

PECULIARITIES OF TUTORING AND MENTORING REALIZATION AT HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS OF AUSTRIA

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The article describes peculiarities of the tutoring and mentoring realization at higher educational institutions of Austria. Practical cases of the tutoring and mentoring realization at Austrian HEIs are outlined. The comparative analysis of tutoring and mentoring functioning at different Austrian universities is provided. Types and forms of tutoring and mentoring at the Austrian HEIs are described. The positive impact of tutoring and mentoring as additional support of students at HEIs is substantiated.

It has been proven that the Austrian higher education policy is directed on the increase of academic success, providing equal opportunities for everyone, transparency, creating comfortable conditions for study. Measures are taken to improve quality and accessibility of information materials as well as to increase compatibility with other areas of life. Important innovations are the results of many reforms. Austrian universities pay much attention to quality of teaching and learning, internationalization strategy development, digital literacy and social inclusion.

It is emphasized that tutoring and mentoring schemes are especially widespread at technical universities and within engineering specialties. At the same time, tutoring and mentoring schemes for first semester students, for foreign students, for students with disabilities, for students who work on individual projects are equally needed and used at technical and classical universities and at different specialties.

It is noted that within the strategic planning framework for public universities, the Austrian National Development Plan helps to regulate the higher education system in Austria. As the universities create a knowledge-based society they are among key strategic institutions. There is focus on quality as well as the creation of proper conditions for lifelong learning. Promotion of students and tutors mobility makes a significant contribution to internationalization.

There are also good options to support young researchers during their PhD at TU Wien. They may practice during the workshops 4 workshops scientific writing, time and self-management, possibilities for career planning and opportunities after their PhD graduation.

ОСОБЛИВОСТІ ЗДІЙСНЕННЯ ТЬЮТОРСТВА ТА МЕНТОРСТВА В ЗАКЛАДАХ ВИЩОЇ ОСВІТИ АВСТРІЇ

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Ключові слова: *тьюторство,
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У статті описано особливості реалізації тьюторства та менторства в закладах вищої освіти Австрії. Окреслено практичні кейси реалізації тьюторства та менторства в австрійських ЗВО. Проведено порівняльний аналіз функціонування тьюторства та менторства в різних австрійських університетах. Охарактеризовано види й форми тьюторства та менторства у ЗВО Австрії, обґрунтовано їх позитивний вплив як додаткової підтримки студентів у ЗВО.

Доведено, що політика вищої освіти Австрії спрямована на підвищення академічної успішності, забезпечення рівних можливостей для всіх, прозорість, створення комфортних умов для навчання. Вживаються заходи для підвищення якості та доступності інформаційних матеріалів, а також підвищення сумісності з іншими сферами життя. Важливі нововведення є результатом багатьох реформ. Австрійські університети приділяють велику увагу якості викладання та навчання, розробленню стратегії інтернаціоналізації, цифровій грамотності та соціальній інтеграції.

Акцентовано увагу на тому, що схеми тьюторства та менторства особливо поширені в технічних університетах, зокрема на інженерних спеціальностях. Водночас схеми тьюторства та менторства для здобувачів освіти першого семестру, для іноземних студентів, для здобувачів з обмеженими можливостями, для студентів, які працюють над індивідуальними проектами, однаково потрібні та використовуються в технічних та класичних університетах і на різних спеціальностях.

Зазначено, що в межах стратегічного планування державних університетів Австрійський національний план розвитку допомагає регулювати систему вищої освіти в Австрії. Оскільки університети створюють суспільство, засноване на знаннях, вони є одними з ключових стратегічних інститутів. Основна увага приділяється як якості, так і створенню належних умов для навчання впродовж життя. Сприяння мобільності здобувачів вищої освіти і викладачів робить значний внесок в інтернаціоналізацію.

Існують також ефективні варіанти підтримки молодих дослідників під час отримання докторської освіти у TU Wien. Вони можуть практикувати 4 семінари з наукового письма, часу та самоуправління, можливостей для планування кар'єри і можливостей після закінчення аспірантури.

Statement of the problem. Austrian universities are among best universities not only in Europe but in the whole world. The practice of additional assistance for students during their studies at Higher Educational Establishments in Austria is popular for many years. Tutoring and mentoring schemes are especially widespread at technical universities and within engineering specialties. At the same time, tutoring and mentoring schemes for first semester students, for foreign students, for students with dis-

abilities, for students who work on individual projects are equally needed and used at technical and classical universities and at different specialties. The challenges which appeared in higher education during recent years require more friendly support from students peers as well as professional guidance from the specialists in different areas.

Analysis of research and publications. The issue of the specifics of tutoring and mentoring in higher education institutions in Austria was studied by

such scholars as: E. Haas, P. Hudson, S. Hudson, B. Leidenfrost, B. Strassnig, M. Schütz, C. Carbon, A. Schabmann.

In particular, an analysis of the mentoring practices of Austrian teachers in schools was conducted, and the impact of peer mentoring on the academic performance of the mentee was investigated.

In-depth research is required on issues related to the policy of higher education in Austria, which is aimed at increasing academic performance, ensuring equal opportunities for all, transparency, and creating comfortable conditions for learning.

Purpose of the article. The aim of the article is to analyze the peculiarities of the tutoring and mentoring realization at the Austrian universities.

Presentation of the main material. Within the strategic planning framework for public universities, the Austrian National Development Plan helps to regulate the higher education system in Austria. As the universities create a knowledge-based society they are among key strategic institutions. There is focus on quality as well as the creation of proper conditions for lifelong learning. Promotion of students and tutors mobility makes a significant contribution to internationalization [1]. The Austrian higher education policy is also directed on the increase of academic success and providing equal opportunities for everyone. Transparency, providing comfortable conditions for the education obtaining for students with disabilities belong to the important directions in the Austrian higher education. It should be also mentioned that the Bologna process ideas have been implementing for years in Austria. Measures are taken to improve quality and accessibility of information materials as well as to increase compatibility with other areas of life [5]. There were many reforms which introduced important innovations. There are public universities, universities of applied sciences, private universities and university colleges for teacher education in Austria [6]. Students are encouraged to improve their organizational skills and personal responsibility, while obtaining information independently etc. Austrian universities pay much attention to quality of teaching and learning, internationalization strategy development, digital literacy and social inclusion [7].

While analyzing the tutoring and mentoring practices at different Austrian HEIs there are something in common and many differences at the same time. Among the common issues is quality control and freedom of choice provided for students. There are demands and criteria for tutors and mentors selection which may differ depending on the university. The same is about the responsibilities and tasks. For example, at Vienna University of Technology the mentoring sessions are planned in the following way: at the semester start it is necessary to focus on getting to know the group, therefore introductory

games as well as group activities are organized; to introduce new students to the university environment, help them to overcome feelings of loneliness and helplessness; there is support of mentees during the semester, including help with projects and exams; activities to strengthen social ties within the group including group games and experiences sharing; and at the end of the semester there is need to focus on ending the semester and planning next steps, there are group meetings with activities, for example, going to parks or restaurants, hiking trips etc., inviting Masters and PhD-students to discussions, and if desired to establish connection outside of the mentoring program [10].

It is very important to establish clear rules at the beginning, therefore there should be clear communication inside the group, is it possible or not to be absent from group meetings, for example. It is also needed to set milestones and communicate goals with mentees, including long-term and short-term goals. The atmosphere is very important, mentees may choose which topics they want to talk about, they should be also aware that it is ok to ask any questions. Clear guidelines should be developed for the mentoring program and group meetings. Mentees should be aware of the importance for group rules [10].

There are also good options to support young researchers during their PhD at TU Wien. They may practice during the workshops 4 workshops scientific writing, time and self-management, possibilities for career planning and opportunities after their PhD graduation. Different activities are organized during summer semester and winter semester. The target group includes PhD researchers/ PhD Students, University assistants, projects assistants etc. Psychological support is provided for all types of students, including PhD students. They could have up to three 50-minutes sessions after addressing to the contact point. Individual counselling meetings help to deal with mental health issues, different forms of crisis, anxiety about exams or graduation, depression etc. [10].

While talking about mentoring for the first-year students, usually there is one mentor who works with 15/20 mentees. There are minimum seven meetings, which can be visited by mentees who applied for the programme. External experts are invited within the programme to teach mentors how to teach. They are paid from the University budget. Concerning number of mentors, approximately 40 mentors apply and 24 are selected. During the interview there are approximately 12–13 questions, mentors are asked – what do you plan to do as a mentor, which experience do you have etc. There are different benefits for mentors: besides, 3 ECTS credits mentors also receive certificates from the Vice-Rector, it is very prestigious. In order to become a mentor students apply via the platform, after they choose a direction of study

and provide their CVs as well as motivation letters. Within “GESTU and barrier-free studying” – the right to study for everyone is realized, students may apply to the programme when they want [10].

It is important to mention about the young teachers mentoring which is provided within the 16 hours course on the didactic basics. There is team which consists of 3 people and the program management is responsible for the selection of mentees and mentors [10].

It is worth mentioning that the University provides career coaching for postdocs within which the regular guidance is organized as well as coaching meetings where it is possible to discuss current problems and develop solution strategies. Within the peer group counselling postdocs are provided with the information on negotiation strategies, application issues and career planning. There is also separate type of mentoring, which is career mentoring for female postdocs within which there is formulation of professional goals, support in their achievement, strengthening professional self-confidence, informing on the scientific community structure etc. [10].

Within the students mobilities possibilities, especially during the realization of the Erasmus program, there is additional support to students. For example, there is a buddynetwork which is responsible for social integration of the incoming exchange students. There is also TANDEM language learning when two students are learning from each other and when local students are connected with exchange students. This idea provides the students with the possibility to learn interesting facts about different cultures [10].

There is a difference between mentors and tutors. If students have problems in understanding the course material they should address tutors with this issue [10].

Usually, Austrian universities provide separate spaces for the tutors and mentors interaction as well as the preparation to the tutorials. Besides, there is information on future trainings for tutors, like basic training, training on intercultural communication etc. [9].

Taking care of the first year students is very important at Austrian universities, therefore the tutoring and mentoring is applied as soon as students start their education at higher educational establishments. For exam-

ple, at the Johannes Kepler University Linz [3] first year students are advised individually by the university professors. Some professors serve as contact persons and help students on solving their problems, they perform the role of mentors for students. At the same time, there are senior students-tutors who guide first-year students during first weeks of study. There is one tutor for each students group who helps with the selection of courses, provides practical recommendations on lectures, how to prepare for them etc. Every tutoring groups is also assigned a mentor, one of the professors, who will work with students during a year.

Some other challenges that may occur during the first year of study are related to the incorrect expectations about university life as students should build new social networks and adjust to new requirements. First-year seminars and mentoring programs have positive effects including academic performance, reduced drop-out rates and better social integration. Mostly two types of mentoring are the most popular: career-related mentoring and psychological mentoring [4].

There is a common practice when mentoring is applied to young teachers who cooperate with more experienced professional with whom they work on pedagogical practices and better understanding of teacher's role [2].

Conclusions. The Austrian higher education policy is directed on the increase of academic success, providing equal opportunities for everyone, transparency, creating comfortable conditions for study. Measures are taken to improve quality and accessibility of information materials as well as to increase compatibility with other areas of life. Important innovations are the results of many reforms. Austrian universities pay much attention to quality of teaching and learning, internationalization strategy development, digital literacy and social inclusion. Tutoring and mentoring schemes are especially widespread at technical universities and within engineering specialties. At the same time, tutoring and mentoring schemes for first semester students, for foreign students, for students with disabilities, for students who work on individual projects are equally needed and used at technical and classical universities and at different specialties.

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