



UNIVERSITY OF
LINCOLN

TRANSITIONING STUDENTS EFFECTIVELY: A student led approach to mental health support

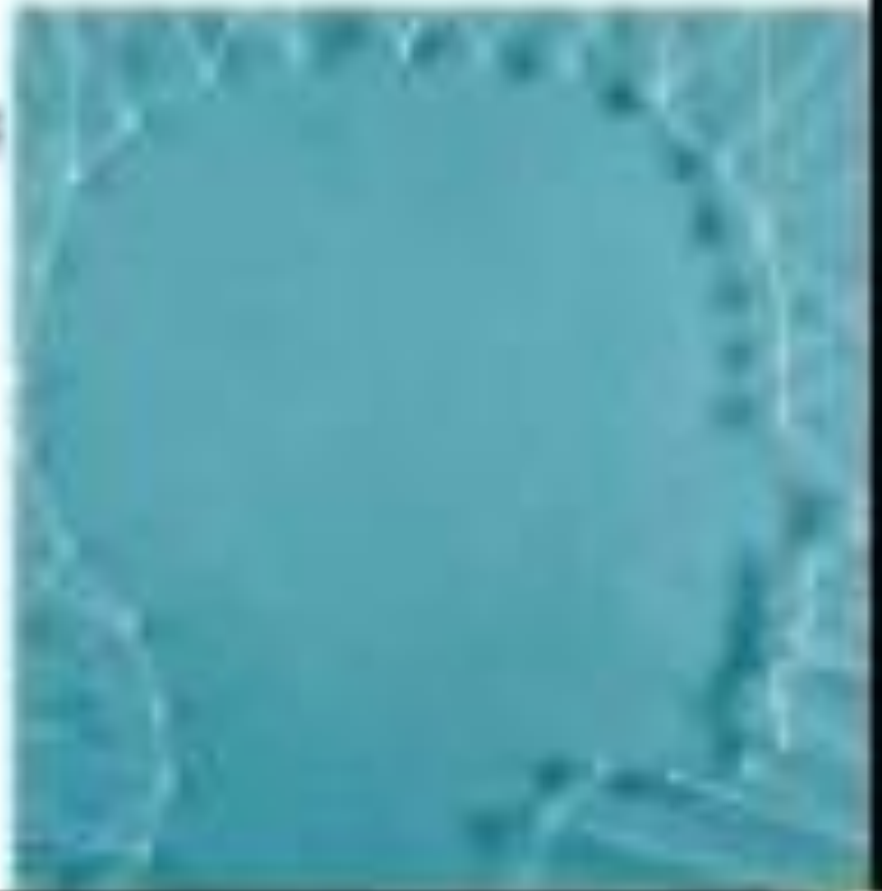
Project Overview

Office for
Students

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Achieving a step change in mental health outcomes for all students

- (1 in 5 students)
- 75% mental health issues by 2020
- Priorities
 - 1. Increase awareness
 - 2. Early intervention
 - 3. Development of self-help resources
 - 4. Collaboration with students



Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

- An Office for Students funded project, led by the University of Lincoln.
- Enhancing and supporting student mental health and wellbeing, particularly in transition from school to university.
- Developing processes, procedures and tools enabling students to support themselves and each other.
- City-wide approach partnering with other institutions, support services and student representatives.
- Activities led by staff based in Student Wellbeing and Digital Student Experience.

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Transitional Wellbeing Activities

- School and college outreach support, face-to-face and virtual presentations and workshops.
- Digital resource packs and booklets, for school and college staff, parents and guardians.
- ‘Fresh Start’ workshops, for transitional students at key points in the academic year.
- Wellbeing Orientation Welcome (WOW) Summer School.
- Support for pre-entry and incoming students accessing Student Wellbeing.



'It was a good opportunity to get a feel of the university prior to starting, and making new friends and memories.'

WOW 2020 attendee

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Digital Student Experience activities

- A diverse range of content including videos, vlogs, articles, podcasts and apps.
- The 'Fresher Take' podcast series, hosted by students.
- Creation of a 'Senior Tutor Newsletter' on useful resources and support for tutors to share with students.
- Student co-production facilitated by the project team and all content was co-produced.
- Co-production workshops sharing 'best practice' were delivered to project partners Bishop Grosseteste University and others.



**FRESHER
T A K E**

'The articles on managing different things have helped me understand how I'm feeling and how to cope with stress and anxiety.'

First year UoL student

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Challenges

- Covid-19 affected delivery of outreach sessions, the team adapted to virtual provision, allowing support to be provided further afield.
- Not all students had made decisions about their future or chosen university. Monitoring progress of students who received specialist outreach support was a challenge.
- Social distancing guidelines affected quality video content during national lockdown restrictions. Vlogs, blogs and animated resources produced more at those times.
- Training and supporting students at other institutions had limited success, difficult to maintain student engagement in content creation without having regular contact.

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Findings

- Successful outreach programme established and delivered, with the support of university and local partners, to increase contacts and broaden the reach.
- Content welcomed and valued by school and college students, teachers, parents and guardians as well as pre-entry and current UoL students.
- WOW students valued the experience with many stating it had reduced anxieties and increased confidence in managing change.
- The project focused on student involvement and encouraged student voices to be heard within its planning, creation and delivery.
- Student co-creation helped develop initiatives that were relatable, engaging and of value to the student community.

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Findings

- Fifty-five student content creators and 3 student editors employed. Increased their confidence and furthered their understanding of mental health and wellbeing, to help themselves and others.
- A trial of the 'Student Life' app by Lincoln Medical School pre-entry students, showed provision of the app was beneficial and made transition into university easier for those using it.
- Where appropriate, project partners have utilised the projects numerous resources and shared amongst their student communities.
- The final project report, with full findings and recommendations, will be available post project on the project website.

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Legacy

- Project website hosting Transitional Wellbeing and Digital Student Experience content and resources alongside articles and reports:

<https://mentalhealthproject.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/>

- Project resources will be used where appropriate and able, by outreach teams in the UoL Education Liaison team and LiNCHigher.
- ‘How to run a successful summer school’ resource package shared widely across the sector, for institutions to use or consider:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/university-of-lincoln-how-to-run-a-successful-summer-school.html>

Transitioning students effectively: *Project overview*

Legacy

- Feedback from focus groups has been actioned by app developers, to help shape the future design of the ‘Student Life’ app.
- Project activities remaining in UoL include the ‘Fresher Take’ podcast, ‘Fresh Start’ workshops, ‘WOW’ summer school, ‘Student Life’ app and student content creation.
- The Digital Student Experience team is now helping and supporting other universities to set up similar student-led content creation initiatives.



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QUESTIONS?

Thank you for listening.

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