

Peer mentoring best practices and tips

1) Peer mentors and mentees:

- Focusing on both: peer mentors and mentees learning needs and development;
- Focusing on individual and collective learning needs (i.e. promoting peer mentoring activities one to one and in group);
- Providing and sharing clear and concrete benefits for students (i.e peer mentoring accreditation):
 - to develop peer mentors and to support their employability and academic and interpersonal skills;
 - to develop mentees academic and interpersonal skills.

2) Trainer role

- Trainer role: Trainer must be positioned as a "teacher-coach" who can facilitate the learning process. This is instrumental in fostering an atmosphere of trust, exploring values, needs and multiple identities:
- Engaging peer mentors to become active and agentive learners to develop pedagogical activities who can lead to support mentees (Pena, Bensimon & Colyar, 2006). This approach can influence positively students responsibility and decision making process:
- Lecturers across programmes who can work collaboratively to design effective and innovative peer mentoring and train students.



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3) Training and supervision:

- Planning a structured training to support peer mentors learning that provide fundamental learning contents (i.e effective communication; safeguarding; peer mentoring relationship and peer mentor role);
- Planning a peer mentoring training across programmes. Exchanging students' experiences is insightful for future peer mentors;
- Planning individual and group peer mentors supervision during the academic year.

4) Teaching strategies and methods

- ↓ Trainer must employ active teaching methods which facilitate the learning process and encourage the co-construction of a space for healthy dialogue to emerge. Such methods play an active role in guiding, building community and facilitating transformative learning:
- Adopting a variety of tools and methods to create and consolidate "peer mentors community" and facilitate reciprocal support.
 - active methodologies:
 - coaching (i.e Goal setting, action plan, tasks, structured feedback);
 - collaborative learning/peer education;
 - restorative practices;
 - VLEs (Virtual Learning Environments).



Peer Mentoring tips 2019-2020

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5) Students impact/research

- Collecting students' feedback;
- ♣ Planning a follow –up;
- Involving students in research (data collection and data analysis);
- Encouraging students to present papers at research conferences (i.e Solstice conference).
- 6) Mobile Device Applications during Covid 19 [MDA] (facebook, whats app, you tube etc

In previous peer mentoring experiences..

- Students had taken to using each aspect of technology used to enhance learning for different purposes:
- Furthermore, the effectiveness and satisfaction of students in the two different roles: peer mentors and mentees, was made possible thanks to a fast, free and instant communication mediated by technology-enhanced learning;
- This result was possible thanks to the adoption of technologies to share information among peer mentors, between peer mentors and first-year students interested in the programme activities, and also maintain social relationships outside the training University context;
- Furthermore, it was useful for the trainer to be a member of the Facebook and WhatsApp groups, to supervise peer mentors in their role, to observe student dynamics, and to support students (Bussu et al., 2018).





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7) Final suggestions

- Improving technological and human skills are crucial to support students during the COVID-19 pandemic;
- **♣** Contacting students more frequently;
- ➡ Planning training session on line by Microsoft Team/Zoom/skype;
- Planning personal tutoring on line by Microsoft team/Zoom/skype:
- Adopting MT Chat to facilitate students' question, feedback and group interactions among peer mentors);
- Audiorecording training session /personal tutoring (Online sessions need to be well designed);
- Coaching sessions to support peer mentors individual development.

♣ And

- Thinking new strategies to involve students who do not have internet access:
- Improving academic timetable that can work better with mentees and peer mentors to have more accessibility to work with them;
- Thinking new strategies to prevent peer mentors drop-out.



What is Peer Mentoring?

Peer mentoring

is a consolidated pedagogical practice which focuses on developing a sense of belonging to a community and enhancing the learning development of both first (mentees) and second year (peer mentors) (Fox, 2010).

AHSC Peer mentoring project Aims

To train peer-mentors by-

- Promoting active learning (Prince, 2004);
- Developing students' life skills (Bandura, 1995; Srikala, 2010), empowerment (Ledwell, 2006) and self regulation (Schunk & Zimmerman, 1999);
- **Building community** among students and faculty (Bringle et al.,1996).

To focus on first-year students by-

- Supporting the learning of accademic content;
- Helping students integrate into the University community;
- Fostering globally aware students who are capable of creating new social systems to sustain our future.