PhD
Peer
Guidance
Network

Mapping IUA *Doctoral Skills Statement* (2021) to Peer Mentoring.

IUA Doctoral Skills (2021)	Peer Mentoring Skills
Research Skills	
Critical thinking and analysis "Critically analyse and synthesise new and complex information."	Mentors may help peers evaluate options, interpret problems, and navigate challenges, strengthening analytical reasoning. Exposure to different research approaches broadens conceptual thinking.
Problem solving "Formulate and apply solutions to research problems."	Supporting mentees may involve identifying root causes (e.g., workload issues, research design obstacles) and brainstorming solutions.
Planning and organisation "Ensure effective project and time management."	Mentors schedule meetings, track mentee goals, and manage time - mirroring research project management.
Ethics and Social Understanding	
Research integrity and ethics "Understand, and apply in their research, principles of ethical conduct of research."	Mentoring requires confidentiality, respectful communication, and ethical handling of sensitive issues—skills directly transferable to responsible research practice.
Integrity "Understanding of principles of research integrity."	Encouraging peers to adopt best research practices strengthens a mentor's own commitment to integrity.
Inclusivity "Demonstrate awareness of issues of equality and diversity."	Mentors learn to work productively with diverse backgrounds, abilities, and cultures.
Personal Effectiveness Transferable Skills	
Reflective practice and self-awareness "Reflect on experiences in a critical manner and act on such in a cycle of self-improvement."	Mentors must reflect on their own experiences, recognising strengths, biases, and areas for development

Creativity "Importance of initiating new projects, proactively reacting to newly identified needs."	Mentors often propose novel strategies for study habits, research approaches, or personal organisation.
Professionalism "Work in an independent and self-directed manner."	Reliability, boundary-setting, and respectful behaviour are core expectations of mentors.
Team-working and Leadership Skills	
Teamwork "Ability to develop and maintain effective relationships with colleagues and work in a collaborative environment.	Mentors participate in peer-mentoring schemes, learning to collaborate with coordinators and other mentors.
Interpersonal skills "Awareness of their own working style and that of others, and how they interact." "Intercultural awareness."	Empathy, rapport-building, and cultural awareness improve through one-to-one and small-group support.
Leadership "Understand leadership in team environments, recognising the strengths of team members and how to work effectively." "Oversee, coach and motivate team-members, fostering a co-operative and solution-driven working environment."	Taking a supportive, guiding role fosters leadership presence, responsibility, and influence.
Networking "Network effectively within and beyond the organisation."	Peer mentoring builds a collegial environment, supports wellbeing, and enhances community.
Communication Skills	
Communication "Communicate and explain research to diverse audiences, including both specialist and non-specialist."	Mentors practice clear explanations of complex material and adapting communication styles to the mentee.
Active listening "Effectively support the learning of other students."	Mentors provide guidance, clarify academic expectations, and support learning.

See: https://www.iua.ie/publications/iua-phd-graduate-skills-statement-2021/