

Review of Frith, Louise, May, Gina and Pockington, Amanda (2017) *The Student's Guide to Peer Mentoring*, London, Palgrave, Pp117*

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The authors clearly state the purpose of the short book in the introduction – ‘*This book is aimed primarily at peer mentors in higher education settings. It will provide you with a context and a framework for mentoring and give you specific guidance ...*’ It then proceeds to deliver on what is promised.

The initial chapter provides a helpful set of definitions of the various types of peer mentoring programmes and the roles of the peer mentor in each of these. This is followed by chapters which deal with various aspects of the topic, for example the role of the peer mentor, reasons for becoming a mentor and the characteristics required for success. In each chapter there are activities which help peer mentors (or potential ones) to explore both their own ideas and also give advice on the sort of information which they need to acquire to make their work successful.

The book provides clear encouragement for people who are doubtful about the role of mentor, suggesting that, with training many of the required characteristics and skills may be learned or more fully developed.

A helpful stress is placed upon boundaries which should be maintained by mentors and mentees and also to dealing with issues which may arise. One minor point of concern is the format provided for a ‘Mentoring Agreement’ (p.69) in which both mentor and mentee agree to ‘keep all discussions from within the mentoring relationship confidential’. However, most (if not all) institutions have a requirement that, while confidentiality should be maintained in

* Reflection. URL: <http://ojs.aishe.org/index.php/aishe-j/article/view/303>



general, that this is not inviolable, for example where it is revealed that one party intends self-harm or harm of another person.

This book is a most useful guide to the whole process and people who worked through it would certainly find it of benefit for their mentoring experience. While it is not a training course, it would certainly work well when used by a group of mentors together. This would be particularly good as no definitive answers are supplied for the scenarios used (a sensible decision) but discussion between individuals would be likely to be beneficial when considering responses.