Making student engagement a reality and next steps: Students as Partners in Redesigning the First Year Experience

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Birmingham City University
What Works: Student retention and success programme 2012-16

BCU approach founded upon:
Student engagement philosophy
Creating a sense of learning community
Students’ Union partnership
Poor retention/student dissatisfaction in some areas
The aims of the Birmingham City University initiative were to:

- interweave Students’ Union and academic elements to better support students through the transition into and through university;
- utilise this approach to provide students with a multiplicity of avenues for support and advice;
- ensure a smoother and more successful transition that leads to greater student and organisational success.

Through these aims the University hoped to:

- develop principles, processes and examples at programme and school level of how to improve transition and retention practices;
- raise the profile of this important work though the promotion of this externally validated initiative across the university;
- enhance the partnership with the Students’ Union;
- share approaches from other participating universities in the programme.
Staff – student partnerships
UK Engagement survey 2015 at BCU

Very often or often (sometimes)

Discussed your academic performance with staff 38% (41%)

Discussed ideas about your course with staff outside teaching sessions 26% (40%)

Worked with teaching staff on activities other than coursework 18% (26%)
Staff – student partnerships
UK Engagement survey 2015 at BCU

Very often or often encouraged to: (some)
Contribute to a joint community of staff and students 38% (32%)
Work with staff to make improvements to your course 37% (33%)
Work with staff to evaluate teaching and assessment practices 36% (32%)
Task 1

Identify a successful area of staff-student relationships at your university? Why does it work?

Share for 5 minutes on your table
What Works: 
Our approach to support

Identifying stress points
Pre entry transition mentoring
Extended workshops
Embedded specialist mentoring
Student Success Advisers
Personal Tutoring development

“Offering the personal touch through connected services within the academic environment”
Welcome to Birmingham School of Media

At the Birmingham School of Media we are in the business of producing creative media thinkers. So in preparation for study with us, we want you to get into the habit of being curious about everything! We encourage you to become devoted media consumers (if you aren’t already!) and to evaluate and question the construction of each media text that you consume.

At the Birmingham School of Media, we aim to fuel your passions and throughout your studies with us, you are encouraged to be creative and
As you will have seen in your Welcome Packs we are asking you to make your Year 1 Module choices online by 30th August 2015. You’ll have received information about the Modules you can choose in your packs and above is a film that we’d like you to watch, where the Degree Leaders outline the various Modules for you. Please watch all of the film before you make your choices (it’s around 12 minutes long), as we want you to make the right decisions for you. Remember that the Modules you choose in Year 1 will affect what you can choose to study in Year 2, so please choose wisely.
OUR LEVEL UP VENTURE MENTORS
You gotta just LUVM!
Student Success Advisers

• Pre Induction & Welcome Week
• Attendance monitoring
• Personal Tutoring maintenance
• Workshops
• Moodle Monitoring
• Applicant Visit Day Coordination
• Student Tutorials/Mentoring : one to one advice
Welcome Week 2014

Register for updates

Your Email

Register
Task 2

How can we use engagement to enhance a sense of belonging within Welcome/Freshers’ Week?

Describe an activity or type of activity that helps to develop this sense?
High-Impact Educational Practices

★ First Year Seminars & Experiences
★ Common Intellectual Experiences
★ Learning Communities
★ Writing-Intensive Courses
★ Collaborative Assignments & Courses
★ Undergraduate Research
★ Diversity/Global Learning
★ Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
★ Internships
★ Capstone Courses & Projects

http://www.aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm
DESIGNING AN ORIENTATION AND TRANSITION STRATEGY FOR COMMENCING STUDENTS

A conceptual summary of research and practice
Alf Lizzio (2006)
Welcome to EDU7211 Transition and the First Year Experience

This module is designed to allow you to explore some of the existing practice surrounding student transitions as they join Birmingham City University, and to examine new ways of developing our current provision in order to enhance their experience across the first year and beyond.

News forum: Come Talk To Us and Each Other!
Task 4

Scenario….you are the external adviser on the approval panel for a new degree programme

What question would you ask of the first year programme lead?
Embedded Belonging

Through Institutional Student Engagement