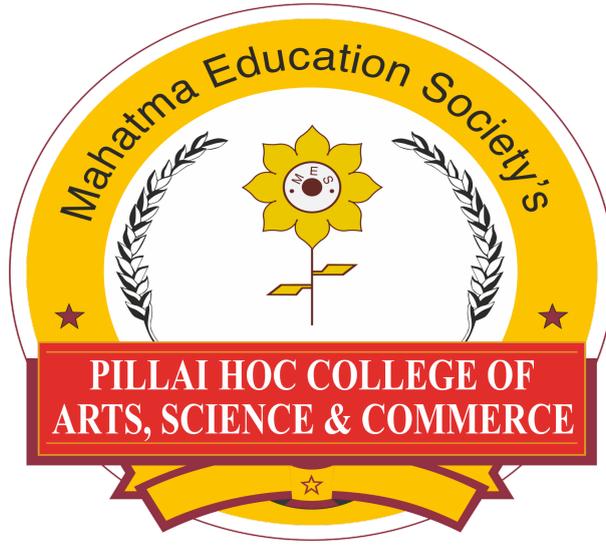


**Mahatma Education Society's**  
**Pillai HOC College of Arts, Science and Commerce, Rasayani**  
(Accredited by NAAC and ISO 9001:2015 Certified)



# Trivariate Mentoring

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***“The real power of education is when you can go beyond yourself and touch the lives of others. In that the mentor must prove a role model.”***

***- Dr K. M. Vasudevan Pillai (Founder and CEO, MES)***

The education system in the twenty first century is undergoing a sea change, with practical and experiential learning taking a lead on age-old instructional models. While college degrees and certificates are an important part of education, it may not be enough. Colleges are training students to be future ready and try to impart essential skills for their professional as well as personal success. The concept of mentoring becomes pivotal in this context.

Mentoring becomes one of the most effective mechanisms to exert positive influence on students’ career paths. It helps them to successfully face the academic and life challenges and to build meaningful careers. Within higher education, mentoring is increasingly seen as a high impact strategy for promoting student success.

## **Mentoring: An Introduction**

The concept of mentoring dates back to ancient Greece. The term *mentor* stems from Greek mythology in which Odysseus entrusted the care and education of his child to a friend named Mentor while the father was away on his adventures and travels. The word ‘mentor’ evolved to mean trusted advisor, friend, teacher and wise person. A Mentor is a person who systematically develops another person’s abilities through intensive tutoring, coaching and guidance.

In their book, *Mentoring: The Tao of Giving and Receiving Wisdom*, Chungliang Al Huang and Jerry Lynch remind us about the mentoring opportunities that are always all around us. They define mentoring as “the giving and receiving of wisdom” within a web of relationships. Through the interactions that mentors have with others, they share the “gift of wisdom and [have] it graciously appreciated and received by others who then carry the gift to

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all those within their sphere of influence.” Mentoring, Huang and Lynch further emphasize, occurs within a community, and mentoring activities help to promote a culture of wisdom throughout this community.

Mentoring involves a reciprocal relationship typically between two individuals in which one person shares their knowledge, skills and experience with another individual to help them progress personally and/or professionally. The person offering the mentoring is usually referred to as a *mentor*, while the recipient or partner may be identified as a *mentee*. Effective mentorship provides aspects of both psychosocial and career support, and may include role modelling; advising, sponsorship, and helping mentees develop a supportive network of other mentors and peers. Effective mentorship requires self-reflection, setting expectations, building trust, and regular review.

Mentoring as a process involves three main stages, namely **Communication, Empowerment and Assistance**. The stage of communication involves listening, questioning and giving timely feedback to the mentee. The mentor should effectively communicate and share feedback with the mentee in order to reduce his/her blind areas and increase his/her self-awareness. Empowerment aims at increasing the mentee’s autonomy and freedom of action. The mentor should encourage the mentee to take initiative and think differently. Being too critical about a mentee's behaviour could negatively impact his/her development. Assistance implies showing genuine care, concern and empathy towards the mentee. A mentor needs to be sensitive towards his/her mentee and extend a helping hand whenever needed.

In colleges, mentors can support students in their academic and professional pursuits. He/ she will work with empathy and vision to create citizens of the future. Mentoring relationships help connect the students and their goals with opportunities to succeed.

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## Mentoring at PHCASC

The concept of mentoring is integral to the teaching -learning experience provided by the institutions under Mahatma Education Society. The visionary leader and CEO of Mahatma Education Society, Dr K. M. Vasudevan Pillai envisages the role of a teacher in the twenty-first century. He advocates that the conventional role of a teacher as a disciplinarian and an enforcer of learning should be replaced with the concept of a mentor. He points out, “Beyond teaching, mentoring.”



(Trivariate Mentoring Session at PHCASC)

PHCASC has introduced the Mentoring Programme in 2017 with a noble vision to foster intellectual and personal development of the students. In its initial stage, the mentoring programme consisted of two levels: Mentor- Mentee Mode and Mentoring through Peer Groups. Since the majority of students come from rural areas, it is necessary to provide them with proper guidance about setting their career goals. Apart from enhancing their skills for career progression, the urge to inculcate skills of positive socialization have resulted in the inception of Trivariate Mentoring Programme in 2018.

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## **Trivariate Mentoring**

To ensure a holistic development of every student in our campus, we initiated a Trivariate Mentoring programme that captures the true essence of our devotion toward the development of every student's intellectual capability and emotional intelligence. The programme is executed in three different and unique phases of mentoring namely Mentor-Mentee Mode (MMM), Mentoring through Peer Groups (MPG) and Vertical Mentoring (VM).

### **Objectives:**

- To help the students identify career paths and support their personal growth.
- To provide students with an opportunity to learn and practice professional networking skills.
- To inculcate a vision in students which will help them to identify and pursue opportunities for employment related to their academic qualifications and competencies.

### **Advantages of Trivariate Mentoring**

The Trivariate Mentoring Programme helps the students to develop and improve their reasoning and communication skills, self-motivation, self-discipline, leadership skills, organisational, self-management skills and goal-setting. The programme also helps students to learn various skills through their teachers, classmates and senior students. Our structure of mentoring is beneficial to both the mentors and the mentees.

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## **The Practice**

### **1. Mentor Mentee Mode (MMM)**

This is one of our most significant practices. Here, every student/mentee is assigned a mentor who meets with them in person once every month. Students are assigned mentors right from their first year at college. In this interaction, mentors try to analyse the progress of their students/mentees and address any issue that may persist on the front of the mentee. The mentor also keeps the track of the mentee's academic records, attendance and behavioural aspects.

The mentor encourages the personal and academic development of the mentee through imparting knowledge and sharing experiences and expertise. It helps the mentees enhance their level of comprehension and other academic skills.

This session is recorded by the mentor in order to assess the progress of mentees.

### **2. Mentoring through Peer Groups (MPG)**

The importance of peer mentoring is emphasized by the idiom "to teach is to learn twice." Peer mentoring is an effective way of developing students' learning skills since it is a process of one-to-one interaction between them. In Mentoring through Peer Groups, the mentor and mentees are students from the same class. This gives an opportunity to advanced learners to improve upon their skills and share their knowledge with their peers. This also encourages average students to work hard and improve their performance. They may take turns acting as 'mentor' and 'mentee', but overall, peer mentoring is about creating a formal support system, learning together, and holding one another accountable.

The Programme Coordinators divide the class into batches and select a student mentor from each batch. Respective subject teachers and class coordinators supervise and keep a track of these sessions. This develops an environment of co-learning.

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Students learn a great deal by explaining their ideas to others and by participating in activities that help them learn from their peers. They develop organizing and planning skills, team work, healthy interaction and self-evaluation.

### **3. Vertical Mentoring (VM)**

Vertical mentoring describes a relationship where a more experienced student helps a less experienced student to improve overall academic performance and provides advice, support, and knowledge. In addition, vertical mentoring facilitates the transition of students into the realm of higher education.

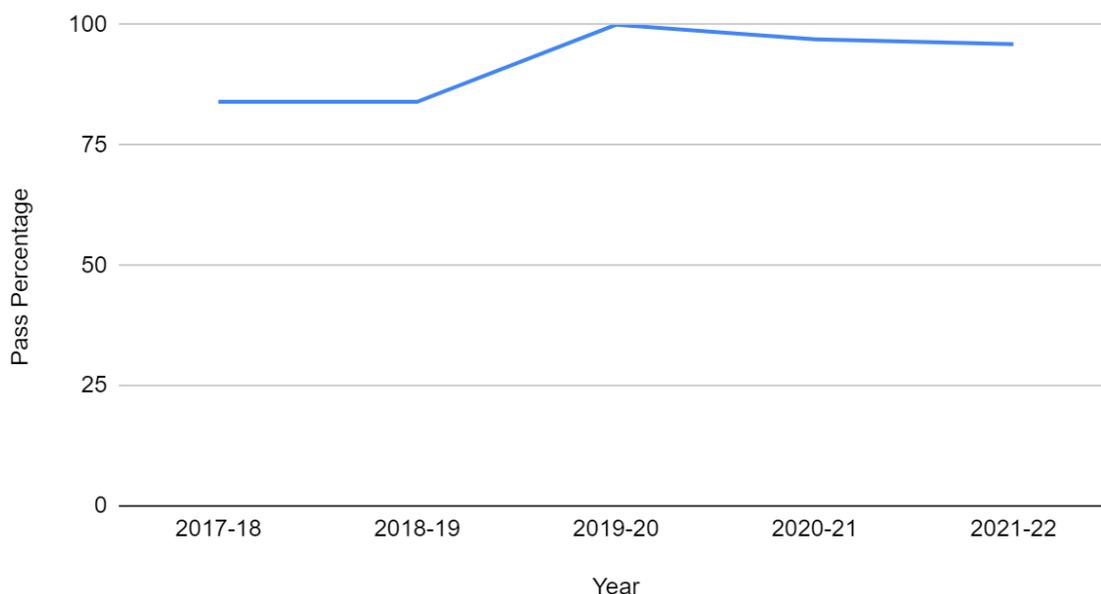
The main objective of vertical mentoring is to enable senior students to engage with the first- and second-year students through lectures on various topics taken from the syllabus. This helps both senior and junior students to learn from each other. Advanced learners from the senior batches are identified by the faculty members as mentors for this programme. They are then motivated to take up some topics from the said subject and engage their juniors in an informative and interactive session. In this process, the senior students improve upon their presentation and communication skills while the juniors get a chance to learn and interact with the senior students along with developing confidence.

### **The Evidence of Success**

The effectiveness of the Trivariate Mentoring Model is evident in the students' success rate and career progression. The mentoring model at the institution provides the students with an opportunity to pair with alumni in the field of their interest who can offer them career advice and networking opportunities. In addition to this, students expand their professional as well as academic networks.

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### Improvement in Pass Percentage



Mentoring turned out to be an effective way for reducing the dropout rates among students across all streams. The students in their first semester have to adapt to a new learning culture. Besides, they also struggle with the syllabus and assignments due to the lack of exposure to the academic rigour which is different from schools. Trivariate mentoring successfully alleviated the inhibitions of the new students by ensuring emotional support, increasing interconnectedness thereby promoting integration and positivity within the student community.

Mentoring proved as a viable alternative to combat stress among the students especially during COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the faculty, peer mentors and mentees have created meaningful connections between course content and the students' personal goals.