Stages of Developing a Peer Mentoring Group (adapted from Proctor, 2008)

Stages of development	Description/Rationale	Advantages	Areas to monitor
1. Define purpose of the group	Provides aim of the group. There can be groups for different contexts, in this case the group is to: provide support for student supervision	Necessary step to define aim of group	Important to ensure there is agreement by all on the aim of the group
2. Agree criteria for membership	Follows from group aim. May include people with differing levels of experience and from different professions. In this instance the group is interprofessional and is for staff currently taking students	Considers the aim of the group and benefits of having people with same vs differing level of experience, same vs differing professional group and area of work etc	May inadvertently exclude some potential group members.
3. Determine system for selecting members	This may be the person initiating the group and it may be by invitation or broad expression of interest. There may be context considerations (location etc). In this instance, project partners have determined this	Person initiating the group sets the context for the group and way to extend invitation. This promotes unity of aim.	The group may not agree with system for membership selection when it is formed.
4. Select members	Potential group members invited to group	Can ensure fit to group purpose	Ensure best membership for group
5. Agree an overall contract (extent and limits of co-mentor responsibility)	Establishment of group agreement has three parts: ground rules and logistics; determining the way in which the group will be run (see model below); and selecting a format for presenting material (see stage 7 below)	Setting up a clear agreement about how the group is run distributes aspects of the facilitation role across the members. This provides a base of stability for the group to function	There are several approaches to running the process and there may be disagreement about these. Not having a designated model is the least well supported option in the literature
6. Negotiate a working agreement (ground rules, ways of working, administrative arrangements, learning agendas)	This concerns how the group runs – confidentiality (of group discussion and of students who may be discussed), respectful feedback, who covers the logistics of where, when and contacting members, agreement to attend meetings, how much time each member has to present material, process for renegotiating aspects of the agreement	Essential to plan this aspect as it ensures everyone understands the process and agrees to adhere to it. It is important that there is consensus even if there are differing views about aspects of the process	May take some time to negotiate agreement and ensure there is consensus; all participants need to be responsible for upholding the agreement

Stages of development	Description/Rationale	Advantages	Areas to monitor
7. Agree system for managing the mentoring work	There are a range of models for managing the presentation of material in the group. These are outlined in handout "Approaches to formatting peer group mentoring sessions"	Having an agreed model provides a known framework for presentation of the material brought to the group and a structure for participants to prepare and present the information	There may be different views about the best model to use; the group may find that the model chosen doesn't fit their needs and will need to renegotiate the process

Models for peer group roles

Model	Description/rationale	Advantages	Disadvantages
Rotating leadership	All group members take turns in 'chairing' a session. A roster can be drawn up and a mechanism for 'swapping' if needed. The 'chair' safeguards the agreed process as needed.	Promotes equality of membership; all members have an opportunity to exercise the role and develop skills	Some participants may be less able to manage the process; some may not adhere to the agreed process, causing group conflict
Mentee led	The person presenting material/case/scenario also chairs the session for that period of time.	Promotes equality of membership; all members have an opportunity to exercise the role and develop skills	It is harder to manage the process when also presenting. Process could vary if there are several presenters
No designated roles	The group meets and all are responsible for ensuring the agreed process is adhered to.	All are equally responsible for the process	Literature points to this being the most problematic model

Reference:

Proctor, B. (2008). *Sharing responsibility. Group supervision: A guide to creative practice.* London: SAGE Publications.