Mentoring and Higher Education: The First Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme Conference

Moathouse Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon 15/16 of June 2005

15/16 June 2005

Aimhigher...
national mentoring scheme

Acknowledgements:

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The First Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme Conference
Moathouse Hotel, Stratford-upon-Avon, 15/16 June 2005

Professor Andrew Miller

The historic location of Stratford-upon-Avon was chosen for the first annual conference of the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme. The event was targeted at HEIs in England and 65 were represented at the conference, plus international delegates from universities in Eire and Australia. Altogether over 100 delegates attended the two day event in the splendid Moathouse Hotel. The conference was managed by HE MentorNet based at Middlesex University in collaboration with the other partners in the ANMS, the National Mentoring Scheme at Cardiff University and the Brightside Trust. The evaluation of the conference was very positive and it marked for many delegates an opportunity to make new friends and to feel part of a national network of HEI-based mentoring coordinators. Unlike other national mentoring conferences, there was a focus on research and evidence-based theory alongside more practical contributions on organisational issues.

Day 1 keynotes

Andrew Miller gave a broad overview of research evidence drawing on US research and local evaluations from Aimhigher regions. Among the issues which he raised were the linkages between group mentoring by HEI students of school students and Peer Assisted Learning support for 'at risk' first year undergraduates. A number of research questions were raised about Aimhigher mentoring including the importance of subject as a matching criterion. He also drew on the US evidence to make the case for e-mentoring programmes to be project-focused with tight aims rather than general, unfocused mentoring support. Andrew identified mentoring best practice criteria based on some research recently undertaken for a forthcoming international handbook of mentoring.

Alan Evans, former Director of the National Mentoring Pilot Project, and now Director of the National Mentoring Scheme, gave a masterclass on what effective mentors do in order to raise the achievement of their mentees including time spent on challenging and action planning. Alan cited impressive evidence on the impact of his programme gathered by the University of Warwick from seven schools showing the considerable impact on GCSE grades in core subjects and the large increase in time spent doing homework. An aspiration for those involved in Aimhigher mentoring was to produce 'holistic mentors' who understand the complex inter-relationships between a student's academic performance and, for example, their self-esteem, values, personal life, motivation and career aspirations

John Annette located Aimhigher mentoring within the context of the Government's national strategy on volunteering. The Russell Commission has recommended that all 14-21 year olds should be given opportunities for volunteering and mentoring is an excellent form of volunteering for university students. US research on service learning showed that young adults volunteering at university were more likely to volunteer in later life and that such programmes helped rebuild social capital. He argued that if mentoring in HEIs is not to remain a marginal activity in universities there needs to be accreditation for the skills acquired by mentors. In addition to academic credit, the introduction of

personal development profiles would allow students to record the employability and lifeskills demonstrated through mentoring.   John concluded by pointing out that e-mentoring provided a potentially fruitful way of engaging the 40% of HEI students who are part-timers in volunteering.

Day 2 keynotes

David Clutterbuck drew on his recent international research on mentor competencies and his practical workshops with major corporations to deliver a mentoring masterclass. He argued that the fundamental question for mentors to pose is 'what do you want to become?'.   The role of the mentor was to help people develop by adding more and better questions to the inner dialogue that everybody has.   University student mentors should be encouraged that large companies are identifying people who are committed to their own learning and to helping other develop for their high-fliers' programmes. David's work on pairing mentor competencies throughout the stages of the process and longitudinal research was insightful. The finding that the act of measurement acts as a spur to the mentoring relationship is an encouragement to all Aimhigher mentoring programmes to build in effective evaluation measures from the outset.

Andrew Miller and Catherine Drury provided an overview of evaluation in the context of Aimhigher mentoring drawing the distinction between activity monitoring and impact monitoring.   Catherine described the parameters of the national evaluation of ANMS being undertaken by Middlesex University including the case study methodology to investigate four HEIs involved in Cardiff University's National Mentoring Scheme and various methods being employed to examine the Brightside Trust's health e-mentoring project. Andrew concluded with a call for all HEIs to participate in a national evaluation of the impact of mentoring on Aimhigher goals. Delegates were invited to send in copies of local evaluations as part of a meta-evaluation of impact.   HE MentorNet also offered to support local evaluation of mentoring programmes using an empowerment evaluation workshop methodology.

Workshop highlights

The conference was fortunate in having a good range of excellent workshop presentations some of which are reflected in this report.

Gillian Mabbitt gave an excellent case study of how mentoring for academic credit has developed through the *Students into Schools* programme running at the University of Newcastle and Northumbria University.

Daphne Hampton shared her experiences of setting up a peer mentoring programme at the London University of the Arts which served as a reminder of the need to support the widening participation cohort as they become freshers.

Angelica Rísquez and Sarah Moore from the University of Limerick provided a fascinating insight into the issues involved in establishing a peer e-mentoring programme to support the transition of first year undergraduates.

Rahila Mukhtar described some of the issues involved in establishing a partnership between five HEIs in Birmingham to support mentoring.

Andrew McGregor and Sujo Anathhanam were medical students involved in a

student-led programme to pair fellow students from Leeds University Medical School with local sixth formers.

Dave Brockington outlined ways in which student mentors could support school students in achieving success in the extended projects as envisaged in the Tomlinson Report on the reform of the 14-19 curriculum and gain ASDAN accreditation.

Zoë Pither from Bristol University discussed essential and desirable topics in the training of student mentors and e-mentors.

Professor Andrew Miller

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MENTORING RESEARCH, AIMHIGHER AND HIGHER EDUCATION

Professor Andrew Miller

Professor of Mentoring and Active Citizenship and Director of the Institute for Community Development and Learning (ICDL) at Middlesex University, and Director of the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme

Professor Miller gave an overview of mentoring within the context of Aimhigher and, more broadly, considered mentoring research and some of the lessons of the research that are of relevance to mentoring within the context of Aimhigher.

Aims of Aimhigher

The aims are to:

- raise aspirations and motivation to enter higher education among underrepresented groups
- raise the attainment of such students
- strengthen progression routes into higher education via vocational routes
- raise aspirations and applications to higher education institutions (HEIs) matching students' abilities
- improve the above for the gifted and talented cohort.

In considering what is involved in these aims, Professor Miller wondered how many Aimhigher schemes focus in practice on the wider range of students and curriculum paths that the aims are designed to target.

The first aim relates not just to school students but to adults: in the workplace, in FE colleges and in training. It is likely, however, that most Aimhigher schemes involve only school students in the 14–19 age range.

At least three of the above aims stress the vocational strands that are developing within the 14–19 curriculum. The Brightside Trust's health-related e-mentoring programme, Bright Journals, is one example of a scheme that has a strong association with particular subject areas.

The aims also relate to apprentices; last year the Government started a Young Apprenticeship programme, with the result that 14–16 year olds are embarking on quite extensive work-related programmes in particular sectors such as carpet making, health, and business engineering. There is a lot of scope to link Aimhigher mentoring programmes to these types of scheme.

The fourth aim, relating to increasing the number of applications to HEIs among the target group, is very long term. The Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) has set in train a number of evaluation programmes, some of which include long-term tracking which should be able to identify increases in the number of applications among target groups. As national funding for Aimhigher will come to an end in 2006 (although local and regional funding will continue for at least another two years) this particular objective is probably too long term in nature for the scheme to address.

With regard to the final aim, one national project, based at the University of Warwick, focuses on the gifted and talented cohort, which possibly requires a different approach from the other targeted groups.

Survey of HEIs, 2004/5

In the autumn of 2004 the ICDL carried out a survey of HEIs, to which 51 institutions responded, and which involved 64 projects linked to Aimhigher.

Mentoring project aims

Most projects had more than one aim, and these aims largely reflected those of Aimhigher:

- building self-esteem and confidence (88 per cent of projects)
- raising academic achievement (80 per cent)
- raising awareness of opportunities in higher education (80 per cent)
- raising awareness of career options (two-thirds)
- raising performance and improving study skills (nearly two-thirds)
- improving goal setting (50 per cent).

Professor Miller noted that from a **school** perspective, mentoring schemes focus on three main areas:

Personal development, including interpersonal skills, and attitudes and values. It could be argued that a key purpose of Aimhigher mentoring is changing attitudes (e.g. to going to university, improving aspirations).

Improving subject learning (overlaps with tutoring), involving university students helping school students with their GCSEs and other qualifications (e.g. in business studies)

Work-related learning (less well represented), especially enterprise and entrepreneurship, which features strongly on the Government's agenda: over the next three years secondary schools will receive a total of £60 million a year (£15,000 to £17,000 per school) to promote enterprise skills and capability. There is potentially a great deal of scope for mentoring programmes that involve universities, especially business schools, helping school students with their enterprise-related activity.

Distribution of mentoring projects

The ICDL survey of HEIs found that institutions were involved with mentoring projects as follows:

Brightside Trust Health E-mentoring programme: currently involves 14 HEIs, with a target of 50 in 2006.

Other e-mentoring projects: There are three main providers:

- E-Mentor Pro, based largely in London and the South East;
- Firefox, a company providing technology and support services for e-mentoring;
- Community Service Volunteers (CSV), which has developed its own mentoring programme.

National Mentoring Scheme: 28 HEIs providing face-to-face mentoring.

Other face-to face mentoring projects: run by individual HEIs.

Type of mentoring taking place in HEIs
- Face-to-face: about 80 per cent of projects
- E-mentoring: under 20 per cent
- Mix of face-to-face and e-mentoring: about 25 per cent
- Group mentoring: 30 per cent.

Many people believe that the best form of mentoring is face-to-face supported by an e-mentoring dimension, which enables increased contact between mentor and mentee and provides a convenient way for mentees to send drafts of their work to their mentor for comment.

An issue for exploration is the extent to which institutions are involved in group mentoring – whereby mentors talk to groups of students rather than individuals – and whether the aims of Aimhigher (particularly raising aspirations to progress to higher education, or indeed improving study skills and subject-related knowledge) could be better and more cost-effectively addressed through a group programme, which might include more beneficiaries, than through a programme based on one-to-one mentoring.

Where mentoring took place
The survey found that 60 per cent of mentoring took place in schools, 25 per cent at the HEI (presumably in the e-mentoring dimension of the project) and 15 per cent in both and/or in the community.

Typically e-mentoring is a weekly exchange, while face-to-face mentoring takes place either once a week or once every two weeks, for an average of an hour.

Barriers to mentoring development
The following barriers were identified by HEIs, the first three of which were cited by two-thirds of respondents:

- **future funding and problems of sustainability:** a number mentioned the importance of integrating Aimhigher work with the broader strategy of the institution;

- **low levels of pay for mentoring coordinators**, many of whom were fairly new to their role within the last one or two years;

- **lack of professional development opportunities;**

- **not feeling part of a wider mentoring culture:** mentioned by over half the coordinators.

These last two factors lie behind the setting up of HE MentorNet, providing opportunities for professional development and networking (such as this residential conference), and enabling coordinators to feel part of a wider mentoring community.

Mentoring research

Evidence of research and evaluation from regional Aimhigher websites

Prior to the conference ICDL carried out a review of regional Aimhigher websites for evidence of local research and what it might reveal about aspects of mentoring, including impact, in the context of Aimhigher. Overall there was little evidence of impact research and evaluation from these websites, but two regions provided examples of relevant learning points based on experience.

North East region (www.aimhigher.northeast.ac.uk)

- There is a need to link mentoring programme to HEIs' core strategy for widening participation (WP) in order to achieve sustainability.

- The University of Newcastle has been very successful over the years in embedding academic credits for mentors, which has acted as an important motivator and reward for mentors and helped to sustain mentoring within the university, with support from academic staff (which is not always forthcoming).

- The E-Go e-mentoring programme, targeted at adults, faced great difficulties in recruiting both mentees and mentors.

- It is very difficult to unpick the contribution of multiple WP/Aimhigher interventions (including mentoring) on the numbers of applications to HE, and to assess the specific impact of the mentoring project.

South West region (www.uwe.ac.uk/widen/index.htm)

Because the South West region is very dispersed, with the University in Plymouth and students in schools across Devon and Cornwall, it is ideal territory for e-mentoring. The website revealed some very promising approaches.

- University students are trained to take on a variety of roles, including tutoring and a broader 'ambassador' role, in a coordinated approach that includes mentor and e-mentor training.

- The region is carrying out a longitudinal study of all its WP activities, including e-mentoring and face-to-face mentoring, and is tracking the impact on focus groups of students in different schools in order to evaluate the longer term impact of mentoring and the relative effectiveness of other interventions.

- Matching is a critical factor in the success and longevity of mentor/mentee relationships. A good subject match, whereby mentors following specific courses are matched with mentees who have requested help in a particular subject area, is particularly important. The HEIs surveyed by ICDL, however, often do not include subject choice in their matching criteria, and may not even take mentors' and mentees' interests into account.

- It is important for mentors to help mentees with their school work as well as with raising their aspirations to progress to higher education.

Other literature on mentoring and HE students

The body of literature available to date is fairly slim. The best work produced in the UK is the evaluation study of the National Mentoring Pilot Project carried out by the University

of Warwick, on the impact of mentoring in relation to school students and students in higher education. There is so far little evidence relating to the impact of e-mentoring in the UK, whether business e-mentoring with school students or mentoring by university students. There is, however, considerable evidence in Canada and the United States, much of which shows that programmes need to be very focused; many of them involve project-based mentoring rather than general academic support and encouragement.

An important issue to be considered is that if the Aimhigher cohort of mentees go on to university they may be at risk of dropping out. There are high drop-out rates in some universities and Peer Assisted Learning (known as supplemental instruction in the US), where a trained mentor works with a group of first-year undergraduates at risk of dropping out, has been very successful, with positive evaluations from institutions such as Bournemouth University.

Some research questions

Participants in Aimhigher are encouraged to regard HE MentorNet as a resource to draw on, thereby contributing to a national evaluation of the impact of Aimhigher across the country. The following are among the questions HE MentorNet would like to explore.

- Is there any evidence that academically more able HE students, or those who are themselves from Aimhigher target groups, make better mentors than other students?

- Is training most effective when delivered in a generic way, covering mentoring, e-mentoring and ambassadorial roles?

- What sorts of matching criteria are being used, and to what extent is subject-based matching the way forward?

- How effective is mentoring in raising achievement and aspirations compared to other WP/Aimhigher activities?

- To what extent are mentoring relationships focused on specific subject areas or on general academic support?

- Which subject areas are represented by the mentors and mentees? In the past there has been an absence of mentors from male-dominated areas such as engineering and IT, mentoring having been traditionally a female-oriented role.

- What are the key motivators for mentors?

- What are the main learning outcomes for mentors?

What evidence is there of the impact of mentoring on HE students' employability skills?

Potential benefits of mentoring include:

- emotional intelligence
- active listening
- 1:1 communication
- coaching skills
- helping others to develop
- motivational skills
- 'soft' interpersonal skills

- managing self
- developing intercultural sensitivity
- understanding diversity
- developing personal reputation
- a form of work experience
- relevance to various professions.

One of the benefits of locating the mentoring within some sort of award or academic credit is that students can reflect on their mentoring and identify precisely what skills they have developed, and then articulate this in a job interview.

Further research questions

- Which Aimhigher aims can be achieved effectively through mentoring? Is Aimhigher mentoring more effective at raising aspirations than at raising achievement?

- Is mentoring more effective at achieving particular goals when combined with other WP/Aimhigher activities, such as ACE days, visits to the university, summer schools?

- What are the relative benefits and impacts of face-to-face compared to e-mentoring (or combinations of the two), for example in raising aspirations?

- What are the relative costs per matched mentor of face-to-face compared to e-mentoring and other WP interventions?

- What is the Volunteer Investment Value Audit (VIVA) ratio for HE mentoring programmes?

In 2004 the ICDL carried out a Mentoring Fund evaluation study for the Home Office, which looked at the costs of mentoring programmes. The cost per matched mentor is a key statistic; in the US, where there is much better evidence, school-based mentoring costs an average of about $633, or £500, per matched mentor, whereas youth mentoring in the community costs about £1000 per matched mentor.

The Volunteer Investment Value Audit (VIVA) is a second piece of evidence, which quantifies the value of a mentor's time on the basis of the total cost of the mentor and the total cost of the project. In the university sector, students' time is valued quite low (minimum hourly wage rate of £4.80) in comparison with the business sector (as high as £50 an hour).

Conference participants were invited to contribute to a national evaluation of the costs of Aimhigher mentoring programmes, involving both VIVA and the cost per matched mentor.

The nature of the mentoring relationship

Ray Pawson of the University of Leeds recently carried out a study of 25 research and evaluation projects which looked at the mentoring relationship in terms of the impact of the mentoring intervention. The projects were based in youth mentoring as well as academic settings, both in the US and the UK. Pawson's aim was to evolve some theories about the nature of the mentoring relationship, drawing on sociological theory

relating to status and reference groups. Essentially his study analysed the difference in status between mentors and mentees and the group with which they identified.

Aimhigher mentees are students who are underrepresented in the higher education sector, perhaps coming from families none of whose members have been to university, and in peer groups who may be antagonistic towards higher education. They may aspire to go to university but face a number of barriers. Mentors, by contrast, are students who are actually in the university sector. Mentors are *insiders*, whereas mentees are *outsiders*, perhaps wanting to make the transition from school student to university student taking a degree.

Pawson devised a model to describe all mentoring relationships in terms of the status of mentor and mentee, identifying three types of reference group for each:

Mentor reference group

Advocate: role model, wanting the mentees to follow in their footsteps

Autonomous: more laissez-faire, explaining the options but not setting themselves up as a role model

Antipathy: who perhaps have the wrong motivation, and will hopefully be screened out

Mentee reference group

Aspirational: who want to go to university and join the mentor reference group

Acquiescence: not antagonistic but not aspirational

Antagonism: to the whole notion of mentoring and changing the way they are – typically found in Youth Justice mentoring, where a student has been to court and told that they are to have a mentor to help them not reoffend.

Nick Hornby's novel *A Long Way Down* portrays a mentor and mentee who are in the antipathy and antagonism reference groups respectively. Most of the Aimhigher mentors are in the advocate or autonomous groups; it is likely that many of the mentees identified by schools are in the aspirational group, already motivated to go to university, but one of the main purposes of Aimhigher mentoring is to bring any school students who are in the antagonistic group into the aspirational group.

Stages of mentoring
1. **Befriending:** building the rapport and the relationship
2. **Direction-setting**
3. **Coaching:** in particular subjects, skills and qualifications
4. **Advocacy:** working as a role model, helping the mentee, bringing them to the university and introducing them to the mentor's peer group.

As many of the mentees will already be aspirational, the mentoring can focus largely on coaching and advocacy, on moving them from outsiders to insiders.

Best practices in formal youth mentoring

Professor Miller had recently contributed to an international book on mentoring, which looks at evidence from around the world on youth mentoring in the community, academic mentoring in universities, and corporate mentoring. He outlined some of the book's findings on best practice, which need to be taken into account in Aimhigher projects:

- The notion of programme 'integrity': mentoring schemes will be harmful if insufficient resources are put into managing and operating them.

- An audit and needs assessment should be carried out, in particular in relation to the project's objectives and what other programmes are in train.

- It is important to have a theoretical understanding of why mentoring works, and a theoretical model of how it will have an impact on changing mentees' attitudes, skills and aspirations

- There is a need to take gender and diversity into account in matching.

- Mentors should be effectively screened.

- Initial and ongoing training should focus on mentor competencies, and on how they can be improved by continuing professional development.

- The targeting and induction of mentees is key; often the weakest point in many school-based programmes is leaving schools too much freedom to decide who they are going to put forward as mentees.

- Weekly mentoring meetings should be held for at least six months if there is to be any significant impact.

- It is useful for mentors and mentees to engage in joint social and other activities outside their mentoring meetings.

- Monitoring and evaluation evidence should be collected and acted on.

HOW MENTORING CAN RAISE ACHIEVEMENT

Alan Evans

National Coordinator, National Mentoring Scheme (NMS), Cardiff University

Alan Evans discussed types of mentoring that can lead to improved academic and vocational performance and to improved aspirations. His presentation drew on the experience of the five-year National Mentoring Pilot Project (NMPP), of which he had been National Coordinator, and which had been evaluated from the beginning by the University of Warwick. At first the evaluation was solely qualitative, but in the last two years it had also focused on quantitative issues, and it had produced some very revealing information about the impact of the project in both qualitative and quantitative terms.

Throughout the five-year term of the project Alan Evans and his team of trainers at Cardiff University had been concerned about incrementally improving the training and support they offered to participating universities and schools, and about improving the quality of the partnership between the universities, the schools and Cardiff University, with a view to improving the effectiveness and impact of the mentoring.

The partners involved in the NMS

The scheme currently involves 30 HEIs (some of which work in partnership with others in their area), 120 schools and colleges, 900 mentors and 3500 mentees. Cardiff University provides national coordination and training, and the scheme, which is funded by the DfES and HEFCE, is overseen by the Aimhigher Advisory Board, coordinated by Professor Andrew Miller and his team at Middlesex University, which undertakes overarching research and consultancy to ensure quality and excellence in the NMS and the other schemes in the partnership.

The aims of the NMS

The aims of the NMS for participating mentees are to:

- raise standards of performance and improve examination achievement
- raise awareness of opportunities offered by higher education
- recognise that higher education is possible, affordable, exciting and enjoyable
- provide them with individual learning plans and targets for action
- enable them to acquire study skills
- develop and improve their self-esteem, motivation, confidence, persistence, application and time management.

Encouraging pupils from underrepresented groups to progress to higher education is a key aim of the scheme, and mentoring is of particular value to boys, who are underachieving at school in comparison with girls and form less than half of the university student population. Mentoring is about making a difference: as Vygotsky said:

> Young people with the support of more experienced peers or adults understand ideas (or apply themselves to tasks) they would not be able to grasp alone.

Mentors in the NMS are trained to be learning coaches (as opposed to befrienders, counsellors or instructors), to improve the learning of their mentees and encourage them to reappraise their own learning capabilities.

The features of effective mentoring

Management and organisation

To raise achievement mentoring has to be effective. The following are prerequisites of an effective mentoring scheme:

- effective and assessed training for the mentors
- careful matching of mentors and mentees (a crucial process)
- commitment to the mentoring process from the schools and colleges where mentors are deployed
- commitment to the mentoring process by universities/colleges
- a shared understanding by all parties of the aims of the scheme
- use of the documentation provided to support the mentoring, i.e. administration manual, mentor handbooks, mentor/mentee logbooks.

The mentoring process

One-to-one mentoring is the most effective in improving the achievements of pupils, especially from deprived backgrounds, and the great majority (about 90 per cent) of mentoring in the NMS is one-to-one, as it was in the NMPP. The mentoring sessions take place in the school, outside the classroom, in a quiet and confidential setting. The prime emphasis of the sessions is mentoring to improve pupils' learning, with an element of tutoring where appropriate.

How mentors make a difference

Mentors challenge their mentees by:

- helping to empower them, engendering the belief that they can manage their learning better
- encouraging them to develop a language about learning and to be more successful in academic work
- encouraging them to participate actively in their own learning
- encouraging them to develop critical and creative thinking
- encouraging them to build on incremental success to reach their potential.

Mentors in the NMPP made a difference within a very short space of time. The amount of homework done by mentees increased, within a month to six weeks, from two to three hours a week to six to eight hours a week; they did far more coursework, and they planned their work better. The mentoring/coaching relationship made the mentees feel better about themselves as learners and enabled them to do harder things, to work longer and to work harder, without feeling that the increased work was a burden.

An important feature of the project was that the mentors' experience was reviewed after a month, when they met in pairs to discuss their experience in the mentoring sessions and the effectiveness of the initial training they had received. This provided valuable

feedback to the Cardiff team both about the nature of the mentoring relationship and about how the training could be improved.

How mentors promote learning and help mentees to develop their thinking

Mentors promote learning by:

- listening and discussing anything of importance to the mentee
- assisting the mentee to set clear and effective long-term goals and shorter-term targets
- reviewing progress made against targets and goals
- assisting the mentees in drawing up appropriate action plans and providing support, encouragement, guidance and motivation.

Quality listening is a key skill, which demonstrates that mentors value the opinion of their mentees – many of whom are not used to being asked questions or having their opinions valued. The scheme seeks to inculcate a culture of support and challenge, whereby mentors ask good questions and promote a climate of dialogue where their *mentees* are encouraged to ask questions – a skill that will be valuable to them throughout their lives.

Action planning is another crucial element of promoting learning, and both mentors and mentees have a logbook to assist them in their planning. Mentors also help their mentees to develop and implement effective strategies for homework, coursework and revision, and examination techniques.

After the initial two to three weeks of the mentoring relationship, mentors seek to stretch their mentees and develop their thinking by encouraging them to:

- be prepared to work at the edge and not just the centre of their capacity
- reframe ideas
- see connections between different situations and ideas.

Key skills and behaviours

Throughout the mentoring relationship mentors seek to impart to their mentees key skills and behaviours to help them become successful learners. The most important of these is persistence (essential to success in any field of endeavour); others are the ability to get on with other people; organisation (time management and goal setting; emotional resilience; and confidence. Successful people can learn even from people they don't like (e.g. certain teachers); many pupils believe that if they don't like a teacher they can't learn anything from them, and mentors are encouraged to show their mentees, by anecdotal evidence from their own experience, that this is not the case.

Mentors' approach to quality mentoring

For quality mentoring, it is essential that mentors:

- have clear and specific learning and development goals for each session
- plan each mentoring session carefully
- are well prepared and properly organised.

However, mentors should also be able to modify or even abandon their prepared strategies in the light of circumstances in any mentoring session, for example when the mentee has had a bad experience during the previous week and the prepared session would not be effective.

Improvements in achievement through the NMPP

The quantitative independent evaluation of the NMPP by the University of Warwick in 2004 showed that the results of the mentored pupils were, after one year, higher than the results of a control group of non-mentored pupils by the following margins:

GCSE science and English	1.56 of a grade
GCSE mathematics	1.61 of a grade
KS3 English	0.55 of a level
KS3 mathematics	1.07 of a level
KS3 science	0.96 of a level

The percentage of mentored pupils who achieved grades A*–C at GCSE compared to those not mentored was at follows:

	Mentored	*Non-mentored*
Science	64%	32%
English	64%	29.7%
Mathematics	49%	22%

The figures, backed up by the evidence of case studies, are based on data provided by seven schools, in all of which the headteacher, school coordinator and whole staff were firmly committed to the mentoring scheme. (The remainder of the 80 schools in the NMPP were unwilling or unable to provide data for the evaluation because of the extra work it involved.) The figures are significant not only as evidence of how mentoring can improve pupils' achievement, but because the biggest factor in increasing participation in higher education by pupils from underrepresented groups is that they perform well at GCSE.

Mentoring will not always achieve results of this order, as its success will depend on so many different factors, and the process needs to be sustained for at least 10–20 weekly sessions, but it will generally promote dramatic change in mentees' attitudes and behaviour within the first four to five weeks.

What mentees think

The following are some of the comments made by mentees about their mentoring experience:

- *My time is better planned because of my mentor and I now have more time for athletics.*
- *Coursework has become less of a strain as I no longer leave it to the last minute.*
- *I do a lot more homework than I used to do.*
- *My mentor has helped me concentrate in lessons I don't like.*
- *It is always good to have advice from someone who has been through it.*

Holistic mentoring

In conclusion, Alan Evans referred to Professor Andrew Miller's concept of holistic mentoring:

A 'holistic' mentor will understand the complex linkages between:

- a student's knowledge, skills and attitudes
- academic performance and personal life
- motivation, classroom performance and achievement
- career aspirations, self-esteem and self-confidence.

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Andrew Miller, *Mentoring Students and Young People:*
A Handbook of Effective Practice (Kogan Page, 2002)

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He suggested that those who train and deploy professional mentors should endorse this concept and should aspire to such a high standard wherever possible.

MENTORING, CITIZENSHIP AND COMMUNITY-BASED LEARNING

Professor John Annette

Dean of the Faculty of Continuing Education and Pro Vice Master Widening Participation and Community Partnerships, Birkbeck College, University of London

Professor Annette began by situating mentoring within the context of volunteering, and of service learning and citizenship, which he believed would become an increasingly important context for student volunteering, including mentoring and tutoring within higher education. He went on to argue that if mentoring is to continue in some form after Aimhigher funding comes to an end it will be crucial to situate it not only within widening participation (its natural home) but also within teaching and learning. Mentoring has to be built into the learning, teaching and assessment strategies of HEIs. He stressed the importance of evidence-based practice in order to convince funders and senior managers that mentoring is effective and beneficial – not only for the mentors and mentees involved but also for higher education students as a whole.

Mentoring and volunteering, service learning and citizenship

Professor Annette set the context of his remarks with the following quotation:

> What needs to happen to empower the student to feel part and to be an active part of his or her society?

> What need you to learn and must you be able to do and feel to contribute to societal learning? What are the skills of civic and political participation, and where do they appear in the curriculum of higher education? It will be necessary to keep asking these questions to sustain a relevant and effective lifelong curriculum.

> <div align="right">Chris Dukes, 'Towards a Lifelong Curriculum', in
Repositioning Higher Education, P. Coffield and B. Williamson
(SRHE/Open University Press,1997)</div>

What is the civic role of universities? What responsibilities do they have to their local and regional communities, to local schools and FE colleges, and other forms of learning activity within the local or regional area? Questions such as these are part of a growing debate about the civic engagement of higher education, the corporate social responsibility of universities to their communities – issues that Universities UK, the main organisation representing university vice chancellors and college principals in the UK, is starting to address. Mentoring, as part of the outreach of universities to their local communities, has to be seen in this wider context. To promote sustainability when special funds are no longer available it also has to cease to be a marginalised activity within universities, and must embed itself within their teaching and learning strategies, with appropriate accreditation for students.

Community-based learning and higher education

We need to ensure that students who undertake mentoring can engage in what is known in the UK as community-based learning, or learning through volunteering/mentoring, and

in the US and other countries as service learning. Over two thousand universities world wide are engaged in service learning. It has to be a structured learning activity – students should not be expected to learn merely from undertaking the mentoring – with measurable learning outcomes. For many students it will be an experiential learning experience based on reflection, as in David Kolb's experiential learning cycle, which involves:

- concrete experience (act)
- reflective observation (reflect)
- abstract conceptualisation (understand)
- experimentation (test).

In experiential learning students are given a set of structured activities to challenge them to reflect on the learning involved, not just on life skills but also on cognitive outcomes and the wider concept of social responsibility to the community. Students are also encouraged to learn more about the background to mentoring by reading some of the available literature. The process leads to new ways of thinking and a higher level of understanding about the nature of the activity, which they then test out in subsequent mentoring sessions.

This form of mentoring is also based on learning through partnerships with the community – with local schools or education authorities. These partnerships should be truly reciprocal, with each partner listening to and learning from the other.

Students undertaking this form of mentoring are also engaging in learning for life skills and active citizenship; by going out and working with other people they develop a sense of social responsibility and a critical awareness of their place and role within society. It is not simply a question of helping another individual but of understanding the school context and the sort of problems that the school faces.

Why community-based learning?

The Government refers to higher education and its relationship to the local and regional community (the context in which mentoring programmes should be situated) as its 'civil renewal' agenda. As these programmes are fundamentally about learning through volunteering, they ultimately have to have an impact. To this end we have to seek out and make allies of colleagues within the institution who are committed to and championing this form of teaching and learning, to ensure that they build it into their teaching, learning and assessment strategies, and that all students are at least given the opportunity to engage in community-based mentoring activities. These activities benefit not only the schools and the mentees, but also the student mentors themselves, who gain life skills and (there is some evidence to show) have higher levels of attention.

Participation in such mentoring or volunteering programmes also gives the students a sense of community that they often do not gain elsewhere in the institution. One of the key issues that many students in higher education face today is loneliness, and these sorts of programmes help to give their lives meaning and enhance their well-being.

The Home Office's annual citizenship survey of the state of volunteering in this country shows that it is beginning to decline among young people (although it is still holding up among older people), and this is partly because women are entering the labour force

and have less time for the traditional forms of volunteering that they used to undertake. The Government is concerned about this decline, and set up the Russell Commission on youth volunteering, which recently published its report. The report, which was strongly backed by the Chancellor, Gordon Brown, recommends that every young person aged 14–21, whether in schools, 16–19 provision or higher education, should have the opportunity to engage in volunteering. This is seen as an entitlement, and a 'social capital' argument. When young people engage in volunteering and work with other people they begin to develop a sense of trust and a shared sense of values; they are part of a network, having some influence, and this gives them a form of capital, referred to as social capital. The evidence shows that students who engage in these sorts of activities, where there are higher levels of social capital, not only tend to go on to higher forms of education but also enjoy better physical and mental health. There is extensive longitudinal research in the US and Australia to show that such students tend to be much more active in their communities in later life.

Ultimately, however, the benefits of community-based learning have to be seen in terms of learning outcomes. The Government requires evidence of the benefits of mentoring and tutoring programmes, not only to the mentees and tutees but also to the student mentors and tutors.

Community-based learning and active citizenship

Schools in England are now required to teach citizenship, and in some schools this is undertaken through peer mentoring, with Year 10/11 students mentoring Year 7/8 students; in some schools the HE mentor is involved as part of the team. There tends to be more of this sort of work in the tutoring area, but there are real opportunities for it in mentoring, particularly peer mentoring.

There have been several initiatives in recent years related to community-based learning and active citizenship; these include:

- Crick Committee Report on Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools

- Citizenship curriculum in schools: involvement in the community

- Volunteering, community involvement and active citizenship: Millennium Volunteers and DfES Young Volunteer Challenge

- Crick Report on Citizenship for 16–19 Year Olds in Education and Training: active citizenship as a life skill, and Learning and Skills Development Agency pilot projects.

Community-based learning and employability

Other initiatives are concerned with preparing students for the world of employment after their community-based learning experience. The Dearing Commission Report in 1997 argued that students in higher education were adequately provided for in academic terms but were being let down in the area of life skills. As a result, HEFCE has since been providing substantial funding for HEIs to develop teaching-quality assessment strategies. Recently it provided several million pounds for the establishment of centres for excellence in teaching and learning, which makes the funding for Aimhigher seem paltry by comparison – another powerful reason for mentoring programmes to be part of the wider context.

Personal development profiles (PDPs) for students should be in place by autumn 2005, providing a real opportunity for students to show evidence of their achievements and skills, and clearly those of us involved in running mentoring programmes have a key role to play in this respect. We need to learn about generic and subject learning and teaching support networks (LTSNs); the Higher Education Academy (www. heacademy.ac.uk) is a key resource and the new locus for all this innovation in teaching and learning.

Community-based learning and higher education in the UK

Organisations active in this field include:

- Learning through Volunteering: CSV/Council for Citizenship and Learning in the Community (CSV/CCLC)

- Student Volunteer England, which has recently produced a report entitled *The Art of Crazy Paving* on the benefits of volunteering, which looked at the evidence of students engaged in volunteering who had been certificated or accredited, and the learning outcomes they achieved

- Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF), which is likely to be incorporated in the Higher Education Innovation Fund after June 2006. It remains to be seen whether the funding for service learning will be ring-fenced within this fund.

- Higher Education Community Partnership.

Some examples of HE partnerships and student volunteering

- Science Shops (e.g. at Brunel University, Liverpool University, Queens University Belfast), where science students work with local communities in applied science projects, often doing environmental audits and investigating particular environmental problems

- Schools: mentoring/tutoring for widening participation and Aimhigher: Partnerships for Progression (P4P)

- Voluntary Sector: local and regional Bureaux/Councils for Voluntary Action, and national Community Service Volunteers (CSV), National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) and National Centre for Volunteering

- Community development and neighbourhood renewal, involving a growing number of universities.

Mentoring and higher education

Important initiatives in this area include:

- National Mentoring Pilot Project, run by Alan Evans
- Widening participation: tutoring and mentoring
- Aimhigher/P4P
- Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme and HE MentorNet.

For further information Professor Annette recommended Peter Storey's *Mentoring and Aimhigher/Widening Participation: A Literature Review*, available on the HE MentorNet website (www.hementornet.org).

Posing the question 'Where are we going next?', Professor Annette suggested that e-mentoring was an obvious way forward, and could be particularly useful for the large cohort of part-time students (40 per cent of the total student population in England) – an area of increasing concern for HEFCE. Part-time students tend to come from more deprived backgrounds and to belong to black and other ethnic minority groups, who, nationally, do not engage in student volunteering to the same extent as their white middle-class peers; it is important to reach out to them and give them the same opportunity to engage in these activities.

Research into mentoring and higher education

There is not a great deal of research available in the UK (there is much more in the US); useful texts include:

- Andrew Miller, *Mentoring Students and Young People* (RoutledgeFalmer, 2002)

- Helen Colley, *Mentoring for Social Inclusion* (RoutledgeFalmer, 2003)

- John Hall, *Mentoring Young People: A Literature Review* (SCRE Centre, 2003; www.scre.ac.uk)

- Michael Shiner et al., *Mentoring Disaffected Young People* (Joseph Rowntree Foundation, 2004; www.jrf.org.uk)

- Tim Newham et al., *Dealing With Disaffection: Young People, Mentoring and Social Inclusion* (Willan Publishing, 2004)

HEFCE has recently given funding to the Economic and Social Research Council to commission research projects into widening participation; it will be interesting to see how many of these projects will look at mentoring.

Key issues

- Where is the community-based learning in mentoring in the UK? In schools, 16–19 and higher education? Are we providing the students in our programmes with the opportunity to have structured learning experiences through their mentoring activity, and to what extent are we certificating or accrediting that learning?

- Where is the learning in community-based learning/mentoring in the UK? Are we sharing models of best practice? Initiatives such as this conference, the NMPP and NMS and HE MentorNet clearly demonstrate that we are, but we also have to address the evaluation and research agenda, and to provide concrete evidence of learning outcomes.

- Where is the funding for community based learning in the UK? Where will it come from after July 2006, when Aimhigher funding comes to an end? How much will be available, and what will the priorities be? Equally, will the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF) continue after July 2006, and in what form?

We have to think within the wider policy context in terms of how we organise our activities and the sort of evidence we provide for the benefits that accrue from them, not only for our own students in higher education but for the students in our schools.

DEVELOPMENTS IN MENTORING: THEORY AND PRACTICE

Professor David Clutterbuck

Clutterbuck Associates and Mentoring and Coaching Research Unit, Sheffield Hallam University

Professor Clutterbuck began his session by asking participants to engage in a brief 'learning dialogue' in pairs, each person asking someone whom they did not know well 'What do you feel passionate about?' and drawing their responses. The exercise revealed that participants were able to establish a better-than-expected rapport with their partner in a short space of time, and that the drawing contributed to this. When taking notes, people tend to look down most of the time, whereas when drawing they tend to look up at the person they are listening to; they also remember what they have heard far more vividly when they have both visual and auditory input. Moreover the chosen question was a simple, effective way to start a relationship, and hence a legitimate one to use at the start of a mentoring relationship. The exercise also revealed that people make assumptions in their drawings based on their own stereotypes, and it is therefore a useful means of making people aware of their stereotypes. It has been found to be very helpful in building a speedy rapport between adults and young learners, particularly young people at risk, where a learning dialogue can be quickly established with humour and real empathy.

Coaching versus mentoring

There has been a lot of confusion over the years between coaching and mentoring, and Professor Clutterbuck sought to clarify the differences between them, demonstrating two models of each.

Coaching

Ninety-five per cent of coaching in the UK and across the world is based on a traditional, directive model that involves external feedback: the coach sets the task and knows what level of performance is expected from the learner, and hence 'owns' the process. The coach observes the learner, demonstrates how they should do things, encourages them, helps them, tells them what they have done right or wrong, and gradually, through a process of experimentation and dialogue, the learner improves. Really good coaches use intrinsic as well as extrinsic observation, helping learners to see for themselves what they are doing right or wrong, and to improve by this process of self-observation.

Executive or developmental coaching is based on a different, non-directive model, whereby the learner is encouraged to reflect on their performance by being asked challenging questions which stimulate them to think about what they are doing and why they are doing it.

Mentoring

Informal mentoring has been in use for many years. In the late 1970s people involved in this informal mentoring in the US decided that it needed to be structured and organised. They adopted a model whereby the mentor set out specifically to help the mentee achieve their career objectives, especially by introducing them to the 'right' people and

making sure their name was put forward in the right quarters. Personal development was seen as incidental to this process.

When this model was introduced in the UK it was received very negatively. In the corporate sector, where employers were seeking to encourage their employees to drive their own careers and their own development, the US model was seen as spoon-feeding, the exact opposite of what employers wanted to achieve. A model of European developmental mentoring emerged, which involved working with people's own goals – how they wanted to grow as a person as well as what they wanted to achieve in their work.

Coaching is primarily concerned with the question 'How do you want to improve your performance'. Somewhere in between coaching and mentoring is the question 'What do you want to achieve?' Mentoring is about 'What do you want to become?' – a much deeper and more fundamental question that can never be finally answered. What we become is defined by the job we do, by our self-esteem, by all sorts of other factors, but *becoming* is the primary job of mentoring.

Personal reflective space

This is another core concept within mentoring. Where, asked Professor Clutterbuck, do we do our real thinking? – i.e. sustained thinking about one issue in depth. Answers from participants included 'in the car', 'in the bath', 'when I'm having a cigarette'. It was interesting that no one said 'at work'; most people come to work to *do* things rather than to think, and the way in which our working day is structured does not leave time for deep thinking. Making and using reflective space is a process that involves several phases:

1. We have a lot of things on our mind that we haven't resolved. Experiments suggest that most people when asked to list these things come up with 20 or 30 major unresolved issues they need to wrestle with.

2. We let *one* of these issues float to the surface, and try to *frame* it – to see it from different perspectives.

3. This gives us *insight* into the issue, enabling us to see it differently and identify different *options*.

4. We emerge from this process with greater *energy*, ready to put into *action* the results of our reflection.

We have in effect had a conversation with ourselves, a process that is an important part of sorting out our mind and helps us to become very clear about problems that have been worrying us for some time. If we have this conversation on our own it is very powerful, but if we invite another person into this inner dialogue that person is able to work with us and the process becomes much more powerful. That person is a mentor: someone who can us ask more and better questions than we would ask ourselves, from a whole range of different perspectives that we would not have thought of, and who is much less likely to 'let us off the hook' than we would be ourselves.

Mentoring versus other forms of helping people to learn

The different roles can be summarised as follows:

Roles	Transfer
instructor–pupil	data/information
tutor–student	knowledge (i.e. information the student can structure and apply, but only on an intellectual level)
coach–learner	skill/competence (practical application of knowledge gained)
mentor–colleague	wisdom (the ability to use information, knowledge, skills and experience to tackle new situations, i.e. in a much wider and more holistic way)

The degree of personal involvement increases from low (instructor–pupil) to high .(mentor–colleague), just as the context of learning moves from explicit to implicit. Very little of what goes on during a mentoring discussion can be written down in a textbook for general use, because it is largely tailored to the individual mentee.

Why mentoring relationships may not fully work

The primary reasons are:

- not enough regular meetings or contact
- only dealing with short-term problems, not long-term personal development
- no clear agenda or objectives for relationship and individual meetings
- no development activity between meetings
- mentee not driving the relationship
- no perceived need or desire to meet
- problem with mentor relationship
- lack of mentor skills
- geographical/ logistical problems.

Mentor competencies

Competencies that have been identified through observation of mentors at work include:

- **self-awareness:** understanding oneself
- **communicating:** talking to people using story, anecdote, metaphor, being clear and precise in what you tell them
- **sense of proportion/humour:** being able to put things into the 'big picture', to step back and see the humour and incongruity in issues and situations
- **interest in developing others**
- **goal clarity:** helping people set clear goals and know what they want to achieve and why
- **behavioural awareness:** understanding others
- **conceptualising:** helping people to articulate their own thoughts and ideas, using models, drawings, etc. to put them into context
- **business/professional 'savvy':** some relevant experience, enabling the mentor to empathise with the mentee
- **commitment to own learning**
- **relationship management:** maintaining the relationship.

Some of these (e.g. self-awareness and behavioural awareness) relate to emotional intelligence. Some commercial organisations are now using two of the competencies, commitment to own learning and interest in developing other people, as the primary criteria for selecting employees for their 'high flyers' programmes.

Mentee competencies

Mentor competencies can be seen in pairs at the three stages of the mentoring relationship.

1. At the *start* of the mentoring relationship mentees need to:

- be **focused** (to know what they want) and **proactive** (particularly at the start of a relationship, people are attracted to others who are proactive and do things for themselves)

- be **articulate** (to explain what they are thinking and the issues they want to talk about) and **listen**

- have **respect** for their mentor and **self-respect**.

2. Once the relationship has been *established*, mentees need to:

- manage their **learning** with the ability to **teach** their mentor, in a two-way process of dialogue

- **prepare** for each session (usually for at least an hour) and **question** their mentor

- be **open**, saying what they really think, and **reflect** on what is said

- **challenge** their mentor, not accepting what they say as gospel, and accept that they in turn will **be challenged** and have to answer difficult questions.

3. At the *end* of the relationship mentees need to:

- **acknowledge their debt** to their mentor, and **pay forward**, seeing themselves as mentors in turn

- have an **awareness of the process**, which enables them to take control and **manage the process**

- balance **intrinsic feedback** (from themselves) and **extrinsic feedback** (from others)

- be **independent** while at the same time realising the **interdependence** of the mentoring process, whereby people can help each other.

One of the biggest problems in programmes for young people at risk is that many of the young people involved do not have any of these competencies, so simply putting them into a mentoring relationship and hoping that it will work creates real problems. Either mentors have to work with them over a period of several months to develop the competencies that will enable them to use the relationship effectively, or the issue has to be tackled before the mentoring begins. Opinion is divided as to which is the better approach, but many mentoring programmes assume that these young people have the competencies from the start. It is essential for mentees to develop the skill of being an

effective mentee, whether they are young children with learning disabilities or chief executives.

Components of the mentoring interaction

The **context** in which the mentoring takes place is important; the way the relationship develops will to some extent be influenced by the nature of the programme and its organisation. It is particularly influenced by the **expectations** of the mentor and mentee about each other's role, their **behaviours** and the **outcomes** they want from the relationship, whether these relate to the mentor, the mentee, the organisation, or other stakeholders (e.g. the family of a disturbed youngster).

Research on the mentoring relationship

Professor Clutterbuck had recently been engaged in a research study to identify what makes a mentoring relationship effective, and how it is effective. The research, which was both longitudinal and cross-sectional, studied the relationship over a period of time, measuring both mentor and mentee and comparing their perceptions at three key stages – at the beginning, after six months and after 12 months – to find out what had changed.

The research question
- What cause and effect mechanisms are at work in a mentoring relationship?
- What is the nature of the social exchange?
- How does it affect outcomes for both parties?

Managing the variables
The variables were reduced by ensuring that the programmes were compatible with the International Standards for Mentoring Programmes in Employment (ISMPE), and by restricting the audience to professional managers and employees. The ISMPE relate to:

- clarity of purpose
- selection and matching
- training and briefing
- measurement and review
- ethics and pastoral care
- programme administration.

The research measures
The four measures, which had to be developed specifically for the study, were:

- context
- expectation
- behaviour
- outcomes.

Outcomes
Four types of outcome were identified:

- **development outcomes**, which may include knowledge, technical competence and behavioural competence

- **career outcomes**, which may include the achievement (in part or whole) of career goals

- **enabling outcomes**, such as having a career plan, a (self-)development plan, a wider network of influencers or learning resources

- **emotional outcomes** – less tangible, but often powerful changes in emotional state, including increased confidence, altruistic satisfaction, reflective space, status and the pleasure of a different kind of intellectual challenge.

Emotional outcomes can be crucial: research in Norway on a mentoring programme that linked women in middle management with senior managers in other organisations found that 83 per cent of the women felt more confident in their job role, as did 50 per cent of the male mentors.

Definitional problems

As well as the four outcomes above, the study sought to measure specific goals: what did the individual want to change in themselves or in their circumstances? The study immediately ran into definitional problems, much of the available literature not clearly defining the following key issues:

- What is mentoring?
- Mentoring versus coaching, counselling and reflection
- What do mentors and mentors do? What types of behaviour are appropriate?
- Is the relationship formal or informal?
- Length of relationship (a five-year relationship can have a very different impact from one that is much shorter).

Redefining mentoring

The study found that mentoring has moved in the following directions over the years:

- directive to non-directive
- career-focused to wider development focused
- hierarchical to humanistic
- one-way learning to mutual learning
- exclusive to inclusive
- one very powerful relationship to a network of supportive/learning relationships.

The notion of one very powerful mentor is no longer tenable; it is being replaced by the notion of multiple mentors in the course of a person's career, and having a mentor or being a mentor is now being seen as a natural part of a person's own progression, whether in their education or work or as a human being.

Problems with previous research

Previous research was found lacking in a number of ways:

- failure to define the phenomenon to be measured
- confusion of supervisory and mentoring relationships
- over-reliance on retrospective accounts from protégé's perspective only
- no comparison of mentor and mentee perceptions of relationship or each other

- key variables missed
- failure to consider context
- are outcomes really outcomes or enablers?
- relevance to the real world?

Probably less than 15 per cent of previous research met the criteria for usefulness and validity, and given that two-thirds of this percentage related to a sponsorship model of mentoring there is very little real research to define mentoring as it needs to be defined.

Highlights of the analysis

1. Organisational supportiveness does not appear to influence goal clarity, relationship commitment, relationship satisfaction, behaviours or outcomes for mentees or mentors.

   Is the relationship therefore context independent?

   Absence of negative factors in the environment may be more important than presence of positive factors.

2. Mentees' expectation of their own proactive behaviours correlates strongly with actual behaviour, and with expectations of developmental behaviours by their mentors, but not with mentors' expectations of mentees' behaviour.

3. Broad measures of goal clarity do not correlate with relationship satisfaction, behaviours or outcomes. But specific goals correlate well with the achievement of specific outcomes.

4. Mentor satisfaction with the relationship is particularly related to mentees':
   - being receptive to raising ambitions
   - facing up to difficult issues.

5. Mentor satisfaction with the relationship correlates strongly with mentee satisfaction.

6. Mentor and mentee satisfaction with the relationship correlates strongly with proactive behaviours by the mentee and developmental behaviours by the mentor.

7. Commitment to the relationship by the mentor correlates only weakly with proactive behaviours by the mentee.

8. Commitment to the relationship by the mentee correlates only weakly with developmental behaviours by the mentor.

   Points 7 and 8 are issues for the qualitative study.

9. Mentee perception of the quality of the relationship correlates with all four categories of outcome.

10. Mentor perception of the quality of the relationship correlates only with the specific outcome 'has contributed to my development'.

11. Commitment to the relationship by the mentee does not correlate with the achievement of generic outcomes – but does correlate with the achievement of specific goals set.

12. Commitment to the relationship by the mentor correlates only with the outcomes 'has contributed to my development' and 'I have learned from the relationship'.

13. Mentee commitment correlates weakly with some mentor outcomes and not at all with others.

14. Proactive behaviours by the mentee correlate only weakly with generic mentee outcomes, but more closely with the achievement of specific goals.

15. Developmental behaviours by the mentor correlate strongly with positive outcomes for the mentee.

16. The four areas of generic outcome correlate closely with each other (0.8s and 0.9s).

17. Mentee satisfaction with the relationship correlates strongly with all four areas of outcome.

18. Both mentors' and mentees' satisfaction with the relationship correlates strongly with mentees' commitment to the relationship.

Some sidelights
- Measurement acted as a spur to reflect on and improve the quality of the relationship.
- Over 90 per cent of mentors and mentees reported that they had benefited from the relationship.
- All of the programmes were regarded by their organisations as successful.

EVALUATING AIMHIGHER MENTORING AND E-MENTORING: TOWARDS A NATIONAL STRATEGY

Professor Andrew Miller

Director of the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme, Middlesex University

Catherine Drury

Mentoring Consultant to HE MentorNet, Middlesex University

Professor Andrew Miller, introducing this session, said that the bid for the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme included a commitment to evaluate the scheme. Evaluation is an important issue, partly in respect to accountability, as HEFCE expects all Aimhigher projects to carry out their own internal evaluation, but more importantly in respect to sustainability. There is a need to obtain hard evidence of the impact of the scheme, and the second year of its operation will provide an opportunity to build up a national picture of the impact that Aimhigher mentoring and e-mentoring is having on the mentees.

Aims of Aimhigher

Professor Miller reminded participants of the aims of the scheme, which are to:

- raise aspirations and motivation to enter higher education among underrepresented groups
- raise the attainment of such students
- strengthen progression routes into higher education via vocational routes
- raise aspirations and applications to higher education institutions (HEIs) matching students' abilities
- improve the above for the gifted and talented cohort.

The first two of these aims are the area in which most of those involved in the project are working, the others requiring longer-term tracking and other measures that cannot easily be undertaken within the two-year span of the scheme.

HEFCE Aimhigher definitions

Activity monitoring

Outputs of mentoring projects include:

- number of mentors/mentees recruited, trained and matched
- age, sex and ethnicity of mentors/mentees
- type of mentoring activity
- focus of mentoring (a specific subject or more generally to raise achievement?)
- number of meetings
- number of mentors successfully trained
- number and frequency of email messages
- number/percentage of pairs completing/dropping out.

Impact monitoring

This relates to outcomes or changes (intended and unintended) brought about by the mentoring programme, i.e. the effect of the mentoring on mentees. HEFCE defines outcomes and progress towards **impact targets** (mainly interim targets), also called achievements. Final impacts can only be measured in the longer term through tracking and longitudinal studies.

HEFCE suggested impact targets

- **To increase awareness, positive attitudes and aspirations towards higher education among underrepresented groups**

  This involves mainly 'soft' issues relating to people's perceptions of the scheme, and most of those working in Aimhigher who have thought about evaluation are probably intending to focus on these areas, using questionnaires for both mentees and mentors at the beginning and the end of the scheme.

- **To contribute to improvements in achievements at levels 2 and 3 (i.e. GCSE, A levels and other vocational qualifications) among underrepresented groups**

  This is a much more difficult area to evaluate (as the experience of the NMPP has shown) because of the practical problems of obtaining hard data from schools in the time available. It is likely that most schemes do not include budgetary provision for evaluation, and that they will concentrate on the 'softer' targets. Moreover, as the NMPP evaluation has shown that mentoring does improve achievement, there may not be a need to prove the same point again.

Catherine Drury described the role and approach of Middlesex University in the evaluation of the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme, both face-to-face and e-mentoring programmes. Participants were encouraged to contribute to the evaluation, which would be formative and developmental in nature, enabling those involved to have an input in how it operated.

Aimhigher NMS evaluation aims

- To establish the scale, nature and impact of the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme

- To assess effectiveness, what worked, scope for improvement and further development

- To evaluate in a way which enables the three partners to self-evaluate and at the same time come together in a broader, overarching national evaluation.

Key elements of the approach

ICDL sees itself as working in partnership, as a 'critical friend' who can assist with the design of the evaluation and with data analysis. The key elements of the approach are:

1. Individual partners lead their own self evaluation, design, execute and report on their intervention.

    Example: Cardiff University will explore mentee and mentor experiences of the National Mentoring Scheme.

2. ICDL assists partners with the research process and ensures the procurement of data to (a) meet evaluation aims and (b) address common research questions. ICDL will incorporate results in its overarching analysis.

    Example: in the case of The Brightside Trust, ICDL will assist with the design of tools and with the external analysis of findings.

3. Each self-evaluation to consult all stakeholders, at different points in time, about common questions that relate to needs, benefits and impacts, what worked well and what did not work well.

4. Evaluate the partnership process (including feedback from the schemes on how well ICDL and HE MentorNet are supporting and resourcing those involved).

5. Be inclusive, by seeking out the experiences and findings of other HEIs, enabling them to highlight and contribute to both interim and final outputs, whether by case studies or some sort of quantitative analysis; ICDL would welcome any such contributions.

6. Employ action research, with a view to informing ongoing development.

    Example: interim results to be fed back on an ongoing basis into the development plan of individual parts of the partnership as well as its whole, to inform/enhance good practice.

    This element of the evaluation is critical in respect of the sustainability of individual schemes, as many different funders will need evidence of a scheme's impact and why they should continue to fund it.

7. Employ innovative methodologies.

    Example 1: 'Empowerment Evaluation'

    Empowerment evaluation is a democratic, dynamic, group and action-based approach to formative evaluation, which:

    - involves self-evaluation by stakeholders to improve practice towards agreed goals
    - prioritises participant ownership of the process.

    The evaluator becomes a facilitator and critical friend to guide participants through the process.

    Example 2: 'Speech Act Theory'

    Speech act theory is an ethno-methodological tool used particularly for in-depth analysis and evaluation of e-mentoring relationships.

Towards a national evaluation strategy

To conclude this session, Professor Miller summarised the strands of the Aimhigher NMS national evaluation strategy:

- **Evaluation of the Aimhigher NMS strands**

  The evaluation is an internal/external partnership evaluation, the other two partners being The Brightside Trust and Cardiff University. It embodies a qualitative, case-study approach, and in the case of The Brightside Trust it will involve an analysis of e-mentoring conversations, using a research tool (speech act theory) developed in the US. The research and evaluation section of the HE MentorNet website already includes some evaluation tools developed by colleagues from other universities, which are available for download and use, and other tools will be added.

- **Meta-evaluation of Aimhigher mentoring**

  Coordinators send in raw data or completed evaluations which ICDL will use to obtain an overall picture of impact. ICDL has some research capacity and can assist HEIs in this work.

- **Value for money, costs and VIVA data:** to be explored in a conference workshop

- **Empowerment evaluation workshops**

  Six one-day workshops will be offered free of charge to HEIs in the next academic year, bringing together mentoring coordinators, school coordinators and others involved in the programme to self-evaluate, review and reflect with a challenging facilitator – a powerful and democratic approach to evaluation which participants would have the opportunity to sample in another conference workshop

- **E-mentoring evaluation seminar and project**

  Two e-mentoring workshops have already been held; there will be another residential workshop in September for a small group of colleagues who would like to develop a common evaluation strategy for Aimhigher and e-mentoring to be used in the second year of the scheme.

- **Barriers to higher education**

  HE MentorNet has provided a questionnaire for HEIs and schools, designed to identify barriers that prevent school students applying or go to university – whether social, academic, psychological, financial or other practical obstacles. The questionnaires should be completed by mentees at the start and at the end of the scheme next year, to help identify what difference the mentoring has made.

Student tutoring and mentoring for academic credit: Tyneside & Northumberland Students into Schools, Colleges, Community

Gillian Mabbitt

This workshop presented the theoretic and practical aspects of student tutoring and mentoring for academic credit based on the experience of the University of Newcastle and Northumbria University from working with over 800 students per year who choose to tutor or mentor as part of their degree programme. The session also considered whether tutoring and mentoring for academic credit can result in improved commitment and performance and develop explicit evidence of employability.

'*A degree is no longer a meal ticket to your future but merely a licence to hunt*'[1]

It is clear that simply gaining a degree is not enough to secure a graduate job, and a recent survey has suggested that two-thirds of students graduating from leading UK universities this summer believe there are not enough suitable jobs for them.[2] In addition, although having a degree will put young people ahead in terms of career earnings the gap is gradually shrinking.[3] The introduction of top-up fees, the recommendations from the Government White Paper on Higher Education[4] and the White Paper on Skills[5] suggest that it has become necessary for universities to offer more to students than a degree programme alone, with evidence of competence in key skills and employability becoming increasingly important.

Students into Schools (SIS)

SiS is a joint initiative between the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and Northumbria University which works in partnership with local organisations[6] to provide students as tutors and mentors in educational placements in Tyneside and Northumberland. SiS is based in the Centre for Academic Development at the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and since 1993 has placed 7000 students from across all faculties and degree programmes in 400 schools, colleges and community placements. The placements range from mainstream schools to community placements including the Fleming Nuffield Hospital, HMP Acklington and the learning centres at St James's Park and the Stadium of Light.[7] In addition SiS provides students with the opportunity to participate in a wide range of education schemes, programmes and activities. These include the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme, the Teacher Training Agency Student Associates Scheme, and e-mentoring, as well as a range of other widening participation activities including campus visit days and student shadowing events.

Aims

The aims of SiS are:

- to raise achievement, awareness of higher education and aspirations of learners in Tyneside and Northumberland

- to broaden the experience of university students and to recognise and enhance their skills and employability.

In the 2004/05 academic year, 720 students tutored for academic credit in 186

placements, including 20 students who mentored for academic credit, and their work has been supported by 40 student managers. In addition 20 students mentored as part of the Aimhigher National Mentoring Scheme, receiving a bursary payment (not academic credit) on completion of their placement.

Modules

Student tutoring is offered to students via a suite of different elective modules. The modules follow the same quality-assurance process and procedures as other academic modules in the university,[8] and are offered at a range of levels. The options are also divided between:

- basic, for students at any level tutoring for the first time

- advanced, which allows students who have completed 10 credits of tutoring to take a further 10 credits

- intensive, where students complete 20 credits of tutoring in one semester (see table). Student management is available as an option for students who have successfully completed tutoring and want to further their skills by taking responsibility for managing a group of (new) student tutors.

Table: Range of student tutoring modules available via SiS

Level or stage	Credits	Type	Newcastle modules Semester 1	Newcastle modules Semester 2	Northumbria modules
One	10	Tutoring		CAD101	ES088
Two	10	Tutoring	CAD201	CAD202	ES087
Two	5	Tutoring	CAD203	CAD204	N/A
Two	10	Advanced Tutoring	CAD207	CAD208	TE174
Two	20	Intensive Tutoring	CAD213	CAD214	TE175
Three	10	Tutoring	CAD301	CAD302	TE042
Three	10	Advanced Tutoring	CAD303	CAD304	TE176
Three	20	Intensive Tutoring	CAD305	CAD306	TE177
Two	10	Student Management – Group	CAD205	CAD206	ES089
Three	10	Student Management – Group	CAD315	CAD316	TE043
Three	10	Student Management – Project	CAD311	CAD312	TE220
Three	20	Intensive Student Management	CAD313	CAD314	TE221

Further options available through SiS include:

- Student Community Action Newcastle[9] (SCAN) Volunteering module, where students complete a placement with local volunteering projects, the aim being to support the aims of the placement

- Learning from Work,[10] where students gain academic credit by demonstrating their learning from part time work

- Mature Student Mentoring,[11] where second-year mature students mentor first-year mature students

- International Student Mentoring, where second and third-year students mentor first-year international students. This was prompted by the Head of Combined Studies and is now part of the university strategy.

For each of the student tutoring and other modules that SiS offers, a job description is

provided and training is given so that students are fully informed of what is expected of them in their role. The training also includes sessions highlighting the different skills that they should anticipate using, as well as outlining different learning styles and providing the opportunity to practise a range of listening and questioning styles. Further training sessions are provided on the assessment process and for students tutoring or working in placements which require more specific knowledge, for example mentoring, e-mentoring, dyslexia or deaf awareness.

The core principles of SiS which run throughout all of the modules are that:

- Peer education is a good idea and benefits all participants if well managed.
- Balancing logistics, quantity, quality, diversity and synergy is a challenge.
- People can learn how to learn more effectively from experience.
- Student tutoring and mentoring for academic credit can result in improved commitment and performance and develop explicit evidence of employability.

Student work and assessment

The students typically make eight or nine half or whole-day visits to their placement over at least five weeks, plus one day supporting a campus-based widening participation event. The assessment is designed to be aligned with the task,[12] so the students do not have to write an essay at the end of their placement but complete work as they go, with three submissions of work during the semester.

The work the students complete is based on providing evidence of competency against employability standards based on the NVQ process.[13] The categories the students work towards for SiS modules are:

- **Self-management:** develop own knowledge and skills; plan, complete and review own actions; show enterprise and initiative and solve problems

- **Interpersonal skills:** communicate effectively; work with others effectively.

Assessment of competence against the standards also encourages the students to reflect on their employability as the examples given for assessment can be directly transferred to CVs, job applications and interviews. The process also improves their awareness of continued professional development as the students are encouraged to evaluate their own performance and take appropriate action to improve their knowledge and skills. In addition to demonstrating their competence against the standards students have to provide evidence of raising the educational achievement and aspiration of learners.

The work submitted consists of the following components:

- **Audit and action plan.** The audit is a short questionnaire about students' perceptions of their own skills and abilities. They are then asked to write appropriate action plans to complete during their placement based on improving the skills and abilities they have identified as needing development.

- **Learning log booklet.** This is used by students to make notes immediately after their activities to collect evidence against graduate employability standards.[14] They are also encouraged to go back to this record and reflect on their learning to complete the Blackboard-based assignments.

- **Blackboard.** This Virtual Learning Environment (VLE) is used to present staged assignments to the students according to their module. They complete the assignment as a word-processed document and submit it via the VLE. Within these assignments the students are asked to complete a mid-tutoring review as part of assignment 2, and a summative evaluation of their work and development as part of assignment 3. The Gradebook function within Blackboard is used to provide the students with their marks and formative feedback for each component.

- **Teacher evaluation.** The placement supervisor completes a report on the student following a proforma document containing standards and levels of competence. This is worth 25 per cent of the final mark for the module.

The modules are differentiated through the assessed outcomes to satisfy the criteria for each level. For example, stage two/three students complete an observation task, stage three students complete an employability report, 20-credit intensive students at stages two/three complete either an oral presentation or an action research report concerning an issue in their placement.

A vocational approach was considered the best method of assessment, although it often met with criticism within the university for not being 'academic' enough, despite the combination of theory and practice, and the assertion from students that the work is more challenging than other types of assessment they complete.[15]

Workshop discussion

Throughout the session discussion took place around the issues that SiS faces in the delivery of student tutoring and mentoring for academic credit. The following are some examples of the issues discussed.

Integration of modules to generate deep learning

The intention is to offer 20 credit modules across the academic year, rather than in one semester, to enable students to engage with and benefit from the opportunity for deeper learning.[16]

Aligning assessment

This continues to be an issue, as it is difficult to ensure that the assessment is aligned with the task while maintaining academic credibility.

Structure versus autonomy

Linked to the points above, this continues to challenge the development of the assessment, especially with regard to the guidance provided for students, as many think that the guidance is too prescriptive (for example, 'write 50 words on . . .'), while others think that there not enough guidance is provided. The modules endeavour to allow the students the autonomy to pursue their own development and demonstrate creativity while providing a supportive framework for them to work within.

Capacity

The number of students completing tutoring and mentoring for academic credit has increased over the 11 years it has been available. However, in the past few years the

increases in student numbers have been more significant. The issue is maintaining the quality of provision and the management capabilities and systems while working with up to 1000 students per year.

Developing efficient systems

This is essentially linked with the point above, and SiS currently works with a range of systems, including computer-based programs such as Blackboard, Campus Management and Databases, in addition to efficient office and processing systems managed within the Centre for Academic Development.

Future developments

SiS continues to enhance and develop the modules it offers to students, and in line with this a range of future developments are planned. As with other HE mentoring projects, funding post-Aimhigher in 2006 remains a concern. However, offering mentoring for academic credit allows the process to continue, as the funding is provided from the Full Time Equivalent (FTE) allowance that SiS receives for the students in the same way that all undergraduate taught courses are funded. Consideration is however currently being given to charging schools and participants for other widening participation activities and programmes.

The assessments completed by SiS students are currently under review and the intention is to link the current reflective process to the electronic Personal Development Plan (PDP) system which the University of Newcastle will be rolling out to students in September 2005.

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6   Community Service Volunteers; Higher Education Funding Council for England; Learn2work Northumberland; Newcastle LEA; NEXUS; Teacher Training Agency; Tyne and Wear Education Business Link Organisation; Universities for the North East

7   See www.ncl.ac.uk/sis/admin/files/ex_placement_summary_details.xls

8   Quality Assurance (QA) procedures – module descriptor, validation, Board of Studies, moderation

9   Funded by the Higher Education Active Community Fund (HEACF)

10   Funded by the Higher Education Employment Division (HEED)

11   Funded by the European Social Fund (ESF)

12   For further information on assessment alignment see David Boud, http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/uploads%5Cdocuments%5CBoudpresentation.pdf (accessed 21/06/05); see also David Boud, Enhancing Learning through Self Assessment (London, Kogan Page, 1995); David Boud, 'Sustainable assessment: rethinking assessment for the learning society', Studies in Continuing Education (2000), 22, 2, 151–67.

13   See www.qca.org.uk National Standards or www.heacademy.ac.uk/2836.htm assessment grid for more detailed criteria relating to levels of competence.

14   'Employability derives from the ways in which the student learns from his or her experiences. This goes well beyond the simplistic notion of key skills, and is evidenced in the application of a mix of personal qualities and beliefs, understandings, skilful practices and the ability to reflect productively on experience.' (EMP023) www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre

15   'Assessments that help students to identify and then present their achievements effectively are invaluable. However, assessment is partly a matter of pragmatics (how much assessment it is reasonable to impose on learners and teachers). Teachers may still innovate in individual modules, while being prepared for objections from students who prefer the familiarity of established methods and are suspicious of new ones.' (EMP024) www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre

16   (EMP025) www.ltsn.ac.uk/genericcentre

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The development of good practice in student-to-student mentoring in higher education

Daphne Hampton

Student-to-student mentoring in higher education is part of the armoury of student support. Together with personal academic tutorials and learning development/study support, mentoring is an excellent vehicle for helping students. It is a powerful model for creating innovative ways for both mentee and mentor to learn from their HE experience. It is also a useful model for helping students to deal with the emotional and intellectual energy produced by confronting the many new and varied experiences of higher education today.

Mentoring takes place within the context of widening participation and should be seen as part of the organisation's strategy for raising academic achievement and promoting retention.

In the context of higher education, mentoring involves 'a one to one supportive relationship between the student and another person of greater ability, achievement or experience' (Topping, 1996).

A student mentor can advise on the hidden curriculum, encourage personal growth, help the mentee optimise academic achievement, help the mentee stay the course, act as a sounding board for the mentee, and help the mentee cope with change. They can tell the mentee the sorts of things that we cannot tell them in our professional capacity.

Areas to be addressed in running a scheme

The development of good practice necessitates many decisions. Research into the results of mentoring schemes that the author has run over the past five years leads to the following conclusions. The main areas to be addressed in running a mentoring scheme are the selection of the mentees, the selection and training of the mentors, funding, location of the scheme within the university structure, and gaining the cooperation of colleagues.

Starting a scheme

When starting a scheme for the first time, it is good to think small. Start with one or two undergraduate courses, with six to ten mentors in year 2 supporting one year 1 mentee each. Choose courses that are identified as having some kind of priority within the university strategy. This will help with funding for the scheme. Possible courses include courses with large numbers of non-traditional students, courses with retention issues in year 1, and courses with large numbers of international students. Using mentoring to retain international students is seen as a sound investment by management. Linking mentoring with widening participation, retention and/or keeping international students argues for it in the context of issues that senior management care about, and this helps gain funding.

Selection and training of mentors

The selection and training of mentors involves the writing of a mentor handbook, followed by a training programme, where boundaries, responsibilities and confidentiality are all stressed. Following this, the Mentor Coordinator must support the mentors throughout the year.

Course teams from the courses targeted must fully support the concept of student mentoring. Where it is not possible to mentor all year 1 students, as is often the case, supportive course management is essential in helping to select year 1 mentees.

The selection of mentees is one of the most difficult areas of any mentoring project, and experience and good knowledge of your own institution is vital here. Possible 'at risk' students who may be chosen for mentoring include first-generation university students, late entrants, international students, single parents, mature students, refugees and other second-language speakers.

All of this means that the student mentor coordinator must have excellent interpersonal skills to gain and keep the cooperation of students, colleagues and senior management.

Location of the scheme

A decision must be made about where you locate the scheme within the university structure. The author`s scheme is located within the Quality Unit, which gives mentoring the necessary academic status in the eyes of the university community, both the student body and the management. Specifically, the scheme is located within study support. Study support is seen as having a widening participation and retention strategy within the university and so makes a natural home for student mentoring.

Benefits of mentoring

Results for mentors show increased self-esteem and confidence, together with the 'feel good' factor from helping others. The main benefit, however, is academic. The mentors' studies benefited from their focus on study skills and techniques. Their year 2 work benefited from revisiting year 1 topics with their mentees. The mentors were also aware of their academic progression and maturation over their second year.

Results for mentees show that their studies had benefited from mentor help. Mentees had more self-confidence and better study techniques. They settled into college life quicker than many of their peers, learning the college and course culture and conventions from their mentors.

Quotations from mentees and mentors can illustrate these points. From mentors:
'I was able to pass on my knowledge of the course and the college, and give other less obvious advice and tips, such as what I thought the tutors were expecting of her.'

From mentees:
'It was all very helpful, both with the assignments and settling into the course.'

'My mentor has also given me the low-down on the lecturers, what they are like, what sort of feedback they give and what not to say to them.'

The author's current research, yet to be published, looks at student perceptions of the learning process during the first term of certain Foundation degrees within her own university. Part of the research looks at student attitudes to mentoring. Participants were asked to state what qualities a mentor should have. They replied with the following: good knowledge of the course and college, approachable, good listening skills, motivating and encouraging, understanding, patient, honest and trustworthy, hard working, helpful, friendly, has time for you, and intelligent.

Respondents were also asked why it would be good to have a student mentor in year 1 of their course. Their answers included, among others, the chance to learn techniques and skills, and the opportunity to get advice with assignments and college life.

Running mentoring schemes for at-risk students can help managers keep students who would otherwise leave. It is a good investment for the university and for the student. The student, whether as mentor or mentee, benefits in the ways outlined above, leading to their gaining a greater breadth and depth of education, something that feeds back into the academic life of the institution. Many mentees go on to be mentors in their second year, something that is a positive gain for them and the institution.

Mentoring promotes challenging thoughts and ideas among the participants, leading to a fuller educational life and greater academic achievement. Such schemes, however, do need commitment of resources, enthusiasm and attitude if they are to succeed.

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Welcome to college? Transitional adjustment and e-mentoring

Angelica Rísquez and Sarah Moore

Summary

In the light of the current debate on widening participation in higher education and the need for increased student support, this article presents the rationale behind an experience of action research, namely a pilot peer e-mentoring programme in an Irish university whose aim is to facilitate the transition of first-year students into university. The article concludes that future research questions should be concerned with effective monitoring, ethical and policy issues, and the evaluation of e-mentoring programmes, considering e-mentoring in its own right rather than comparing it with face-to-face interaction. At this early stage, sharing experiences across institutions and countries and developing a research community on e-mentoring research and practice in higher education is indispensable.

The transition to university in the context of wider participation in third-level education

Assessing and supporting early undergraduate transition to university life is clearly important, particularly in the context of an ever-expanding, increasingly heterogeneous undergraduate population. In college, the support systems that first-year students have built for themselves from previous environments may be gone, or no longer be supportive, so that they find themselves in a sink-or-swim situation. The first seven weeks of term is a critical period for first-year students as they struggle with coming to terms with their new social environment (Rickinson and Rutherford, 1995). The size of generalist faculties may often act against a smooth transition, as the large student numbers actually increase feelings of isolation, and timetabling of so many students and subjects often means that students have few classes shared in common with others they meet (Dalziel and Peat, 1998). Pargetter et al. (1988) noted that the most common adjustment problems for students coming directly from secondary education are related to developing strategies for recognising and developing specific intellectual and learning skills; an inability to translate skills and study habits into the tertiary environment during the transition process; a lack of preparation for the differences between school and university academic standards; study expectations and subject content; and inappropriate or inaccurate expectations of university education. McInnis and James (1995) note that effects of negative transitions to the first year are easily underestimated since they are often only revealed as discontinuation or failure in later years. In this sense, Levitz and Noel (1989: 72–3) highlight that institutions must play an active role in taking dependent learners and moving them toward greater independence:

> To experience early successes, freshmen must learn to understand and meet the expectations in their new environment, particularly with study skills, independent living, and time management . . . Because the most dependent learners are those at the point of entry into college, academic and student support services should be concentrated most heavily in the freshman year. Intrusive, proactive strategies must be used to reach freshmen with these services before they have an opportunity to experience feelings of failure, disappointment and confusion.

In the context of wider participation in higher education and increasingly diverse student populations, these adjustment barriers are exacerbated by the complex life circumstances of mature/adult learners, students with a disability, international students, and students from ethic minorities or from a socio-economically disadvantaged background, among others. As Simpson (2000) has noted, there is a danger that widening access offers such students not an open door but a revolving door that sweeps them out of the institution as fast as they enter. Widening access will therefore imply a consequent enhancement of support not only for those students, but indeed for the general population of students too. In this vein, Levitz and Noel (1989) remind us that when we provide students with the services they need to succeed, we are meeting their unspoken and completely justifiable demand for institutional quality. At one level, supporting this transition can be viewed as an expression of a university's recognition of its responsibility in fostering access and support opportunities for undergraduates coming from increasingly diverse backgrounds. At another level, it can communicate to new entrants that someone actually cares for them in what may appear an 'iron cage institutionalised' environment.

In the light of the responsibility of higher education institutions to provide student support that facilitates more comprehensive conceptions of 'access' which include student retention, preventable underperformance and successful progression, the purpose of this article is to highlight the opportunities and challenges that the emerging concept of peer electronic mentoring presents to facilitate the transitional adjustment of vulnerable students to third-level education. Some innovative programmes developed by other universities in which interaction between mentoring pairs is supported by information and communication technologies (ICT) are presented. Finally, a brief agenda for scholarly research is suggested.

Peer electronic mentoring as a response to the greater need for student support in higher education

Mentoring is defined by Single and Muller (1999) as a paired relationship that is established between a more senior individual ('mentor') and a less experienced individual ('protégé' or 'mentee'), intended to develop and increase the skills, knowledge, confidence and cultural understanding of the mentee to help him or her to succeed. Its electronic version is growing in influence, as shown by the number and importance of programmes relying on ICT to develop mentoring relationships that have appeared in the last few years. According to Noe (1988), this proliferation of e-mentoring programmes can be partly attributed to the failure to meet stemming from time and space constraints, which has undermined traditional face-to-face mentoring relationships more than any other factor. A number of claims – some of them based on field observations, some others still mere hypothesis – are made about the potential advantages and challenges that e-mentoring programmes are likely to face. The contributions of some of the authors that have published so far on the issue are summarised in tables 1 and 2:

Table 1: Potential advantages of e-mentoring

Single and Muller, 1999	Flexible communication environment independent of time and space, allowing for asynchronous exchanges. Also, this flexibility provides greater choice in the pairing of mentors and mentees. Electronic communications possess qualities that support the development of open, supportive relationships as a result of the attenuation of status differences by concealing social cues that otherwise hinder communication between higher status groups and lower status groups. Communicating using email allows for the construction of thoughtfully written messages without the pressure of immediately responding.
Ensher et al., 2003	In some very special cases, relationships can develop into 'hyper-relationships': communicators can thoughtfully compose and edit their comments, so that the few cues they have about the other communicator are over-interpreted, forming a better relationship than they would if they were physically interacting Both mentors and protégés usually find it helpful to maintain records of their communications.
McCormick and Leonard, 1996	The use of the computer is relevant to the student environment, and the communication style can be easier and less intimidating for certain type of students.
Harrington, 1999	In an environment where computer-assisted learning and access to a computer is commonplace, e-mentoring could simply become one of several development tools. In such instances, computer mediated communication (CMC) offers a cheap and easily accessible instrument to support learning. The mentee is likely to gain greater self-awareness, through self-reflection and assessment, supported by the relatively 'self-absorbed' nature of CMC, i.e. not needing to take account of another person's immediate reactions. Research understanding feedback away from technical detail to a more psychological focus has found that willingness to give feedback increases.
Richards, 2004	Since many individuals are afraid of the therapeutic space for a variety of reasons (shame, recognition of failing, among others) the use of technologies may allow reaching a wider audience, especially individuals who may take comfort in the 'safety' provided by the technology. Distancing is positive and must be respected. Over time and as the relationship develops this gap can be empathically closed.

Table 2: Potential drawbacks of e-mentoring

Single and Muller, 1999	Many e-mentoring programmes have minimal contact among programme staff and participants, and have been initiated without inadequate planning in the way of structure, mentor training and follow-up.
Ensher et al., 2003	CMC can cause miscommunication and is often perceived as a cold medium. In extreme cases, misunderstandings can even turn hostile as the anonymous nature of the medium can promote a lowering of inhibitions. The development of relationships is usually slowed because of the reduction of information exchanged. Those who do not have good written communication skills may nor find this medium useful. Having written records of communications presents ethical challenges.
Harrington, 1999	E-mentoring has to be introduced within the appropriate context. Different media have a different symbolic value, and it may take time to introduce depending on the prevalent attitudes towards CMC.

Higher education institutions across the globe have also embraced the 24/7-access opportunity that e-mentoring promises. Some of the programmes in third-level institutions are generally aimed at improving access to university for underrepresented groups. Having undergraduate mentors to support younger students in secondary education helps newcomers to make more informed choices about their access to university. In other cases, they are designed to increase the chances of retention or successful transition into the labour market of already existing students, pairing them with graduates or industry professionals.

However, focusing specifically on the use of ICT to implement a peer-support programme aimed at facilitating the transitional adjustment of first-year students to university, the experiences narrow down, to our knowledge, to just a few cases. One of these is the initiative of the Department of Psychology at the University of Westminster (Dewart et al., 2004), a peer-mentoring programme implemented in 2002 that connects first-year psychology students by email with third-year students, while assessing improvements in adjustment using a solid research design and sound psychological measures. Also, Daniel Webster College in the USA maintains a discussion list between first-year students and peer supporters, which has been running for a few years during the orientation period. All first-year students receive a letter in their enrolment packet with their user name and password, and some basic information about the virtual learning environment used. The organiser claims that the activity is very high (Marandos, 2005).

Finally, a similar programme that makes use of a virtual learning environment to combine peer-to-peer support with online information, self-evaluation questionnaires to assess perceived adjustment to university and other resources has been recently piloted at the University of Limerick in Ireland (Risquez, 2005). A total of 55 first-year students volunteered to participate and, after signing a participation agreement, were assigned to one of the 34 volunteer mentors according to course of study. The pilot scheme ran for the whole academic year, and in-depth interviews have been conducted to assess the effectiveness of the scheme and inform future decisions on the nature and design of the

mentoring programme. Feedback from interviews reveals that successful interactions tend to happen when:

- trust is built first
- a positive approach is taken, which puts friendship first, rather than focusing on problems
- there is frequent interaction and quick replies
- the coordinator supports the first-year student during the semester
- the first-year student doesn't have other personal support at college.

It is also noticeable that some of the mentors agree to be an additional academic support to help the student to develop skills to cope with particular projects and subjects, even when mentors are not paid. The benefits more frequently reported by first-year students are:

- They felt more confident talking to someone through the internet than face-to-face.
- They liked the idea that there was a support in case of need.
- Most participants have deemed as very useful the discussion with the project coordinator of their adaptation scores in the Student Adaptation to College Questionnaire (SACQ) (Baker and Syrik, 1999).

The benefits for the mentors relate to:

- (in successful interactions) a shift from external motivation (CV) to involvement and satisfaction
- greater perceived competence at helping others.

The main challenges encountered are related to (a) cold relationships and lack of social cues; (b) frequency of replies hindered since there was no email alert; and (c) website confusing or difficult to use. Consequently, we are currently exploring the possibility of changing from a web-based format to an email-based format supported by web-based resources. Also, in this pilot phase the contact rate has been relatively low. According to the feedback facilitated by students, the frequency of the interaction is expected to increase in the coming year by introducing a first face-to-face meeting to help to build trust and serve as 'ice breaking'.

Some directions towards a research agenda

An important issue to note in relation to this emerging field is that the proliferation of e-mentoring programmes has not generally been subjected to sound academic research to the same extent as face-to-face mentoring programmes. As noted by Ensher et al. (2003: 274):

> Although there are virtually no published academic studies to date examining the feasibility or effectiveness of cyberspace as an appropriate context for mentoring, an examination of the plethora of websites connecting mentors and protégés indicates that the practice of online mentoring in thriving.

Also, research agendas have often adopted a comparative perspective in relation to the traditional face-to-face programmes, as in the case of Ensher et al. Yet using a traditional face-to-face arrangement as a referent to measure the effectiveness and

efficacy of electronic mentoring programmes defeats its own purpose. As Harris (in O'Neil et al., 2002: 9) suggests:

> The important issue is not whether e-mentoring is better or worse than face-to-face mentoring, but rather that e-mentoring can bring mentors and protégés together for long in-depth, productive, mutually beneficial interactions when the same can't happen face-to-face.

If organisers come from the belief that e-mentoring is an easy and economical choice that takes away the pain of the administration and monitoring and substitutes appropriate structure with a snazzy website, then a case for a defence of traditional face-to-face mentoring should be made. However, if emphasis is placed on best practice; then e-mentoring should be studied in its own right. Therefore, future research questions should relate to the opportunities and limitations that e-mentoring involves in higher education settings; how to monitor mentoring relationships most effectively; what are the ethical and policy issues involved in keeping electronic records of the interactions; and how to evaluate e-mentoring programmes most effectively. At this early stage, sharing research and practice across institutions and countries is indispensable.

Conclusion

In the current European context of widening participation in higher education and subsequent increased student diversity, the time and space constraints that on-campus support activities involve, overloaded student schedules, distance education, lifestyle pressures, and potential disengagement from traditional learning communities, ICT offers exciting opportunities to develop new support initiatives that complete and reinforce the already existing provisions for support. Without matching timetables and arranging meetings, e-mentors can offer practical advice, encouragement and reassurance, provide information, and promote the use of the university's array of initiatives designed to assist students, while they gain training and experience of mentoring which they can use for the benefit of others. A peer e-mentoring programme at an institutional level offers a very wide range of prospects for expansion and integration with other institutional initiatives and services within the context of an overall institutional strategy on access and progression. But the electronic element in a peer-mentoring programme facilitates increased opportunities for widespread application to the general population of students; and allows taking a respectful and positive view on student support by targeting any first-year students without focusing specifically on students 'at risk'. Turning attention to the entire cohort of first-year students allows the adoption of wider and more flexible conceptions of diversity, which are not always included in the standard definitions of 'disadvantage' and are not obvious from the demographic characteristics of the individuals.

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Positive partnerships: implementation of the Aimhigher HE Coordinated Mentoring Scheme

Rahila Mukhtar

This workshop discussed the implementation of the Aimhigher HE Coordinated Mentoring Scheme and how the scheme was developed across the Birmingham and Solihull area. The National Mentoring Pilot Project (NMPP) had run successfully with Aston University and UCE Birmingham for over five years and served the needs of secondary school pupils at risk of not achieving their full potential. At the end of the NMPP in the summer of 2004 there was widespread support across the city for the creation of a coordinated approach to the provision of student mentors to work in local schools and colleges, and also to open the scheme out to include all the HEIs in the Aimhigher area.

The presentation started with a look at the partnerships that have been developed within the coordinated mentoring project in Birmingham and Solihull. The five HEIs involved are Aston University, the University of Birmingham, UCE Birmingham, Birmingham College of Food, and Newman College of Higher Education. The roles of the HEIs were considered, as it is important that the partners play a key role to ensure sustainability of the project. The five partner HEIs each receive funding to establish and maintain a Mentor Office, to recruit mentors, to organise mentor training, to contribute to the matching process and to organise payment of mentors. The presentation considered the key to establishing effective working relationships and the benefits of partnership working to the HEIs involved.

Role of the mentoring coordinator

This initial presentation was followed by a discussion about the role of the Aimhigher Mentoring Coordinator, which we believe is important to the development of mentoring across the city, and which gives great attention to ensuring the quality of the scheme, with monitoring and evaluation being key to the future. The coordinator provides a central point of contact for all schools and colleges seeking HE mentors, with the aim of considerably simplifying the process for schools and providing a more coherent approach in accessing mentors. The coordinator is also required to develop a mentor training programme and to provide support materials for both partner HEIs and mentors.

Routes to effective partnership

The principal aim of the workshop was to look at the routes which are required to establish effective working relationships and partnerships. The role of the Project Board (which consists of the mentoring coordinator and a representative from each partner HEI) was considered as providing a means to help achieve this. The project group meets every three months and provides an ideal opportunity for staff to share experiences and progress, identify solutions to any issues that may arise, and share good practice. Furthermore the administrative handbook provides support materials to partners and is ongoing and adapted as the project develops and further support needs are identified.

Funding and other issues

The Aimhigher HE Coordinated Mentoring Scheme is funded locally by Aimhigher Birmingham and Solihull and provides schools with carefully selected and trained mentors. The scheme, which has worked with 24 schools and colleges in its first year, provides funds for student travel and 50 per cent of the student salary, with the other 50 per cent coming from individual school and college Aimhigher funds. The workshop discussed how schools and colleges can be encouraged to take part and to make a contribution to half of the mentor salary.

Developing effective working relationships with the schools was identified as the key to embedding student mentoring into the school environment. This also involves taking on board the considerations of schools in the placement of student mentors and the importance of working flexibly when meeting the needs of schools.

The workshop addressed the various issues arising from having a coordinated approach, and the benefits to all involved. Attendees were asked to consider and discuss a variety of possible scenarios and to offer their advice and input in these areas. The presentation was followed by a lively discussion about the central coordination role and how it can assist and support all partners in carrying out their roles more effectively. Attendees also discussed the support needs which would be required from partners who are new to delivering student mentoring programmes, for example advice in the recruitment, retention and support of student mentors.

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A student-led approach to widening access to medicine

Andrew McGregor and Sujo Anathhanam

The Leeds WAMS Scheme and its aims

The Leeds Widening Access to Medical School (WAMS) Scheme is an organisation which was set up in 2002 and is run by medical students at the University of Leeds. We provide a service free of charge to sixth-form students who go to state-run schools which may have less experience of sending students to medical school. There are two equal arms to the scheme: a mentoring programme and a presentations programme. The presentations programme involves delivering a variety of presentations to students in Year 9 and above, while the mentoring programme involves paring sixth-form students with medical student mentors who offer them guidance and support. The mentoring programme was the main focus of our workshop at the conference. Through both the presentations programme and the mentoring programme we hope to increase the number of successful applications of students from a wide range of backgrounds, thus encouraging a breed of doctors who have a greater understanding of the diverse culture in which we now live.

Overview of the mentoring programme

Medical students in their second, third and intercalating years are paired with sixth-form students considering a career in medicine. The programme is aimed at students in Year 12 and mentoring is designed to be a two-year relationship, lasting until the mentee completes the applications process and leaves the sixth form. Mentors supplement any careers advice the mentees may already have access to, offering one-to-one guidance and support on the medical school applications process. This includes factual information and first-hand knowledge about life at university, help obtaining work experience, writing the personal statement, improving interview technique and improving confidence. Mentors are not expected to directly provide academic support to their mentees, although hopefully regular contact with medical students helps raise the students' overall aspirations and therefore raises academic achievement. Mentors do not receive academic accreditation for the work that they do.

In the autumn term of each year, letters and posters are sent out to schools in the Leeds City Council area. Sixth formers can 'self-refer' themselves or teachers can recommend them to the scheme. Meanwhile, a recruitment drive is put in place within the medical school. All medical students wishing to get involved in the scheme attend mentoring training sessions, have a Criminal Records Bureau check and are then paired with sixth formers who have contacted us. Although there are usually more medical students than sixth formers expressing interest, there is currently no selection of medical students. Medical students who are not paired up are put on a waiting list. Same-sex pairing is aimed for but not always achieved.

The scheme is constantly evolving and in September 2004 we established a partnership with The Brightside Trust. Mentors and mentees paired in 2004/5 are expected to communicate with each other via the Brightside Trust's Bright Journals website, rather than by email as in the past. Here they can log on and interact via online journals. The main advantage of the Brightside Trust's e-mentoring scheme over email mentoring is

that it enables monitoring of contact between mentors and mentees and so allows us to keep track of relationships (see www.brightjournals.com for more details and the advantages of using this platform for e-mentoring). Mentors are encouraged to meet their mentees at least once a term, and more often during the interview period. As well as the initial mentoring training session, mentors are invited to attend a website training session. The mentees are also invited to this training session to learn how to use the website and meet their mentor.

Audit of the scheme

It is very difficult to evaluate the effectiveness of the work we do as it is difficult to define success. There are also no suitable control groups. However, we are currently undertaking an extensive audit of the mentoring scheme since it was set up in 2002 until June 2005. From March to June 2005, questionnaires were sent to all the medical students who have mentored for the scheme in the past three years. We received 71 completed questionnaires out of a possible 84 (85 per cent response rate). The questionnaires attempt to ascertain:

- the demography of the mentors
- the extent, duration and frequency of mentor–mentee contact
- how mentees fared in the applications process
- mentors' motivations for joining the scheme, their opinions of the scheme and whether they enjoyed mentoring

Preliminary results include the following:

- The scheme has helped 81 mentees since it was set up (i.e. 71 mentors have mentored 81 mentees – so some medical students have mentored more than one mentee).

- Of the 71 respondents, 67 mentors (94 per cent) enjoyed their experience of mentoring.

- Of the 71 respondents, 60 mentors (85 per cent) felt they would have benefited from a similar scheme when they were at school.

- Of the 22 mentees paired with medical student mentors in the academic year 2002/3, 6 mentees (27 per cent) were known to successfully enter medical school.

Full results of this audit will be available in a few months' time.

A voluntary, student-led scheme

One of the major issues that we raised at the workshop was that, although the scheme gains support from the School of Medicine, it is run entirely voluntarily by a committee of approximately 18 medical students in various years of the course. Mentors and presenters are not paid, although they are reimbursed for travel expenses. Medical students at the University of Leeds have a lot of enthusiasm for these activities and we rarely have any trouble recruiting volunteers (in fact, most of the time we need to turn people away). Enhancing the curriculum vitae is an obvious advantage to being involved with the scheme, but we feel that students do it because they genuinely want to help. The work can be rewarding, is a good way of meeting other people and helps students

gain many of the transferable skills needed to be a doctor. Therefore the issue of paying mentors, presenters or committee members has never been brought up as we feel it is unnecessary and also because it may change the nature of the scheme.

Because involvement with the WAMS scheme is voluntary, our running costs are minimal (they are covered by the School of Medicine). The main resource expended is our time. Medical student enthusiasm for the scheme is only increasing and we are unaffected by the problem of money running out, which many other schemes face.

There are several advantages of the scheme being student-led. Most committee members have delivered our presentations and are either current mentors or have been mentors in the past. We can therefore relate well to mentors and presenters. Moreover, being medical students ourselves, we personally know some of the mentors and presenters and so are easily accessible and approachable if problems arise. Aside from the medical student mentors and presenters, we are also able to relate well to the needs of the school students we are accessing as we are not that much older than them and we ourselves all recently completed the applications process successfully.

The main practical difficulty we face is administration. Because we all have full-time challenging degrees to contend with, the tasks of carrying out CRB checks, monitoring contact and keeping records up to date often become extremely time-consuming.

Overall, a student-led scheme has its disadvantages as does any mentoring scheme; however it does have its advantages. It is our dedicated mentors and the results that we gain that keep us going.

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ASDAN – Aimhigher: developing more autonomous learners

Dave Brockington

This workshop introduced the design features of the ASDAN (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network) Aimhigher National Project and focused on practical ways in which it might link up with the National Mentoring Scheme at a local level to the greater benefit of learners in schools and colleges. An example of this is that the Certificate of Personal Effectiveness (CoPE), which is an ASDAN Aimhigher vehicle for developing more autonomous learners at the same time as raising attainment for widening participation target groups, includes undertaking an extended research project as a specified learning outcome. If undergraduate student mentors could assist learners in schools/colleges around the country to complete their extended research project (the extended project/personal challenge envisaged by the Tomlinson Report) as part of the CoPE this would help them in developing research and study skills for progression to higher education. The two Aimhigher national projects have agreed to share information to help facilitate the possible deployment of student mentors in the future.

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Training Mentors and E-Mentors to Work with Young People in School

Zoë Pither

This workshop covered a broad range of issues relating to the training of mentors. The focus was on preparing Higher Education students to mentor young people in a school environment, although some other models of mentoring were also discussed. Both face-to-face and e-mentoring models were explored, with attention paid to the important similarities and differences in training for these different roles. The focus of the presentation was largely practical, looking at what topics to cover and how to carry out training.

Training topics
The presenter began by talking about the topics that mentor training should cover. These were broken down into three levels of importance: essential – the basic topics which must be covered with mentors for legal reasons or in order for them to understand where their role fits in an organisation; desirable, including topics which help mentors to develop a better understanding of the mentoring role, and added extras which are topics or skills which might further enhance a mentors understanding and ability to carry out their role, but are more about enhancing skills and understanding that they already have to some degree, rather than introducing essential new knowledge.

Essential topics
A number of essential topics were identified, which mentors must be briefed in before they can start work with young people. For both face-to-face and e-mentoring these include: aims and objectives of the scheme; what support systems are available to mentors; child protection, including what constitutes abuse and what action to take if they suspect abuse or are the recipient of a disclosure of abuse; confidentiality, ethics and boundaries, ensuring that mentors know what is appropriate to their role, when they must pass on information and what aspects of their work must remain confidential; health & safety, making sure mentors understand their obligations and know what action to take in cases of risk or hazard in the school environment. In addition to the above topics e-mentors need to have training in how to use the specific website or software package that will be used to facilitate the mentoring relationship.

Desirable topics
The topics in the next category are all intended to help mentors understand and manage their role. By developing mentors understanding of their own role in the mentoring relationship we enable them to be more effective and ensure that they are better able to support their mentees. This category includes: understanding the mentoring lifecycle and how the relationship will develop over time; acknowledging the ways in which a mentor is likely offer and provide help, and the type of skills they are likely to employ; techniques to manage difficult situations and behaviour and techniques for managing both individual meetings or communications and managing the relationship over time.

Added extras
This is perhaps the largest (possibly inexhaustible) category as it covers development of skills areas which mentors might employ in the course of their work. Often these are skills that mentors already have, but training could develop further e.g. revision and

planning skills. In other cases they cover areas that mentors might have some implicit understanding of, but where training in particular theories can hone their understanding and ability to respond to their mentees. This might include areas such as theories of motivation or learning styles.

It is always important in training mentors to strike a balance between equipping them with skills and knowledge to enhance their performance, and recognising (and encouraging them to recognise) the high level of relevant skills they already have. If the process of selecting mentors is effective then they will come to the role with a wealth of personal qualities and skills which they can employ in the mentoring relationship and the training process should ideally encourage them to explore and use these skills.

Training delivery
The methods of delivery should include some variation and be appropriate for the audience. Student mentors often respond well to interactive activities such as case studies, brainstorming and role-playing. Key points to look out for when planning training delivery include catering for different learning styles (e.g. Activists will benefit from taking part in role play, Reflectors will benefit more from observing others taking part in role play) accommodating special needs, including specific learning difficulties (e.g. large print handouts for mentors with visual impairment etc.)

Making the training interactive also allows trainers to create a training environment that challenges mentors' pre-conceptions and judgements about their role and the young people they work with. This also allows the trainer to monitor how well mentors are responding to the training and be aware of any areas of concern.

There was some discussion over whether the same training methods would be appropriate for mentors drawn from professional backgrounds, as opposed to undergraduates. Training for these groups is often limited to a very short time due to work commitments. On the whole it was felt that a different approach might be needed for these mentors, although some of the same topics would need to be covered. One suggestion was that mentors could be supplied with some pre-course reading to prepare them and make them aware of relevant issues. The training session itself could then begin with a review activity, to ensure that everyone had completed the reading and learnt from it.

Mentoring & e-mentoring
Broadly speaking it was felt that mentoring and e-mentoring have more common ground when it comes to training, than they do differences. However there are some important differences in terms of communication, such as lack of immediacy, facial expression and body language. It is important that mentors think about these differences and about how they will handle them, at the training stage, so they can discuss ideas and share good practice with one another.

Resources
The session ended by sharing and discussing some of the resources used by the speaker to train mentors and e-mentors.

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APPENDIX 1: CONFERENCE PROGRAMME

MENTORING AND HIGHER EDUCATION
AIMHIGHER NATIONAL MENTORING SCHEME
ANNUAL CONFERENCE

STRATFORD MOATHOUSE, STRATFORD-UPON-AVON
15–16 JUNE 2005

Wednesday 15 June

11.15   **Welcome and introduction to HE MentorNet**
Helen O'Donnell, Middlesex University

11.30   **Mentoring research, Aimhigher and higher education**
Professor Andrew Miller, Middlesex University

12.15   **How mentoring can raise achievement**
Alan Evans, Cardiff University

14.15   **Workshops 1:** a choice of workshops on conference themes

15.45   **Workshops 2:** a choice of workshops on conference themes

16.45   **Mentoring, citizenship and community-based learning**
Professor John Annette, Birkbeck College, University of London

17.30   **Networking opportunity and registration on HE MentorNet website**

19.00   **Conference reception and dinner**

Thursday 16 June

9.15   **Developments in mentoring: theory and practice**
Professor David Clutterbuck, Sheffield Hallam University

10.15   **Evaluating Aimhigher mentoring and e-mentoring: towards a national strategy**
Professor Andrew Miller and Catherine Drury, Middlesex University

11.30   **Workshops 3:** a choice of workshops on conference themes

13.30   **Workshops 4:** a choice of workshops on conference themes

14.30   **Closing plenary: Mentoring: the way forward**

15.00   **Close**

APPENDIX 2: SCHEDULE OF WORKSHOPS

Wednesday 15 June

Workshops 1	Workshops 2
Ensuring quality standards through accredited mentoring courses **Jill Cochrane and Chris Jones** University of Hertfordshire	***Design, implementation and preliminary results of a pilot e-peer mentoring programme in the Republic of Ireland*** **Angelica Risquez** University of Limerick
Establishing, sustaining and, evaluating a volunteer mentoring scheme **Bronwyn Murphy** London South Bank University **Roger Hiskey** Aylwin Girls' School, London	***Positive partnerships: implementation of the Aimhigher coordinated mentoring scheme*** **Rahila Mukhtar** Aimhigher Birmingham and Solihull
Tutoring and mentoring by undergraduates for academic credit **Gillian Mabbitt** University of Newcastle-upon-Tyne	***Measuring impact: is it working?*** **Karl Devincenzi and Alex Austerberry** University of Exeter
	Training mentors and e-mentors **Zoe Pither** University of Bristol
Good practice in development of student 2 student mentoring schemes in higher education **Daphne Hampton** University of the Arts, London	***Asdan – Aimhigher: developing more autonomous learners*** **Dave Brockington** Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network (ASDAN)

Thursday 16 June

Workshops 3	Workshops 4
From institutional face-to-face mentoring to Aimhigher 'mixed-mode' mentoring and beyond **Vanessa Fitzgerald and Jayne Stanyer** University of Plymouth	*The e-mentoring project lifecycle: sharing the positives and anticipating the pitfalls.* **Sarah Davies and Nancy Campbell** The Brightside Trust
Where does the future lie for mentoring? **Jane Wardman** Aimhigher Leeds	*Developing good mentoring models in South Yorkshire* **Annette Sundaraj** Sheffield Hallam University
Supporting and encouraging those with disabilities into higher education **Jill Cochrane** University of Hertfordshire	*Mentoring for work-based learning: a tale of two cities?* **Julie Farmer** Train of Thought
Doing the viva! **Andrew Miller and Catherine Drury** Middlesex University	*A student-led approach to widening access to medicine* **Andrew McGregor and Sujo Anathhanam** School of Medicine, University of Leeds

APPENDIX 3: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

** Speaker

* Workshop presenter

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John Annette**	Dean of the Faculty of Continuing Education, Birkbeck College, University of London
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Alex Austenberry*	Student Mentor, University of Exeter
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Richard Bicknell	Graduate Intern, Aimhigher Berkshire, University of Reading
Susan Bray	Careers Officer, University of Gloucestershire
Kay Bridger	Widening Participation Officer, Loughborough University
Dave Brockington*	Strategic Advisor, ASDAN
Nancy Campbell*	Web Editor, The Brightside Trust
Daniel Cave	Technology Learning Mentor, City Technology Campus, Birmingham
Shelagh Chapman	Community Volunteer Coordinator, University of Lincoln
Jo Clements	Volunteer Administrator, Bath University Students Union
Matt Clulee	Outreach Coordinator, University College Worcester
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Pam Cotterill	Principal Lecturer, Staffordshire University
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Hannah Hyam	Conference Reporter (freelance)
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Jacqui Waterhouse	Volunteer Coordinator, ICDL, Middlesex University
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