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Introduction

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This text is positioned within the cross-disciplinary field of mentoring in higher education (HE) and highlights the key themes that emerge in relation to the pedagogy of mentoring and the potentials of peer learning. In selecting the chapters for this book, the editors felt that it was important to frame the issues around the practice of mentoring within HE specifically, whether it be between students and tutors, students and their peers or between professional colleagues. Therefore, the chapters explore these various forms of mentoring via philosophical pieces, case studies and empirical research conducted within individual settings drawn from different national contexts, while linking to the globalised context in which the various authors work.

The text adopts a clear and targeted focus on mentoring in HE. This is important for exploring the place, role and importance of mentoring as a form of collaborative learning that responds to the social justice aims of enhancing equitable practices. The content also responds to the existing literature to address concerns raised within a variety of cross-disciplinary fields including HE studies, mentoring and coaching, vocational, lifelong and professional learning. With this in mind, the text will be of

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interest to students of HE, particularly on vocational courses such as teaching or nursing, or those studying education more broadly, as well as to academic colleagues working within HE settings. What follows is a brief section defining the key terminology used within the book, an outline of the purpose and structure of the book, and finally a summary of the chapters contained within.

Defining Key Terms

Mentoring has been described in many ways and has often been aligned with processes that involve the development of good communication and close professional relationships such as coaching, counselling, advising and teaching (Klasen & Clutterbuck, 2002). While Galbraith (2001) concentrates upon the differences in age, status and experience between mentor and mentee, other writers have given more attention to the reciprocal nature of the relationship that can be developed within the mentoring process (e.g., Addington & Graves, 2010). For example, Faure (2000, p. 23) defines mentoring as "a relationship that meets a development need, helps develop full potential, and benefits all partners; mentor, mentee and the organization". Taking a similar stance, Collins (2009, p. 80) states that "mentoring is a protected relationship in which learning and experimentation can transpire; potential skills can be developed, and in which results can be measured in terms of competencies gained". Thus, it would seem that mentoring can be identified as a form of educational process concerned with the personal and professional development of individuals through intentional and strategic relationships that will ultimately also benefit the organisations within which individuals work. This can traverse groupings based on age, knowledge and skills or status (such as student and tutor) within education settings, but not always.

This interpretation fits with the ideas and practices explored within this text, although, as demonstrated in a number of chapters, mentoring within HE settings can materialise specific characteristics in situ and often adopts a peer approach. This can be between students (see Chaps. 2, 3 and 4) or between individuals with similar status or professional roles

who share their knowledge, skills and pedagogical experience in a more reciprocal manner to support each other's professional development (see Chaps. 10, 11, 12 and 14). This focus on peer support particularly echoes existing literature and research conducted with staff working in vocational faculties within HE such as education (Cullingford, 2016; Harvey, Ambler, & Cahir, 2017), health (Clement & Welch, 2018; Cullen et al., 2017; Hafsteinsdóttir, van der Zwaag, & Schuurmans, 2017; van der Weijden, Belder, Van Arensbergen, & Van Den Besselaar, 2015) and social care (Katz, Elsaesser, Klodnik, & Khare, 2019; Leedahl et al., 2019).

Why a Book About Mentoring in Higher Education?

While the work of mentoring, and particularly vocational mentoring, occurs across the education and employment sectors, it can be framed as an essential "lifeline" for professionals and their students working within the current HE context. Over the past 20 years, there has been a drive for HE in different national contexts to submit to the "neoliberal turn" which has infiltrated different forms of education demanding regulation, measurement and efficiencies (Ball, 2015, 2016). To address this, many HE academics have sought to carve out opportunities to explicitly counter this neoliberal trend by developing identities and practices that are not framed in terms of the audit and performativity culture (Leathwood & Read, 2013). One route for this has been the expansion of informal and formal collegial support and mentoring (Arthur, 2016; Goodsell Love, 2012). In the context of HE, collegial mentoring can provide space for colleagues to work together rather than in competition, to learn and develop as tutors and researchers in ways that can maintain a sense of integrity and academic freedom. As noted by Lander and Nicholson (Chap. 13) and Maxwell and Duckworth (Chap. 15), this approach can provide space for a reciprocal sharing of knowledge, offer experiences for enhancing personal growth and fulfil collective purposes such as social justice aims as well as professional development (see also

Duckworth & Maxwell, 2015; Kroll, 2017; Woolhouse, Albin-Clark, Shirley, & Webster, 2019).

As detailed within a number of chapters in the first section of this text, mentoring is not a practice that is contained or boundaried, and mentoring as a practice has also become a more integrated part of HE students' experiences at undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Crisp, Baker, Griffin, & Lunsford, 2017; Darwin & Palmer, 2009; Hansman, 2016; Murphy, Haller, & Spiridakis, 2019; Sheridan, O'Sullivan, Fisher, Dunne, & Beck, 2019). Indeed, in the various chapters, different models of mentoring emerge depending on the groups of individuals involved and the particular contexts in which they are situated. For example, Pye, Williams and Dunne (Chap. 3) describe their design of academic peer mentoring for students, which echoes some of the key factors outlined by Ball and Hennessy in their models for mentoring (Chap. 2). Building on these ideas, the various authors seek to offer a philosophical engagement with mentoring as a concept and share a range of pedagogically framed case studies to demonstrate the breadth and depth of current mentoring and peer-learning practice in HE. For example, Colvin and Ashman (Chap. 4) outline a large peer mentoring scheme in Utah, USA, that shares some similarities with the approach detailed in Chaps. 2 and 3. Stewart et al. (Chap. 10) consider HE peer mentoring in Kentucky, USA, with a focus on professionals involved in academic research that has resonance with Woolhouse and Nicholson's work that addresses UK practice (Chap. 14). To compliment these, Boehr et al. (Chap. 11) offer the point of view of mentees; the authors describe the practicalities and outline the experience of peer mentoring when framed within a cohort model, which offers a useful contrast to many of the other chapters in the book.

Furthermore, in a number of chapters, attention is drawn to specific national or trans-national locations in order to explore how similar approaches to mentoring can be (re)negotiated in different ways, within situated contexts. To this end, Rodriguez-Cuadrado and Núñez Cortés (Chap. 8) provide an overview and specific example of mentor training from Spain, and in Chap. 12, Allan, Pham and Le consider an example from Vietnam, addressing how the process of mentoring can be adapted in response to a cultural context. While many of the chapters detail the

beneficial aspects of various mentoring approaches, the difficulties and issues are also considered. In Chap. 9, Fulford takes a philosophical approach to the issues of time and availability, which have been repeatedly identified as key barriers for productive, meaningful and supportive mentoring in different HE educational settings and national contexts (Dietz & Scheel, 2017; Fong, 2016; Langdon et al., 2016; Sawatsky, Parekh, Muula, Mbata, & Bui, 2016.).

Last, but not least, this book is designed to be of particular interest to practitioners and tutors within HE settings who are keen to explore the concepts of mentoring/peer mentoring and associated learning approaches and/or who wish to engage with such pedagogies to support students in their settings. Examples of this include Yale's chapter which has a particular focus on how mentoring can be successfully incorporated into the role of HE personal tutors (Chap. 5), while Peiser (Chap. 6) and Ball-Smith (Chap. 7) consider the importance of mentoring for professional placements.

In order to further enhance the relevance of this text for HE practitioners and tutors, every chapter provides a clear and short overview at the start and posits questions for reflection and discussion at the end. This offers a route for readers to more actively engage with the ideas and examples included within the chapters and also possibilities for similar peer mentoring programmes or schemes to be developed, delivered and sustained in their home institutions.

Structure of the Book

The book is divided into two sections. Section I covers mentoring with undergraduate students in HE and includes peer mentoring within students (Chaps. 2, 3 and 4) and the mentoring of HE students by tutors (Chaps. 5, 6, 7, 8 and 9). Section II explores other types of academic mentoring in HE contexts including professional peer and cross-cultural mentoring and concludes with three chapters that have a focus on mentoring for social justice. Each of the chapters addresses a particular aspect of mentoring in HE. There is a focus either via theoretical or philosophical engagement with the topic or through situated case studies that draw

out the pedagogical practices, challenges, opportunities and/or potential outcomes of mentoring.

To aid with practical engagement with the book within educational contexts, the questions for discussion and reflection at the end of each chapter are designed to engage the academic reader and enable individual chapters to be utilised within teaching and learning contexts such as undergraduate and postgraduate degrees or as part of professional development courses.

Section 1: Mentoring with Undergraduate Students in Higher Education

The first section of the book contains nine chapters that adopt different approaches to investigating how mentoring has been deployed to support the development of undergraduate students within HE contexts. The studies under investigation have a key focus on students enrolled on professional, vocational courses, in which communication, trust and the sharing of knowledge, skills and experience can be considered the corner stones of productive professional relationships.

Peer Mentoring Between Students

Chapter 2 by Ball and Hennessy critically explores a variety of models encompassed under the umbrella of peer mentoring between students in HE. It considers how mentoring can be used to support learning and contribute to the development and management of the "student experience". In addition, consideration of how such approaches attend to institutional priorities and performance indicators are also reviewed. Attention is drawn to the practical application of peer mentoring, using examples and points for reflection.

In Chap. 3, a student academic mentoring programme for second-year undergraduate students is explored, based on case study research at a university in England conducted by Pye et al. The mentoring process under discussion involves a tripartite structural approach utilising

individual, small group and in-class student mentoring. The empirical research data discussed was collected via documents such as student attainment, and mentor and tutor evaluations which were enhanced with qualitative discussions. The chapter explores the experiences of undergraduate students, some of whom were peer mentors and some mentees to frame the benefits of a mentoring approach that takes various forms rather than a singular approach, as this can be flexible and adapted to suit the needs of mentors and mentees.

In Chap. 4, the role and importance of credibility and trust within the peer mentoring relationship are explored. In this chapter, Colvin and Ashman explore the process involved in instances where peer mentoring utilises a more experienced student to help a less experienced one. The chapter draws on empirical data gathered from over 650 students who were using peer mentoring as a learning tool, and their argument is grounded on exploring how what may seem a straightforward expert–novice interaction of peer mentor/mentee can be complicated when there are questions of credibility.

The Mentoring of Higher Education Students by Tutors

Chapter 5 offers an alternative perspective on the topic of mentoring by focusing on students' perceptions of the student–personal tutor relationship. Yale considers how mentoring pedagogies can underpin a positive student–personal tutor relationship and provide a strong foundation for learning, developing student confidence and mediating some of the challenges faced by students in their first year of HE. Yale questions assumptions underlying student support mechanisms, the implicit messages such assumptions send to students, and how this positions them: either as autonomous and independent learners, or as in need and dependent. In addition, there is a consideration of how HE institutions can develop a mentoring system which is integrated within the wider learning context, which both students and personal tutors are invested in.

Chapter 6 considers the important role HE plays in the preparation of professionals entering fields such as nursing, teaching and social work

and the challenges posed by bridging academic settings and professional workplaces. Peiser argues that this has particular significance in the UK, with policy makers calling for "evidence based" or "evidence-informed" learning, which requires extended engagement from workplace mentors and increasing synthesis of theoretical knowledge and practical skills. Thus, the chapter is focused on the opportunities and challenges for mentors, particularly within pre-service teaching, and considers the implications for curriculum development in HE.

In Chap. 7, Ball-Smith argues that the relationships developed between professional placement mentors and university-based tutors are crucial for supporting students during their professional training. She notes that a university and their partner schools will develop individual procedures and practices that are needed to traverse the perceived boundaries of school (practice) and HE (theory). Accordingly, Ball-Smith explores the different ways in which mentoring can be developed with a focus upon identifying the mentoring models and pedagogical practices which are most likely to benefit the pre-service teacher in a critical time of their professional development. In addition, consideration is given to the tensions that can arise for students who are simultaneously working towards an academic award and a professional award.

To further engage in the dialogue around how national policy can inform the mentoring support offered by tutors to HE students, Rodriguez-Cuadrado and Núñez Cortés consider social, political and educational scenarios surrounding Spanish mentor practices. Within Chap. 8, they consider how such factors inform the concept of mentorship, its history, practices and implications for a myriad of educational disciplines within the Spanish context. To do so, they particularly address the organisational and pedagogical aspects of writing centres and programmes, initiatives that increased considerably in popularity after Spain gained access to the European HE area.

Chapter 9 is deliberately placed within the centre of the text as Fulford addresses the challenge of "time" that will be familiar to those involved in designing programmes of study that involve mentoring, and which is an underlying concern threaded within other chapters. Fulford adopts a philosophical approach to unpick the difficulties involved in the need to find time for regular meetings when developing close professional

relationships within HE settings. She does this by engaging with the French existentialist philosopher, Gabriel Marcel's work around dichotomy of "disponsibilité" and "indisponsibilité" ("availability" and "unavailability", respectively).

Section 2: Academic Mentoring in Higher Education Contexts

Building on the ideas and themes offered in Section I, Section II of the book includes seven chapters that consider how peer mentoring and collaborative learning have become a central aspect of learning for professional colleagues working within HE settings.

Professional Peer and Cross-cultural Mentoring

An innovative autoethnographic stance is taken within Chap. 10 to foreground the personal perspectives of five individuals involved in a Doctorate in Education (EdD) dissertation mentoring group. Stewart et al. use various "running a marathon" metaphors to offer an engaging discussion of their experiences; the relationships they developed, the strategies they utilised to maintain the group's momentum and the challenges they overcame, which echo the difficulty of finding time raised within Chap. 9. The chapter concludes by offering a range of insightful suggestions for practitioners wanting to enhance mentoring practice in their own settings and the points for discussion are separated into three areas related to the roles involved in cohort mentoring: graduate students, mentor professors and university programme directors.

The theoretical underpinning and pedagogy involved in a peer mentoring group of doctoral and master's students in Ohio, North Western USA, are studied in Chap. 11. Through collective and individual reflective discussion of their experiences over a year, Boehr et al. consider the factors that enabled continued and productive engagement with research dissertations while also acknowledging the pressures and difficulties various members of the group experienced. The analysis is informed by

feminist research, praxis, and mindset as they consider how they built an advising/mentoring process that recognised and maintained intricate connections between the body, mind, heart and relationships (Jordan & Schwartz, 2018). In particular, there is an emphasis on how they became more intentional and explicit about caring for themselves and for each other within an intensive educational context that requires high focus and productivity.

In Chap. 12, Allan, Pham and Le adopt a traditional definition of mentors as "people who use their knowledge, power and status to assist others to develop their careers" (Tonna, Bjerkholt, & Holland, 2017, p. 211), to explore the relationship between HE tutors in four countries in the West defined as "developed" (England, Germany, Ireland and Romania) and those in two countries identified as "developing" (Vietnam and Laos). The discussion particularly focuses on the inter-country implementation, the shifting role of mentor/mentee and the cross-cultural tensions experienced. This is enhanced through a focused case study from Vietnam and the description of a shifting model for mentoring which could be implemented across other contexts within which cultural differences arise.

Mentoring for Social Justice

This final subsection of the book draws together three chapters that explore questions around the possibilities for mentoring in HE to further social justice aims. These chapters particularly consider how mentoring as a pedagogical process might offer opportunities for self-development and empowerment that extend beyond the content of a programme of study, while also considering the challenges that are faced.

In Chap. 13, Lander and Nicholson examine how the role of teacher educators in university-based programmes fulfil a vital role in the preparation of future teachers that has been undermined. Lander and Nicholson draw on empirical data derived from a case study involving qualitative semi-structured interviews conducted in one university in North-West England. In doing so, they illustrate how teacher education has been undervalued within the academy because of a clear tension between the

need to teach and support student teachers and the lack of mentoring around research. They argue that this research mentoring requires consideration because it is needed to facilitate the transition from "teacher" to "academic/active researcher" in the field of teacher education.

The theme of empowering learners and utilising mentoring to further social justice aims is continued within Chap. 14. Woolhouse and Nicholson explore empirical data gathered from over 300 teaching assistants studying a part-time professional development course to consider the benefits and challenges of peer mentoring. To do so, they construct a dialogue to draw together the work of Lave and Wenger (1991) with that of Freire (2000, p. 41) to frame peer mentoring as a "practice of freedom" that they argue can develop a supportive community of practice for a group of educational professionals whose work and experiences are often undervalued and overlooked.

The concepts of inequality and transformation have been central to the work by Maxwell and Duckworth. In Chap. 15, they re-engage with these and Bourdieu's (1986) concept of capital to posit how a transformational model of mentoring, grounded upon values of respect, equity, care and social justice can counter neoliberalism and expose the discriminatory landscape of capitalism. They argue that a mentoring model that embraces inclusive forms of "transformational pedagogical capital" can challenge inequality and work towards social justice aims by offering a process that can empower HE learners and strengthen the communities they belong to.

The book closes with a final, concluding chapter in which the key themes and ideas presented in the various chapters are drawn together. It is noted that mentoring can take various forms; it may be one to one; face to face; small group; online; between student peers; between students and tutors; or between professional peers. In the conclusion, we reflect on how the various chapters illustrate that there is no homogeneous or definitive approach or model for mentoring, and that different adaptations arise depending on the nature of the relationships involved and the specific national contexts.

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