

GENERAL INFORMATION	
Title	Student Navigation Network: Peer mentoring scheme
Key words	Peer mentoring, support for student well being, advice, study support
Objectives	<p>The peer mentoring scheme is part of the Student Navigation Network whose aim is to provide academic and pastoral support (support for student well-being) for students in their transition to university.</p> <p>Objectives of peer mentoring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To foster a positive and inclusive atmosphere, improve their experience and encourage a sense of belonging. 2. To match mentors to new students from the time of students' first arrival at the University and throughout the first year 3. To provide personal and professional development opportunities for students acting as peer mentors
Phase of studies <i>(Choose all phases it applies)</i>	Access <input type="checkbox"/> Retain <input type="checkbox"/> X Graduation <input type="checkbox"/> Transition to work-life <input type="checkbox"/>
Type of degree <i>(Choose all degrees it applies)</i>	Bachelor's <input type="checkbox"/> X Graduate <input type="checkbox"/> Master's <input type="checkbox"/>
Level <i>(Choose all levels it applies)</i>	International <input type="checkbox"/> National <input type="checkbox"/> Institutional <input type="checkbox"/> X Faculty <input type="checkbox"/> X Group <input type="checkbox"/> X Individual <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of the institution	University of Bristol
Location <i>(City and country)</i>	Bristol, United Kingdom

Target group/s	First year undergraduate students
Stakeholders involved	Undergraduate students acting as mentors and mentees, the Widening Participation team (the team who support under-represented students within the university)
Description of the organisational process <i>Actors, triggering evidence, campaigns, graph... (max. 300 words)</i>	<p>New first year students are invited to take part in the scheme through a written communication, which includes a copy of the guide from the Student Navigation Network team once they have received their letter offering them a place. Non-traditional students are targeted with a further follow up email to encourage these students in particular to take this up, although the scheme is open to everyone. Students wishing to take part and work with a mentor are asked to complete a short online form in early September. A welcome event is then held to introduce the scheme and for students to ask questions. Mentors (those providing the support) and Mentees (those receiving support) are then matched. Mentors are all studying for postgraduate degrees. Mentors receive training and some have had specific training in particular areas, for example disabilities such as Aspergers syndrome and then work with students with particular needs.</p> <p>The aim is to match mentors and mentees in September each year so that new first year students can receive support even before they arrive. This year, a new Welcome event was set up in a single evening, rather than several day-time meetings, split by faculty. Approximately 600 students attended the welcome event in 2015/16. Once the link has been established, it is up to the Mentor and Mentee how often they meet up and how they stay in touch, although mentors are guided to make contact once a week until at least the end December.</p> <p>Topics are up to the Mentee although this can include information on university life, advice on how to get around, where things are, social clubs and activities and tips on exams, coursework and study skills. In particular, the scheme aims for the Mentee to talk through any worries or concerns and get advice from a peer that they trust.</p>

A. FORMAL EVALUATION CRITERIA

A1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION <i>Provide sources of information (URL, websites, literature, materials)</i>	PDF guide for students on Peer mentoring http://www.bristol.ac.uk/media-library/sites/newstudents/documents/2015/student-navigation-network.pdf Support contacts: http://www.bristol.ac.uk/sraa/uk-student-recruitment/student-support-team/
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<p>A2. TIMEFRAME <i>Since when has it been in use? What is its maturity level (initial, intermediate, advanced)? Describe if there is evidence of its duration in the long run. (max. 70 words)</i></p>	<p>The scheme is advanced in maturity. It began in 2006 with a small pilot in the faculty of Social Sciences and Law. Since then it has expanded every year and in 2013/14 the scheme was extended to all first year students in the university. Widening participation students have never been specifically targeted but students who meet the WP criteria are sent individual emails inviting them to take part.</p>
<p>A3. NUMBER OF STUDENTS <i>How many students are involved? Is the number representative considering the target group?</i></p>	<p>This year (2015/16) 1503 first year undergraduate students opted to have a peer mentor. This is 28% of the first year population. At least 338 (24%) were international students. From non-traditional groups of those who were known to be UK students (58%), the scheme worked with 181 students from ethnic minorities (11% increase), 114 students from low participation neighbourhoods, 45 students with a disability (18% decrease), and 28 mature students (although there were 62 mature students overall).</p> <p>In addition, although not a widening participation (non-traditional student) measure used in the University's Access Agreement, students with no parental history of HE have also been identified. 247 students with no parental history of HE participated in the programme (69% increase). These students may require additional support in their transition to the University of Bristol due to having no parental experience of HE to draw on.</p> <p>Of the known UK students, ethnic minorities and first generation in HE students were overrepresented this year. However, only 8% were from low participation neighbourhoods.</p>
<p>A4. SCALABILITY ("volume") <i>Describe how it has been or can potentially be scaled up and practiced in a wider scale. Or, has it been or can it potentially be scaled down (e.g., from larger to smaller institutions)? (max. 70 words)</i></p>	<p>It has been scaled up from a small initial pilot in one school in one faculty in 2006 to a university-wide scheme for all first year student and numbers have increased year on year.</p> <p>This scheme has potential to be scalable either up or down.</p>
<p>A5. TRANSFERABILITY (from one context to another) <i>Describe how it has been or can potentially be transferred and applied to different (a) target groups, (b) institutions, and (c) societies. If possible, name also some practices that this initiative was developed from or has inspired to. (max. 70 words)</i></p>	<p>The scheme is currently being considered for doctoral students in the university through the Bristol Doctoral College. Most UK universities have a similar kind of scheme but there is also a regional network for peer support that shares good practice (although not specifically focused on non-traditional students).</p>

<p>A6. ASSESSMENT <i>Describe how it has been evaluated. How has it proved its relevance as the most effective way to achieve the objective? How it was successfully adopted? How it has had a positive impact on people? How the impact has been measured? Shortly describe how various forms of evaluations have been used in the assessment (A6.1 User evaluation, A6.2 Self-evaluation, A6.3 Peer evaluation, A6.4 External expert evaluation). Provide references, if possible. (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>The peer mentoring scheme is evaluated every year through an online survey of the Mentees and Mentors, usually in February. The survey results are then compared year on year since 2010/11.</p> <p>The survey results show that scheme has grown consistently in popularity since its inception. In 2010/11 199 mentees participated in the scheme, in 2014/15 this was 933 and for 2015/16 this figure is 1503. This represents a 58% increase from 2014/15. The scheme is widely taken up by students from all six faculties (Arts, Biomedical Sciences, Engineering, Health Sciences, Science, Social Sciences and Law) with most uptake in Science and Social Sciences (342, 391).</p> <p>Number of contacts in 2015/16 ranged from 1(55), 2-3 times (113) 4-7 times (95), 8 times or more (18). 17 students did not meet their mentor.</p> <p>An evaluation report is produced annually and can be requested but is not publicly available.</p>
<p>A7. CONTACT <i>Who can be contacted so as to seek support and networks for implementing the practice (name, position, e-mail)?</i></p>	<p>There is a mentoring and tutoring co-ordinator who oversees the scheme. Email contact student-navigation-network@bristol.ac.uk.</p>

B. CONTENT EVALUATION CRITERIA

B1. SOCIAL JUSTICE PRINCIPLES (see Nelson & Creagh, 2013)

<p>B1.1 Self-determination <i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i></p>	<p><i>Very weakly</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>Weakly</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>	<p><i>Well</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">X</p>	<p><i>Very well</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><input type="checkbox"/></p>
<p><i>(how students have participated to its (a) design, (b) enactment and (c) evaluation and how they can (d) make informed decisions about the participation)</i></p>	<p>Students have participated in a), b) c) and d). The scheme functions well because of the relationships between those asking for and giving support. The support team have consulted and worked with both Mentors and Mentees each year to develop improvements over time. For example, adjustments have been made to the number of mentees each mentor is assigned over time and the design of welcome sessions and training has been done in conjunction with students participating in the scheme.</p>			

B1.2 Rights <i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i>	<i>Very weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Well</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<i>Very well</i> <input type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>(how it is assured that all participants are treated with dignity and respect. How have their individual cultural, social and knowledge systems been recognised and valued?)</i></p>	<p>This is ensured through the information and induction given to Mentees at the start and the training that Mentors receive which now includes more specialist training to enable the support of students with particular needs or disabilities.</p>			
B1.3 Access <i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i>	<i>Very weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Well</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Very well</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>(how it is assured that there is an active and impartial access to the resources (e.g., curriculum, learning, academic, social, cultural, support, and financial resources))</i></p>	<p>This scheme is open to all students but with a targeted invitation to non-traditional students. It is felt important not to label the non-traditional students as ‘needing support’ but instead they are given specific encouragement to participate.</p>			
B1.4 Equity <i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i>	<i>Very weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Well</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Very well</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>(how if it openly demystifies and decodes dominant university cultures, processes, expectations and language for differently prepared cohorts)</i></p>	<p>The scheme is specifically designed to help students in demystifying university cultures, regulations and expectations, help develop a sense of belonging and gives targeted support for student well being.</p>			
B1.5 Participation <i>Rate and Justify (max. 70 words)</i>	<i>Very weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Weakly</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Well</i> <input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Very well</i> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p><i>(how it has led to socially inclusive practices. How does it increase students’ sense of belonging and connectedness?)</i></p>	<p>The most recent evaluation report (2015/16) states that 84% of Mentees felt that peer mentoring had improved their student experience. The more contact Mentors and Mentees had, the greater the benefit reported. For some students, just one contact improved their student experience ‘to a great extent’. Most common areas covered were social aspects of university and settling in but study skills and exams were also very common topics.</p>			
B2. COLLABORATION <i>Describe what kind of collaboration there is between various stakeholders. (max. 70 words)</i>	<p>The scheme is led by the Widening Participation Student Support team within the Student Recruitment, Access and Admissions division. Mentors and Mentees are invited to contribute the development of the scheme.</p>			

<p>B3. STUDENT SATISFACTION <i>Describe the student perception of this initiative. Is there evidence of their satisfaction? (see also A6.1) (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>As above, the most recent evaluation report states that 84% of Mentees in 2015/16 felt that peer mentoring had improved their student experience. The more contact Mentors and Mentees had, the greater the benefit reported. In addition, for some students, just one contact improved their student experience 'to a great extent'. The following free text quotes illustrate this:</p> <p><i>'Increased my enjoyment of the subject and helped me settle into university life.'</i></p> <p><i>'Made me feel more confident and excited as we discussed all of my concerns and thoughts out starting Uni and moving to a new city etc'.</i></p> <p><i>'Very comforting to receive a friendly email in amongst so many other computer generated ones from university, UCAS and funding places :)'</i></p> <p><i>'Really helped to not be nervous, helped me plan out what I would need to bring from my country, what I'd need to do, how to go about it and just made the initial days of uni very easy'</i></p> <p><i>'Starting uni initially seemed less daunting. I was also able to meet up with my peer mentor during the mature student welcome events.'</i></p>
<p>B4. STUDENT WELLBEING <i>How does it influence on students' (a) psychological, (b) social, (c) academic, and (d) physical wellbeing? What kind of evidence there is? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>The evaluation report shows that a), b), c) and d) are all influenced, depending on the students' needs and circumstances. The evaluation report details that following topics have been covered in peer mentoring sessions :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Talking about social aspects of university life ● Settling into University life ● Study skills ● Exam/revision skills ● Understanding other aspects of university ● Accommodation issues ● Talking about personal issues ● Researching/planning coursework ● Understanding how my department works ● Other course issues ● Finding other sources of support ● Financial issues

C. FINAL REFLECTIONS

(based on the previous description of your good practice)

<p>Success factors <i>What are the factors required for the successful implementation? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>The initial piloting in one academic department or school seems to be an important strategy in developing the scheme and learning early lessons. The early invitation to participate and careful targeting of non-traditional students, whilst retaining the commitment to a service that is open to all students is also an important element of the design. The training and increasingly specialist training of mentors is also an important factor for success. Evaluation year on year enables the team to track challenges and the impact of changes over time.</p>
<p>Sustainability <i>What is needed for the practice to sustain? What resources are required? How it contributes to environmental, economic or social sustainability? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>There is a need for a support team to design, support and evaluate the scheme and to work with mentors and mentees on developing it further. However the support team, as in the case at Bristol, can be part of a team with a wider remit.</p>
<p>Challenges <i>What are the constraints identified? How easy it is to learn and implement? (max. 200 words)</i></p>	<p>The scheme seems relatively easy to set up but the training of mentors is critical.</p>

Sources

Kunttu, K. 2005. The study ability model. The Finnish Student Health Service (FSHS). (http://www.yths.fi/filebank/692-ENG_OPISKELUKYKYMALLI_pdf.pdf)

Nelson, K & Creagh T. 2013. A Good Practice Guide: Safeguarding Student Learning Engagement. Queensland University of Technology. Brisbane, Australia. (http://safeguardingstudentlearning.net/wp-content/uploads/2012/04/LTU_Good-practice-guide_eBook_20130320.pdf)