**The completed reading template shows how a journal article can be used by a student reading for the assignment:** “Critically evaluate ways in which gender inequality can be addressed in the workplace. Narrow your discussion to two approaches to allow for depth of discussion.”(2500 words)

Template for critical reading: research articles

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| Question to guide reading: How can mentoring increase gender equality? |
| **Reference details:** De Vries, J., Webb, C., & Eveline, J. (2006) Mentoring for gender equality and organisational change, *Employee Relations*, Volume 28, Issue 6, pp. 573-587 |
| **What is the research article about?**   * *Research aim: impact of a Leadership Development for Women Programme in Aust university* * *positive outcomes of mentoring for mentees, mentors and the university* * *Mentors report significant benefits for themselves and the mentee as well as the*   *organisation itself as a result of their participation* |
| **What research methods/approach did the researchers use?**  *Mixed methods*: *Interviews with 15 mentors and survey responses from 128 mentees – element of being longitudinal as research done against background of 10 year change programme* |
| **What are the limitations of this study?**  *Possibly that its location in Australia means findings are culturally specific to there; however UK has same university system as Australia and similar patterns of inequality and limited opportunities for women… possible also that have changes in equalities legislation in UK Equalities Act 2010… its impact not known in this study…?* |
| **In what way is this study relevant/useful? What can I use?**  *This research provides a really useful example of how one approach to reducing inequality for women in the workplace can be positively addressed through a well-structured mentoring programme* |
| **\*In what way does this study’s findings compare to findings of other studies?**  *Positive outcomes were same in Maxwell’s study (2009) – all parties – mentors, mentees and organisations benefited from the process.*  *Also compares with Ragins et al., (1998) Ehrich, (2008), O`Neil, (2002) and Maxwell (2009) most importantly because all support mentoring as supporting gender equality – consistent evidence over 10 year period..* |
| **Relevant ‘direct quote’ from paper for possible inclusion in course work** |

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| The extract below illustrates how the writer has integrated information from a range of studies to build discussion about the value of mentoring in increasing gender equality in the workplace. |

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| Many organisations have started to realise the importance of supporting qualified and talented women in their career progression. The traditionally held perceptions of gender differences in management are changing and considerable efforts have been made by the public and private organisations to improve career prospects for women (Davidson and Burke, 2011; Maxwell, 2009). The evidence suggests that formal mentoring programmes play a vital role in supporting gender equality and allow females to break through the glass ceiling (Clutterbuck 2012; de Vries *et al*., 2006; Ehrich, 2008; O`Neil, 2002; Maxwell 2009; Ragins et al., 1998).  In an earlier research study on mentoring in businesses and its impact on women’s career prospects, Ragins et al. (1998) concluded that for the majority of female executives interviewed, mentoring was seen as critical in their career advancement as it enabled women to gain access to the `old boys networks` and break the traditional barriers. **Similarly,** a research study conducted at the University of Western Australia, where a Leadership Development for Women Programme (LDWP) had been implemented, found that formal mentoring enables women to gain access to networks, corporate knowledge and skills which subsequently help them to challenge the traditional practices (de Vries et al. 2006). Universities have been recognised as having a masculine culture and women are often discouraged from applying for senior or leadership roles (Thancoody et al., 2006). Thus, the purpose of this programme was to meet the needs of diverse groups and support the development of women in leadership and key decision positions (de Vries et al., 2006). More importantly, the LDWP aimed at facilitating a cultural change at the university, a culture which would encourage greater involvement of women in key roles. The focus of the programme was to provide the less experienced staff with personal and professional development, and the more experienced with leadership and management. As part of the mentoring programme the university offered a series of workshops, presentations, information sessions, forums, mentor scheme, encouraged development of learning groups as well as provided networking opportunities. The empirical research confirmed the positive outcomes of mentoring for mentees, mentors and the university. The programme resulted in greater understanding of the barriers women face in the organisation, reduced employee turnover as well as an increase in the number of female staff. Moreover, women reported that the programmes enabled them to gain confidence, position themselves better in relation to career development and develop leadership skills. The University of Western Australia provides a good example of an organisation where a masculine culture was challenged and mentoring programmes enabled a better understanding of the barriers females face in male dominated environments. As Ehrich (2008) notes, the increasing use of mentoring programmes in private and public organisations suggests that they are meeting the needs of participants involved and support the personal and professional development. | This paragraph presents evidence to show that mentoring has been recognised as an important tool in increasing gender equality  Use of multiple sources to show degree of consensus across the literature  This paragraph draws on research studies to explain why mentoring works. The writer presents similar research findings from private and public sector organisations – Ragins et al and de Vries et al reach similar conclusions.  The writer has discussed the de Vries study and the LDWP in quite a lot of detail, because it identifies good practice in relation to mentoring and gender equality. It may not always be necessary to give as much detail – that is the writer’s decision, depending on the range and relative importance of the issues to be covered  The final sentence concludes this paragraph by highlighting the importance of mentoring in both public and private sector organisations.  The structure *“As Ehrich (2008) notes, the increasing use of....”* indicates that the writer agrees with Ehrich – it’s a useful way of putting your own voice in the text, without saying *“I think that…”* |