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**Original Citation**

Smith, Vicki J (2011) It's the relationship that matters: a qualitative analysis of the role of the student/tutor relationship in counselling training. Counselling Psychology Quarterly, 24 (3). pp. 233-246. ISSN 0951-5070

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**Title** It's the relationship that matters: a qualitative analysis of the role of the student / tutor relationship in counselling training.


## Abstract

This study comprised a qualitative analysis of the role of student / tutor relationships in counselling training. Two focus groups comprising students on a UK postgraduate diploma in counselling were undertaken and the findings analysed using template analysis. The findings indicated that these relationships have a strong impact on the effectiveness of the learning experience. Students identified a number of valued relational

features, with the creation of a safe, supportive learning environment being regarded as of crucial importance. The results suggested that students needed to feel sufficiently comfortable with, and trusting of, tutors if they were to take the kind of interpersonal risks that are necessary in this type of experiential, skills- based training. Students experienced higher levels of negative affect and, by implication, stress if tutors were unsuccessful in providing sufficient levels of safety and support, particularly in the latter stages of training. Strong links were found between the relational concepts students valued in tutors and those previously identified as important in client / therapist and supervisory relationships (Rogers, 1957; Jones et al 2008). Implications for counselling training and suggestions for future research were discussed.

**Keywords:** student/ tutor relationship, relational features, safe, learning

**Title** It's the relationship that matters: a qualitative analysis of the role of the student / tutor relationship in counselling training.

## Introduction

Anecdotally it is common to hear how a positive interpersonal relationship with a teacher or tutor had a profound effect on a person's enjoyment of a particular school or college subject and perhaps also on his or her mastery of it. This paper focuses on the student / tutor relationship in counselling training and the impact of the quality of this relationship on student learning. There is a wealth of research demonstrating the importance of the student / teacher relationship in effective teaching and learning. (Lowman, 1995; Teven

and Hanson, 2004; Benson et al 2009). The initial focus here is on this literature, as there is far less available which concentrates on the impact of student /tutor relationships on the learning experience of mental health trainees.

In terms of the influence of pupil / teacher relationships on learning, Martin and Dowson (2009) maintain that:

"Relatedness in the academic domain teaches students the beliefs, orientations, and values needed to function effectively in academic environments. In turn, these beliefs (if positive and adaptive) direct behaviour in the form of enhanced persistence, goal- striving and self- regulation." (p329)

Research studies have identified certain teacher skills, behaviours and qualities which either students or tutors (or both) perceive as increasing student pro-academic behaviours. The literature on the positive effects of immediacy behaviours (such as smiling, eye contact, calling students by name and showing an interest in them) is well established (Anderson, 1979; Teven and Hanson, 2004 ). Teven and Hanson (2004) found that teacher credibility was linked to non verbal immediacy and using "explicit verbally caring messages directed towards their students." (p50) Bainbridge, Frymier and Houser (2000) found that referential skill (the ability to present information clearly), ego support (being able to make others feel good about themselves) and conflict management (the ability to resolve disagreements) were the most important factors for effective teaching. Lowman (1995) conceived of the two main aspects of effective teaching as intellectual excitement and interpersonal rapport. Teachers demonstrating the latter know who their

students are, and are able to demonstrate “caring about them and their learning a great deal.” (Lowman, 1995: 29). Benson et al (2009) found that the most frequently reported teacher qualities resulting in rapport with students included open-mindedness, accessibility, approachability, concern for students and fairness. (Definitions for these terms can be found in Buskist et al 2002). While this research is clearly of relevance to this study, much of it relates to pupils in compulsory education or undergraduates in higher education rather than, as is the focus of this research, people undertaking professional training in a mental health profession. Certainly it is not necessarily possible to generalise the results to a completely different setting, which indicates the need for this particular study.

The other fields of research which are relevant to this study are those of the therapeutic alliance (“the quality and strength of the collaborative relationship between client and therapist” Horvath and Bedi, 2002 : 41 cited in Cooper, 2008) and the supervisory alliance (the collaborative relationship between a supervisor and a supervisee, usually in the mental health field). Jones et al (2008) highlighted the importance of both the therapeutic alliance and the supervisory alliance as contributors to the change process in therapy and supervision respectively. Indeed, Cooper (2008), who has identified over 4000 papers and dissertations written on the therapeutic alliance in the last thirty years, concluded that the therapeutic alliance accounts for about 5% of the variance in overall therapeutic outcomes, which is one of four ‘demonstrably effective’ elements of the therapeutic relationship (Steering Committee, 2002 cited in Cooper 2008). Certainly the importance of this alliance is now commonly accepted in the counselling and

psychotherapy professions. Literature also supports the concept that the supervisory alliance is central to the effectiveness of supervision (Holloway, 1995; Ladany, Ellis & Friedlander, 1999 cited in Jones et al 2008) with a few studies focusing on the impact of this relationship on psychotherapy trainees. (Worthen & McNeill, 1996; Nelson & Friedlander, 2001).

However the number of studies examining the link between the student/ tutor alliance and effective mental health training is very limited. Jones at al (2008) suggested that, just as the client / therapist relationship and the supervisory alliance affect the change process in their respective domains, it is a reasonable hypothesis that the student/tutor relationship will impact on learning in mental health training courses. In their study Jones at al devised and tested their Teaching Alliance Inventory on clinical and counselling psychology trainees. This inventory aimed to measure aspects of the student / tutor relationship and certain tutor pedagogical skills. Their research suggested that a belief in the tutor's ability to manage interpersonal issues is related to students' perceived learning on these training programmes. These findings are supported by a limited number of other studies on the subject (Dobinson-Harrington 2006**;** Salahuddin, 2000) which also suggested that the student / tutor relationship does have an impact on the effectiveness of the training, at least from the student perspective. However, research has tended to focus on the supervisory relationship in counselling and psychotherapy training courses (Gazzola & Theriault 2007**;** Gray et al 2001**;** Nelson & Friedlander 2001), rather than examining the student/ tutor relationships in courses as a whole. While the supervisory relationship forms a crucial part of the learning process on this type of course, there are

other relational bonds formed between tutors and students which may be of equal importance. This present study aims to contribute to this area of research at a time when the pressures on higher education are great, and course retention and outcomes are becoming more and more heavily scrutinised.

Training in the mental health professions entails not only learning facts and theoretical concepts, but also the application of those concepts to real life situations as well as the acquisition and application of skills and reflexive abilities. Schon (1983) describes this complex combination of skills and knowledge as "knowing in action." Students on counselling training courses engage in a wide range of training activities, including development of skills through practising on peers, critically observing others (including use of modelling), self- reflection and personal development, obtaining feedback and supervision of client work. As a result, students need to be prepared to 'put themselves on the line' and to be able to accept negative as well as positive feedback. It could be argued, therefore, that the relationships between students and tutors are of even greater importance than on more academically- based courses where 'self exposure' is less of a requirement for success.

## Research questions

The focus of this study was two fold. Firstly to investigate which particular features of their relationships with tutors counselling trainees valued, and secondly to ascertain the extent to which students perceived a connection between the quality of their relationships with tutors and the quality of the learning experience.

## Method

Volunteers were sought from a UK University to participate in a research study. Written information about the purpose and focus of the study was distributed to two student groups as part of the recruitment process. Those agreeing to take part were sent a list of the key questions which would form the basis of the discussion. Ethical approval was obtained from the University of Huddersfield Ethics Committee prior to undertaking the research. Consent forms were completed by all students.

Fifteen students on a two year part-time postgraduate counselling training course were interviewed in two focus groups comprising eight (first year) and seven (second year) students. All participants were women, although a relatively small percentage of the total student group were men (24% in year one and 9% in year two). Ages ranged between twenty one and sixty one, with most students being between 35 and 54. Ethnic backgrounds were mixed, with nine students being white and six being from an ethnic minority.

Both sessions (one lasting thirty minutes and the other fifty minutes) were recorded and transcribed, with names being changed to ensure anonymity. The discussion focused around the following areas:

- Positive and negative features of relationships generally
- Positive and negative features of relationships with tutors

- The extent to which positive relationships with tutors are important for learning
- The ways in which relationships with tutors affect learning
- Aspects of the course where positive relationships might be particularly important.

## Data Analysis

A qualitative analysis of the focus group transcripts was undertaken using template analysis (King 2004**).** This particular approach was chosen for three main reasons: it is a flexible approach which can be tailored to the requirements of the researcher, who, in this case, was adopting a phenomenological perspective (King 2004); it lends itself to the use of some a priori codes and it provides a clear structure without being too rigid and prescriptive.

It was decided, as is appropriate to much qualitative analysis, not to place great importance on the prevalence of a theme in the data set, but rather to decide on whether it captures something of importance to the overall research question, assuming it occurs at least once in a data item (Braun and Clarke 2006) and at least once across the data set.

The transcript (see Appendix 1) was initially coded using descriptive codes, which were then grouped into themes. The template was developed by further refining these themes a number of times in order to produce a final template which was sufficiently succinct to be useable, yet sufficiently detailed to provide a rich understanding of the original data and

the emergent themes. The template was quality checked by another researcher to provide a level of quality assurance.

## Findings

### (1) Features of relationships with tutors

### Acceptance, affirmation, encouragement and support

Perhaps unsurprisingly, students regarded "being accepted as me," "(being) accepted on my culture, my views and stuff like that, not to be judged" and "allowing you to have an opinion" as important in relationships generally.

Being accepted by tutors figured prominently, with one student making the connection between a good relationship and "their acceptance of me." Linked to this, acceptance of students' ideas was seen as important:

"For me it's about having that confidence that if I present something, or an idea, or question or whatever to a tutor, that it isn't going to be disregarded because it isn't their thing."

Often expressed as a feature which stood in direct opposition to an accepting approach, students strongly disliked feeling judged by tutors:

"You feel that if you said something they didn't agree with, you'd be immediately judged."

The importance of "being validated by the tutor" and being able "to throw out ideas and they be welcomed" were highlighted. In the context of giving constructive feedback, tutors were regarded as "affirming." "It's about bringing out the best in people, and presumably that's what they want from this course, they want to bring out the best in all of us and I think there are some tutors who seem to do that more easily and effectively than others."

Tutor supportiveness was highlighted: "It's important to feel supported …by the tutor," while one student raised the issue of what constituted an appropriate level of support:

"The tutors have sort of had a hand holding role in the course, but I don't feel in any way when I finish this course that I'm going to feel unheld because I've been so held. So in a way the support has been right, because I'm not frightened of it not being there."

Students made the link between feeling accepted and encouraged and participating fully with one stating that she would not want to contribute "if you feel that your tutor is someone who's just going to bat away any (new ideas), that come from an area they disagree with." Similarly if a tutor was too challenging: "He was talking the most and was very challenging," students struggled to "say very much at all."

**Openness, genuineness and self-disclosure**

Students saw openness as important both in relationships in general and in student / tutor relationships. For them this meant "congruence," being "quite genuine," and being "real with one another." Another important aspect for them was "not (being) afraid to address issues." This sense of openness was seen as crucial in terms of encouraging student participation. Tutors who had "an agenda" or who did not provide opportunities to discuss "what we think about what's going on in the group" were regarded negatively. One student identified a situation which she thought needed to be discussed ("there was a massive elephant in the room"), but "everyone felt uncomfortable and nobody was able to say anything about it."

Students also appreciated tutors who were willing to self - disclose by, for example, using "themselves as examples," "sharing their views with humility" and who were willing to be "vulnerable" in their work with students.

**Empathy**

Empathy, in the form of an understanding of the student perspective in the learning process, was highlighted as important to effective relationship development:

"So, in my time as a student, I always seem to pick up, be more receptive to tutors who sort of were understanding of things such as workloads, study / life balance and so on, than others who were completely egocentric in a sense that they just had their job to do and this is what they were here for, and you just had to work your way around it. So I think that sort of attitude can really get in the way of a good learning relationship."

**Sense of equality**

Wanting a sense of equality featured in both data items, which included the importance of a sense of "shared exploration," "that sense of us being colleagues as opposed to sort of, you know, tutor, kind of tutee imbalance, really." Students preferred tutors who did not present themselves as experts ("speaking with wisdom from up high") and who encouraged them to feel that they had something of value to offer to the learning experience from the start of the course.

Demeaning treatment, in the form of being patronised, was regarded negatively. Favouritism was similarly frowned upon:

"I think (there are) tutors who are more focused on certain individuals that they may have clicked with a bit more…and then maybe there's others who don't interest them so much."

This sense of favouritism was linked to student "comfort levels" and their sense of not feeling "particularly heard."

**Tutor modelling**

The idea of a tutor modelling an effective relationship was regarded as valuable by some students:

"I think it's a good thing to have a tutor as a role model of what you want to become, so a good relationship would enhance that in most cases."

Demonstrating a “positive attitude,” as well as modelling “some of the skills and attitudes that you’re learning as part of the course” appeared across both data items. However, the importance of consistency and predictability of tutors (with the link being made with the importance of consistency in a therapeutic relationship) featured very strongly amongst the second year group, resulting in some anxiety and focusing around a problematic supervisor whom some perceived as exhibiting a “sort of volatility and unpredictability.” This issue of consistency had a clear connection with effective learning for this second year group. (See section 2 below).

Some students saw a clear link between the client / therapist relationship and the tutor / student relationship, in the sense that tutors have a responsibility to model an effective relationship to students:

“I suppose it relates to the fact that what we’re taught is that in the counselling relationship, you know, that the therapeutic relationship, that the most fundamental thing you need to get right is the counselling relationship, so I suppose in the same way that the client should learn about relationships through the relationship with their therapist, the way that we’re going to learn about relationships is through our relationships with our tutors.”

**(2) The effects of student / tutor relationships on learning**

Overall there was clear agreement in both focus groups that relationships do have a significant impact on the learning experience. As one student put it:

"Well work here is about relationships….It's the beginning, middle and end of it for me."

Another stated:

"I think, a good relationship, facilitates learning, it makes you more eager to learn….it helps me a great deal if I have a good relationship with that tutor."

In terms of the impact on learning, it was found that the tutors' ability to build positive relationships with students contributed to the quality of the students' learning experience. If tutors succeeded, for the most part, in developing these constructive relationships, "which bring out the best in all of us," student affect and behaviour were predominantly positive and conducive to learning. It was significant that the group in the latter stages of their training, facing the pressures of final assessments, placed far more emphasis on the effects of relational features on affect and behaviour. Many of the learning experiences took place in small groups, including supervision and skills practice, so that a majority of the students' comments focused on their experiences in these small group settings.

**Giving and receiving feedback**

The importance of honest, "constructive feedback" presented in "a sensitive sort of way" was emphasised. In terms of receiving feedback, one student "would rather be told by

this person because he'd be able to tell me in a way that made me feel that, yeah, there was some really good stuff in it." The result of constructive feedback would, according to one student, be that "you wouldn't want to just give up afterwards." It was seen as harder to accept feedback from "a tutor where there's kind of, there are issues….and that hinders your learning."

**Providing a safe, supportive learning environment**

Perhaps the most influential aspect of an effective student / tutor relationship for these students was its ability to create a safe, supportive learning environment in which students felt comfortable enough to be able to fully participate and to ask anything without fear of being " treated like you're stupid."

One student expressed a concern about a particular supervision group which was shared by a number of others:

"I'm wary about saying anything in case I say the wrong thing and it produces the wrong reaction."

Second year students expressed a great deal of anxiety and fear around not feeling sufficiently safe to speak or to make mistakes ("which are all part of learning"), again relating to one supervision group in particular: "If the relationship's wrong then fear gets in the way and I withdraw."

So many aspects of learning were affected by whether or not students felt safe enough to participate:

"I felt very unsafe really to say very much at all…. where I now feel absolutely safe to say whatever I think, and I know which is better for me."

"And it's hard to grow, isn't it, if you're not being held to a certain extent, it's a kind of cradling feeling, or it ought to be."

Personal development was facilitated by this sense of security and cradling: students expressed the importance of being able to be open and "vulnerable" so "you could easily explore feelings on the spot." It was clear that student learning was significantly hampered if students did not feel safe enough with tutors to participate fully in the learning experience.

Another feature of this safe learning environment highlighted by students was its similarity to the environment created by effective therapists. This was a place where students, like clients, felt comfortable enough to make mistakes:

" The tutor relationship that I have with my tutors is very much, it sort of has a counselling sort of context in that if I think back ….so that I am able to be interested and make mistakes, which are all part of learning."

## Discussion

Overall, the findings of this study support the idea that effective tutor / student relationships on counselling training courses do have a positive impact on students' learning experiences and outcomes. Many of the relational features identified are generally consistent with previous studies focusing on what constitute positive client / therapist (Rogers, 1959**;** Norcross, 2002, cited in Cooper, 2008) and supervisory relationships (Martin, Goodyear and Newton, 1987 cited in Worthern and McNeill 1996). Students valued tutors who both affirmed and encouraged them (Benson et al, 2009) and accepted them without judgment; who provided an appropriate level of support ( Martin and Dowson, 2009), reduced the impact of the power imbalance by empowering students (Patrick and Smart, 1998) and assuming from the outset that students could make valuable contributions. A belief in tutors as valued role models (Caligor, 1984 and Schechter, 1990 cited in Jones et al, 2008; Egan, 2007) was also emphasised.

However, this study also found that students drew many comparisons between the client / therapist relationship and the tutor / student relationship, both overtly, and by using similar relational terms. It is striking, on examining the various relational concepts, how many of them are central qualities or relational features in humanistic approaches to counselling and psychotherapy (Feltham and Horton, 2006) and, more specifically, in the therapeutic relationship in person-centred therapy (Rogers, 1957). The three qualities regarded as essential to the therapeutic alliance in person- centred therapy (Rogers, 1957) were all referred to in both focus groups, either directly or by a related term. Two of these 'core conditions' of 'empathic understanding' (or empathy)' and unconditional positive

regard' (or respect, acceptance) have also been shown to be important in building an effective supervisory alliance (Angus et al, 2007; Grey et al, 2001). The third core condition of 'congruence' (or genuineness) features less prominently in studies of the supervisory alliance. Other relational features which are advocated in some counselling approaches are openness, including self disclosure (Egan, 2007) and a sense of equality or minimal power imbalance in the relationship (Dryden, 2002) which is particularly promoted in humanistic therapeutic approaches, while acknowledging that equality is never completely possible due to the power differential.

Some authors indicate the crucial role of modelling desirable qualities, skills and behaviours on the part of the therapist (Egan, 2007). Students drew a clear link between therapist and tutor modelling in terms of tutors modelling effective relationships and "some of the attitudes and behaviours" (Egan, 2007:50) required by effective therapists. Similarly, they saw the importance of tutors demonstrating a "positive attitude," as well as being a consistent and predictable presence. Lack of consistency and predictability was one of the factors which caused significant anxiety, particularly to the second year group. This mirrors the client's need for these qualities in therapy in order to develop and grow. So, again, there are clear links being made between aspects of the client / therapist relationship and that between the student and tutor. However, even though students made direct links with only one or two of the specific qualities they wished tutors to model, the fact that the link was made makes it reasonable to deduce that they would also want tutors to model the other desirable relational features which they identify.

The fact that students highlighted so many of the relational features which promote change and development in clients and supervisees, suggests that students benefit from tutor/student relationships which are, in many respects similar to these relationships. The question that inevitably arises is to what extent the student / tutor relationship can, or should, be regarded as a therapeutic one. Therapy or counselling is clearly distinct in many respects from teaching or training. Counselling has a curative focus and the counsellor has a very clearly delineated role which includes well defined professional boundaries. In addition, the relationship aims to be non-evaluative and is usually entered into voluntarily, whereas there are inevitably both evaluative and compulsory components in the tutor / student relationship. The dangers of conceptualising the teaching alliance as a purely therapeutic one are many, with the real need for tutors to avoid adopting the role of therapist with their trainees so as to minimise role conflict and ensure the presence of adequate boundaries. However, there do exist areas of overlap both in terms of process and outcomes. The following, which are excerpts taken from profession - centred definitions, point to some aspects which resonate with the tutor role:

"Counselling is a way of enabling choice or change or of reducing confusion" (BACP 2008 cited in McLeod 2009: 5). Students are embarking on a process of change and are often confused in the early stages of their course, and "its predominant ethos is one of facilitation rather than of advice-giving or coercion" (Feltham and Dryden 1993 in McLeod 2009: 5).

McLeod describes one of the potential outcomes of counselling as:

"*Learning*. Engagement with counselling may enable the person to acquire new understandings, skills and strategies that make them better able to handle similar problems in future." (McLeod 2009:8)

The concept of counselling as a developmental process is widely accepted and it is this aspect which seems the closest to the process of teaching, and more particularly to training in the mental health professions. Indeed personal development is regarded as one of the three central components of any counselling training course (BACP 2010). Trainees are required to work through any personal issues which may reduce their effectiveness as counsellors, and tutors may play a part in this process via personal development groups as well as via supervision. It appears, then, that particularly on courses which aim to foster students' personal development, the student / tutor relationship, together with students' learning, is likely to be enhanced when tutors draw on therapeutic relational skills and qualities.

A noticeable consequence of the presence of this type of relationship is that students often seemed to feel either more willing to participate in discussion (see sections on 'acceptance, affirmation and encouragement,' and 'openness, genuineness and self-disclosure) or to feel safe and supported by, or comfortable with, the tutor (see sections on 'providing a safe, support learning environment' and 'sense of equality'), which students describe as a necessary prerequisite for their full involvement. Indeed, an aspect of unequal treatment (favouritism) results in their "not feeling heard." This is closely

linked to the second key issue of importance to students: that of tutors providing, via their establishment of positive interpersonal relationships, a safe and supportive learning environment. Again this mirrors the environment which effective therapists and supervisors succeed in creating and many of the words which students use to describe this environment ("being held," "cradling feeling," or "safe to speak or to make mistakes") mirror those which clients (Dryden, 2002) or supervisees use (Palomo et al 2010). The main effects on learning of this containing environment are that students feel comfortable to fully participate, to make mistakes and have more space to grow and develop. The lack of this safe setting can result in withdrawal, unwillingness to speak and lack of openness. Students also described the associated feelings of anxiety, "feeling vulnerable," wariness, uncertainty and confusion and "fear of reprisal." Clearly these are stress reactions, which are likely to impact on student effectiveness. These stress reactions were particularly strongly felt by students nearing the end of their course, when final assessments were looming, so a safe learning environment may be of even greater importance at this time. In conclusion, students are likely to learn more effectively if tutors provide a learning environment which provides a similar safe and containing space as that provided by an effective therapeutic relationship.

## Implications for training courses

This study's findings suggest that for tutors to maximise students' learning on this type of training course, the following suggestions may be worth consideration.

Tutors could:

- Develop effective relationships with their students based on the relational features advocated in client / therapist relationships, many of which can be conveyed via related behaviours. This, of course, assumes a high level of self awareness and reflexive ability on the part of tutors. It may be appropriate to train and support some tutors in developing these relational skills.

- On the basis that 'counterproductive events' are inherent to this type of course, minimise the use of the negative relational features identified, but, at the same time, ensure that opportunities are provided to discuss these events with students.

- Create a safe learning environment for students via the use of these therapeutic relational features so that students are enabled to participate fully in the learning experience and to feel sufficiently safe to take educational risks. This aim could be discussed overtly with students at the beginning of the course and a regular forum provided in which to discuss related issues.

- Acknowledge the power imbalance in the tutor/ student relationship by, for example, identifying any expressions of their own power in supervision groups (Bernard and Goodyear, 2009 cited in Mehr et al 2010) and elsewhere and inviting discussions about the power differential. Also aim to minimise the imbalance by empowering students in a range of settings. For example, students could be encouraged to choose the focus of supervision or personal development sessions.

Institutions could:

- Provide training in conflict resolution to counsellor trainers and external supervisors.

## Limitations of the research

This study focused on students from one institution, so its findings may not be applicable to other institutions. All participants were women, a fact which excludes a male perspective about an issue on which men may place less emphasis, although the number of men undertaking counselling training courses is invariably small. Finally, all students were volunteers, so may have chosen to participate due to having particularly strong views or grievances regarding the issues discussed. This could have had an effect on the findings.

## Implications for future research

Future studies could focus on the tutor perspective or perhaps a comparison of student and tutor perspectives. Larger studies, including more participants from a range of institutions, could be undertaken. Longitudinal research could investigate the link between the relationship and learning outcomes. Classroom observation of tutor / student relationships would provide a different, and perhaps more accurate, perspective of effective relational features and their impact on learning.

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Acknowledgements: The author would like to thank Viv Burr for her support and many helpful suggestions during the writing of this paper. Also thanks to Joanna Brooks for assistance with the literature search and to Vanessa Hinchcliffe for reviewing the template

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## Appendix 1

**Tutor /student relationships and their impact on learning**
**Template**

1.0 Students' concepts of relationships in general
- 1.1 Mutual respect / trust
  - 1.1.1 Supportive
  - 1.1.2 Accepting
    - 1.1.2.1 Accepting you as a person
    - 1.1.2.2 Accepting you for your beliefs
    - 1.1.2.3 Non- judgmental
  - 1.1.3 Positive body language, attitude, tone of voice
    - 1.1.3.1 Friendly
  - 1.1.4 Sense of equality
- 1.2 Effective / open communication
  - 1.2.1 Genuine
  - 1.2.2 Open- minded
  - 1.2.3 Sense of humour
  - 1.2.4 Good listener
    - 1.2.4.1 Listening to your opinion
  - 1.2.5 Patient
- 1.3 Consistency
- 1.4 Confidence in the other
- 1.5 Sense of connection
- 1.6 Feeling comfortable
- 1.7 Being valued

2.0 Features of student / tutor relationship
- 2.1 Respect
  - 2.1.1 Accepting / affirming
    - 2.1.1.1 Non-judgmental
  - 2.1.2 Appropriate level of support
  - 2.1.3 Sense of equality
    - 2.1.3.1 Shared exploration / learning
    - 2.1.3.1 Equal partners / colleagues
    - 2.1.3.3 Lack of favouritism
- 2.2 Empathy with students
  - 2.2.1 Understanding need for study / life balance
- 2.3 Confidence in tutor
  - 2.3.1 Knowledge of subject
  - 2.3.2 Passion for subject
- 2.4 Open communication
  - 2.4.1 Not being afraid to address issues
  - 2.4.2 Open to a range of perspectives
  - 2.4.3 Good listener
  - 2.4.4 Accessible / approachable

- 2.4.5 Genuine / being real with each other
- 2.4.6 Self disclosure
  - 2.4.6.1 Using selves as examples
  - 2.4.6.2 Sharing views / experiences with humility
  - 2.4.6.3 Bringing a sense of vulnerability
- 2.4.7 Patient
- 2.4.8 Feeling comfortable
- 2.4.9 Responsive

2.5 Links with client / therapist relationship

- 2.5.1 Tutors model an effective relationship / skills and attitudes
  - 2.5.1.1 Positive attitude
- 2.5.2 Consistent / Predictable
- 2.5.3 Relationship affects performance
  - 2.5.3.1 Fear in tutor / student relationship affects client work
- 2.5.4 Diversity of tutors reflects diversity of clients (develops resilience)

3.0 Effects of tutor on student learning

3.1 Effects of tutor skills / personality on learning

- 3.1.1 Information is more accessible
- 3.1.2 Information more consistent
- 3.1.3 Learning experience enriched by effective facilitation
- 3.1.4 Clearer understanding of learning goals
  - 3.1.4.1 More consistent assessment by tutors
- 3.1.5 Learning enhanced by appropriate level of structure
  - 3.1.5.1 More effective skills-based learning
- 3.1.6 Learning enhanced by appropriate level of preparation
- 3.1.7 Learning enhanced by varied teaching styles
  - 3.1.7.1 Positive experience of moving groups
- 3.1.8 Learning enhanced by positive atmosphere

3.2 Effects of student/tutor relationship on learning

- 3.2.1 Easier to accept feedback
- 3.2.2 Gain more from tutor input
- 3.2.3 More accurate assessment by tutors
- 3.2.4 More effective student personal development
  - 3.2.4.1 More able to explore feelings

4.0 Effects of student /tutor relationship on student affect / behaviour

4.1 Anxiety

4.2 Uncertainty / confusion

4.3 Withdrawal

- 4.3.1 Fear of reprisal
- 4.3.2 Wanting to be invisible

4.4 Feeling safe /supported

- 4.4.1 Increased participation / exploration
  - 4.4.1.1 Can ask anything
  - 4.4.1.2 Can be more open
- 4.4.2 Increased risk-taking / can make mistakes
- 4.4.3 Sense of being held

4.4.3.1 Able to grow

4.5 Increased enthusiasm

4.6 Increased commitment

4.7 Greater self confidence / independence

5.0 Effects of different learning environments on student learning

5.1 Small groups

5.1.1 Learn from different groups

5.1.2 More accurate understanding of others

5.1.3 Key learning takes place

5.1.4 Relationships impact on learning

5.2 Large groups/ lectures

5.2.1 Relationships of less importance to learning

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