Bounce Back Mentors

Position Description

Background
The Student Academic Success Services invites first-year students who are at risk academically to participate in the Bounce Back program. The program matches first-year students with upper year student Mentors who provide Mentoring, learning support, and referrals to key resources during regularly scheduled meetings. With this support, first-year students have the opportunity to develop attitudes and skills that will improve their learning and academic success at Queen’s.

Reporting directly to the Program Coordinator, Peer Mentors will engage in one-on-one Mentoring with up to 3 eligible first-year students who opt-in to the program. Peer Mentors will meet weekly with up to 3 mentees each week throughout the winter term. There may be an opportunity to do some mentoring in the fall term. Mentors will assist program participants to identify the sources of previous academic difficulties; set goals; facilitate access to campus resources, services and programs; and build confidence in their strengths and abilities to achieve success at university.

Some benefits from being a Bounce Back Peer Mentor include:
• Building a deeper connection with the Queen’s community
• Ongoing professional development
• Certificate of contribution for your professional portfolio
• Meet other students with similar interests
• Enjoy a great experience that works around your schedule!

Qualifications:
The Bounce Back Mentor must:
• Have experience working in a leadership role among peers
• Have an interest, passion and enthusiasm for helping peers and can display a good understanding of challenges facing first-year students
• Have experience providing personal support and forming helping relationships (e.g., mentoring, tutoring, or coaching)

• Demonstrated initiative and self-motivation
• Be able to set priorities to meet deadlines and possess excellent organizational skills
• Possess excellent interpersonal skills and be an active listener
• Be able to exercise good judgment and sound reasoning. Be self-reflective, patient and empathetic
• Demonstrate good decision-making and creative conflict management/problem-solving skills
• Have good oral and written communication skills
• Be knowledgeable about the University, its administrative processes, and the various programs and support services/resources that are available to students
• Participation in varsity or club athletics, or engagement in competitive sport is considered an asset
• Ensure that interactions with students are positive, inclusive, and meet the unique transition needs of a diverse student body
• Be available for, attend, and actively participate in all Bounce Back trainings, meetings, and sessions.
• Act in accordance to a signed Queen’s University confidentiality agreement

RESPONSIBILITIES

Conduct one-on-one meetings with first-year participants who opt-in to the program
• Meet with students at appropriate times and locations that are mutually comfortable
• Build a positive rapport
• Explore stressors and coping over the course of the first semester
• Assess study skills that require improvement
• Identify strategies for change
• Engage participants in a planning process for attending workshops and services that are available on campus and that help to build skills and new understandings
• Proactively check in at least once per week
• Create and review progress towards goals in learning plan
• Engage in problem-solving if/when difficulties arise
• Encourage positive progress towards academic success

Maintain strong helping/coaching relationship with participants
• Listen and support participant experiences in a non-judgmental way
• Support participants in building their self-confidence
• Recognize and help participants to identify potential signs of personal distress
• Encourage self-reflection and open-mindedness
• Assist participants in forming community connections
• Appropriately offer resources and referrals

Administrative Tasks
• Complete on-going documentation of job-related activities (e.g., weekly coaching logs through eRez) as well as end of program assessment survey
• Proactively ensure that the Coordinator is kept apprised of any potential problems, ongoing concerns and activities by submitting weekly updates.
• Work collaboratively with other members of the Bounce Back team
• Attend weekly Mentor team meetings facilitated by Senior Mentors (1-hour in length)
• Uphold the mission of the Bounce Back program, the Student Academic Success Services and the Division of Student Affairs
• Operate within the limits of training and expertise using a peer-to-peer helping model
• Attend pre-service and on-going training opportunities, and continuously seek to improve skills and knowledge pertaining to the position
• Support the on-going development of and improvements to the Bounce Back program
• Other duties as assigned

Time Commitment
• Up to 4 hours per week
• The volunteer term will be from September 2021 to April 2022

Questions can be directed to Mikayla Sebesta, Academic Transition and Peer Programs Coordinator via email at mms11@queensu.ca.

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