

## Editorial

# Welcome to Waypoint

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### From the editors

Welcome to the inaugural edition of Waypoint, a reflective journal of student advising and development in tertiary education. We are excited about launching this new online journal as a platform for sharing expertise, views, and experiences regarding student advising in the broadest sense, with a clear focus on tertiary education.

We embark on new journeys for various reasons. We may have a clear destination in mind—a place to see, a specific accomplishment to be made. Or we may set out to explore, curious about what the journey may bring and simply hoping we will learn from the experience. No matter what our reasons, as we travel, we need to know where we are, how we got there, and where we want to go next. We need waypoints.

Every year, hundreds of thousands of individuals embark on a journey, the goal of which is sometimes crystal clear and often shrouded in a cloud of hopes, expectations, and uncertainties. As they step into the world of tertiary education and continue their learning paths, some of the crystal-clear objectives may dissolve, while unexpected vistas may present themselves and offer new inspiration.

Tertiary education is always an exploration – whether it begins right after secondary education or forms a new beginning at a much later stage in life. All who start that journey benefit from encounters with others who help identify the waypoints and help them discover the route to follow and the direction to take. Next to the role that peers, relatives and friends play, personal tutoring and advising represent par excellence the intentional effort made by tertiary education institutions to offer support and guidance along the way, from being there to help and listen to offering comprehensively designed programmes for facilitating academic and personal development. Personal tutoring, student advising, academic advising, mentoring, coaching, and many other activities with similar objectives exist to help students reach, interpret and use their waypoints as they set their goals and work towards achieving them. This is the intimate connection between student advising and student development, forming the shared foundation for all articles we publish.

Whatever one's role may be in advising students, there is always a strong element of personal commitment to executing it well. And there is a lot of expertise, knowledge, and experience to

be shared. As useful as it is for students to engage in conversations and take a reflective stance on where they are and where they want to go, it is as beneficial to their practice for their advisors, personal tutors, mentors, counsellors and coaches to do the same.

In our view, the continuously growing and evolving body of knowledge and expertise around advising and personal tutoring represents a specific form of scholarship: a form of scholarship that is holistic in that it contains 'proper' research as well as a constant integration of new knowledge into existing practice, offering opportunities for reflection, evaluation and improvement. Waypoint intends to be a meeting space where precisely that happens: an exchange of interesting findings through practice and research and an ongoing dialogue on what those findings mean for the constant development and improvement of a relevant, well-founded and up-to-date advising practice. It is a sharing of collective waypoints: where are we, how did we get here, and where do we need to go next?

To this end, Waypoint welcomes various types of submissions. The Research Articles we publish present original research on matters related to advising – its practice and its outcomes. These articles provide a clear rationale for the study within the body of published research or policy, an overview of the research method adopted, a presentation of the research findings, and a discussion of those findings in relation to existing knowledge. These articles will often have the ambition to provide insights that are relevant across many settings and contexts. Case Studies zoom in on specific organisational, demographic and historical contexts, showcasing projects or policies, yet always through a perspective that makes reading the study relevant not only for those who work in similar contexts but for others as well. One person's case study can be another person's waypoint for reflection. Technology Reviews represent our desire to give proper attention to critical hands-on aspects of the advising practice. They critique or review a technology application, outlining its application for advising and its strengths and weaknesses.

Where the previous types of articles can be viewed as the places where valuable input is provided for the ongoing process of reflection and improvement, there are two types of articles which offer examples of what such reflections may yield: new insights in the form of theories, models, and approaches, or in the form of thought-provoking opinions. The Synthesis and Application articles connect various theories, models, or findings and weld them into new perspectives contributing to practice or the scholarly discourse on advising and student development. Opinion Pieces go one step further: always based on a clear rationale and drawing on facts and evidence, these articles challenge the advising practice and discourse and will often make us think deeply about the why of what we do in advising.

In this first issue, we present what we believe to be excellent and inspiring examples of each type of article.

In the article that opens this issue, Tine Nielsen and Rune Mastrup Lauridsen respond to the ever-increasing focus on individualism that also seems to inform many objectives and practices in advising. In their Opinion Piece 'Guidance for individuals – guidance for the world',

based on personal observations and grounded in sociological and education literature, they make a case for a shift in focus away from the individual and towards the common good.

The second Opinion Piece in this issue, 'Empowering excellence in learning and teaching – unscripted critical moments and their ripple effect' by Nicola Clarke, reminds us of the value of unplanned, unscripted moments between students and their (personal) tutor or advisor that can be of critical importance for the development of the student. While such moments may be unscripted, Clarke argues, they do not need to be random. The advisor who reflects regularly on their work and interactions with students can – and should – make such critical, unscripted moments an intentional part of their practice.

In the Case Study 'The challenges faced by senior tutors in UK higher education', Nienke Alberts presents findings from a series of semi-structured interviews aimed at capturing the role of the senior tutor. While the role is mostly and formally seen as one of oversight and coordination, Alberts found that a substantial part of the workload goes into providing direct support to students – work that often comes with an emotional burden that tends not to be recognised and acknowledged.

An interesting variation on the concept of the community of practice is that of the 'academic family' of tutors and students, which is the topic of Wendy Leadbeater's Case Study 'Personal tutor perspectives on the implementation of academic families.' This approach is aimed at transcending the boundaries between tutors and tutees when it comes to the mutuality of engagement and the sharing of resources and repertoire, thus letting the personal and academic growth of students go hand in hand with the professional development of tutors.

In the Synthesis and Application article 'Using the 3 'C's to unlock student success: a closer look at a coaching approach to personal tutoring', Lisa Gannon connects various perspectives and theories from the literature on coaching and self-determination. It introduces an integrated model for coaching that offers a practical set of guidelines for the coaching role aimed at enhancing a sense of autonomy, mastery and purpose in students.

The article by Dominique Waterval, Iris Burks and Isabelle Maussen, 'Uncovering strategies to empower students: a scoping review of one-on-one advising interventions', is the second Synthesis and Application article in this issue. Where Gannon distilled from the literature a specific and concrete set of stepwise guidelines for the coaching practice, Waterval, Burks and Maussen, also based on literature, provide food for thought and inspiration for anyone who intends to support students as they develop the intricately connected core competencies of self-efficacy, self-regulation, resilience, and personal well-being.

In 'Evaluation of Implementation of Models of Academic Advising in Postgraduate Taught courses', Sarah Bosch and Melissa Jacobi extrapolate generalisable recommendations from their study on the impact of four different models for advising students in postgraduate courses. In comparison to the undergraduate level, postgraduate advising is much less developed both as a practice and as a topic of research. This Research Article, based on a

theoretical framework from literature and data obtained from existing quantitative and qualitative instruments and datasets, represents a significant contribution to the research on postgraduate advising, offering practice-oriented recommendations and a foundation for future studies in this area.

In the final article of this issue, rather than reviewing a specific technology, George Steele offers a framework for reviewing tools we use for advising and personal tutoring. In 'Creating a Technology Review Matrix: Assessing How Technology Assists in Achieving the Goals of Academic Advising and Tutoring when Working with Students' Steele introduces a simple recipe for creating a crosstabulation of intended outcomes and specific technologies that can kick-start conversations about the use of technology between various stakeholders.

We hope that the articles in this first issue of Waypoint will inspire our readers to reflect and apply, and to share their own views, findings and expertise – and thus contribute to a lively and profound discourse on the critical role that advising and personal tutoring play for all students in tertiary education.

### About the Editors

David Grey is the Chief Executive of UK Advising and Tutoring (UKAT), a UK higher education membership association focused on ensuring that every HE student experiences effective personal tutoring, which personalises their learning and enables them to flourish. David has over 25 years of experience as a Computer Science academic, personal tutor, and educational developer, with a leadership focus on learning and teaching, as well as the student experience and personal tutoring. He works closely with higher education providers to revise and enhance personal tutoring provision and publishes regularly in the field. He is an AHE Senior Fellow and UKAT Recognised Leader in Advising.

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