

KLC School of Design Industry Mentoring Programme



2025-26



KLC
School of
Design



About the Mentoring Scheme

In 2024-25, KLC School of Design launched a Student Mentoring Programme. In its first year, the programme proved to be popular with both students and employers. Students have welcomed the opportunity to learn more about studio operations and employers have been keen to support the next generation of designers.

The Industry Mentoring Programme is built around the idea that students benefit from understanding how a studio functions before engaging in work. By supporting students to observe some of the key activities in your studio, understand roles and practices they can be better prepared for a placement opportunity or employment and be more effective for the studio.

In support of later work placements, the Industry Mentoring Programme is designed to be flexible and easy for studios to support. During the Mentoring Programme, employers aren't asked to find work for the students. Instead, we ask employers to give students the opportunity to observe their day-to-day work through the activities that are already taking place in your studio.



“It was interesting for us to put into words what we felt were the most important things to know about an interior design practice”

Mentor

“The most important thing I learned was the transition from the academic skills learnt at KLC and how this then manifests within the industry.”

Student

How Does the Mentoring Programme Work?

Typically, we ask that studios mentor two students. This provides students with a shared experience and they are able to discuss with each other the experiences they have had. We suggest students are given the opportunity to observe four to five different activities. These might include, but are not limited to:

- a tour the studio; to meet key staff and understand the different roles
- a client meeting; to gain understanding of how a studio/designer interacts with a client.
- a consultant meeting; to see how different professionals collaborate on a project
- a site visit; to understand the relationship between studio practice and construction
- a design discussion within the studio
- an FF&E discussion related to a project
- a Project Management meeting

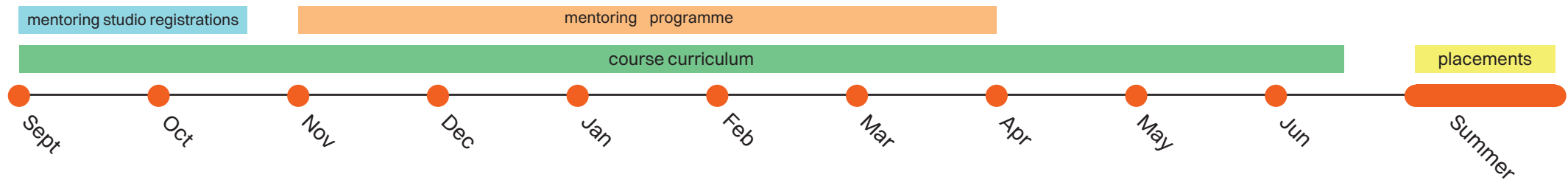
After each session, taking a few minutes to answer students' questions and discuss what they have observed will give the students further understanding of the nature of the work within the studio.

Timeline

Our next Mentoring Programme begins in November 2025, and will run until April 2026.

During the mentoring period, you'll have the flexibility to arrange studio visits with your mentees at a time that is convenient to both you and the students. Remember, we don't expect you to arrange additional things for the students. The aim is to fit in with the things that you are already doing.

In November, for the start of the Mentoring Programme, KLC will host a launch event. This brings together all the studios and students. We ask a member of each studio to give a brief (2 minute) talk about their studio and then we will match studios with students. Following this there will be drinks and canapes while you have the first opportunity to meet with your mentees and beginning planning.



Profile of Participating Students

The Mentoring Programme includes students from two of our interior design programmes.

Students from our Diploma in Applied Interior Design are, usually, 'career changers'. These students are, generally, more mature and have experience of professional careers prior to joining the course. The Diploma is an intensive one-year course that prepares them to enter the industry.

Students from our BA (Hons) Interior Design are, typically, younger and will have joined the course directly from secondary education. These students are undertaking a 3-year full-time degree course, and will be participating in the Mentoring Programme in their 2nd year.

Students are allocated to studios based on their interest in types of work and scale of studio.

Benefits of joining the Mentoring Programme

- Participation in the programme qualifies those staff to gain up to six CPD points from SBID. Please contact SBID directly for further details.
- Studios value the opportunity to connect with students and network with other interior design practices during the launch event.
- For many studios, mentoring provides a chance to meet emerging talent, which can be useful when considering future recruitment.
- Mentors often enjoy supporting the next generation of designers and gaining insight into what students are currently learning at KLC.
- The programme offers mentors the valuable opportunity to reflect upon and articulate what they believe to be the most important aspects of their practice.

Next Steps...

If you'd like to find out more or join the Mentoring Scheme, please get in touch with our Professional Practice Coordinator:

Ieva Kelpsaite - ieva.kelpsaite@westdean.ac.uk

We will liaise with SBID, to ensure that they are aware of your involvement in the programme and can record CPD achievement.

We will look forward to having you join the KLC Industry Mentoring Programme.

To find out more or discuss how you can get involved, please contact

Ieva Kelpsaite, Professional Practice Coordinator
ieva.kelpsaite@westdean.ac.uk



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