All messages exchanged between mentor and mentee (and vice versa) are automatically scanned for:

- inappropriate character strings, swear words etc, be they 'stand alone' or embedded in other words (e.g. Arsenal)
- key words such as 'meet', 'Facebook', 'YouTube' etc. etc.
- number strings that could potentially be a telephone number, be they 'stand alone' or embedded in other words
- anything that might resemble an e-mail address
- any url
- any attached documents

Should any of the above be detected, delivery of the message to the recipient is blocked and instead the message is lodged for moderation by the scheme co-ordinators. Only when a scheme co-ordinator has reviewed the message and is happy with the content is it released to the intended recipient. There are two scheme co-ordinators for the IT ambassadors programme both of whom have been cleared through the STEM ambassador enhanced CRB process.

4. The scheme co-ordinators have access to all messages being exchanged on the platform and regularly run random checks on the messages being exchanged. BrightsideUNIAID also run random checks across all their schemes.

5. Messages on the platform can be archived but cannot be deleted either by Mentor or Mentee, so there is always a complete audit trail should it be necessary to review historical messages. Similarly all accounts on the platform, once created, can be disabled and archived but not deleted.

6. Where we have students from a school on the platform, we insist that a teacher or appropriate school contact has an account 'teacher side' on the platform so that we can make auditable contact should the need arise - again it is not possible to delete any messages exchanged.

7. Mentees are only able to send messages to a limited and controlled group: their mentor, other mentees 'parented' by the same mentor and the scheme Coordinators. In order to prevent cyber-bullying on the platform, when a mentee to mentee message is sent, it is automatically copied to the mentor. The mentees cannot circumnavigate this automatic copy to mentor function.

8. On the messaging screen both mentee and mentor have a 'flag to Coordinator button' which they can use to immediately notify the scheme coordinators of any message with which they feel uncomfortable.

9. On-line exchanges between mentee and mentor remain confidential unless the mentor feels that their mentee might be in danger or at risk of coming to harm in some way, at which point the matter will immediately be escalated via the scheme coordinators to the school or college - again we insist on having an appropriate contact number so that this can happen quickly should the need arise. Mentors can escalate less serious issues but only with the permission of their mentee.

10. Access to the platform is by unique userid and password. Userids are only issued to participating schools, they are not freely available. Userids are distributed to students via their teacher/lecturer.

11. Mentees are anonymous as far as their mentor is concerned. Mentors are not aware of which school their mentees attend. Mentees choose a 'Display Name' and avatar to represent themselves on-line - generally we advise first name only or some form of nickname for the Display Name. Mentors are identified in the same way.