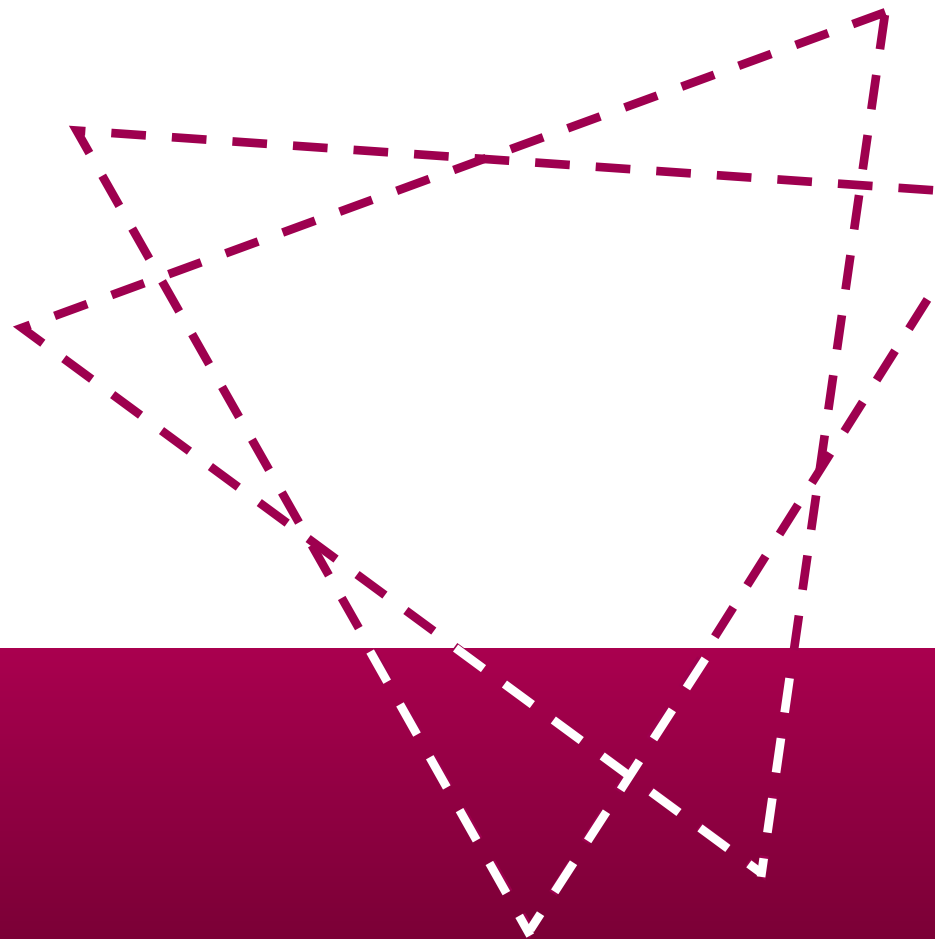


PARALLEL SESSION 3

WEDNESDAY 28TH JUNE 2023



Contents

Contents.....	1
Parallel 3.1 (Show and Tell), Room 3508.....	2
How to arrange/use a highly structured VLE to support flexible learning, transferable skills and peer-to-peer learning	2
Ucc Skills Centre: Dialogues Of Student Engagement And Design: Four Case Studies.....	3
Supporting Programme Leaders to Enhance the First Year Experience	5
Parallel 3.2 (Show and Tell), Room 3011.....	7
Orientation and tutoring that boost a sense of community towards social integration into the university.....	7
From professional to student language – Translating the university with the cooperation of staff and students	9
Culture Shock in HEI environment	11
Parallel 3.3 (20-Minute Presentation), Room 3511	13
The Impact of Early Alert Participation on First Year Student Retention into the Second Year ...	13
Preparing the use of learning analytics dashboards in higher education: Is it opportune to confront a student with the study behaviour of peers?	15
Parallel 3.4 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 3510	17
'Smells like team spirit': working in partnership with students to shape and support university transitions	17
10 Lessons from 10 Years of Teaching a FY Seminar at a Public U.S. University.....	19
Parallel 3.5 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2522	21
Learner Identity amongst first year ethnic minority commuter students	21
How do advanced entry students perceive their transition in and through university within online and blended learning environments?	23
Parallel 3.6 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2521	25
Peer Support @UHasselt – Creating collaboration between student support services and peers	25
Understanding why students fail to submit assignments	27
Parallel 3.7 (20-Minute Presentation), Room 2517	29
Demystifying Higher Education through Dialogue: The Use of Peer Assisted Learning	29
How peer support can positively impact first-year students' transition into university	31

Parallel 3.1 (Show and Tell), Room 3508

HOW TO ARRANGE/USE A HIGHLY STRUCTURED VLE TO SUPPORT FLEXIBLE LEARNING, TRANSFERABLE SKILLS AND PEER-TO-PEER LEARNING



SPEAKERS

Patricia Perlman-Dee, University of Manchester, England

Patricia Perlman-Dee, CFA, is a Senior Lecturer in Finance and the Employability Lead at Alliance Manchester Business School (AMBS), UK. Patricia has created a range of courses across UG, PG, MBA and Executive Education. In 2021, 2020 and 2019, Patricia was awarded the Faculty of Humanities AMBS Outstanding Teaching award.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This Lightening Talk will discuss how course directors can use the VLE (Blackboard) to provide clear direction and guidance for students, but at the same time provide for a flexible learning environment.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

This Lightening Talk will discuss how course directors can use the VLE (Blackboard) to provide clear direction and guidance for students, but at the same time provide for a flexible learning environment. The Lightening Talk will demonstrate the innovative practise on how to structure and set out your VLE, including usage of weekly planning and setting of expectations. It will also show how to foster student partnership in creating learning resources by incorporating other collaborative tools such as OneNote. The set up and usage of the VLE results in elevated student engagement, including superior peer-to-peer feedback on formative assessments.

This set up of the VLE has been used in both Undergraduate and Postgraduate environments and across numerous types of courses. By introducing the set up early to students, it will support the students in their independent learning journey. For first year students, a clear structure will help and support the transition from having been told what to do, to now having the information of what to do and support in how to plan their time. Many first year students often feel over whelmed by not being able to stucture their time efficiently. The Lightening talk will show the audience how an innovative, but simple, thoughtfully, structured (and initially time consuming) set up of a VLE can make a “traditionally taught” course unit run with a hybrid learning strategy, enhancing clarity, and reducing unnecessary communication through email and announcements. The Lightening talk will also show early evidence of how the highly structured VLE provided improved learning for the students in the first course they took on their program, which possibly was a factor impacting overall higher marks for the students on assessments on the course unit compared to previous year. The Lightening talk will show how a highly structured VLE can support students to develop transferable skills such as time management, organisation, group work etc. It will also show how academics can benefit from an effectively set up VLE.

UCC SKILLS CENTRE: DIALOGUES OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT AND DESIGN: FOUR CASE STUDIES



SPEAKERS

Kathy Bradley, University College Cork, Ireland

Kathy Bradley is Head of the Skills Centre at University College Cork which provides an active and responsive learning space for students seeking to unlock their potential. A UCC law graduate, with a Certificate in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education and a Higher Diploma in Executive Coaching, Kathy facilitates peer-to-peer and interdepartmental engagement with academic and student communities.

Éadaoin Regan, University College Cork, Ireland

Dr Éadaoin Regan has been a tutor in the UCC Skills Centre for three years and has been involved in planning and collaboration of bespoke sessions to meet student needs across various colleges in University College Cork. Éadaoin completed her PhD in the Department of English (UCC) in 2022 and is currently continuing in her role in the Skills Centre, meeting with students and lecturing staff to provide further opportunities to identify supports most valuable to each student and course we engage with.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This Show and Tell will focus on the UCC Skills Centre's collaborative work with the four colleges in University College Cork. For the 22/23 academic year, we designed academic skills programmes to meet the needs of each student which have been integrated as part of core modules across the following disciplines: Business & Law, Medicine & Health, and the College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The UCC Skills Centre provides a dedicated, responsive and active learning space for the enhancement of study and writing skills. Our goal is to enhance the student experience through the provision of customised workshops, sessions and online resources. We offer a free and friendly place for all UCC students to come and improve their study skills, writing techniques, IT skills, and presentation skills. In addition to our peer-to-peer engagement with students, as part of our interdepartmental communication, we have seen huge success in our bespoke programmes. These have been integrated as part of core modules across the following disciplines: Business & Law, Medicine & Health, and the College of Arts, Celtic Studies & Social Sciences.

Scaffolding skills at programme level has been exceptionally successful in the 2022/2023 academic year so far. These programmes are designed to teach students transitional skills, encourage students to develop graduate attributes as independent and creative thinkers, become creators and evaluators and communicators of knowledge. Further, faculty across the disciplines have reported that Skills Centre integrated modules has also impacted on student assessment with better essay structure and referencing visible in latter year assessments since introduction of bespoke modules within their courses. This includes the facilitation of our award winning SPEAK presentation skills module, designed

to build upon and showcase students excellent engagement and communication between professional services such as the Skills Centre and the academic community to deliver innovatively.

SUPPORTING PROGRAMME LEADERS TO ENHANCE THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE



SPEAKERS

Julie Blackwell Young, Abertay University, Scotland

Dr Julie Blackwell Young is Head of Teaching Quality and Learning Enhancement at Abertay University in the Abertay Learning Enhancement Academy. She has part of a cross-sector group conducting research into programme leadership and hosting a series of events to support programme leaders and those who work with them across the Scottish higher education sector. The rest of the cross-sector group are the co-presenters of this Show and Tell.

Martha Caddell, Heriot-Watt University, Scotland

Professor Martha Caddell is Director of Heriot-Watt University's Learning and Teaching Academy. Her research and scholarship interests include academic identities and educational leadership, negotiating policy and pedagogic practice interfaces, and internationalisation of higher education.

Christine Haddow, Edinburgh Napier University, Scotland

Dr Christine Haddow is Lecturer and Programme Leader of the BA (Hons) Criminology programme at Edinburgh Napier University. Christine's interests in education and pedagogy focus on the role of programme leaders, community and belonging at university and education in custodial settings.

Kimberley David, University of Glasgow, Scotland

Dr Kimberley Davis is Academic and Digital Development Advisor at the University of Glasgow. She specialises in curriculum development with a focus on programme assessment and feedback literacy for staff and students.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Developed through cross-sector collaboration and a survey of programme leaders in Scotland, this manifesto sets out what higher education institutions can do to support programme leaders, who have a pivotal role in the first year experience. Our session aims to solicit feedback from delegates across the world, with an interest in programme leadership support.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Programme Leaders have been identified as being key players in shaping the student experience (Ellis, 2019). Ellis suggests that they are linchpins who "largely determine the coherence of the student experience", however, they often feel unsupported by universities and unclear about their role and how to translate university policy into practice with the work of the programme leader often being invisible (Ellis, 2019, Cunningham & Wilder, 2019, Caddell et al. 2022). This is of particular importance when we consider the importance of a good, effective transition into university for students and how the programme is pivotal component of this transition (Whittaker, 2008). This show

and tell launches and showcases the "Programme Leader Manifesto" which has come out of the collaborative work of the presenters into the current state of play in programme leadership within the Scottish sector. Using cross-sector networks that have been created by the work of the collaborative group and a survey open to programme leaders at all higher education institutions across Scotland, this manifesto sets out what higher education institutions can do to support programme leaders. This embraces encouragement in enhancing programmes (Caddell & Blackwell Young, 2022), including to develop effective transitions into university, whichever year that might be for any particular student. By taking a sector-level approach, we can work as a community to impact on practice and to develop the key themes of the collaborative work so far which has included resilience, reward, recognition, programmatic approaches to assessment, student-staff partnership and international comparisons of programme leadership. The work of the collaborative group can be found at:

<https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/en/resilient-learning-communities/completed-projects/programme-leadership-strengthening-resilience-supporting-learning-communities>.

During our show and tell we would be keen to hear from other delegates across the world about practice in supporting programme leadership and to seek opportunities for collaborative working in this area.



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Parallel 3.2 (Show and Tell), Room 3011

ORIENTATION AND TUTORING THAT BOOST A SENSE OF COMMUNITY TOWARDS SOCIAL INTEGRATION INTO THE UNIVERSITY



SPEAKERS

Outi Tikkanen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Outi Tikkanen (Master of Education) is working as a coordinator at the University of Eastern Finland Student and Learning Services. Our team provides services for new students, especially orientation and tutoring. Outi Tikkanen focuses mainly on orientation and online materials for new students.

Niina Rissanen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Niina Rissanen (Master of Arts) is working as a coordinator at the University of Eastern Finland the Student and Learning Services. Our team provides services for new students, especially orientation and tutoring. Niina Rissanen focuses mainly on peer tutoring and study skills issues.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The presentation describes practices in the new students' orientation and explains how orientation and peer tutoring support the collaborative start of studies at the University of Eastern Finland.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The activities carried out in cooperation between the University of Eastern Finland's Student and Learning Services, faculties and their academic subjects, and peer tutors aim at supporting and streamlining the start of studies for new students, facilitating social integration, introducing them to the university's services, and the student community. The division of work, roles and tasks between the actors are mutually agreed, which make operations smooth. Cooperation is coordinated by Student and Learning Services, which prepares a joint communication plan, annual wheel of activities, division of labour, and tutor training, for instance. The Student Union and various student associations also have an impact on the activities with their own contribution.

The orientation also includes activities that support a sense of community for all new students. As our student population is large and divided into two campus cities 150 km apart, the joint programme is partly implemented online. Participation is available remotely as well.

Our academic rector welcomes new students online using chat to create interaction from the very beginning. Information sessions and workshops on important practices are organized remotely, which enables participation and interaction also beyond the campus cities. Tutor groups are formed in the beginning and it is possible to follow the info sessions

on campus, which contributes to strengthening the sense of belonging. However, the remote sessions seem to have increased students' participation and dialogue.

In addition to remote access, orientation offers the opportunity for face-to-face meetings and contacts. For new students, an information market is arranged on campus where they can get acquainted with the services and organisations in the campus cities, as well as the activities and study opportunities of their own university. The information market facilitates low-threshold familiarization and interaction with different actors. The orientation also includes faculty and/or field-specific sessions arranged by the academic subjects, which facilitates field-specific student interaction and grouping.

The orientation also includes small group guidance organised by peer tutors during the first weeks of study. Peer tutors play a significant role in integrating new students into the university. Peer tutors are trained using a comprehensive process-like training package that includes experiential learning. Tutors receive credits for both training and acting as tutors.

In training and tutoring, the peer tutors learn about the principles of small group activities, equal tutoring activities and working as a group tutor. In addition, the tutor learns about the university's services (e.g. guidance and counselling services) and study practices. Academic subjects participate in the training of peer tutors by giving them the latest in-depth knowledge of the subject and its practices. Peer tutors also collaborate with student associations.

Peer tutors play a key role in grouping students. With the help of the knowledge and skills they have acquired during training, the peer tutors introduce new students to each other, older students, the services and practices of the university and the student union, as well as the campus city.

The development of orientation and peer tutoring will continue.

FROM PROFESSIONAL TO STUDENT LANGUAGE – TRANSLATING THE UNIVERSITY WITH THE COOPERATION OF STAFF AND STUDENTS



SPEAKERS

Erika Koncz, University of Szeged, Hungary

Erika Koncz is an education development officer at the University of Szeged. She has been working at this position for 4 years. She graduated in 2020 at the faculty of Economics and Business Administration, and now she is doing her masters in marketing, communication and media while working at the University.

Anna Kovács, University of Szeged, Hungary

Anna Kovács is based in Szeged, Hungary. She is a twenty-one-year-old economics student and marketing intern at the University of Szeged. Her studies are focused on Business and Management and she is writing her thesis on marketing communications concerning improving student engagement.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

From students to students - Student involvement is the key to achieving the highest possible student satisfaction. Students ambassador programme is a great tool to help administrative staff to have new ideas and to develop the most suitable communication for students so that professional knowledge and student experience can meet.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

A team of 30 students, from 12 faculties, several majors and different years. A team of students from the University of Szeged, who support the first-year students all year round to become university students as smoothly as possible. The first year is crucial when it comes to the dropout rate and this project resulted in great numbers in the first run so it became a priority for the University.

Erika Koncz is both a student and an employee at the university. This dual perspective helped her in the basic idea of the programme, as it helped her a lot in making decisions because she was able to look at an issue from a student's point of view regarding her work.

The basic idea is that the best way to communicate with students is to have students communicate with them, so we created a special team.

One of the main aims of the team is to support the integration of first-year students, helping them to navigate their way through a wide range of academic matters, administrative tasks and community life. The other main objective is to introduce the university lifestyle to the new recruits.

The programme involves setting up Facebook groups managed by student ambassadors before admission, so that community building can start before the mid-term results. Once they have their admission result, they can start the challenges of the enrolment process

together, and they start their studies from the very first moment in a peer support system, and there are always senior student ambassadors there to help them with everything.

Students organise a colourful programme of activities for the enrolment week, alongside the administrative part, where they get to explore the many opportunities the university has to offer in a playful way, in teams and as part of the community. For example, they can learn about the university's Counselling Centre and the SANSZ programme, which helps students with special needs to live a fulfilling life as university citizens. They can also learn about international opportunities and, for example, share programmes with international students at several stations in the event series.

The training of student ambassadors also includes developing emotional intelligence and social awareness, so that all students can be properly supported.

Through the Student Ambassador programme, we have created channels to reach as many students as possible. We use TikToks to transmit important information in a playful way, and we have created an instagram page where students can send messages to students. In addition, student ambassadors help pre-admission and first-year students with podcasts and videos. They also share their own experiences in Facebook groups to help first-year students.

The Facebook groups have an efficiency of almost 85% and student feedback suggests that the important information that student ambassadors have passed on to them is much clearer.

The following benefits were mentioned:

Facebook groups have a more student-friendly language.

I finally understood the difference between the two types of course registration period.

If I follow the group, I don't miss out on any fun social programme.

According to the programme's first year statistics, we reached many more students through these three platforms than through any other channel. Every year we analyze students' feedback and make changes accordingly.

We suggest three key points for the discussion after the presentation:

- Students POV
- How to involve the students' perspective
- communication channels within the University

CULTURE SHOCK IN HEI ENVIRONMENT



SPEAKER

Patrik Foltýn, Tomas Bata University, Czech Republic

Born in 1994, work as International Relations Officer at Tomas Bata University in Zlín (TBU), the Czech Republic, since 2018, where he is responsible for incoming student exchanges and their integration at TBU. On top of that, he is also responsible for assessments of previous foreign education of TBU applicants.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

New international students who move to a new country for their studies usually tend to face Culture Shock. This can negatively influence their academic performance. But do they have a chance to prepare themselves and minimize the Culture Shock in this crucial moment of their studies?



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Everybody can imagine how moving to a new place can be stressful. All the packing, organizing, and sorting take a considerable amount of time and effort. And it does not matter if you move only two streets away. But what if a student decides to move to a different country and pursue a degree abroad hundreds or thousands of kilometers away from home? Can you imagine the level of stress in this situation? And what if the students decide to move to a country that is way culturally different than their homeland?

That is an almost guaranteed ticket to Culture Shock. This can be overwhelming, especially at the beginning of something as important as university studies. Stepping outside your comfort zone this way is challenging, and it gets even tougher when you miss familiar things such as family, friends, food, culture, or weather. At the same time, the new environment can surprise students in many ways that they would not even anticipate. Students can catch themselves in situations that look odd in their eyes while their surroundings will see them as usual.

At TBU in Zlín, we are trying to minimize the impact of Culture Shock on our new international students right after they arrive at the university. We host a session dedicated to this topic for them each semester where we try to explain what they can expect as potential Culture Shock in the Czech Republic and how to prepare themselves for it. Also, we discuss the individual approach to the culture and how each individual sees it from a different perspective since every student is an individual and has different needs. Nevertheless, the most significant part is educating and inspiring our students on how to deal with Culture Shock and turn back on the right track in the university environment. Because there is no guaranteed way to heal yourself from Culture Shock, we provide only recommendations to our students. However, every individual must pick what suits best to them.

This session is dedicated mainly to delegates who have links to international programs and are in touch with international students.

Questions about the definition of culture will be raised, and we will discuss whether we can learn a specific culture or whether we are born with it. We will address the challenges that Culture Shock might have for our international students and how to fight Cultural Fatigue when new students are already overwhelmed by a new environment.

Parallel 3.3 (20-Minute Presentation), Room 3511

THE IMPACT OF EARLY ALERT PARTICIPATION ON FIRST YEAR STUDENT RETENTION INTO THE SECOND YEAR



SPEAKERS

Katelynn Carter-Rogers, St. Francis Xavier University, Canada

Katelynn is an Assistant Professor at St. Francis Xavier University in the Gerald Schwartz School of Business in Indigenous Business. Katelynn is a highly skilled social science researcher and consultant with a decade of experience in advanced statistics, research design, student intervention and success, and attitudes measurement.

Amy McAvoy, Saint Mary's University, Canada

Amy manages the Student Success Centre at Saint Mary's University in Halifax, N.S. Canada. In her 20-year career, Amy has worked at three major Canadian universities as an academic advisor, career educator and coordinator of transition programs. She is on the editorial review board for E-Source for College Transitions at USC.

Steven Smith, Saint Mary's University, Canada

Steven is a Professor of Psychology and former Associate Vice-President Academic & Enrolment Management, former Dean of Science, and a former Registrar at Saint Mary's University. Dr. Smith has expertise in persuasion, health promotion, attitudes measurement, data analysis, and student success.

Vurain Tabvuma, Saint Mary's University, Canada

Vurain is the Sobey Professor in Management and an Associate Professor in the Sobey School of Business at Saint Mary's University. Vurain's research focuses on intrinsic motivation, employee and student onboarding, job satisfaction, organizational change, adaptation, student success, public service motivation, and pro-social motivation.

Tracey MacDonald, Saint Mary's University, Canada

Tracey joined Saint Mary's University in 2019 as the Director of Institutional Data Analysis and Planning. She supports the university's efforts to be more strategic in the use of data to inform policy and decisions. Tracey spent 14 years at Mount Saint Vincent University in a similar role.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

We investigate whether an Early Alert system impacts student retention. We find that students who participated in Early Alert were more likely to be enrolled as students the following fall than students who did not. This remained consistent for students with multiple reports if they engaged at least once.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Our research investigates whether an Early Alert system had an impact on first year student retention. The study examined the effectiveness of Early Alert intervention programming launched at a medium sized Canadian university for its incoming first year students. Within the program, faculty and staff are encouraged to use Early Alert when they have concerns about a student's behaviour and/or academic performance. Faculty can submit an alert to connect their students to the appropriate on-campus resources. Faculty were encouraged to use Early Alert when they have concerns about a student's behaviour and/or academic performance. Concerning behaviour might include:

- Continuous poor performance/grades on assessments
- Assignments not being turned in or turned in late
- Inactivity or low login rate for asynchronous delivered courses
- Poor or sporadic attendance
- Observed behaviour that is inappropriate or disruptive
- Observed social/emotional changes including general unhappiness and social interaction problems

The purpose of our research was to determine the impact on students who participated in Early Alert compared to those who did not. The research study took place during the Fall 2020 semester and retention was assessed the Following Fall (2021). Seventeen first year courses participated in the Early Alert program in Fall of 2020. Only those faculty members had the ability to submit an alert for students. A total of 512 Early Alert reports were received. In addition, 156 students had multiple Early Alert alerts reported for them.

After an alert was submitted, it was reviewed by the Early Alert Care Team. The nature of the alert determined how that concern was addressed and which university office followed up with the student (e.g., the Early Alert Team or Academic Advising). The appropriate Advisor or Early Alert Team member contacted the student by email. The students were invited to discuss the concerns that were identified, and they were offered to be connected with the relevant resources and support on campus. Students who were identified in the Early Alert program and who participated (i.e., the 267 who responded to an outreach effort by an Early Alert or Academic Advisor) were compared to students who were identified by faculty but who did not participate or respond to offers of support (i.e., 245 students). Our findings indicate that students who participated in Early Alert (i.e., engaged in support) were more likely to be enrolled as students the following fall (71%) than students who did not engage (55%). Further, this success rate remained consistent for students with multiple reports (i.e., 156 of the 512) as long as they responded to one engagement or more (69%; compared to 50% if they did not engage).

Future directions will be discussed, including evolving from a first-year program to including an upper year program component, and devising a more experimental approach to assessing impact.

PREPARING THE USE OF LEARNING ANALYTICS DASHBOARDS IN HIGHER EDUCATION: IS IT OPPORTUNE TO CONFRONT A STUDENT WITH THE STUDY BEHAVIOUR OF PEERS?



SPEAKER

Olaf Spittaels, AP University of Applied Sciences and Arts Antwerp, Belgium

Olaf Spittaels has a master's degree in experimental psychology and has been working at the center for basic interactive research in assessment. Nowadays he is lecturer and researcher at AP University of Applied Sciences in Antwerp. He has extensive experience in educational development and cooperated in different research projects.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The research project LAP!, aimed on the relevance of learning dashboards, is based on different actions: a user survey, a database analysis, focus group discussion on dashboard preferences, a think aloud study on dashboard prototypes and an eye tracking study. The results provide guidance for the implementation of learning dashboards but raises also an interesting question about confronting students with peerbehaviour.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

This session presents results of the multidisciplinary research project “LAP!” (Learning Analytics at AP University of Applied Sciences Antwerp). The LAP! project aims to develop a qualitative dashboard for different user groups at the institution. This project maps user needs and preferences about learning analytics activities among three target groups: students, lecturers and deans. Qualitative research methods are applied to examine user preferences to LA dashboards. The following research questions are raised: Which learning analytics are given priority by our user groups and to what extent can we represent LA in a user-friendly personalized manner?

In order to answer these questions, multiple methods are used to collect data from these user groups. The preparatory phase consisted of a literature exploration and a database analysis to determine which variables have a predictive power on study success.

Phase 1 consisted of a focus group discussion on dashboard preferences and a user survey among students, teachers and heads of education. The topics of the focus group discussion included preferences of learning analytics data, learning performance indicators, lay-out of learning analytics dashboards and tracking activities to increase learning awareness.

During phase 2 a think-aloud study was executed on dashboard prototypes. The think aloud method was used to evaluate the experiences with the first prototypes of the learning analytics dashboards for students and teachers to get insight into the way the different user groups experience the dashboard. During the think aloud study, respondents' behavior was monitored and they were questioned about the operation, the content and the visual presentation of the dashboard. Both the lecturers and students indicated that they liked being able to determine the preferences themselves.

During phase 3, an eye tracking study was conducted. The eye tracking study, gained more insight into the use of learning dashboards by the user groups.

In conclusion: The whole study provided insight into the dashboard preferences of the usergroups. But the study also brought into attention that not all students are willing to be confronted with the study behaviour of their peers. So this raises the questions: Will we confront every student, and especially first-year students, with the study behaviour of their peers?

Parallel 3.4 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 3510

'SMELLS LIKE TEAM SPIRIT': WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH STUDENTS TO SHAPE AND SUPPORT UNIVERSITY TRANSITIONS



SPEAKERS

Ellen Pope, Aston University, England

Ellen Pope is currently Head of the Learning Development Centre (LDC) at Aston University and oversees the provision of academic support services and student mentoring programmes to facilitate student retention, continuation and success. She is particularly interested in how working in partnership with students and developing peer communities can enhance the student experience and engagement.

Mark O'Hara, Aston University, England

Professor Mark O'Hara is currently Associate Pro Vice Chancellor (Education) at Aston University and is based in the University's Education Department. He is a National Teaching Fellow and Principal Fellow of the UK's Advance HE as well as being a recipient of the Collaborative Award for Teaching Excellence (CATE).



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This workshop showcases our experience of working in partnership with students to support successful transitions. Focusing on our peer mentoring initiatives and peer assisted learning (PAL) programmes, we share the outcomes of evaluation demonstrating the impact such partnerships can have on student learning and the student experience for those involved as mentors, PAL Leaders, and programme participants.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Students experience multiple transitions throughout their time at university and are often most vulnerable in their first year, experiencing uncertainty about managing university life and study (Carroll, 2019; Summers et al, 2021). Furthermore, successfully managing transitions to and within taught programmes is a feature of returning students' experience, particularly when experiencing a placement year or taking up other opportunities for developing professional practice.

Over many years, Aston University has developed impactful strategies to support student transitions, developed from our understanding that improving student engagement and belonging can positively impact on retention and outcomes. Initiatives including academic support for students pre- and post-entry, high quality personal tuition, and meaningful opportunities for social integration are just some of the things in place to enhance student success (Pope et al, 2017; Moores et al, 2022). We also recognise the power of working in partnerships with students, providing them with agency and voice to shape student transition and learning in collaboration with professional and academic colleagues.

This workshop focuses our experience of working in partnership with students to support successful social, academic, and professional transitions – creating opportunities through

collaboration to help students connect, develop, and thrive at university. Focusing on our peer mentoring initiatives and peer assisted learning (PAL) programmes, we share the outcomes of evaluation demonstrating the impact such partnerships can have on student learning and the student experience – for those involved as mentors, PAL Leaders, and programme participants. Additionally, our students will share their experiences of delivering peer led initiatives, including working with academic and professional services colleagues in designing opportunities for their student peers to build confidence and skills for study.



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10 LESSONS FROM 10 YEARS OF TEACHING A FY SEMINAR AT A PUBLIC U.S. UNIVERSITY



SPEAKER

Stephanie Cox, Boise State University, USA

Stephanie Cox is a Lecturer at Boise State University in Boise, Idaho, USA. Her career focuses on first-year students. In 2011 she was tapped to become one of the first faculty to design and teach BSU's first first-year seminar. She presents on first-year pedagogy at academic conferences, most recently at the 42nd annual Conference on FYE in Los Angeles, California.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This presentation will give an overview of the 10-year growing pains and successes of a first-year seminar that launched in 2022. It will be organized in a #1-10 approach describing specific classroom practices that were retained, replaced, or revised. Q & A will focus on sharing attendees' practices and experiences.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

As part of a general education reform, Boise State University (Boise, Idaho, USA) developed an academic First Year Experience course. This course—University Foundations 100: Intellectual Foundations—was envisioned as an interdisciplinary course where all incoming freshmen would engage with “big questions” as part of an “intellectual orientation” to university-level learning, inquiry, and innovation. Individual courses were created by a team of two full-time lead faculty around their academic specialities and designed to meet the university learning outcomes of Critical Inquiry, Oral Communication, Innovation, and Teamwork. Students enrolled in a 200-student weekly plenary lecture team-taught by the two lead faculty, and a connected weekly discussion section of 25 students taught by a discussion group leader.

The first UF100 courses were piloted in fall 2012. It was a rocky start. Resistance and even hostility came from all quarters: students, academic programs, advising, and ultimately upper administration. In response, the program made changes in the enrollment cap, curriculum, and faculty governance structures. This included lowering enrollment caps to 100 students, adding a common read, and adopting a tagline – Know, Do, Become – to clearly express the goals of UF100 and other general education courses.

Individual faculty made additional changes to our theme-based curriculum to be more intentional, student-centered, and transparent. This presenter was one of the initial 14 faculty members selected to teach the new course. She will speak as an instructor who has taught three different courses/themes in every format the university offers: in-person, online, summer short-term, and the Covid-19 pivot. The presentation will be organized in a #1-10 approach connecting lessons learned to specific classroom practices she and her teaching partner retained, replaced, or revised between 2012 and 2023. These 10 lessons will cover (re)creating an active and engaged class where students work collaboratively, connect to the course material, and take charge of their own learning each week. She will

discuss the specific reason for each change, its implementation in the classroom, and the evidence of its effectiveness.

During the Q&A session, delegates will be invited to share their own lessons-learned and classroom practices.

Parallel 3.5 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2522

LEARNER IDENTITY AMONGST FIRST YEAR ETHNIC MINORITY COMMUTER STUDENTS



SPEAKER

Kulvinder Singh, Birmingham City University, England

An Associate Professor in Accounting, Kulvinder Singh is part of the course management team of the Accounting suite of courses at Birmingham City University. He is also undertaking a PhD, which focuses on learner identity of ethnic minority students, and exploring the impact of this on attainment.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The presentation will focus on findings from research conducted into the motivations underpinning enrolment and expectations of ethnic minority commuter students enrolling onto level four (year 1) of accounting courses at an urban commuter institution. It will explore the saliency of learner identity at this early stage of the academic journey.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Retention and success within the higher education space has often been theorised by placing belonging as the key enabler. There has been much literature which focusses on belonging in Higher Education and the correlation with achievement.

This assumption that student behaviour determines success however is based on a model of higher education which assumes the students entering the higher education space all possess characteristics which will allow them to undertake the academic and social activities of engagement which will promote this sense of belonging. There is a growing shift however in the number of students classed as 'commuters', with the expected number of students falling within this category expected to rise (Thomas, 2019).

As discussed within the commuter student literature, this group of students are not always as 'time-rich' and local to the institution to enable them to be able to undertake these activities, and this is further theorised to suggest that 'engagement' is also reduced amongst commuter students (Thomas, 2019). Therefore, the sense of belonging model places these students at a disadvantage compared to their residential peers. It also implies a privilege of being able to live on campus and being able to undertake the academic and social activities associated with developing a sense of belonging.

This further links to learner identity where the core components of a learner's identity tend to focus on the lived experiences an individual will encounter whilst undertaking their educational journey. The formation of this identity is shaped by a student's university experience and the nature of the involvement in those experiences.

This research is based on the results from the first phase of a longitudinal study of learner identity amongst ethnic minority commuter students studying at a predominantly

commuter urban UK institution, and to determine the extent to which learner identity impacts upon attainment.

A thematic analysis of the qualitative data explored the determinants of the decision to commute, the motivations behind the decision to join university and the outcomes students are hoping to achieve whilst on the course. The findings from both quantitative and qualitative data gathered from first year accounting students demonstrate an outcomes based approach to university amongst the respondents.

The research will aim to impact upon the design of not only courses and modules, but develop interventions designed to enhance the student experience and sense of belonging. The lived experiences of students and the narratives provided will be aimed to shape the first year experience and encourage the sense of belonging to help lay the foundations for future success.

The research will further continue to assess the saliency of learner identity amongst ethnic minority commuter students, exploring changes in learner identity and the impact of attainment and achievement.



REFERENCES

Thomas, L. (2019) 'I am happy just doing the work...' Commuter student engagement in the wider higher education experience. *Higher Education Quarterly*. 74(3) pp.290-303

HOW DO ADVANCED ENTRY STUDENTS PERCEIVE THEIR TRANSITION IN AND THROUGH UNIVERSITY WITHIN ONLINE AND BLENDED LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS?



SPEAKER

Andrew Ainslie , Abertay University, England

Andrew is a final year PhD student at Abertay University studying student transition in and through University with a focus on students entering university via the college articulation pathway. His interest in this area of research was informed by his own personal experience of study through college.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This presentation explores data gathered through semi-structured interviews with advanced entry students and considers their initial experiences of transition from college as well how they continued to navigate university during the Covid-19 pandemic. Insights for the post Covid 19 education landscape will also be included.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The period of transition into a new learning environment is a critical influencing factor in a student's ability to achieve overall success within their new academic institution. A smooth transition can enable early academic success whilst a poor transition can lead to lower attainment and increased risk of drop out or disengagement with study. The transition into a new learning environment occurs at each point within the education ladder where an individual's environment changes or is changed and occurs from early years education through to university education.

This presentation focuses on the transition experiences of a population of further education college students colloquially referred to as 'Direct Entry Students' as they entered their first year of university study. 'Direct entry' within the Scottish university education framework refers to college students who have gained advanced entry into the 2nd or 3rd year of an undergraduate degree having completed a Higher National Certificate (HNC) or a Higher National Diploma (HND). These students utilise the increasingly popular Articulation Pathway initially developed by the Scottish Government as an alternative and widening access means of entering higher education.

This entry route is facilitated by the Scottish Qualifications Framework with HNC, HND and 1st and 2nd year of university study both representing levels 7 and 8 respectively within this framework. Whilst considering the HN qualifications as equal and transferable, in practice it does not consider the differing learning environments experienced by students between College and University and the transition required of these students for success. Developing relationships with peers and staff, possessing requisite academic skills, becoming independent learners, and developing a new learner identity and sense of belonging within their new institution are all factors which influence the initial success of Direct Entry students to university.

This session will present data gathered from nine Direct Entry students who utilised the Articulation Pathway and had their first experience of university education during the 2020/21 academic year, a time period where the transition was dominated by Covid 19 restrictions and implementation of online learning. The researcher utilised semi structured interviews conducted in December 2022 to enable participants to reflect on their initial experience of university as well as their experience in the second stage of study when a blended learning approach had been adopted. An Interpretative Phenomenological analysis was utilised to explore the lived experiences of participants, the development of their new learner identity and their sense of belonging within their new academic institution.

Parallel 3.6 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2521

PEER SUPPORT @UHASSELT - CREATING COLLABORATION BETWEEN STUDENT SUPPORT SERVICES AND PEERS



SPEAKERS

Özlem Yalçı, Hasselt University, Belgium

Study coach of Faculties Medicine and Life Sciences, Rehabilitation Sciences and Master of Statistics

Els Swijns, Hasselt University, Belgium

Disability officer at Hasselt University



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This session will give participants insight into how Hasselt University creates an institution-wide collaboration between student support services and peers. We will discuss two practices (buddy programme and testimonials in seminars) and how we embed them in our mainstream activities.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Hasselt University is known for its innovative teaching and learning methods. We use an educational concept centred on the student, where they are guided to study independently in a growth process towards fully autonomous study. Autonomy and competence are developed in connectedness (Ryan en Deci, 2000). This is why we focus on working in small groups and encourage close collaboration between students and instructors. Some programs include mentors, coaches and tutor projects.

At Hasselt University, we provide a visible, accessible and inclusive range of student support for all students. We want to emphasise academic and social connectedness (=increasing a sense of belonging) to promote the students' study success. Over the years, we have evolved from an exclusive offer of student support for students to a request where peers are more and more involved (from and for students). To lower the threshold for contacting a support person, we consciously involve peers in our regular student support offerings.

Research shows (Dopmeijer J., 2021) that using peers within student support has a positive impact on study outcomes and a sense of belonging. First-year students benefit from the support and empathy of a peer and may choose to talk to a peer. Some students find it easy to connect with a peer in a similar stage of life and experience similar life challenges.

How does UHasselt leverage collaboration with peers to promote study success?

Concrete examples of initiatives where we deploy student support collaboration with peers are:

- Buddy programme: A university-wide and inclusive program rooted in connection and commitment to increasing the likelihood of study success. The benefits for the peers are that they receive a certificate and are prepared for the role of a buddy (talent discovery and development, training, community building, expanding network).
- Testimonials in seminars: (start-2-study, start@UHasselt & Time management for international students, meeting times for students with disabilities): senior students share their experiences, insights and give tips & tricks ... Although students volunteer, we reward their efforts with an incentive.- Student Point: A centrally located room in the agora (i.e. central place on campus in the main building where all students can meet) where students can stop by, without an appointment, to ask questions. It is staffed alternately by student support staff and peers. Peers are formally appointed and selected on the basis of a motivational interview (<https://www.uhasselt.be/studentpoint-en>).
- Support with new initiatives: Establishment of a Silence Point, reception, conversation room for student psychologists, student participation and acting in videos around study tips, evaluation of our website. Peers are contracted or receive incentives.

We will focus on the first two initiatives.

UNDERSTANDING WHY STUDENTS FAIL TO SUBMIT ASSIGNMENTS



SPEAKERS

Samantha King, University of Northampton, England

Samantha King has been a Learning Development tutor at the University of Northampton since 2018. Prior to this, she gained several years' experience as an EAP lecturer in higher education. She is a Fellow of AdvanceHE and her research interests include the student experience, and supporting widening participation in HE.

Alison Loddick, University of Northampton, England

Alison Loddick is a Maths and Statistics Learning Development tutor at the University of Northampton. Her research focuses on why university students engage and disengage with their studies.

Tim Curtis, University of Northampton, England

Dr Tim Curtis is an associate professor in social innovation, systems thinking and sustainability. He is Programme Leader for the Integrated Foundation Year at the University of Northampton and has extensive experience of developing high impact learning and teaching strategies in higher education.

Deepak Bhachu, University of Northampton, England

Deepak Bhachu is a Senior Lecturer and Cognate Leader in Business, Management and Marketing for the Integrated Foundation Year at the University of Northampton. A lecturer with 14 years experience, he is passionate about supporting students in their academic journey, and specifically on removing barriers to achievement in higher education.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

In the UK, failing to submit an assessment at the first submission point is more prevalent among first year students and among black students. A survey of nearly 200 students explored this, using the student voice to provide insights into why this happens and how this can be prevented.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Non-submission of assignments has an impact on a significant minority of students but is not well understood (Prinsloo, 2019). This presentation reports on research exploring non-submission conducted at the University of Northampton in the UK.

At the University of Northampton, summative assignments are included in most modules as a method of assessment, either alone or in combination with examinations. However, a significant minority of undergraduate summative assessments are not submitted at the first submission point. Students who fail to submit at this first submission point are offered a second submission point, but their subsequent grade is capped at 40%.

Recent data from the University of Northampton shows that the proportion of students failing to submit is not evenly distributed but varies with level of study and ethnicity. The proportion of students failing to submit reduces with level of study, with the largest

proportion of students failing to submit at least one assignment occurring in the foundation year, followed by the first year (Coulson and Loddick, 2021). Additionally, it was found that 53 per cent of black students failed to submit at least one assessment during their university studies whereas the same was true of only 22 per cent of white students (Coulson and Loddick, 2021). As research shows that failing to submit an assignment increases the probability of a student withdrawing from their course, addressing the issue of non-submission could improve retention and continuation of students in the first years of their university study. In addition, it could close up to 50 per cent of the GEM (Global Ethnic Majority) attainment gap.

In order to explore why students fail to submit at the first submission point, a research partnership was set up between the Learning Development team and academic staff from the Integrated Foundation Year. A study was initiated which aimed to understand why students fail to submit and how they can best be supported to recover from this. For the first phase of this study, a survey was distributed to around 3000 current students who had failed to submit at least one summative assignment at the first submission point during their degree course. Nearly 200 students responded to the survey giving their reasons for non-submission and how they overcame them as well as suggesting additional areas for support. Nearly 20 per cent of survey respondents were in their first year of higher education and their experiences were compared to those in later years of study.

Findings show a range of reasons for non-submission ranging from personal circumstances to academic skills-related issues. Importantly, there were significant differences in the reasons given based on student ethnicity. Detailed findings will be presented. While the findings relate to one university in one country, it is likely that they will be relevant to other institutions throughout Europe who share a similar context. This research will inform the practice of learning developers, lecturers, and institutions, giving an insight into how we can improve retention and progression of students of all ethnicities in their first year of higher education and beyond.



REFERENCES

Coulson, K. and Loddick, A. (2021) Non-submission of assessments – the impact on the BAME attainment gap. Association for Learning Development in Higher Education (ALDinHE) Conference [Online], 7-9th April 2021.

Prinsloo, P. (2019) Tracking (un) belonging: At the intersections of human-algorithmic student support. Pan-Commonwealth Forum, 9-12 September 2019, Edinburgh, Scotland

Parallel 3.7 (20-Minute Presentation), Room 2517

DEMYSTIFYING HIGHER EDUCATION THROUGH DIALOGUE: THE USE OF PEER ASSISTED LEARNING



SPEAKERS

Rachel Milne, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Rachel Milne is a PAL Coordinator and PAL Leader at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Her research interests include supplementary instruction, widening participation in education, and representations of marginalised identities in the arts and humanities. Twitter: @rachelmmilne

Linnea Wallen, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Linnea Wallen is a Lecturer and PhD Candidate in Public Sociology at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Her research interests include communities of practice, museums, sustainable community engagement and memory work. Twitter: @linneawallens

Karl Johnson, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Karl Johnson is a Lecturer and Programme Leader in Public Sociology at Queen Margaret University (Edinburgh). He researches and writes about widening access to higher education, social theory and pop culture, and issues affecting the Scottish Islands. Twitter: @karlpjohnson

Lisa Vettese Cruden, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Lisa Vettese Cruden is a PAL Coordinator and Learning Developer at Queen Margaret University. She is based in the Widening Participation Team working on outreach projects, and student academic support. Her research interests focus on widening access and learning support.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Peer Assisted Learning is used at Queen Margaret University as a key provision in both initial and longitudinal induction. This presentation explores the importance of PAL in fostering a sense of community for students and the role dialogue plays in the sharing of experiences and relationship-building between students.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) model is globally well-established as a key provision in supporting students through university and the body of research evidencing its efficacy is constantly expanding. Queen Margaret University (QMU) has a diverse student population, with a high percentage of students from Widening Participation (WP) backgrounds including many Direct Entrant (DE) students who matriculate directly into second or third year on completion of a relevant college qualification. PAL was first introduced at QMU in 2017 and has quickly become an integral component of our students' undergraduate journey. Beginning in Induction Week, the scheme supports

students at each transitional stage from first to fourth year. Trained student-leaders facilitate student-led sessions in which they demystify expectations and explore their learning together with cohorts in the years below them; functioning as a learning community providing ongoing orientation and academic support.

Dialogue is key to the success of PAL as sessions are designed around the sharing of experiences and the building of relationships; amongst leaders, between leaders and participants, and amongst participants. Indeed, although the foremost aim of PAL is to provide academic support, it is equally important for its role in generating a sense of community amongst students. The model helps foster a sense of belonging to their cohort, programme, division and the university as a whole. Previous evaluative research of PAL at QMU has shown that both leaders and participants perceive sessions as supportive, friendly spaces for students across programmes and years to explore, develop and take ownership of their learning together.

In this presentation, we will build on the existing theory and research on student community and the use of PAL in Higher Education. We will present qualitative data generated between 2020-2022 through surveys, focus groups and written reflections, including a mix of PAL leader and participant voices from across a range of programmes at the university. We will contribute to existing research by placing particular emphasis on the notion and practical use of dialogue in student-led, PAL spaces in Higher Education with reference to public sociological ideas of radical educational practices. Equally, we reflect on how peer-dialogue in this context can be used to foster a sense of belonging amongst students across years and programmes, as well how it can support students in demystifying university life academically and socially. At QMU the personal growth of our students is as important as their academic success – particularly those from WP backgrounds – and peer dialogue is key to this.

HOW PEER SUPPORT CAN POSITIVELY IMPACT FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS' TRANSITION INTO UNIVERSITY



SPEAKER

Carly Emsley-Jones, Cardiff University, Wales

A Higher Education Professional with extensive experience within teaching and student support services, Carly Emsley-Jones (FHEA) is the Academic Skills and Mentoring Manager at Cardiff University. Working in these areas has provided Carly with a holistic understanding of the factors contributing to the student experience and transition into Higher Education.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The Student Mentor Scheme at Cardiff University has trained over 4,500 student mentors and supported almost 40,000 first-year students with their transition into university. Our evidence demonstrates that peer support can develop positive peer to peer relationships, create a sense of belonging and even limit the potential of withdrawal.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Whilst we acknowledge the transition into university can be exciting, it can also be overwhelming for some students. This is where our award-winning Student Mentor Scheme comes in to support first-year students at Cardiff University. We are now celebrating a decade of support, connections and a sense of community, and are delighted to share our practice and learning with colleagues across Europe.

As the Student Mentor Scheme has been operating for ten years, we have a wealth of feedback demonstrating the positive impact that peer support can have on the first-year experience. Supporting students to have a positive transition experience enables them to cultivate a sense of belonging which contributes to student success. Whilst this has always been important, COVID-19 has affected students in different ways. As a result, the scheme has recently evolved, embraced new technology and ways of working to ensure that it remains a helpful resource for first-year students.

Feedback from the 2022/23 academic year demonstrated that 73% of first-year students said the mentor scheme helped them settle into and feel part of Cardiff University and 72% of students developed positive peer-to-peer relationships as a result of having a student mentor.

In addition to this, 27% of respondents said that they had sometimes or often considered dropping out of Cardiff University, but 60% of those stated that having a student mentor influenced their decision to stay. Feedback such as this would not be possible without our student mentors who volunteer their time. Whilst this is positive, there is also an opportunity to highlight some of the challenges which are presented to us such as getting some first-year students to engage with the scheme.

Moving forward, we are looking for ways to measure the impact of the scheme on a more holistic basis. Whilst we predominately monitor activity through mentoring sessions, we appreciate that connections are developed outside of these sessions through digital tools

such as phones, computers and social media channels. This presents an opportunity for us to provide a contemporary peer support scheme which meets the needs of our diverse students, in an ever-changing environment.