



LINCOLN HIGHER EDUCATION  
RESEARCH INSTITUTE



*Transitioning students effectively:  
A student-led approach to mental health support*

Office for Students Mental Health Challenge Competition  
Final Project Report

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March 2022

## Acknowledgements

Professor John Sharp for your patience, advice and support, especially during the final evaluating and reporting period. And for giving my head a wobble when needed. Colleagues within the Lincoln Higher Education Research Institute (LHERI) team, for being warm, welcoming and supportive throughout, particularly with your hugely valuable peer reviews and feedback. Thank you.

Cate Neal, for two years of leading the project, producing literature reviews, articles, case studies and reports and for your crucial help and advice during our Project Manager handovers. Jacqueline Mayer, Tom Wright and Professor Liz Mossop for the original project bid and grant application and your continued support and guidance throughout. The Transitional Wellbeing and Digital Student Experience teams, for adapting to every challenge, working tirelessly throughout the project's duration whilst providing much needed and valued expertise (and very welcomed humour on occasion too).

For support and commitment during the project, heartfelt thanks is extended to all project partners, Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), Bishop Grosseteste University Students' Union, Lincoln College, Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT), Lincolnshire Police, LiNCHigher, University of Lincoln (UoL) Students' Union and UniWellbeing. Gratitude is also given to all UoL colleagues but, in particular, Julie Spencer and the wider Student Wellbeing team, Dr Roger Bretherton, Emma Jubbs and Dr Jessica Hodgson, for your valuable input, work and support in helping to achieve the project aims.

And importantly, a huge thank you to all students involved in every aspect, who gave their time in school, college and university focus groups, project evaluation activities and all those who supported the project, in a content creator, editor or ambassador role.

Zoë Mills  
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March 2022

## Contents

Executive Summary.....	7
Part 1 Introduction.....	22
1.1 Background.....	22
1.2 Project Overview .....	22
1.3 Project Governance and Staff .....	23
1.4 Partnerships .....	25
1.5 Evaluation Approach and Reporting .....	28
1.6 Impact of Covid-19 .....	29
Part 2 Literature Review .....	31
2.1 Review of Current Literature.....	31
2.2 Project Alignment.....	38
Part 3 Data Collection Methods.....	40
3.1 Evaluation Approach .....	40
3.2 Quantitative Data Collection .....	40
3.3 Qualitative Data Collection .....	41
3.4 Strengths and Limitations .....	41
Part 4 Transitional Wellbeing Activities .....	44
4.1 Background.....	44
4.2 Transitional Outreach Resources and Sessions.....	44
4.3 Outreach Sessions to Schools and Colleges .....	47
4.4 Wellbeing Orientation Welcome (WOW) Transitional Summer School .....	53
4.5 WOW Summer School 2019.....	54
4.6 WOW Summer School 2020.....	56
4.7 WOW Summer School 2021.....	60
4.8 WOW Summer School 2022.....	62
4.9 Fresh Start Workshops .....	62
4.10 School Student Focus Group .....	64
4.11 Student Advisory Board.....	64
4.12 Summary of Transitional Wellbeing Activities .....	65
Part 5 Digital Student Experience Team Activities .....	68
5.1 Background.....	68
5.2 2019 Digital Focus Group .....	68

5.3 Fika App Trial and Focus Group.....	71
5.4 Digital Content and Reach.....	74
5.5 Fresher Take Podcast Series.....	79
5.6 Student Life (UniWellbeing) App.....	80
5.7 First Year of Student Life App Usage Report.....	80
5.8 Lincoln Medical School ‘Student Life’ App Trial.....	84
5.9 Student Content Creators.....	90
5.10 Student Content Creator Survey.....	91
5.11 Senior Tutor Newsletter.....	93
5.12 Digital Collaboration With Partners.....	94
5.13 Summary of Digital Student Experience Team Activities.....	95
Part 6 Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP).....	97
6.1 Background.....	97
6.2 MBSP Study.....	97
6.3 Results.....	97
Part 7 Dissemination.....	99
7.1 Background.....	99
Part 8 Project Staff, Partner and Stakeholder Feedback.....	102
8.1 Project Feedback.....	102
Part 9 Project Legacy.....	104
9.1 Background.....	104
9.2 Legacy.....	104
Part 10 Findings and Recommendations.....	107
10.1 Findings.....	107
10.2 Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions.....	109
10.3 Recommendations for Schools and Further Education Providers.....	110
10.4 Recommendations for Future OfS Funded Mental Health Projects.....	111
Part 11 References.....	112
Part 12 Appendices.....	116
12.1 Project Resources: Available Links.....	116
12.2 Transitional Outreach Session Student Feedback Form.....	125
12.3 Transitional Outreach Session Staff Feedback Google form.....	126
12.4 Fresh Start Feedback Google Form.....	127

12.5 WOW (2020) Feedback Form .....128  
12.6 Lincoln Medical School Student Focus Group Questions .....129  
12.7 Lincoln Medical School Students Follow Up Google Form Survey.....131  
12.8 Student Content Creator Google Form Survey .....134

## Tables

Table 1 The key benefits of peer support for the different stakeholders .....	35
Table 2 Key features of digital content supporting student wellbeing and their benefits.....	37
Table 3 Interview and Focus Groups as an evaluation tool.....	41
Table 4 Questionnaires as an evaluation tool.....	42
Table 5 Schools and colleges receiving face to face and virtual outreach sessions .....	48
Table 6 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 June 2019 and 30 November 2019 .....	49
Table 7 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 December 2019 and 31 May 2020 .....	49
Table 8 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020.....	50
Table 9 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2021 .....	50
Table 10 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2021 .....	51
Table 11 Digital Student Experience output between 1 June 2019 and 30 November 2019.....	75
Table 12 Digital Student Experience output between 1 December 2019 and 31 May 2020 .....	75
Table 13 Digital Student Experience output between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020 .....	76
Table 14 Digital Student Experience output between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2020 .....	76
Table 15 Digital Student Experience output between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2021 .....	77
Table 16 Digital Student Experience output between 1 January 2022 and 28 February 2022 .....	78

## Figures

Figure 1 Students disclosing a mental health condition to HEI's 2006/7 – 2015/16.....	32
Figure 2 Transitional student concerns, ranked by students from 0 – 10 .....	33
Figure 3 Outreach session geographical locations of schools and colleges.....	47
Figure 4.1 Average results of students' confidence in managing stress and emotions .....	52
Figure 4.2 Average results of students' confidence in managing change and being independent.....	52
Figure 5.1 Participants self-rated score totals for anxiety.....	58
Figure 5.2 Participants self-rated score totals for confidence in ability to manage change .....	58
Figure 8 Unique Active User activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app .....	81
Figure 9 New Registration activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app .....	81
Figure 10 Wellbeing Days activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app .....	82
Figure 11 App Event activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app .....	83

## Executive Summary

### 0.1 Introduction

0.1.1 *Transitioning students effectively: A student-led approach to mental health support* was a £736,000 Office for Students (OfS) funded project supporting the wellbeing of students as they transition from school or college into university. The project was led by a core team of professional services staff within the University of Lincoln (UoL), who took an integrated approach to the planning and delivery of all activities. However, project activities generally fell into two categories – those led by the Transitional Wellbeing team staff based in the Student Wellbeing Centre, carrying out a range of activities, including transitional outreach work in schools and colleges, and those led by the project staff based in the Digital Student Experience team (previously known as Digital Student Life), producing student-led content and resources and trialling apps. Additionally, professional services and academic staff from across the university and partner organisations including Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), Bishop Grosseteste University Students' Union, Lincoln College, Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT), Lincolnshire Police, LiNCHigher, UoL Students' Union and UniWellbeing worked collaboratively on various elements of the project. The project ran from July 2019 and was originally due to end in December 2021, but completed in March 2022 following a three month extension granted by the OfS due to the impact of Covid-19. Since the start of the project, a range of interventions were successfully implemented by the project team, activities and findings for the project are summarised below whilst links to all of the resources produced throughout the duration of the project are provided (Appendix 12.1).

### 0.2 Transitional Wellbeing Team Activities

0.2.1 The team designed, produced and delivered a successful transitional outreach programme to school and college students across Lincolnshire and beyond. A full suite of outreach resources was developed, on topics such as 'Emotional Fitness', 'Getting Ahead' and 'Next Steps'. UoL Students' Union elected sabbatical officers also joined school outreach sessions, offering peer support and sharing their lived experiences at support sessions.

0.2.2 Production and delivery of 'Fresh Start' workshops was undertaken by the team which were offered to new students at the start of term and shortly after the festive break - a time when some students can feel overwhelmed. The team wanted to re-frame the feeling of more traditional 'homesickness' workshops, to include focused support around this area, but also provide advice and information around managing change, when to seek help and most importantly, to reassure students that they are not alone.

0.2.3 Three Wellbeing Orientation Welcome (WOW) residential summer schools held in 2019, 2020 and 2021 were overseen by the team, providing a three day, two night stay

on campus to 157 students across the project duration. WOW was offered to students who had concerns around transition and managing change. The project team increased provision of places throughout the project and in 2021 the summer school provided support to 72 of the 157 students on campus, the largest group overall. Student Ambassadors during WOW were previous summer school attendees, offering peer support to pre-entry students, sharing lived experiences and prior knowledge of attending the residential.

0.2.4 The team also designed, produced and shared a welcome video for all new, enrolling students to the UoL: 'You're at University, Now What? An introductory talk on University Life.' This resource was shown during welcome sessions to all new students arriving at the UoL following enrolment.

0.2.5 A 'How to run a successful summer school' resource package was also produced by the team, based on the experience of managing and hosting the WOW summer schools. This resource was shared across the sector as 'best practice' for institutions and organisations to use or consider:

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

0.2.6 Support was provided by the Transitional Wellbeing team to all prospective students who disclose a diagnosis of a disability, condition or mental health concern to the UoL via their Universities and Colleges Admissions Service (UCAS) application. Contact with pre-entry students, provision of support, coordination of care plans and Personal Academic Study Support (PASS) plans was delivered by Transitional Wellbeing colleagues, with the number of disclosures and support requests increasing each year of the project.

0.2.7 The purpose of resources produced by the project, was to make content available to all, to use as needed in supporting the wider student community locally, nationally and sector wide. All project resources developed by the Transitional Wellbeing team are available for use on the project website:

<https://mentalhealthproject.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/schools-outreach/>

### **0.3 Transitional Wellbeing Team Highlights**

0.3.1 Fifty-nine separate outreach sessions were delivered to 36 schools and colleges comprised of 24 virtual sessions and 35 face to face sessions across the project duration. Transitional outreach sessions were directly delivered to over 5,300 school and college students across workshops, presentations and education fairs and project resources were shared across a much wider reach of institutions than those where outreach sessions were directly delivered. Digital resources were individually shared with over 230 schools and colleges, following personal phone calls to institution staff.

0.3.2 Transitional activities had a known audience reach of over 17,800, including support provided during live online sessions for the UoL and other local providers, summer schools and outreach sessions.

0.3.3 The adaptation to virtual delivery during national lockdown restrictions enabled the team to reach a wider target audience - delivering virtual sessions as far as the West Midlands, Bedfordshire and Norfolk.

0.3.4 Connections made with the Education Liaison Team within the UoL and LiNCHigher, the local Uni Connect consortia partnership of education providers, enabled the project team to liaise with more schools and colleges than anticipated, providing further opportunity to deliver the support across the county and beyond.

0.3.5 Similarly, these connections meant that content and resources could be shared post-project. Resources and content will continue to be used by the Education Liaison Team when appropriate during their outreach work and LiNCHigher Officers will also continue to use resources as necessary in school and college sessions, whilst continuing to host content on their 'Future Focus' website.

0.3.6 Qualitative data transcribed from video interviews with students from all the WOW Summer schools delivered throughout the project, indicated that students valued the opportunity and experience with many stating it had reduced their anxieties and increased their confidence to manage the changes ahead.

0.3.7 Available quantitative data shows that WOW students were statistically more likely to attend university which is higher than the UoL average and the UoL average for students with disabilities (in 2019 and 2020).

#### **0.4 Transitional Wellbeing Team Challenges**

0.4.1 The impact of Covid-19 affected the delivery of outreach sessions but allowed the team to think more creatively about the content and delivery of those resources. Whilst travel was restricted preventing the team from physically delivering sessions, adapting the sessions to virtual means and presenting them remotely to schools and colleges, ensured continuation of project activities as much as possible.

0.4.2 Monitoring the progress of students coming into university from schools who may have received specialist outreach support was a challenge. Not all students receiving project support were moving on to university and it was unknown at the time of delivery whether any would choose the UoL as their destination. It was too early for Year 12 school and Year 1 college students to identify their destination of choice and therefore more challenging for the team to monitor any progress. The team felt that capturing the benefits of strategies and the information provided during the session itself, wherever possible, was a more feasible approach to enhance the value of the project.

## **0.5 Transitional Wellbeing Team Limitations and Learning**

0.5.1 Although a useful alternative approach during enforced lockdown, virtual delivery diminishes the opportunities to make outreach sessions truly interactive. Face to face sessions are preferable wherever possible, to aid student engagement and for staff to gauge the reactions of the student audience and react accordingly. Evaluation of virtually delivered sessions also has some limitations. It is difficult, for example, to gather feedback from all students engaged by virtual means due to the varying digital platforms used, monitoring engagement by students via those platforms and the varied support of academic staff.

0.5.2 As previously noted, not all students within sessions at schools and colleges were planning on applying to university, or were prospective students of the UoL. For that reason, the team felt that capturing the benefits of the session and the information provided during the sessions itself whenever possible, pre- and post-intervention, rather than trying to identify students at university in the future, would have more immediate benefits to the project recommendations.

0.5.3 A more robust evaluation, following the journey of a number of students from Years 12 and 13, into and through university, would require longitudinal monitoring and evaluation which is outside the scope of this short-term project.

## **0.6 Digital Student Experience Team Activities**

0.6.1 A diverse range of content was produced by the Digital Student Experience Team throughout the duration of the project including student created videos, articles, vlogs and podcasts. Student co-production took place on all content covering a wide range of topics, all developed to support student mental health and wellbeing. Co-production workshops were also delivered to project partner BGU and OfS Mental Health Challenge Competition (MHCC) project institution, Northumbria University, to share 'best practice' and advice on how to embed the model of student co-production work.

0.6.2 Content and resources were shared with BGU, for their students to access through the 'MyDay' platform. The Digital Student Experience team also trained and supported BGU students, enabling them to become content creators for the project. Resources created by these students were shared via the UoL's social media channels, hosted on the project website and BGU's own website as seen here:

<https://www.bishopg.ac.uk/about-bgu/what-we-do/autism-resources-and-community-hub-arch/autistic-voices-blogs-arch>

0.6.3 Building on the work with BGU, the Digital Student Experience team also trained and supported Northumbria University in content creation, specifically focusing on creating resources to support student transition.

0.6.4 Two dedicated project videos were produced to highlight the work of the project, including an overview and information video covering the services offered by all teams as part of the project activities.

0.6.5 A podcast series 'Fresher Take' was also produced, which was student hosted and led, with 28 episodes released between 2019 and 2022.

0.6.6 The UniWellbeing hosted, health tech app, 'Student Life', was offered to students to aid their transition, featuring bespoke student created content. A trial of the 'Student Life' app was undertaken with Lincoln Medical School (LMS) offer holders, to understand the impact on use of the app both prior to university and during the transition period in 2021. Student feedback on its usage, limitations and content that would be helpful was gathered in focus groups and was used to help shape the app.

0.6.7 The team created and produced a regular 'Senior Tutor Newsletter', provided to Schools and Colleges within the UoL, with information, useful content and links to relevant support, that academics are then easily able to share with their students.

0.6.8 The Digital Student Experience team also collaborated with UoL Students' Union Wellbeing Champions as part of their Wellbeing Network, producing a bespoke video to effectively promote their service to the student community, with a focus on information for newly arriving students.

0.6.9 The team designed and produced the main project website, with 'landing pages' for teams created, to effectively share content, resources and 'best practice':

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

0.6.10 The student-created content developed as part of the project will continue to be utilised on an ongoing basis, to support student transition on the 'Student Life' website, app and social media channels, alongside, increasingly, the main UoL website and social media channels.

<https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/starting>

## **0.7 Digital Student Experience Team Highlights**

0.7.1 Digitally produced content had a known audience reach of over 138,000 across all social media platforms throughout the duration of the project. Fifty-five student content creators and three student editors worked with the project team, creating, producing and editing relevant and relatable content.

0.7.2 A trial of the 'Student Life' app by Lincoln Medical School (LMS) students, showed through analysis of the comments received, that provision of the app was of benefit and made transition into university easier. One student noted that it helped prepare them in advance of arriving, giving them an '*insight into how my life might change*'. Provision of

the digital app and relevant, timely information helped students manage their own wellbeing and helped them to *'navigate these differences'*.

0.7.3 Whilst engagement with general 'Student Life' content dropped off during the pandemic, mental health content created specifically for the project continued to perform well, demonstrating endurance beyond the project end, supporting its legacy.

0.7.4 The 'Fresher Take' podcast performed well throughout the project and episodes that gained a wider audience reach included topics such as 'Transitioning to University', 'Handling Homesickness', 'Social Distancing, Self-isolation and Studying' and 'Staying Positive'.

0.7.5 Feedback from student content creators, illustrated that they valued their time working with the team. All of the students felt that they had gained something from being involved, such as presentation and digital skills. Most importantly, project participation had improved their confidence. Students told the team that they developed confidence and it helped them gain an insight into their own mental health and wellbeing, as well as learning valuable strategies to support themselves and others.

## **0.8 Digital Student Experience Team Challenges**

0.8.1 Covid-19 and social distancing guidelines presented some challenges in producing quality video content as face to face filming paused during national lockdown restrictions. The team therefore focused on producing more vlogs and blogs as well as graphic and animated style content, which was easier to produce remotely during that time.

0.8.2 The team's work training and supporting students at other institutions had only limited success. It proved difficult to maintain student engagement in content creation on an ongoing basis without having regular contact with them.

0.8.3 An additional challenge was work undertaken with third party app and digital companies, as shown with the initial project partners Fika and UniHealth. Changes to the support initially agreed with Fika, no longer aligned to the project whilst UniHealth were forced to close their service provision following changes to FaceBook and Messengers terms of use in early 2020.

## **0.9 Digital Student Experience Team Limitations and Learnings**

0.9.1 Whilst initial work with the original digital app partner, Fika, was good, requests for more content to be included incurred additional costs. Fika also moved away from emotional fitness-based support to more skills-based content, which no longer aligned with the project. Moreover, student engagement with the app waned and work with Fika ceased in June 2021 when the original contract ended.

0.9.2 Its replacement, the UniWellbeing health tech app, 'Student Life', actually performed better with students. The team felt that collaboration with UniWellbeing was

of more benefit to incoming and existing students and aligned better with the project overall.

0.9.3 The timing of content released is key. When planning for filming and release dates, specific points in the academic year, university led events and national awareness days should be considered with relevant content released to coincide with these.

0.9.4 Caution should also be exercised regarding the high levels of reach the project content has achieved. Reach is not the same as engagement and some of the audience may not have engaged with the content or viewed it for long. However, project content did seem to draw a significant audience on social media, raising awareness of the project and the themes it covered.

0.9.5 Considerations for future promotion of the 'Student Life' app to pre-entry and incoming students can be taken from the focus group feedback received. Comments noted that earlier promotion would be more suitable to aid student transition, from as early as the offer of a university place. Only 30% of students surveyed (n=94) during a LMS induction session on 1 October were still using the app after arriving at university, but 71% had downloaded and accessed it prior to starting. This showed the team that the app was being used as intended, to aid student transition, but consideration does need to be made about effective and appropriate promotion of the app for incoming students to ensure they use and benefit from the app pre arrival.

## **0.10 Project Legacy**

0.10.1 The legacy of the project includes a project website, with links to both the Transitional Wellbeing materials and the Digital Student Experience team content and resources:

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

0.10.2 The UoL Education Liaison Team has provided vital support to the project throughout its duration, connecting the project team with many more schools and colleges than anticipated. Where appropriate within their work, the team will continue to utilise project content and resources, particularly presentations and use these within the schools and college outreach sessions they deliver.

0.10.3 The project worked closely throughout its lifespan with LiNCHigher, a local Uni Connect consortia partnership of education providers and organisations supporting young people in schools, colleges and community groups across Lincolnshire. Again, where appropriate and fitting, to support the project and continue its legacy, LiNCHigher Officers will utilise project resources, such as presentations and workshops, within their outreach work with schools and colleges in the local area. Project resources are also available on the LiNCHigher 'Future Focus' website, accessed and utilised by school and college students and staff.

0.10.4 Project initiatives remaining within the UoL after project end include the WOW summer school, 'Fresh Start' sessions, 'Fresher Take' podcast, 'Student Life' app and student content creation.

0.10.5 A 'How to run a successful summer school' resource package has been shared sector wide, for other institutions/ organisations to use or consider.

0.10.6 Feedback from focus groups has been actioned by app developers, to help shape the future design of the 'Student Life' app. The findings from the project, particularly in relation to the app, are being used to strengthen the case for the procurement of a more advanced UoL app, with more interactive features and key student resources alongside student-created content, such as timetables, which could help to ensure better and longer term student engagement. Pending budget approval, the Digital Student Experience team are hoping to introduce a new app in the 22/23 annual year.

0.10.7 Despite the challenges in maintaining engagement of student content creators at other institutions, the Digital Student Experience team continue to pursue opportunities to develop bespoke student content creation training, offering support to other institutions looking to develop their own, similar initiatives. If successful, this could provide a future revenue stream for the UoL.

0.10.8 An end of project conference 'Innovative Mental Health Support for Student Transition to Higher Education' was held on 17 March 2022 in Lincoln, with informative sessions, key findings and learnings from the project, its partners, stakeholders and guest speakers. Opened by Professor Neal Juster, the UoL Vice Chancellor, 8 sessions were provided throughout the in-person event, delivered by the Transitional Wellbeing and Digital Student Experience project teams alongside project partners – Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT), LiNCHigher, UoL Students' Union and Dr Roger Bretherton.

## **0.11 Dissemination**

0.11.1 Dissemination has been key throughout the project providing staff the opportunity to share best practice across the sector and beyond. Sessions and presentations were delivered at external events including:

- LID2020 (Lincoln Inclusion and Diversity) Conference (February 2020).
- Go Higher West Yorkshire Conference (June 2020).
- British Education Research Association (BERA) Mental Health Special Interest Group Conference (July 2020).
- Inside Government Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference (October 2020)
- SUMS Consulting Conference (November 2020).
- National Teachers Conference (November 2020).
- HE Student Wellbeing Taskforce (May 2021).

- National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) Virtual International Conference (June 2021).
- Study Higher Annual Access (Virtual) Conference (October 2021).
- Universities UK Mental Health in Higher Education (Virtual) Conference (November 2021).
- Student Mental Health Research Network (SMaRteN) Virtual Lab Group (November 2021).
- Globally MindED (Virtual) Conference (December 2021).

0.11.2 Presentations and sessions were also provided to internal colleagues including:

- Lincoln Academy of Learning and Teaching (LALT) Academic Professional Apprenticeship Workshop (October 2019).
- Lincoln Higher Education Research Institute (LHERI) Presentation (October 2019).
- Graduate Teacher Education Programme Workshop (February 2020).
- Australian University Visit with Vice Chancellors Office, Presentation (Including the Director of Student Experience at Queensland University of Technology, Chief Information Officer for Swinburne University and Head of Student Services at Swinburne University) (March 2020).
- School of Education Summer School (July 2020).
- Teaching, Student Experience and Graduate Outcomes (TSEGO) Committee (July 2021).
- Education and Student Life Committee (January 2022).
- Senior Tutor Forum (January 2022).

0.11.3 Articles, case studies, newsletters and blogs have also been published as follows:

- British Education Research Association (BERA) (October 2019): Member newsletter piece on 'New Developments'.
- British Education Research Association (BERA) (April 2020): Member newsletter piece on the project evolving to adapt to overcome the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- IMPact Journal (January 2020): Project overview:

<https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/c/8316/files/2020/04/IMPact-Short-notice-Cate-Neal-2020.pdf>

- IMPact Journal (June 2020): Project response to the Covid-19 pandemic:

<https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/c/8316/files/2020/10/IMPact-Short-notice-Cate-Neal.pdf>

- Office for Students (June 2020): Case Study 'Supporting Transitions':

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/coronavirus-case-studies/student-mental-health/>

- Office for Students (August 2021): Case Study ‘The role of digital mental health support tools and the importance of the student co-production model in supporting their development’:

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-wellbeing-and-protection/student-mental-health/the-role-of-digital-mental-health-support-tools-and-the-importance-of-the-student-co-production-model-in-supporting-their-development/>

- NADP Journal of Inclusive Practice in Higher Education (June 2021): Article ‘The importance of supporting student wellbeing during transition into Higher Education’:

<https://nadp-uk.org/issue-13-1-summer-2021/>

- FACE – Forum for Access and Continuing Education (September 2021): Project Overview Blog:

<https://www.face.ac.uk/blog-post/transitioning-students-effectively-a-student-led-approach-to-mental-health-support/>

- Wonkhe (October 2021): Comment piece ‘Virtual is new reality in support student mental health’:

<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/virtual-is-new-reality-in-supporting-student-mental-health-2/>

- Innovative mental health support for student transition to Higher Education, Conference Brochure (March 2022):

<https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/8/8519/files/2022/03/Conference-Brochure-Final.pdf>

0.11.4 The team held an end of project conference ‘Innovative mental health support for student transition to Higher Education’ on 17 March 2022 in Lincoln, to disseminate project activities, findings and key learnings from the project, its partners, stakeholders and guest speakers.

0.11.5 The project team were delighted to receive one of the first ‘Levelling Up’ awards, part of the Rt. Hon Justine Greening’s Social Mobility Pledge Initiative in Summer 2021.

## 0.12 Findings

0.12.1 The project aimed to develop a peer-to-peer approach in supporting student mental health and wellbeing, particularly during transition from school to university. It aimed to partner with other institutions, support services and student representatives to develop initiatives to enable students to support each other and themselves, with students being central to project activities. The project achieved most of its aims, despite the limitations presented from the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent national lockdowns. Those limitations served to help the project team explore other ways in which to provide continued support to students and students, such as virtual and remote delivery and content production.

0.12.2 A successful outreach programme was established and delivered by the Transitional Wellbeing team, with the support of university and local community partners to increase contacts and broaden the reach of delivery. Available evaluation data shows that students and staff at schools and colleges welcomed the support and information provided via outreach workshops. Resources were developed following initial focus groups at local schools, which gave the team an understanding of the content and themes pertinent and relevant to students' needs. These same resources were provided digitally and available for all, included pre-recorded presentations, videos and workshop resources on a number of themes. From the project start, it was the team's intention to create resources that could be utilised widely across the sector and by schools and colleges, to support students irrespective of their future destination. The content created was not exclusive to UoL, but available to others as indicated.

0.12.3 Available data shows that content was welcomed and valued by school and college students, teachers, parents and guardians as well as incoming and current UoL students. It is clear from evaluation data that transitional outreach sessions were valued by school and college staff and positively viewed by many of the student participants.

0.12.4 The WOW summer school grew from 40 student spaces provided, offered to 80 across the project duration, and is now being provided to more incoming university students since the project ended. Feedback shows that attendees are positive about the provision which makes a positive difference to their ability to manage change ahead of arriving at university. Available data shows that WOW students' attendance at university is higher than the UoL average and the average for UoL students who disclose a disability. The project has enabled WOW places to be increased, and support is now offered to more students for whom transition and change can be a challenge, including care experienced or estranged students. The WOW Summer School will continue as part of the annual provision managed by the Student Wellbeing team post project.

0.12.5 *'Transitioning students effectively: A student-led approach to mental health support'* was the project title and the 'student-led approach' has been key, embedded into the project throughout its lifespan, particularly within the activities of the Digital

Student Experience team. Student involvement has been encouraged and recognised throughout, from pupil focus groups within local schools to help shape outreach content, student focus groups to understand the impact of resources produced and learn more of supportive content that students would like to see, to students actively producing and hosting their own podcasts, students working in Ambassador roles at the WOW summer school and Students' Union elected sabbatical officers joining school and college outreach sessions, sharing their lived experiences.

0.12.6 The project ethos focused on student involvement and actively encouraged student voices to be heard within its planning, creation and delivery. This helped to produce and develop initiatives that were relatable, engaging and of value to the student community. Student input included:

- Early focus groups with school students on content and information that will be of benefit.
- Focus groups with UoL students, on resources and content produced.
- Trials, focus groups and surveys with students on the Fika and Student Life Apps.
- Student content creators and editors, who designed, created, produced and edited content throughout.
- Feedback directly from students on schools and colleges outreach work.
- Feedback directly from university students on content and resources, Podcasts and Apps.
- Feedback from the Student Advisory Board on a sample of content and resources.
- Students sharing 'lived experience' and personal video stories, for use in schools and colleges.
- Feedback from WOW summer school attendees.
- Student Ambassadors at WOW Summer School who were previous WOW attendees, offering peer to peer support.
- Feedback from students attending Fresh Start Workshops.
- Students' Union elected sabbatical officers joining school outreach sessions sharing lived experiences.
- Feedback from student content creators on the benefits they had gained from being involved with the project.

0.12.7 Fifty-five student content creators were employed as part of the project across its lifetime and they felt that their involvement helped to increase their confidence and further their own understanding of mental health and wellbeing, and of the institutional support available and in turn this helped them to support their peers.

0.12.8 Sustainability of project resources is provided by the project website as well as collaborative work with the UoL Education Liaison Team and LiNCHigher. However, it is important to note that this level of support is not the same as that which was provided by the Transitional Wellbeing outreach team. Staff will utilise resources where they are

able, but cannot offer the same dedicated level of delivery on these topics as was provided by the roles funded via the project.

0.12.9 Where appropriate, project partners have utilised the projects numerous resources and shared them amongst their student communities. As demonstrated by BGU, for example, their students were also involved as content creators and shared resources on their own 'My Day' platform.

0.12.10 Projects such as this, the initiatives they generate and the outcomes they create, are of major strategic and operational importance. This work is valued and necessary and there is scope to broaden the breadth of support provided and to link it into government, sector organisations and other university future plans. Through supporting student transition, and thus aiding and bolstering students' emotional and mental health, confidence and aspirations can also be strengthened.

### **0.13 Recommendations**

#### **0.13.1 Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions**

- Whilst widening participation (WP) outreach activity is already provided by numerous organisations and universities nationwide, specialist support on mental health, wellbeing and emotional fitness when managing change is not readily available, nor is it provided by Higher Education (HE) professional services staff, as far as the team are aware. Universities should consider embedding support within the institution, such as a dedicated Transition Co-ordinator, to work within existing Student Support Teams and alongside education providers and organisations, in support of pre-entry and incoming students.
- By working collaboratively together with the local authority and existing WP support teams as well as schools and colleges, institutions can collectively utilise existing skills sets, to effectively support students in their journey from compulsory education, into Further Education (FE) and HE.
- Provision of digital health apps are of evidenced, short term benefit in aiding student transition into university for those students using them, providing strategies and techniques in supporting their own mental health and wellbeing.
- Provision of specialist wellbeing programmes, such as the Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) programme, are of benefit in supporting student wellbeing, with students reporting increases in mindfulness, strengths use and self-efficacy following MBSP programme delivery.
- Available data shows that students prefer content and resources directly created by students, particularly around mental health. If not already available, the creation of roles such as student content creators within Digital Teams to enable the production of continued, relatable, engaging and informative content are encouraged.

- Pre-enrolment transitional events provided to pre-students which offer advice, information and familiarity, can in turn promote their confidence to manage the changes that lie ahead.
- Building on the experience of developing and running a student content creation initiative as part of the project, the UoL's Digital Student Experience team is actively offering to support and enable other institutions to set up similar initiatives with the aim of enhancing the student experience across the sector.
- Timing of support, resources and content is key. The provision of apps, student produced resources and supportive content to aid transition should be made available to pre-entry students at the earliest (and most appropriate) opportunity. Data shows that students recommend information on transitional support is provided as early as receiving a university offer to garner the most benefit.
- The University Mental Health Charter from Student Minds notes that consideration should be given to transition, recognising the evidence of this being a difficult time for students and that positive impacts can be gained by students when pre-entry interventions are provided. There is an evidenced need for support such as that provided via this project, even early pre-intervention support whilst potential university students, are still at school, making future decisions and beginning to take responsibility for their own independence, health and mental wellbeing.
- Consideration could also be given to local Youth Council support, in gathering and providing thoughts and concerns from young people to best manage their transition into HE.
- Similar, future projects should also consider sourcing research governance advice during the initial planning stages, to mitigate outcomes should the lines between evaluation and research become 'blurred'.

#### 0.13.2 Recommendations for schools and Further Education providers

- Topics such as coping with change and preparing for the future, becoming independent, living with others, managing emotions and knowing when to seek help, should be given consideration, if not already done so, and included within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. This project recognises the value of these topics to students, particularly prior to leaving school or college.
- When considering support for school and college leavers, attention should be given to particular groups of students to ensure that their voice is heard and support is available and provided. Care experienced or estranged students, for example, for whom transition is an additional challenge due to a lack of 'social capital' in terms of the limited practical, emotional or financial support on offer, can put these students at an additional disadvantage when moving on from compulsory and FE.

### 0.13.3 Recommendations for future OfS funded mental health projects

- Partnership working, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and its subsequent demands on time, staff and resources for project partners, was often compromised. The inclusion of dedicated, project funded roles which sit within partner organisations wherever possible, rather than 'in kind' support, would lead to more robust collaboration from partners, facilitating more shared working and partnership involvement.
- Evaluation of the long-term impact of outreach work on students is a particular challenge. Not all students within sessions at schools and colleges are planning on applying to university, or were prospective students of the UoL. For that reason, the team felt that capturing the benefits of the sessions and the information provided during the sessions itself whenever possible, pre- and post-intervention, rather than trying to identify students at university in the future, had more immediate benefits to the project recommendations. However, future projects might consider the longitudinal tracking of students and their outcomes in order to effectively analyse the benefits for those who had received specialist support in advance of leaving school or college, through and into university and beyond.

## Part 1 Introduction

*'The transition to university is a complex and often difficult period of a young student's life.'* (Krause and Coates, 2008, p.499)

### 1.1 Background

1.1.1 The changes that life at university brings can impact massively on an individual, with many changes occurring all at the same time. Leaving a familiar home, perhaps for the first time and becoming truly independent can cause anxiety for many young people. A study undertaken by Cooke et al (2006) suggests that for many students, university can be an anxious time. Changes to study habits and new ways of academic learning; leaving a familiar home environment and routine, alongside a newfound independence and associated responsibilities can cause concern for many amidst the uncertainty of what lies ahead. For those who may feel unprepared, starting at university and the challenges it brings can feel overwhelming and perhaps for some, a huge step to take.

1.1.2 Student mental health is rightly, much reported and discussed, particularly within the HE sector. There has also been an increase in the number of students entering Higher Education Institutions (HEIs), with accepted applicants through UCAS in 2020 at a 'new record high' (Bolton, 2021, np). It is through the supportive work of Professional Service departments within the University, that there is an awareness of the increase in mental health and disability disclosures by incoming university students, up 450% in the last decade, whilst being mindful that there may be many students who chose not to disclose (UCAS, 2021).

1.1.3 The University Mental Health Charter created by Student Minds provides advice and guidance to those institutions that sign up to it, particularly around the promotion and provision of mental health support and that universities should be '*...actively encouraging healthy behaviours and community-building and providing proactive interventions to improve wellbeing*' (Hughes and Spanner, 2019, p53).

1.1.4 With this in mind, the weight of potential concerns and additional challenges faced by pre-entry students to universities nationwide is problematic. Transition is a pivotal point in prospective students' lives and there is an evidenced need for additional support (Cage et al., 2021).

### 1.2 Project Overview

1.2.1 Transitioning students effectively: A student-led approach to mental health support aimed to address and support some of the underlying concerns and mental health challenges that school leavers and pre-entry students may experience. The project was funded by the OfS as part of the Mental Health Challenge Competition in 2019 and match funded by the UoL. It focused on supporting transitional students as they move from

school and college to HE. The project was led by a core team of Professional Services staff within the UoL, with one group based in Student Wellbeing carrying out a range of activities, including transitional outreach work in schools and colleges and one group based in Digital Student Experience, producing student-led content and resources and trialling apps. Additionally, professional services and academic staff from across the university and partner organisations worked collaboratively on specific elements of the project. The project was centrally managed and evaluated from within the Lincoln Higher Education Research Institute (LHERI).

1.2.2 To drive the collaborative elements of the project, and to ensure buy in from all stakeholders, an overseeing project Steering Board was established, with representatives from all project partners including Bishop Grosseteste University (BGU), Bishop Grosseteste University Students' Union, Lincoln College, Lincolnshire County Council, Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust (LPFT), Lincolnshire Police, LiNCHigher, University of Lincoln Students' Union and UniWellbeing, as well as commercial partner organisations. This also ensured a city-wide approach, which was a key feature of the project.

1.2.3 Since the commencement of the project in July 2019, a large number of student-based activities have taken place across the project, with work led by the Transitional Wellbeing team and the Digital Student Experience team.

### **1.3 Project Governance and Staff**

1.3.1 At the project start, an overseeing Steering Board was established, formed with project partners and stakeholders. Representatives from all partners including the LPFT, Lincolnshire Police, BGU, Lincoln College, Lincolnshire County Council as well as commercial partner organisations were invited and given access to a project SharePoint site, which held all project documents, internal and external evaluation reports and regular manager reports presented to the Board. Twelve Steering Board meetings were held during the project, with presentations made by the Project Manager, Wellbeing and Digital Project Leads and a full accompanying report for each meeting was shared via email and on the SharePoint site.

1.3.2 At the project start, the core team consisted of seven 1.0 FTE staff members and two 0.5 FTE staff members. Project Directors based within the three departments of Student Wellbeing, Digital Student Experience and LHERI had a significant role in the project, with their time dedicated in-kind as part of the match funding agreement.

1.3.3 A Project Manager was appointed in September 2019, with key responsibilities for overseeing the project, its operational and strategic planning and delivery, alongside evaluation and reporting to the Steering Board, OfS and Wavehill. To facilitate effective engagement and delivery across all areas of the project, the Project Manager worked closely with the project team as well as liaising with all partners and stakeholders,

including university staff, external partners, funders and evaluation consultants. The Project Manager also monitored the budget for the project and had responsibility for dissemination of findings, writing up as they emerged. Regular presentation was undertaken at appropriate events alongside production of relevant papers, case studies and reports as required.

1.3.4 Within the Student Wellbeing Team, two full time Transitional Wellbeing Advisors were appointed in Jul 2019, seconded from their existing Student Wellbeing Advisor roles within the department for the duration of the project. Two full time Transitional Wellbeing Education Officers were also appointed at that time, one newly appointed and another again, seconded through an existing role within the Wellbeing team. An additional half time Transitional Wellbeing Administrator was also appointed, again seconded from an existing Student Wellbeing role.

1.3.5 The Transitional Wellbeing Advisor roles involved delivery of transitional outreach sessions to schools and colleges (with a focus on Years 12 and 13), supporting prospective students prior to their entry into the UoL, and delivering both group sessions and individual support to students who experienced difficulties with the transition into HE. The Advisors also identified new ways to deliver sessions to schools and colleges, as well as looking at how the team could best support incoming students to the UoL, particularly in the years during and following Covid-19 restrictions. A focus was also given on building effective relationships with schools and colleges, planning and arranging session delivery whilst considering any specialist requirements schools and colleges might have. In February 2020, Project Lead and Operational Lead responsibilities were also embedded with the Transitional Wellbeing Advisor roles, to enable smooth coordination of work activities and timely reporting to the Project Manager.

1.3.6 As Transitional Wellbeing Education Officers, roles centred around outreach work, delivering presentations and workshops to school and college students, creating wellbeing resources and planning and preparing for the WOW Summer Schools. All Transitional colleagues were involved in all WOW summer schools and support was given by the Transitional Wellbeing Education Officers to design and deliver WOW 2020, a particularly challenging year when participants adhered to social distancing and other guidelines. The Officers also supported the Transitional Team in maintaining schools contact during the second year and worked on ways to deliver school sessions in a digital format through restructuring content to make it accessible to schools and students on a variety of different platforms. Transitional Wellbeing Education Officers also worked on developing and delivering specialist workshops, to helping pre-entry and existing UoL students transitioning into their first year.

1.3.7 A Transitional Wellbeing Administrator was appointed to support the specialist outreach work and coordination of the WOW summer school. The role supported a database of school and college contacts, managed all bookings for outreach sessions,

maintained a database of all pre-entry, prospective students accessing support from the Transitional Wellbeing team as well as working as a Clerk for the dedicated project Steering Board.

1.3.8 The Digital Project Lead held responsibility for overseeing the creation of digital resources, ensuring that the objectives of the project were met, and content produced was of a high standard. The Lead worked closely with Project Manager and the wider project team to plan whole project activities as well as external partners and app providers to develop the best approach for supporting students with their wellbeing through digital tools.

1.3.9 The Digital Content Creative Assistants worked with students and a Student Life Editor to co-ordinate student content creation. The Creative Assistants worked closely with the Digital Student Experience team and their team of student digital content creators to collaborate on articles, videos and social media content to share students' experiences and advice in a peer-to-peer way. The Digital Content Creative Assistants also co-ordinated and edited student-led podcasts.

1.3.10 Staff 'mortality' in the final year of the project, and the limited timescale remaining, resulted in colleagues in existing roles taking on additional duties (and allowances) wherever possible and covering areas of vacant posts where required.

## **1.4 Partnerships**

1.4.1 Work began with project partners right away, establishing a Steering Board made up of partners and stakeholders to ensure 'buy in' from all involved. Issues could then be discussed, and decisions made collaboratively whilst work and content produced could be shared more broadly. Meetings were held bi-monthly, and a project SharePoint site was set up, to facilitate the sharing of relevant documents along with Project Manager presentations and full Steering Board Reports.

1.4.2 Partnership working was not without its challenges, recognised early on and monitored via a project Risk Register. The onset of the Covid-19 pandemic affected collaborative ways of working, as some partners working priorities were understandably focused elsewhere. It was ensured that all partners were aware of the SharePoint site, relevant information and reports available and following the first Partnership Assessment Survey by Wavehill, Relationship Managers were established within the team. These included the Project Manager and colleagues in both the Transitional Wellbeing and Digital Student Experience teams, who would update colleagues, as necessary, with timely and relevant information.

1.4.3 Whilst initial work with the original digital app partner, Fika was good, requests for more content to be included incurred additional costs. Fika also moved away from emotional fitness-based support to more skills-based content, which no longer aligned

with the work of the project. Moreover, student engagement with the app waned and work with Fika ceased in June 2021, when the original contract ended. The UniWellbeing health tech app, 'Student Life', actually performed better with students and the team felt that collaboration with UniWellbeing would be of more benefit to incoming and existing students and align better with the project overall.

1.4.4 UniHealth experienced difficulties when Facebook changed their rules around using the messenger system in January 2020, meaning they could no longer run their platform or support the project.

1.4.5 ExpertSelfCare worked on an app for international students but adapted during Covid-19 and instead focused on producing a health information app rather than student induction focused support, which again no longer aligned with the project. Work was already underway with UniWellbeing on the provision of the health care app 'Student Life', so the continuation of this was taken up by the project team as an app and resource to share pertinent content to incoming and existing students. The 'Student Life' app was initially introduced by the university in August 2020 and received good levels of engagement throughout the project. The Digital Student Experience team will continue to support this initiative following the project end.

1.4.6 Lincoln College engaged early on with the project and were offered support from the Transitional Wellbeing team with arranging outreach sessions, which were sadly unable to be pursued due to the impact of Covid-19. There had been some challenges and confusion around project activities, with Lincoln College working on other projects concurrently. It was acknowledged that provision of resources from two different projects, could cause potential difficulties for students, should the boundaries be 'blurred' with support and information given. The timing of projects meant that Lincoln College staff felt unable to take up the offer of outreach sessions from the team once lockdown restrictions were lifted. However, links to all available resources and content remained shared. Early in the project, the Digital Student Experience team supported the college in their production of a wellbeing video, supporting the work and story of 'Mental Health Runner' Tom Dunning.

1.4.7 Lincolnshire Police colleagues were increasingly inundated throughout the Covid-19 pandemic. The Transitional Wellbeing team had discussed potential collaboration with Lincolnshire Police and the Mental Health Liaison Team in particular during outreach sessions within schools and colleges. Lincolnshire Police colleagues could not attend every outreach session, but based this on the needs of the schools and colleges as they arose. Sadly, the timing wasn't ideal, with Covid-19 and subsequent restrictions meaning that any plans for collaborative work of that nature were paused. Similarly, a Question and Answer style video was initially planned with the Digital Student Experience team, but with the nature of the work of the Police, particularly colleagues work within mental

health liaison, along with the impact of Covid-19 restrictions, work was interrupted within the project timescale.

1.4.8 Meetings were held during the early months of the project with colleagues from Lincolnshire County Council, in particular the Children's Services team, to consider connections between the outreach work of the Transitional Wellbeing team within schools and colleges and a newly established Mentally Healthy Schools Team. Council colleagues put the project team in touch with the Mentally Healthy Schools Team, whose work seemed to compliment the work of the project more specifically. Covid-19 had impacted on their output and training took place until 2021, which led to difficulties in linking up work when restrictions finally lifted. However, all outreach resources and content produced by the project team was shared with the Mentally Healthy Schools team and there was consideration for future use of those resources within their continued outreach work.

1.4.9 A digital health initiative through the NHS, the VitruCare app, was provided as a personalised healthcare app, giving individuals the opportunity to work together with their GPs and care teams and access all relevant healthcare documents in one place. Content, links and resources were also provided for individuals, relevant to their needs. The Student Wellbeing team, in collaboration with the University Health Centre, utilised this app, for students registering at the on-site GP, meaning that appropriate support could be provided, relatable to the individual and their current diagnosis or challenges. The project linked up with the LPFT team in order to provide transitional support for students as well as content via the 'Student Life' app, provided directly to the NHS VitruCare platform.

1.4.10 The Digital Student Experience team worked closely with BGU, offering support via induction sessions and workshops, helping BGU colleagues to establish a group of student co-producers creating content for the project. Twelve articles were produced by student contributors from BGU, shared via the UoL's social media channels and hosted on the project website:

<https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/author/mentalhealthproject/>

BGU also hosted and shared content creator resources on their own website:

<https://www.bishopg.ac.uk/about-bgu/what-wedo/autism-resources-and-community-hub-arch/autistic-voices-blogs-arch>

1.4.11 The Digital Student Experience team also liaised throughout the project with staff at both BGU and their Students' Union, sharing relevant content produced onto their student 'My Day' app.

1.4.12 Collaboration with the UoL Students' Union involved liaising with their Wellbeing Network and Student Representatives. Pre-Covid-19 it had been hoped to establish

Wellbeing Champions through the Students' Union by early 2020, however, recruitment and training towards this was paused during lockdown restrictions. When restrictions eased, the Wellbeing Network later began to meet and colleagues from the project attended in order to update the team on content and resources and include the Network in possible future initiatives. The Digital Student Experience team worked with the Wellbeing Network to produce a video on their work, introducing their team and support available. Student representatives also joined the Transitional Wellbeing team during outreach work, sharing lived experiences directly with students in schools and colleges.

1.4.13 The UoL Education Liaison team provided vital support to the project throughout its duration. Work took place with the team very early on, helping to forge links between schools and colleges in the area and providing support on content produced, methods of delivery and strategies for effective outreach support. The team enabled valuable links to schools and colleges to be made, as well as engaging project staff in specialist events such as parents' evenings, 'Lincoln Live' social media events and inclusion in HE fairs, and the annual National Teachers conference hosted by the UoL. These opportunities all gave the project team the ability to share more broadly the information, content and resources to students, parents and teachers. The UoL Education Liaison team work closely with specialist partners and individuals, such as Dr Alex George, the current Youth Mental Health Ambassador for the Government, who visited Lincoln to provide mental health advice and support, sharing his own lived experience to both visiting school students and UoL students.

1.4.14 The project worked closely throughout its lifespan with LiNCHigher, a local 'Uni Connect' consortia partnership of education providers and organisations supporting young people in schools, colleges and community groups across Lincolnshire. Collaborating with their team ensured that further opportunities were made for the project team. The Transitional Wellbeing team could widen the reach of their sessions, helping the team to link in and engage with different schools and colleges across the region.

## **1.5 Evaluation Approach and Reporting**

1.5.1 The project team have been aware from the start of the need for robust and meaningful evaluation, with the Project Manager based in LHERI taking a lead in steering evaluation. Evaluation took a mixed methods approach, with surveys, interviews and questionnaires used to gain insight and understanding from students of the impact of activities and content produced. Five internal evaluation reports have been produced throughout the project's duration, along with Activity and Evaluation plans conducted with the full team, to develop, discuss and collectively decide on current and future work and activities throughout.

1.5.2 As the project progressed, it was clear that output from all areas was high, despite the limitations from the Covid-19 pandemic presented mid-way. Alongside the activities undertaken, information and data were also sourced (as much as practically possible due to the nature of activities and challenges posed by the pandemic) to consider the project's outcomes and impact.

1.5.3 At key points of the project, interim reports were provided to both the OfS as the funding providers and the external evaluation consultants, Wavehill. Reports were also produced and regularly shared with all Partners, Stakeholders and Steering Board members and hosted on the project SharePoint site. This final project evaluation report draws on all reports and findings, collected from activities undertaken by the project.

## **1.6 Impact of Covid-19**

1.6.1 During the project, adaptations and changes were made, mainly around Covid-19, government restrictions and lockdowns. From March 2020, during the first national government lockdown, face to face activities were suspended and due to the subsequent school closures, a greater emphasis was made on remote delivery, with the project team adapting methods of delivery quickly and efficiently.

1.6.2 The Transitional Wellbeing team offered and provided school and college outreach sessions via varying platforms such as MS Teams and at Zoom at the request of individual institutions. Outreach resources were updated to encourage continued engagement and the team adapted and developed 'virtual' resource packs, sent out to schools throughout Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Cambridgeshire, alongside directly contacting over 230 schools and colleges to discuss support available.

1.6.3 Although the delivery of outreach sessions was affected, it did allow the team to think more creatively in the content and delivery of resources. Whilst travel was restricted for the team to physically deliver sessions, adapting those same sessions to virtual means and presenting remotely to schools and colleges ensured continuation of project activities as much as possible.

1.6.4 Continuous adaptability has been key to the project. Through the conversion of resources to digital formats, for example, the adaptability of sessions and provision ensured that outreach delivery remained accessible and relevant during the Covid-19 pandemic and beyond, as part of the project legacy.

1.6.5 During national restrictions, the Digital Student Experience team were unable to work face to face with students to support filming and editing. However, the team were able to adapt their approach relatively easily and continued working with students, collaborating remotely via Teams and other online platforms throughout lockdowns. The style of the output produced had to be altered, with more vlogs and blogs created, along

with more animated and graphics-based content, which could be more easily produced to a high standard remotely.

1.6.6 During September 2020, the WOW Summer school was delivered face to face on campus, following government guidelines and restrictions lifting at that time, which was of huge benefit to students attending who noted they were ‘... grateful for the opportunity ...’. However, when lockdown was reinstated in late 2020, the team once again resumed virtual support and delivery of all main project outputs.

1.6.7 From July 2021, again, when restrictions lifted, face to face work began again for all within the project team, WOW 2021 was delivered in person and on campus and face to face visits and outreach work recommenced, as did face to face filming and collaborative work with students joining the University on campus from October 2021.

## Part 2 Literature Review

### 2.1 Review of Current Literature

2.1.1 A literature review entitled, 'Student Mental Health Concerns and Interventions in Higher Education: A review of current literature', was undertaken by Cate Neal, the initial Project Manager, in 2019. Its purpose was to enhance the project team's understanding of how the work and activities aligned to current thinking within student mental health support. Key points from that review are included below.

2.1.2 The increase in young people experiencing mental health issues has been well-documented over recent years, with those aged 16-24 identified as being particularly vulnerable. Given that 83% of the undergraduate population (and 64% of the overall student population) fall within this age bracket, it is perhaps inevitable that a significant proportion of the student population may experience mental health issues. However, research suggests that symptoms of depression, anxiety and distress are more common among undergraduates than their age-matched peers and can lead to impaired academic performance (Winzer et al., 2018), with those suffering mental health problems tending to worry much more about academic performance than their 'well' peers (Brown, 2018).

2.1.3 Critically, there has also been an alarming increase in student suicide rates associated with mental health issues, with a 2016/17 figure of 4.7 in 100,000 representing a 52% increase since 2000/1 (Cornish, 2018). Given the sharp rise in student mental health issues, many university support services are struggling to cope, with 95% reporting an increase in demand for counselling services and 61% reporting an increase of 25% or more (Thorley, 2017). This has led to waiting lists of up to nine weeks in some settings - the equivalent of an academic term (Barrable et al., 2018). Strain on HEI student support services was further compounded by cuts to NHS provision, with a £260 million shortfall in funding since 2005, leading to 40% of mental health trusts being understaffed (Batchelor et al., 2019).

2.1.4 There are also many additional agitating factors which have been identified both through public policy reports and empirical research. In particular, the Grand Challenges Report commissioned by Student Minds and supported by Comic Relief identified problems with continuity of NHS care for students as they transition from home to university (Student Minds, 2014). The transitional period, as students start university, can also be characterised by a negative disposition brought on by uncertainty and adjustment (Gibson et al., 2016), with reluctance to disclose due to stigma meaning students fail to access help in a timely manner (Cage et al., 2018). Even once the initial transition has been successfully navigated, there is a raft of well-established pressures upon students (the most cited being finances and academic pressures) along with more emerging difficulties such as cyber-bullying (Mishna et al., 2018). Taking everything into consideration, there is potential for a 'perfect storm' in student mental health provision, with current services

unable to meet demand. Figure 1 illustrates the increase in students disclosing mental health conditions since 2006/7 (Source: IPPR analysis of Higher Education Statistics Agency Data, Thorley, 2017).

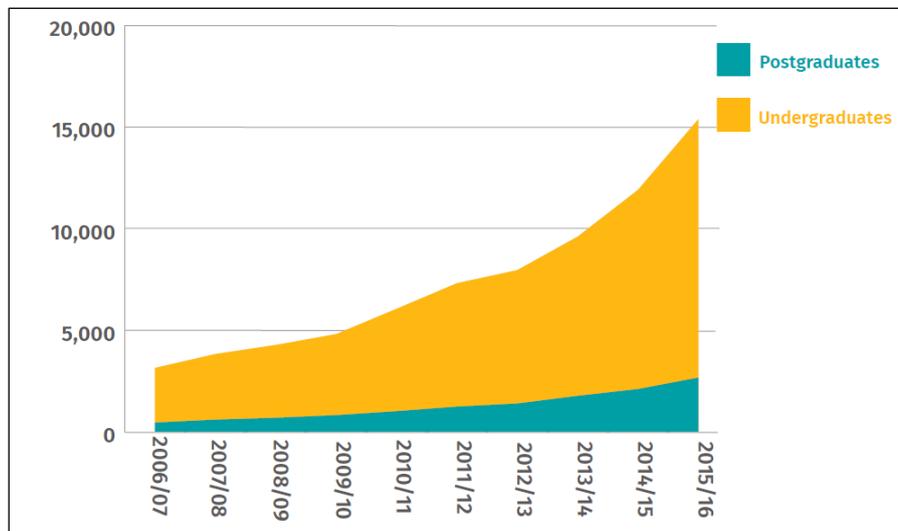


Figure 1 Students disclosing a mental health condition to HEI's 2006/7 – 2015/16

2.1.5 Despite the challenges facing university support services, the vast majority of students are not in crisis and are simply experiencing normal dips in mental wellbeing which could be supported outside of first-line interventions such as counselling and medication (Barrable et al. 2018).

2.1.6 The introduction of more novel therapies such as peer support, identified by students themselves as a first-choice intervention (Byrom, 2018), and digital support tools, used alongside early intervention, afford opportunities to not only motivate and empower students to take responsibility for their own mental health and wellbeing, but also to free up resources for those students who are suffering more critical problems (Batchelor et al., 2019).

2.1.7 It is widely acknowledged that the transition from school or college to university is a challenging time for students. Issues such as living away from home or family for the first time, forming new relationships, managing finances and juggling study and paid employment can be difficult, and students are offered support to deal with the 'culture shock' and steep learning curve they encounter when entering HE. Those students who enter HE with a pre-existing mental health condition may find the transition particularly difficult, and those who have not previously suffered mental ill health may experience problems for the first time due to the elevated levels of stress that may occur during this period. *'Points of transition are associated with increased risk of developing mental health problems, due to the stress of adapting to new circumstances.'* (Brown, 2017, p.20). Figure 2 summarises the common issues students worry about when transitioning from school

and college to university, ranked by students from 0 – 10 (n=22), with 0 being least important and 10 being most important (Source: Knoesen and Naudé, 2018).

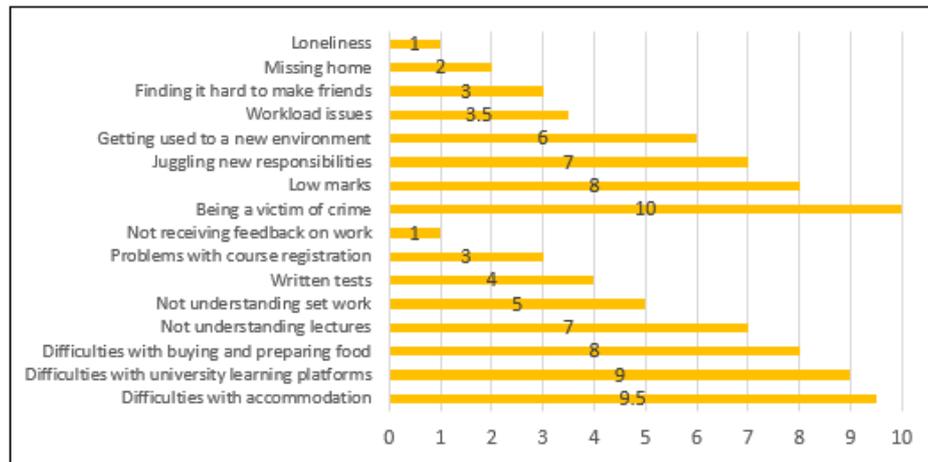


Figure 2 Transitional student concerns, ranked by students from 0 – 10

2.1.8 As the figure demonstrates, problems with accommodation rank highly as causing concerns for new students, second only to being a victim of crime. In 2013, the NUS reported that 28% of students suffering mental distress reported problems with housing or accommodation. This is backed by information collated by Brown (2017) for the HEPI Report ‘The invisible problem? Improving students’ mental health’. Brown identifies the UK’s ‘boarding school system’ of HE, which is relatively unusual worldwide, as a key factor in student mental health.

2.1.9 Accommodation problems can cover a raft of issues such as quality of housing provision and managing independent living, but a major factor is the potential for negative peer influence amongst students living together for the first time. Pressure to conform through drug and alcohol use for example, can have a significant negative impact on vulnerable young people.

2.1.10 Another factor during transition is the potential for students to neglect their health, mental and physical, without a parent or caregiver to prompt them to make healthy choices and seek help when needed. Gibson et al. (2016) noted that, alongside physical changes such as weight gain and behavioural changes such as the cessation of physical activity, anxiety in young people was significantly heightened during entry into HE. One of the recommendations arising from Gibson et al.’s longitudinal study of health behaviours in first year students was to signpost students to relevant support services upon entry to university. It was also apparent that psychological well-being is changeable even over a short period of time and needs to be monitored throughout the time spent at university, to allow the provision of appropriate and timely intervention. Gibson et al.’s study found that levels of anxiety in students entering university were high during the Term 1, but had significantly decreased by Term 2. The hypothesis that early intervention at the transitional stage, when anxiety and other mental health issues are most prevalent,

is further supported by the results of a small-scale study carried out by Knoesen and Naudé (2017), which studied the ‘flourishing and languishing’ experiences of South African students during their first year at university. Reportedly, the ratio of negative to positive experiences during the very early stages of the first year leaned towards the negative. However, as students became more familiar with the challenges of university they developed resilience and self-regulation, leading to an upward trend in the reporting of more positive experiences. The promotion of mental wellbeing was identified as particularly important during the transitional period in order to provide students with the skills and tools to self-manage emotions.

2.1.11 The expectations of university life versus reality can also be a problem for students at the transitional stage. Previous research has found that students whose expectations have not been met tend to be less satisfied and may feel alienated, unwelcome or not part of the HEI community. Particularly so as a study exploring the challenges faced by students of different ethnicities transitioning into university discovered (Parker et al., 2017). This study highlights the importance of universities engaging with secondary and FE providers to offer information on the realities of student life and the support available to students during their transition into university, which will help minimise the impact of any ‘culture shock’ on transitional student mental health. A holistic approach, which aims to prepare students for all the new experiences university presents can be a significant factor in mitigating mental health problems at the transitional stage. The WHO Model of support for university students identified ‘readiness for university’ as one of five essential levels of support (World Health Organisation, 2014). ‘Readiness’ was identified by the WHO as covering all aspects of university life, such as emotional coping skills, budgeting and academic demands was effective in reducing stress and anxiety in students with varying levels of distress.

2.1.12 Peer support is commonly regarded as a new ‘therapy’. However it was first described informally by Jean Baptiste Pussin in 1793. Pussin wrote of his pre-disposition to hire recovered patients at the asylum he managed due to the fact that they were ‘disposed to kindness towards the patients in their care’ (Pinel, 1806). Whilst the seismic shift in the treatment of those suffering with mental health difficulties means the idea of confining sufferers to asylums is inherently shocking to a modern audience, Pussin was correct in his assessment that those with lived experience were particularly adept at supporting those experiencing similar difficulties. The backbone of modern peer support is based upon this ‘disposition to kindness’ and characterised by empathy, normalising of experiences, sharing of coping strategies and the building of a supportive community. Table 1 summarises the key benefits of peer support for different stakeholders (Source: Lawton-Smith, 2013).

Supported	Supporters	Support/clinical services
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Perceived empathy</li> <li>• Openness and trust</li> <li>• Empowerment</li> <li>• Development of self-efficacy</li> <li>• Increased self-esteem</li> <li>• Sense of hope through shared experiences</li> <li>• Reduced stigma</li> <li>• Increased control</li> <li>• Decreased isolation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased self-esteem and self-confidence</li> <li>• Feeling valued</li> <li>• Increased ability to cope with own mental health problems</li> <li>• Acquisition of new skills</li> <li>• Increased employment opportunities</li> <li>• Community building</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less demand on services</li> <li>• Reduction in crisis cases</li> <li>• Engagement with hard to reach service users</li> <li>• Reduced hospital admissions</li> <li>• Increased community involvement</li> <li>• Reduced pressure on frontline staff</li> <li>• Cost effective</li> </ul>

Table 1 The key benefits of peer support for the different stakeholders

2.1.13 In addition to the proven and perceived benefits for all those involved in peer support programmes, peer support is also a desirable and desired intervention for young people in particular. Rickwood et al. (2005) identified that young people prefer to talk to friends and family and people they know rather than professionals. These behaviours can be observed in young adolescents, Bartoli et al. (2018), in an evaluation of peer-led interventions in school-aged children, noted that previous research had demonstrated that peer-led programmes focusing on mental health have demonstrated positive outcomes with regard to increasing knowledge, reducing stigma and an increase in perception of self-efficacy and autonomy, which relate strongly to the idea of resilience. However, students who have benefited from naturally occurring or school-based support systems through established peer and familial relationships may lose their support network once they move away from home and school to attend university. Evidence suggests that university based support programmes which aim to replicate these ‘lost’ support networks, such as a course of peer support facilitated by the students themselves, can have a measurable impact on mental wellbeing. A study of 65 participant students across eight universities resulted in a statistically significant increase in mental wellbeing as measured using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (Byrom, 2018). However, whilst initial uptake was good the study did identify problems with attrition, with only 34% of participants completing the full course, a frequently reported disadvantage of peer support programmes.

2.1.14 It was unclear from Byrom’s study why students tended to drop out of the programme, but there are steps which can be taken to reduce attrition. A review of UK trends in peer support conducted by Lawton-Smith (2013) acknowledged that whilst peer support programmes differ hugely in their design and implementation, there are several defining factors which determine the success and longevity of interventions. These were identified as clear role definition, access to appropriate training and support and integration into wider teams.

2.1.15 Recent developments in the field have also concentrated on more innovative ways of delivering peer support – namely through digitally facilitated peer intervention. Whilst

this is an emerging field, and there is therefore a paucity of research, the limited available evidence offers some promising trends. A survey of young adults with mental illness found that they were more likely to connect with peers online than their 'well' counterparts (Gowen et al., 2012). This may be due to the fact that sufferers of anxiety in particular can find real-world interaction challenging. Connecting digitally offers all the advantages of more traditional peer support, including community building, decreased isolation, sharing of experiences and coping mechanisms, whilst removing some of the barriers sufferers can experience around face to face interventions. Those engaging in digital peer interactions also appeared to enjoy increased capacity to challenge stigma and negative attitudes towards mental illness, with the knowledge that others are facing similar difficulties, thus offering empowerment and providing hope (Lawlor and Kirakowski, 2014).

*'Online interventions have been identified as cost-effective and efficient ways to provide inclusive support to HE students, removing many of the barriers to help-seeking as well as promoting mental health and wellbeing.'* (Barrable et al., 2018, p.1)

2.1.16 However, there is a concern that the ease of online interactions could lead to an over-reliance on digital interventions, with research to date also failing to offer conclusive evidence as to whether digital peer interaction translates to meaningful recovery in the offline world (Naslund et al., 2016).

2.1.17 The prevalence of apps and digital tools to support both mental and physical health have surged in popularity in recent years, with the vast majority of the population having at least one 'wellness' app downloaded to their smartphones. Despite this, age-targeted apps and tools are a comparatively new phenomena, with the research into the benefits of digital interventions in young people, and students in particular, being relatively scarce. However, as Barrable et al. (2018) outline, there are some immediately obvious advantages to online intervention, such as cost-effectiveness, the ability to reach a large cohort, accessibility to students from all backgrounds and with a wide range of problems.

2.1.18 Digital interventions are also unique in that they can potentially remove a number of barriers to help-seeking. Waiting times, lack of understanding of symptoms, lack of awareness of services offered, the impact upon education and the removal of both public and self-stigma have all been identified as influential in the failure of students to seek help (Laidlaw et al., 2015). Self-stigma in particular has been quoted as a compelling factor in the failure of students to seek help for mental health issues. A study by Cage et al. (2018) found that 'self-stigma was a significant predictor of a lack of help-seeking intentions and actual help-seeking behaviour' (p.14). Given that digital interventions offer discreet access to a range of services, those feeling self-conscious or even ashamed of seeking help for their difficulties can choose to retain anonymity, only disclosing their mental health issues should they opt to do so. This also offers the individual a larger locus of control over their treatment, identified as an important factor in recovery, with The

Mental Health Foundation highlighting that it can help boost self-esteem and lower the risk of suicide (Mental Health Foundation, 2019).

2.1.19 Another common factor which affects help-seeking behaviour and which digital intervention may help counteract is internal conflict in the individual as to whether their mental health problem is ‘bad enough’ to require intervention. Students in particular are familiar with the concept that stress is a ‘normal student experience’ and may feel that they should simply ‘put up’ with the effects (Laidlaw et al., 2015), rather than seek help at an early stage and before they reach crisis point. As previously identified in Gibson et al.’s (2016) study of transitional students, signposting to enable early intervention and prevention are key, and the answer may lie in providing digital tools focusing on prevention as well as intervention to the entire student community from the point of entry into university, or ideally, pre-entry. Blanket provision of digital tools and content also offers opportunities for a high uptake of support among students, with a study by Carpenter-Song et al. (2018) suggesting that those with mental illness are already highly engaged in the use of technology, and would welcome the opportunity to utilise their existing technology provision to address their mental health needs.

2.1.20 Another way in which digital tools and content can support student wellbeing is by taking the focus away from medicalising mental health and shifting instead to a holistic approach. De-medicalising (and by association de-mystifying and de-stigmatising) mental wellbeing can be a key factor in increasing engagement. Evidence to support this is drawn from the aforementioned study by Laidlaw et al. (2015) which found that students perceived mental ‘health’ very differently to mental ‘wellbeing’, the former being associated with psychiatric conditions whilst the latter was associated with happiness, confidence and coping strategies. Further evidence of the need to shift the focus from medicalisation to ‘wellness’ comes from Barrable et al.’s (2018) study into an online intervention system aimed at supporting mental health, wellbeing and study skills in HE. The study found that apps and content which avoid clinicalisation are more likely to increase engagement and reduce attrition, and that the design of content is key to engaging and retaining student use (Table 2).

Feature	Benefit
Online access	Anonymity, ease of access, removal of stigma
Visual appearance, layout, language aimed at students	High uptake and engagement, inclusiveness, usability
Ability to personalise apps, pages etc.	Strengthens ‘emotional bond’ with apps, affords students ownership
Multimedia, animation	Enhances learning
Evidence based techniques such as problem solving	Increases self-efficacy

Table 2 Key features of digital content supporting student wellbeing and their benefits

2.1.21 As well as enabling users to assert control over their wellbeing as an individual, digital interventions can also help facilitate formal and informal opportunities for peer connection and community building. A study by Naslund et al. (2014) found that those

suffering with mental illness are often highly motivated to seek others with the same condition, something that social media can enable.

2.1.22 There are some obvious concerns regarding vulnerable individuals sharing their experiences of mental illness online. In reality, however, Naslund et al. found that comments on YouTube videos featuring individuals talking about their personal experiences of mental health were overwhelmingly positive. Furthermore, once connections are formed, those engaged in online support communities benefited from all the traditional benefits of peer support, such as sharing coping strategies, engendering hope through sharing stories of personal triumphs and the normalising difficult experiences. In addition, members seemed to grow in resilience, becoming protective of their online community and challenging negative comments made by others. The positive effects of online peer support also appear to be sustainable. A study by Kathina et al. (2015) into online peer support in young people found a reduction in symptoms of those suffering with both depression and anxiety continued post-intervention. The results for the reduction of anxiety were particularly promising, as they were statistically significant.

2.1.23 Current literature highlights the need for mental health programmes within modern HEI settings to be student-led, student-focused and accessible to all. There is also a great deal of emphasis on preparedness for university and early intervention, or better still, prevention to avoid mental health issues in students escalating. The UoL project aims to embed support, both digital and face to face, in the curriculum, normalising the experience of self-care for mental health, and making the tools to self-manage available to the entire student population. Through promoting emotional development as a natural part of the university experience, and embedding coping strategies which will be effective for those students suffering with mild to moderate mental health issues. The UoL mental health project aims to align with the current thinking and address the challenges identified through this literature review in a number of ways.

## **2.2 Project Alignment**

2.2.1 The evidence provided in the literature review identified several factors which affect transitional student wellbeing, such as student expectations not matching the reality and the psychological wellbeing of transitional students changing. Key features of interventions were also highlighted, with student-led and designed support packages and avoiding over 'medicalisation' being particularly significant.

2.2.2 The project addressed these issues in several ways. Transitional outreach work helped support students by providing advice and guidance ahead of the next stage of their lives and, for many, moving on to university. Outreach presentations and workshops provided practical strategies to help build confidence and resilience and better prepare students for the changes that lay ahead. This helped to give students the ability to manage

their own mental health and wellbeing and recognise when they may need to seek further support.

2.2.3 The WOW Summer School was offered and provided to students accessing support from the Wellbeing Team, giving attendees the opportunity to experience campus life and meet others. The summer school was key to decreasing anxiety and helping to balance students' expectations of the changes that university life can bring. It also offered the opportunity to experience socialising and living with other students, helping to minimise concerns around accommodation, a noted challenge identified by the literature review.

2.2.4 Student cohorts were involved in the trial of digital tools such as the 'Fika' digital app, as well as differing cohorts trialling and producing content for the UniWellbeing health tech app 'Student Life', provided by the UoL. The provision of digital tools such as this helps to support those students for whom accessing services face to face can be an additional challenge. Offering students the option to digitally support their own mental health and wellbeing where appropriate, coupled with the challenges faced by Covid-19, means that digital provision in particular is adapting to the ever-changing needs and requirements of HE students.

2.2.5 Digital tools provided by the project include signposting to relevant professional services wherever possible and needed. Therefore, it is hoped, minimising any perceived 'over-reliance' on digital tools. Content produced, particularly by students, also highlights the importance of peer support, talking to others and seeking out professional support when appropriate.

2.2.6 Students were involved in co-production in all areas of the project, with digitally produced content focusing on the positive aspects of maintaining good mental health and appropriate ways to seek support, whilst avoiding medicalisation. Peer support and, in particular, students sharing lived experiences, has been evidenced through project evaluation as being a valuable support source and resource, with students noting that student-led content from 'relatable people' provides reassurance they are 'not alone'.

## Part 3 Data Collection Methods

### 3.1 Evaluation Approach

3.1.1 The project utilised a mixed methods approach to evaluation, in order to understand the impact and value to students of project activities and content produced. Evaluation of the project centred around the project's 'service' and activities provided, to assess how well the project was achieving its aims. All students and staff taking part knew that their participation would improve the activities, resources and content delivered. Data collected and audio recordings were anonymous, no personal information or details were shared beyond the project. On completion, all information and session recordings were deleted. The Fika and MBSP trial studies both received ethical approval from the University of Lincoln Research Ethics Committee.

### 3.2 Quantitative Data Collection

3.2.1 Quantitative data was obtained from the following sources:

- Metrics from the Digital Student Experience social media platforms including YouTube, Facebook and Instagram.
- Metrics on student 'audience' numbers from the UoL 'Facebook live' events.
- Metrics from the UniWellbeing 'Student Life' app, including registrations, active users, app events and engagements with app content.
- Analysis of variance for the Fika trial involving The Satisfaction with Life Scale (SWLS, Diener et al., 1985), the Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS, Watson et al., 1988), and the General Self-Efficacy Scale (GSE, Chen et al., 2001).
- Analysis of variance for Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) study including The Mindful Attention Awareness 64 Scale (Brown and Ryan, 2003), the Strengths Use Scale (Govindji and Linley, 2007), the Generalised Self-Efficacy Scale (Schwarzer and Jerusalem, 1995), the Brief Resilience Scale (Smith et al., 2008), the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale (Lovibond and Lovibond, 1995) and the PERMA Profiler (Butler and Kern, 2016).
- Questionnaire feedback forms completed by 'Fresh Start' workshop attendees in 2020 post-intervention, using a Likert style scale (*with 1 being not beneficial, not useful and not in depth and 10 being very beneficial, very useful and in enough depth*).  
Questionnaire feedback forms completed by students at a transitional outreach session, using a Likert style scale, pre and post-intervention (*with 1 being least confident and 10 being most confident*).
- Questionnaire feedback forms filled out by students at WOW summer school 2020, using a Likert style scale, pre and post-intervention (*with 1 being not anxious and 10 being most anxious and 1 being not confident and 10 being most confident*).

### 3.3 Qualitative Data Collection

3.3.1 Qualitative data was obtained from the following sources:

- Focus Groups with Year 11 students at a local Lincolnshire Secondary School.
- Feedback from Student Advisory Board members on Digital Student Experience content.
- Google feedback forms sent to staff members at schools visited by the transitional team.
- Feedback from WOW attendees and family members, transcribed from the WOW Summer School 2019 promo video.
- Interviews with WOW Summer School 2021 attendees, family members and student ambassadors, transcribed spoken responses.
- Focus group on the new features of the Fika app.
- Feedback from first year LMS students of their knowledge of the UniWellbeing ‘Student Life’ App, taken via a virtual survey held ‘mid-session’ in induction week.
- Focus group with first year Lincoln Medical School (LMS) students on their use and thoughts of the UniWellbeing ‘Student Life’ app, transcribed comments.
- Google survey shared during Week 8 for LMS students (in Foundation, Years 1, 2 and 3) on their usage and thoughts of the UniWellbeing hosted ‘Student Life’ app.
- Google survey shared in January 2022 with student content creators, on their thoughts, benefits or challenges working on the project.

### 3.4 Strengths and Limitations

3.4.1 The strengths and limitations of interview and focus groups as an evaluation tool can be seen in Table 3:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help collect rich and detailed information from a relatively small number of participants.</li> <li>• Explore the nature of expressed views, opinions, perceptions, attitudes, preferences and behaviours by allowing specific lines of enquiry to be pursued in depth as they arise.</li> <li>• Achieve a relatively high level of personal interaction while maintaining an acceptable level of standardisation.</li> <li>• Flexible if semi-structured or unstructured and when conducted face-to-face.</li> <li>• Amenable to content, discourse, conversation and narrative analysis</li> <li>• Can be analysed manually or using NVivo.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require interview/focus groups expertise.</li> <li>• Can be time consuming and expensive.</li> <li>• Can be difficult to record, analyse and interpret.</li> <li>• Suffer from interviewer/focus group facilitator (e.g. age, gender, ethnicity, socio-economic status, dress code) and interviewee/focus group participant effects (e.g. motivation, interest, attentiveness, accuracy and truthfulness) and transcription bias (e.g. recall errors, selection of material).</li> <li>• Volume of information obtained can be considerable increasing costs.</li> <li>• Flexibility may result in interview / focus group variation and inconsistency.</li> </ul>

Table 3 Interview and Focus Groups as an evaluation tool

3.4.2 The strengths and limitations of questionnaires as an evaluation tool can be seen in Table 4:

Advantages	Disadvantages
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good for gathering straight forward numerical and other types of data from any number of participants, large or small.</li> <li>• Explore the nature of expressed views, opinions, perceptions, attitudes, preferences and behaviours in a prescribed way.</li> <li>• Achieve a relatively high level of standardisation if structured or semi-structured without a requirement for personal interaction.</li> <li>• Relatively inexpensive to use unless they need to be developed and validated initially using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis.</li> <li>• Amenable to descriptive or inferential statistical analysis.</li> <li>• Can be analysed manually or using SPSS.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can be rendered relatively useless if poorly designed or constructed in the first instance.</li> <li>• Take time to complete particularly if overly long or respondent is busy.</li> <li>• Box ticking alone can never capture the complexity of people's lives, leaving some respondents frustrated at not being able to express themselves fully or in a different manner.</li> <li>• Response rates can be very low, particularly when administered by electronic means (e.g. email or online)</li> <li>• Self-reporting may lead to selective recall and respondent bias.</li> <li>• Data may provide an overall or general picture but lack depth, detail or adequate information in context.</li> </ul>

Table 4 Questionnaires as an evaluation tool

3.4.3 Evaluation of virtually delivered sessions presented limitations, as it was difficult to gather feedback from all students engaged by virtual means due to variances in technology used by differing institutions, whether the students were all present in the sessions or logging in from their home and whether students could be seen on the webcams being used. On those occasions, a show of hands was often asked of students on how they felt. Importantly, this is not anonymous and feedback by those means is reliant on teachers correctly counting and reporting back via the digital platform. Many students may understandably be reluctant to respond and show others how they feel. When delivering virtually the team did not always have 'sight' of students via a webcam and, on many occasions, were left to deliver virtual sessions without any academic support. All of which made evaluation of virtually delivered sessions an additional challenge. Following those sessions, post-intervention feedback forms were sent individually to teachers and academics to return, with response rates often as low as 50% or providing thoughts of only a single member of staff.

3.4.4 The Transitional Wellbeing team faced additional challenges when delivering outreach sessions into schools and colleges, informed of arrangement changes only on arrival. Difficulties included student numbers greatly increasing, locations changing to less appropriate rooms for the workshops scheduled and workshop time being drastically reduced. On those occasions, it was not always possible to gain pre- and post-intervention feedback, as to do so would mean less time for delivery. With this in mind, only a sample of feedback taken from varying sessions has been included within the final report.

3.4.5 The variety in style of outreach session delivery also presented some challenges for the team. Many sessions were provided to entire year groups in an 'assembly style' format within a large hall. Often, these fell within timetabled, traditional 'assembly' periods and shorter sessions at the beginning of the day. On those occasions, due to the

number of students involved, the team were unable to use individual feedback questionnaires and due to the much shorter session time provided by schools, instead focusing on delivery of information and strategies, to ensure that students received as much advice and support as possible.

3.4.6 Analysis of questionnaires completed by school and college students pre- and post-intervention also showed some limiting factors. Responses were recorded on a Likert scale of 1-10 and analysed to assess whether there had been a positive change, negative change, or no change. On some occasions, as responses were scribbled out and changed, it suggested possible collusion or copying. Even through the provision of anonymised questionnaires, individuals may respond how they perceive they 'should' or in a 'socially desirable way' (Patten, 2014). This was an identified limitation to this style of questionnaire and bespoke questionnaires were considered for each individual session delivered, however this was not always practical or manageable due to the style of delivery, time provided at each institution or numbers of students in the session etc.

3.4.7 Monitoring the progress of students coming into university from schools who may have received specialist outreach support was also a challenge. Not all students receiving project support were moving on to university and it was unknown at the time of delivery whether any would choose UoL as their destination. It was too early for Year 12 school and Year 1 college students to identify their destination of choice and therefore more challenging for the team to monitor any progress. The team felt that capturing the benefits of strategies and the information provided during the session itself, wherever possible, was a more feasible approach to enhance the value of this project.

3.4.8 To avoid any 'bias' of results, the project team were mindful not to include student content creators with an interest or link to the project in any focus groups or evaluation work.

## **Part 4 Transitional Wellbeing Activities**

### **4.1 Background**

4.1.1 The Transitional Wellbeing team were recruited at the project start, with two Student Wellbeing Advisors being seconded into the roles from July 2019 for the duration. This brought in valued knowledge and experience of the existing wellbeing support available at UoL alongside the appointment of two Transitional Wellbeing Education Officers and a 0.5 FTE Transitional Wellbeing Administrator to support the team's work.

4.1.2 During the project, the Transitional Wellbeing team, led by the Wellbeing Project Lead facilitated a range of activities aimed at easing the transition of first year students entering university. Engagement with schools and colleges was excellent throughout the project, with over 5,200 students from Years 11 – 13 directly involved in outreach sessions, face to face and virtually, across the county and beyond. Resources for students, teachers, parents and guardians were also produced, utilising the expertise of Transitional Wellbeing Advisors and Transitional Wellbeing Education Officers funded by the project. The WOW Transitional Summer School was held on three occasions during the project, in July 2019, September 2020 and July 2021, supporting a total of 157 pre-entry students with a full programme of events on campus, aimed at easing their transition into university. The 'Fresh Start' workshops were also offered to new students at the UoL when arriving and at key flashpoints throughout the year, providing support with homesickness, managing change and being independent.

### **4.2 Transitional Outreach Resources and Sessions**

4.2.1 Transitional outreach work was delivered by the team, adapting sessions to both live virtual delivery, or providing pre-recorded virtual presentations to institutions during national lockdowns and government restrictions. The sessions varied from large assembly style presentations to smaller presentations and bespoke workshops delivered as part of the curriculum or specialist enrichment and learning days. Feedback was gathered via a standard form filled out by pupil and student participants, capturing pre and post-intervention thoughts and a feedback form for school staff issued post-intervention.

4.2.2 Content delivered by the team was initially around 'Managing Change'. This began as a large, all-encompassing presentation that was delivered assembly style. It soon became apparent that this method of delivery was not the most conducive for students learning or their engagement. The Transitional Team looked at the content included and from that, three main themes emerged – 'Emotional Fitness', 'Getting Ahead' and 'Next Steps'. From these themes, dedicated workshops, or shorter, informative presentations could then be provided. 'Managing Change' was also offered as a 'cover all' presentation should schools or colleges need their whole cohort to receive informative help and advice when moving onto the next stage of their lives.

4.2.3 Following the onset of Covid-19, digital resource packs of available sessions were adapted and developed and made available online, for schools and colleges to use within their taught sessions as and when they needed. This was particularly useful to those schools and colleges providing virtual learning to students within their own homes during national lockdowns in 2020. Sessions designed, developed, delivered and made digitally available to schools and colleges are provided via links (Appendix 12.1) and included the following:

#### 4.2.4 *Managing Change*

This session covered a little of everything, the changes that may lie ahead for students as they leave their current form of education including myths vs realities, becoming independent, goal setting, living with others, managing emotions and when to seek help and support.

Presentation: [https://youtu.be/ohjyTlw\\_76c](https://youtu.be/ohjyTlw_76c)

Digital Magazine: <https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/managing-change.html>

#### 4.2.5 *Emotional Fitness*

This session had a focus on the importance of emotional fitness and self-care, it talked about recognising strengths and using these to build up resilience to better cope with any challenges individuals may face. The digital pack produced also covered topics such as self-care, the Five Ways to Wellbeing and managing emotions. The presentation included content produced by the Digital Student Experience team.

Presentation:

<https://youtu.be/tQ2kYeDcygg>

Digital Magazine:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/uolswc-emotional-fitness-digital-magazine.html>

#### 4.2.6 *Next Steps*

Within this session, the focus was on looking ahead after Further Education, managing expectations and tips to help. It included some Myths vs Reality on University life, setting in and living with others, video resources on managing money, self-care and tops tips. The presentation also included valuable content produced by the Digital Student Experience team.

Presentation: <https://youtu.be/ot4GI0b0sYU>

Digital Magazine: <https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/next-steps.html>

#### 4.2.7 Getting Ahead

This session looked at focusing and progressing skills, in particular it covered time management, prioritising and procrastination, all of which can at times prove difficult for students during a change of routine and becoming independent. The presentation again, included content produced by the Digital Student Experience team.

Presentation: <https://youtu.be/myw9gRyTBII>

Digital Magazine: <https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/getting-ahead.html>

The content and resources produced for each of these sessions is available here:

<https://studentservices.lincoln.ac.uk/life-at-university/new-students/transition-to-university/schools-colleges/>

4.2.8 Guides were also designed, produced and shared for Teachers as well as Parents and Guardians, to help provide information, hints and tips to utilise with students or school and college aged young adults. As well as speaking about mental health and emotional wellbeing, these magazines also provided links to support services that may be useful.

*Teachers:*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/a-guide-for-teachers.html>

*Parents and Guardians:*

<https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/a-guide-for-parents-guardians.html>

4.2.9 A university information guide was also produced by the team for staff in schools and colleges about university support and processes. This guide talked through applying for Disabled Students Allowances, setting up support (including sending medical evidence), financial support and more:

<https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/guide-for-school-college-support-staff.html>

4.2.10 Where literature was available online, provided and made available for all, the Transitional Wellbeing team also provided a link to an online feedback form, which teaching staff were asked to complete should they use the resources available with their student cohorts. A sample of feedback, which helped the team to understand that the content is suitable, relevant and timely for the students it is aimed to support, included:

*'It was pitched at the right level for our sixth formers and included a student perspective as well as professionals.'*

### 4.3 Outreach Sessions to Schools and Colleges

4.3.1 Figure 3, shows the variety in location of schools and colleges that transitional sessions were delivered to, both face to face and virtually, with a larger concentration of institutions in the Central Lincoln area:

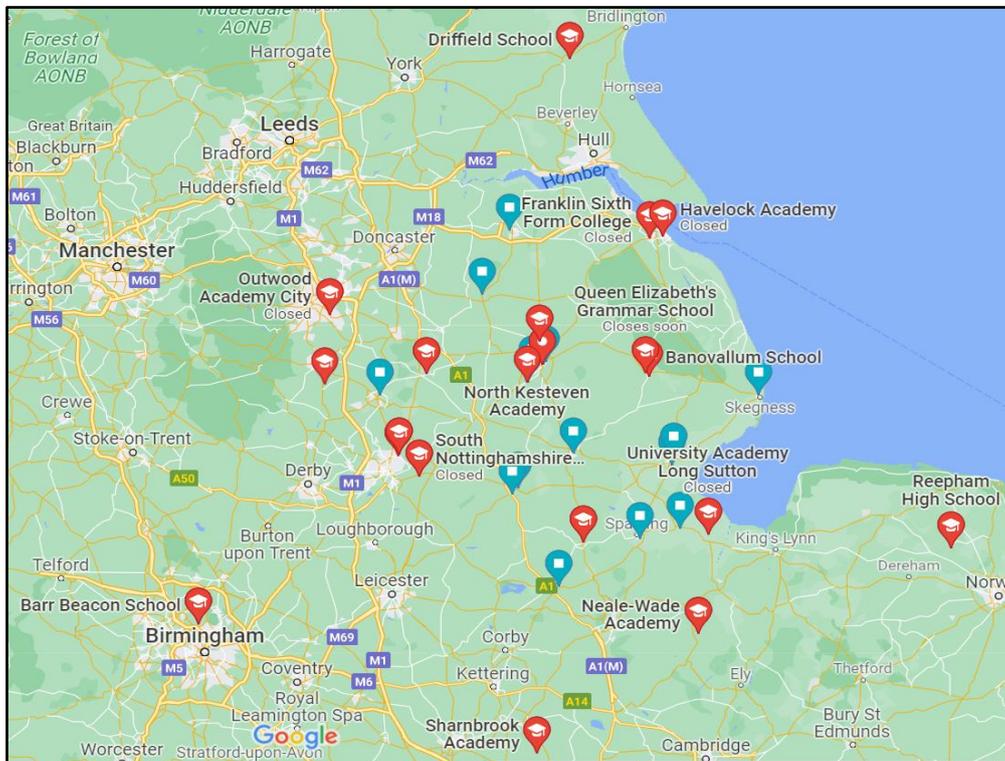


Figure 3 Outreach session geographical locations of schools and colleges

4.3.2 Fifty-nine sessions were provided to thirty-six institutions, with many receiving more than one session across the duration of the project. Face to face and virtual outreach work was delivered to the following schools shown in Table 5:

School or College	Location	Face to Face	Virtual
Arnold Hill Academy	Nottingham		1
Banovallum School	Horncastle	1	
Barr Beacon School	Walsall		1
Boston College	Boston	4	
Boston High School	Boston	2	
Bourne Academy	Bourne	1	
Christ the King Voluntary Academy	Nottingham	2	2
Driffield School and Sixth Form	Driffield		1
Franklin Sixth Form College	Grimsby		1
Havelock Academy	Grimsby		1
John Leggott Sixth Form College	Scunthorpe		1
Kesteven and Grantham Girls' School	Grantham	1	
Lincoln Christ's Hospital School	Lincoln	2	
Lincoln Minster Senior School	Lincoln	1	
Lincoln University Technical College (UTC)	Lincoln		1
Neale-Wade Academy	March		2
North Kesteven Academy	Lincoln	3	
Outwood Academy City	Sheffield		1
Queens Elizabeth's Grammar School	Horncastle		1
Queen Elizabeth's High School	Gainsborough	4	
Reepham High School	Norwich		2
Riseholme College	Lincoln		2
Sharnbrook Academy	Bedford		3
Sir Robert Pattinson Academy	Lincoln	2	
Skegness Academy	Skegness	1	
South Nottinghamshire Academy	Radcliffe on Trent		1
Spalding High School	Spalding	2	
Stamford College	Stamford		2
St George's Academy	Sleaford	1	
The Brunt's Academy	Mansfield	3	
The Dukeries Academy	Newark	1	
The Priory Lincoln Academy	Lincoln	1	
Tupton Hall School	Chesterfield		1
University Academy Holbeach	Spalding	1	
University Academy Long Sutton	Spalding	1	
Walton Academy	Grantham	1	
		<b>35 Face to face</b>	<b>24 Virtual</b>

Table 5 Schools and colleges receiving face to face and virtual outreach sessions

4.3.3 Transitional Wellbeing-led activities took place throughout the projects duration, with statistics and figures gathered at 6 monthly intervals and during each internal evaluation report. These activities included schools and college outreach work, presentations, conferences and the WOW Summer School.

4.3.4 Transitional Wellbeing activities began from June 2019 and delivery of the WOW Summer School in July. School and college outreach work also commenced with a good number of institutions booking sessions from the team during the first few months of the project. Activities delivered between 1 June 2019 and 30 November 2019 are shown in Table 6:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Total
WOW Summer School	40 (131 YouTube views)	1	172
Queens Elizabeth's High School – Year 11 Focus Group	25		25
Wellbeing World Magazine Focus Group	7		7
Overall school total	1700		1700
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>1903</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1904</b>

Table 6 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 June 2019 and 30 November 2019

4.3.5 Figures between 1 December 2019 and 31 May 2020 are shown in Table 7. Transitional Wellbeing activities lessened during this time, primarily due to the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic in March 2020 and the subsequent national lockdowns that followed. However work did continue throughout, and outreach support was still delivered virtually to schools and colleges as can be seen below:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Total
School total up to February 2019	461		461
Long Sutton Academy	88		88
University Academy Holbeach	73		73
Boston College	78		78
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>700</b>		<b>700</b>

Table 7 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 December 2019 and 31 May 2020

4.3.6 Transitional Wellbeing activities delivered between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020 are shown in Table 8. As restrictions slowly started to lift, but were then re-introduced, work continued out into schools and the WOW summer school took place during September. The UoL 'Live Lounge' online event provided by the team, saw a large influx of engagement from pre-entry and incoming UoL students:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Total
WOW Summer School	53	3	56
Lincoln Live Lounge events	10,000		10,000
Fresh Start Workshops	17		17
Calls to Wellbeing leads at partner schools	155		155
Stamford College Virtual Fair	50		50
John Leggott College	50		50
Franklin College	50		50
Havelock Academy	50		50
Tupton Hall School	330		330
Lincoln University Technical College (UTC)	45		45
Arnold Hill Academy	50		50
Christ the King Voluntary Academy	43		43
LiNCHigher HE Week	67		67
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>10,960</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10,963</b>

Table 8 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020

4.3.7 As restrictions lifted further during 2021, support was provided to more students at varying schools and colleges, with larger cohorts and repeat sessions delivered. Transitional Wellbeing activities delivered between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2021 are shown in Table 9:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Total
Calls to Wellbeing leads at partner schools	75		75
Neale Wade Academy (x 2)	200		200
Stamford College	100		100
LiNCHigher Virtual presentation	100		100
Barr Beacon School	100		100
Queen Elizabeth's Grammar School	100		100
Riseholme College (x 2)	200		200
Christ the King Academy	100		100
Sharnbrook Academy (x 3)	150		150
Outwood Academy	100		100
South Nottinghamshire Academy	42		42
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>1,267</b>		<b>1,267</b>

Table 9 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2021

4.3.8 Transitional Wellbeing activities delivered between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2021 are shown in Table 10. Again, these increased during this time. WOW 2021 hosted 72 students on campus and the team continued to engage with schools and colleges exceptionally well, alongside supporting a smaller online event for UoL:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Total
WOW Summer School	72	3	75
Lincoln Live Lounge Event	1,000		1,000
Fresh Start Workshops	11		11
LINCHigher Thriving Lives virtual session	20		20
Informative leaflet to Top 30 feeder schools and colleges	900		900
Queen Elizabeth's High School	150		150
Banovallum School	80		80
Boston High School	120		120
Bourne Academy	120		120
Brunt's Academy	80		80
Christ the King Voluntary Academy (x 2)	180	1	181
The Dukeries Academy	80	1	81
Driffield High School	120		120
Reepham High School (x2)	105		105
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>3,078</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3,043</b>

Table 10 Transitional Wellbeing Activities between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2021

4.3.9 In total, activities undertaken by the Transitional Wellbeing team had an overall, known audience reach of over 17,800 and transitional outreach sessions were directly delivered to over 5,300 students across workshops, presentations and education fairs.

4.3.10 Support provided into schools and colleges remained consistent throughout and pleasingly, did not wane during government restrictions or national lockdowns. As noted previously, the team adapted resources and the provision of virtual sessions and delivery was welcomed by schools and colleges, ensuring support continued. Number of students supported via sessions provided by the team remained high and outreach sessions provided regularly, only slowing outside of term times as expected.

4.3.11 Outside of term time, the team remained focused on support for pre-entry UoL students, whose numbers increased each year. The WOW Summer school, its coordination and planning, also took place outside of term time, to allow the team to provide support in all areas as planned - outreach activities and pre entry student support activities for the university.

4.3.12 Feedback was gathered by the Transitional Wellbeing team during some school and college outreach sessions, in the form of pre- and post-intervention 'Likert' scale style questionnaires completed by student participants, with a score of 1 being least confident and 10 being most confident. A feedback form was also provided to school staff, issued post intervention, to gain comments and thoughts on the sessions and content.

4.3.13 A sample of student feedback below in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 show an average of the results taken from 78 students, from sessions delivered at a local college. The questionnaire asked students to rate their confidence in managing stress and emotions as well as confidence in managing change and being independent, with a score of 1 being least confident and 10 being most confident.

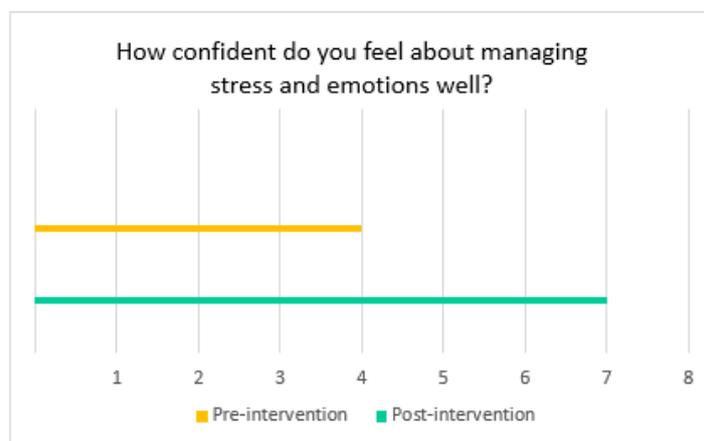


Figure 4.1 Average results of students' confidence in managing stress and emotions

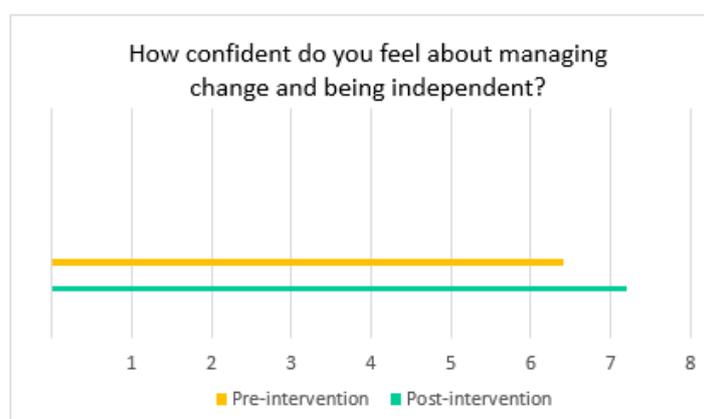


Figure 4.2 Average results of students' confidence in managing change and being independent

4.3.14 The average results across this larger groups of students showing a small increase is pleasing, as it shows the team that immediately after strategies and information are delivered during outreach workshops, students stated that they felt more confident with their newly learnt skills.

4.3.15 Alongside this small increase, feedback received from students for the provision of outreach support was overwhelmingly high. Sample comments received from a pupil session included:

*'The session was very helpful. I feel more confident now and I know how to deal with my emotions in case of anxiety or depression.'* (Year 12 student)

*'Very enjoyable talk. Clear and confident speakers.'* (Year 13 student)

4.3.16 Feedback was also positive from school and colleges tutors, a sample comment noted:

*'The presenters were friendly and the language used targeted at the audience. The clips were suitable and entertaining.'* (Head of Year, local school)

4.3.17 Alongside these comments, some students noted information received had given them a greater awareness of the changes that were to come, that they perhaps weren't fully aware of, with one pupil stating, following the session:

*'Considering uni closer to home.'* (Year 12 student)

4.3.18 Comments such as this are also positive, as it shows the awareness of students thinking about making the right choice for themselves, for their own future, based on information they had learnt during project outreach sessions.

4.3.19 Feedback from staff was also sourced by the team, post-intervention, to understand if the content and topics had been useful for their students. Comments received were pleasing, with Heads of Sixth Form and academic staff noting in particular:

*'All presentations were excellent in the manner and content they were delivered by a knowledgeable team. Our safeguarding lead also watched every presentation and (was) very impressed with content and the level of detail.'*

*'Very powerful and the students were engaged throughout.'*

*'We would like to do more sessions like this.'*

4.3.20 By capturing the thoughts of students and staff following sessions, the team had a greater understanding of the benefits and the value of support that was provided. Had feedback repeatedly shown a weakness in any area, or numerous students had stated that a topic was unsuitable for example, the team would then have the ability to respond, re-visit and re-design the content as required.

#### **4.4 Wellbeing Orientation Welcome (WOW) Transitional Summer School**

4.4.1 When looking at the complexity of issues that many of the students who access the Student Wellbeing Centre face, some have additional concerns about beginning University and study. Alongside this, anxieties might also be around social interaction and friendship groups, independent living, ways in which they will study, getting around and familiarity with the campus. This can, at times, lead to students feeling overwhelmed and on occasion, some students have chosen to leave university. The Transitional Wellbeing Team hosted and delivered the WOW Summer School during the project, a free 3-day, 2-night stay on campus following a full programme of events. This was offered to prospective students who disclose a diagnosis of a disability or medical condition via their UCAS application, who then access support through the Wellbeing team, all of which may experience anxieties about beginning university study, such as those on the autism spectrum, those with a diagnosis of mental health and more recently, offered to those leaving care. WOW is provided to prospective students through conversations with the Transitional Team via email, phone and at Open Day events, with the primary aim to ease

any concerns that students may have about the changes that lie ahead and the transition into university life.

4.4.2 During WOW Wellbeing staff were on site 24/7 to help and support students as needed. Any student under 18 at the time of WOW required signed consent from a parent or guardian. Students Ambassadors, who are previous attendees, are employed to assist staff during WOW, to support students, answer queries and share lived experience.

#### 4.5 WOW Summer School 2019

4.5.1 The Transitional Wellbeing team hosted WOW during July 2019 with 40 students joining the Summer School. Students stayed on campus for the duration, within the Cygnet Wharf accommodation block, and followed a programme of events designed to offer elements of university life such as sample lecture and seminars, alongside meeting tutors and support staff.

4.5.2 Four Student Ambassadors joined the team to assist with the delivery of WOW, all of which were previous attendees of the summer school, working approximately 20 hours each across the duration. As students arrived, they were greeted by staff, shown to their accommodation by Ambassadors and welcomed more formally during an 'icebreaker' session. For ease, attendees were given pre-paid meal and drink vouchers to use in university catering establishments throughout the residential, with a social restaurant event offered one evening for all to attend.

4.5.3 Across the duration of WOW, staff were visibly able to see students relax into the new environments, many making solid friendship groups from the start, which eases students' social concerns ahead of enrolment and university study.

4.5.4 Members of the Digital Team were also involved with WOW 2019, filming and producing a promotional video which included interviews with both WOW attendees and their family members. Comments from WOW attendees, transcribed from the video produced by the project team, included:

*'If you're anxious of coming to university, these three days have personally given me a lot.'*

*'It was like.... a nice welcome to the university.'*

*'Honestly...it was really nice to meet other people and kind of... not be defined by our illnesses...because we're all here having gone through something or... you know... having autism.'*

*'To turn something like that into a positive experience is really nice.'*

*'I came in and took the first step in and I was scared... now I don't want to go home.'*

*'The apprehension is now more excitement.'*

*'I'm looking forward to coming back in September...and I do recommend it to a lot of people.'*

4.5.5 Comments from family members, again transcribed from the summer school video produced by the project team, included:

*'She's happy, she's chatty...that's not like our daughter... I think it's given her a good start for September.'*

*'She's like a different person, it's really, really brilliant to see her, she's been talking to everyone.'*

*'That's just all a parent ever wants to hear is their child happy...so I would definitely recommend this programme to anybody.'*

4.5.6 On completion of WOW 2019, considerations were made by staff for future summer schools, namely:

- Increase places available: due to project staff facilitating the event, dedicated support meant this provision could increase, plans were in place to support 80 students in 2020.
- A 'paperless WOW': to avoid varying data being held such as lists for trips, and accommodation, all information could be hosted through MS Teams or similar, to enable staff working for the event to all access remotely with ease.
- Further communications and updates to academics were necessary, particularly should attendee numbers increase.
- Ambassadors would be arranged for particular events, when more interaction could be had to support attendees, for example.
- A separate timetable for ambassadors to use and follow was acknowledged as being helpful.
- An electronic copy of the timetable, made more readily available for students and staff to access would be useful, provided during the event rather than paper versions used previously.
- A joint Student Wellbeing and Student Support Centre welcome session was considered, to introduce students to all Student Services support available through the university.

4.5.7 Following WOW, the team were able to source data on the attendees to understand how they had performed within their first year. Available evaluation data showed that more WOW attendees had attended university in their first year than the UoL average, and the UoL Disability average. The figures presented show a comparison of these and the average for the 2019 WOW:

- UoL average: 72.4 %
- UoL Disability average: 68.7 %

- WOW student attendance average for 2019 (*n=40 students*): 74.5 %

*(UoL figures are shown at a session level, as students may attend more than one session, an average percentage of the year overall is provided.)*

4.5.8 Whilst these figures are a snapshot of the 2019 attendees and their first year attendance, it gave the project team an indication that the provision of WOW was of benefit to students attending. When looking at the 2019 WOW attendance against the UoL disability average for the same year, the increase is considerable. Although, perhaps not solely attributed to attending WOW, should the trend continue, it is certainly indicative of the summer school's benefit to students, their confidence and continued engagement with their studies.

#### **4.6 WOW Summer School 2020**

4.6.1 Plans for 2020 focused on an increased provision for 80 students on campus, almost double the number of places offered in the previous year. Initial interest in WOW 2020 was excellent, the project team identified potential participants through open days and talks delivered by the Transitional Team to parents, with around 50 prospective students listed to attend by the end of 2019.

4.6.2 However, when the Covid-19 pandemic took hold, planning was suspended whilst guidance was awaited from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) at UoL. As some restrictions began to lift, a proposal for a face to face summer school in a Covid secure manner with an option for virtual delivery if required, was written and submitted for approval to the SLT. Approval was received to proceed in line with current government and university guidelines, and the project team approached interested students, asking their preference. Forty-two participants confirmed they would like to attend a face to face, on campus event, with a further eleven students choosing the virtual option.

4.6.3 Several challenges were encountered when planning the on-campus event, keeping pace with ever changing government guidelines, ensuring students could come onto campus safely within the current restrictions and making sure that all students and staff were aware of guidelines and how they should be followed whilst on campus. To facilitate social-distancing and adhere to restrictions, the following measures were put in place:

- Arrivals were staggered to minimise footfall around areas of campus.
- Attendees were split into four different groups which participants remained in whilst in their accommodation and for most activities during the 3 days.
- Attendees were reminded regularly the importance of maintaining social distancing and following one-way systems in place around campus.
- Attendees were asked to wear face coverings in all communal areas and encouraged to wear them whenever they were inside.

- Attendees had their temperature taken on arrival, before entering accommodation and each morning ahead of planned activities.
- Staff wore visors throughout the event when dealing with students (both inside and outside).
- Previously, in person sessions have been delivered by other departments as well as academic staff, however, to ensure delivery of the best experience possible for students whilst adhering to both university and government guidelines, these sessions were delivered through Microsoft Teams, either 'live' or by pre-recorded sessions.
- The event was delivered using a reduced number of staff to keep contact between staff and attendees as low as possible, therefore reducing the risk. This posed a challenge in terms of preparation, as the event would normally be supported by the wider Student Wellbeing Team as well as Student Ambassadors. As part of the programme of events, historically a session has been provided by the Head of Student Wellbeing and the Student Wellbeing Manager for parents and guardians, (separately from students) to answer any queries they may have about WOW or ahead of enrolment. To minimise footfall on campus during the face to face WOW, a pre-recorded talk was offered and taken up by all families as their preference.

4.6.4 Eleven students who had chosen the virtual WOW were invited to join a Facebook group to encourage them to get to know each other. At the beginning of each day they received content such as pre-recorded videos, links and information, allowing them to complete some of the same activities as the face to face WOW attendees, matching information they received at the same time.

4.6.5 Prior to the summer school, students joining the on campus event were invited to join a private group on social media to meet and chat with others ahead of arriving. This was the first year that a 'private' page had been established and it was great success. Thirty-one students joined and begun conversations, chatting amongst themselves and even creating their own private chat groups. Friendships were established ahead of WOW, providing reassurance about the social element.

4.6.6 A mix of qualitative and quantitative responses, from pre- and post-intervention questionnaires were gathered. Pre-intervention, participants were asked to use a Likert scale to score how anxious they felt about the transition into university. Scoring was then repeated post-intervention, with a score of 1 being least anxious and 10 being most anxious. Figure 5.1 below shows an average of these scores pre- and post-intervention on attendee anxiety levels. (*\*38 students responded to the pre-WOW questionnaire with 40 responding to the post-WOW questionnaire, therefore an average was taken, shown in Figure 5.1.*)

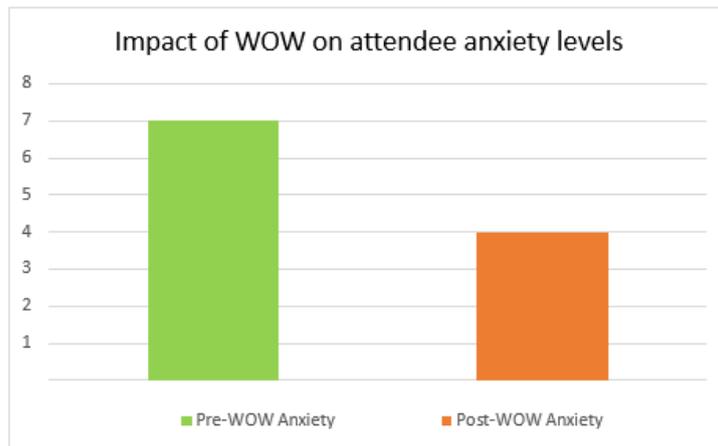


Figure 5.1 Participants self-rated score totals for anxiety

4.6.7 The results show that students generally felt less anxious after attending the WOW summer school about the changes that lie ahead. The intention of WOW is to give attendees the opportunity to experience elements of university and meet peers ahead of enrolment to primarily decrease any concerns, so this outcome is hugely valuable, both to the students themselves and to the project team.

4.6.8 Pre-intervention, participants were asked to use a Likert scale to score how confident they felt in their ability to manage change. Scoring was then repeated post-intervention, with a score of 1 being least confident and 10 being most confident. Figure 5.2 below shows an average of these scores pre- and post-intervention on attendee confidence levels. (*\*38 students responded to the pre-WOW questionnaire with 40 responding to the post-WOW questionnaire, therefore an average was taken, shown in Figure 5.2.*)

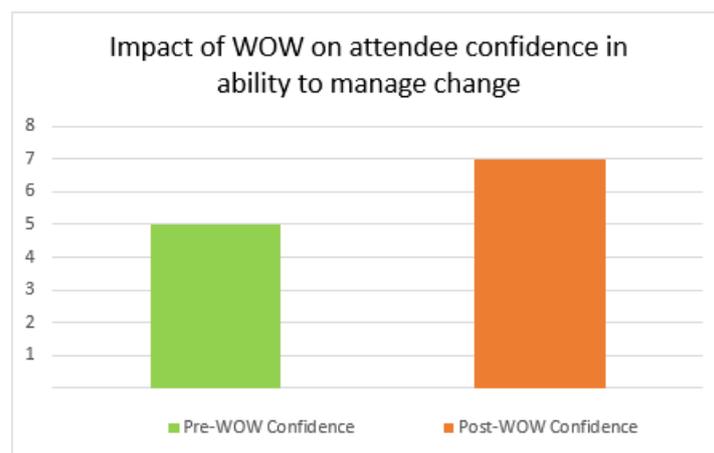


Figure 5.2 Participants self-rated score totals for confidence in ability to manage change

4.6.9 A marked improvement can be seen in both WOW attendee anxiety levels and their self-perceived confidence in ability to manage change. This result, although small, provides an understanding that WOW is of benefit in raising confidence levels amongst

pre-entry students with transitional concerns and also, reducing their anxiety levels for what lies ahead.

4.6.10 Comments included within the post-intervention questionnaires noted that many students were thankful for the opportunity to attend:

*'I'm so grateful for the opportunity, especially in 2020.'*

*'Thank you for allowing me to experience this transition. All the people I've met have been so lovely. Talking to my advisor has reassured me of the support there will be for me in October.'*

*'I really enjoyed it here! The meeting your academic was my favourite, made me feel less nervous.'*

One student was able to reflect on her decision to come to university:

*'It's helped me to realise that Lincoln might not be right for me. It isn't a bad thing because it's given me more to think about. But the Advisors I spoke to were really lovely and helped reassure me about what to do.'*

4.6.11 Whilst many highlighted the importance of the event for making friends and connections in readiness for starting University:

*'Very enjoyable and made many friends which makes me feel more confident about attending University in October.'*

*'It has been really helpful meeting people and knowing I've got friends when I start.'*

*'Enjoyed meeting new friends. I know social distancing made it hard, but I would have liked to socialise with other groups more.'*

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

4.6.12 On completion of WOW 2020, considerations were made by staff for future summer schools, including:

- Keeping the Parent and Guardians Talk pre-recorded, this helped with accessibility for all but also helped families leave site quicker. This then meant that students could actively 'join' the summer school from its start, encouraging early engagement and inclusion.
- Keeping the group format: 80 students would be split into 8 (colour coded) groups of 10, easing support and management of arrival and scheduled sessions.

- Keeping coloured lanyards for the student groups, to help students and staff identify each other easily.
- A ‘fair’ style event was suggested, with various support teams from across the university such as Student Wellbeing, Student Support, the Students’ Union and Health Centre, all available with stalls and information for students to access with ease.
- The team were mindful to not always use the ‘WOW’ acronym, but ensure pre-entry students are aware of what the title stands for – Wellbeing Orientation Welcome.

4.6.13 Due to the pandemic and the impact on face to face teaching and learning, available data and figures on attendance for 2020 are not fully accurate or reflective of a student’s engagement in their first year. However, the figures below show a comparison between the UoL average, the UoL Disability average and the average for the 2020 WOW attendees:

- University of Lincoln average: 51.9 %
- Disability average: 49.5 %
- WOW student attendance average for 2020 (*n=40 students*): 59.6 %

*(UoL figures are shown at a session level, as students may attend more than one session, an average percentage of the year overall is provided.)*

4.6.14 The project team were able to observe how the WOW 2020 attendees flourished over the duration of the summer school and were impressed with students’ efforts to participate and socialise, particularly given the additional challenges and anxieties that Covid-19 has presented. For many it was their first time visiting the campus following further national lockdowns and restrictions.

4.6.15 WOW 2020 gave staff an opportunity to familiarise themselves with the support students would require due to the Covid-19 restrictions on campus prior to the start of the academic year. Students understood and followed guidance exceptionally well, wearing masks in communal areas on campus, following one-way systems through buildings and using hand sanitiser when entering and exiting rooms and buildings.

4.6.16 WOW 2020 also provided further opportunity for Wellbeing staff to familiarise themselves with individual student concerns ahead of their arrival, welcome them, they were able to support students to gradually overcome any challenges they faced, increase their social confidence and make new friends.

## **4.7 WOW Summer School 2021**

4.7.1 In previous years, the summer school had been open to students who provided medical evidence of a diagnosed medical condition or disability. However, at the conclusion of the 2020 summer school, Wellbeing staff noted that many applicants who

would have benefitted from attending the summer school missed out due to not having a formal diagnosis. As a result of this, the decision was made for 2021, to open up applications to all, regardless of diagnosis, based on conversations with staff and their needs.

4.7.2 In 2021, WOW offered 80 free places to prospective students, following initial contact with the Student Wellbeing Team. In addition, when making individual phone calls to prospective students, the team identified a further 4 students who would benefit from attending. As a result, 84 application forms were returned. For 2021, students were provided a room within the university's St Marks accommodation, living with other students for the duration.

4.7.3 With the increase in the number of attendees for 2021, changes were made to the timetable to accommodate larger numbers and to also offer the attendees more choice, wherever possible. For the first time in 2021, the Student Wellbeing Team offered appointments at their usual drop-in service, so WOW attendees were able to experience how the service worked. Nine students accessed appointments in this way during WOW. Five student ambassadors supported the team this year, three of whom were previous WOW attendees.

4.7.4 WOW 2020 presented challenges around Covid-19 and whilst restrictions were lifted cautiously and WOW 2021 could go ahead as planned with all attendees on campus, all attendees were asked to take a lateral flow test the day before or on the day of arrival and were asked to provide evidence of a negative result. Lateral flow tests were made available for those who had not taken the test prior to arrival. The university still had some restrictions in place in terms of room capacity and attendees were all allocated a colour group (as per the previous year) which they stayed in for the sessions where room numbers were limited. Staff wore visors when inside buildings or teaching spaces and attendees were also encouraged to wear face coverings. Hand sanitiser and wipes were provided in accommodation and inside teaching spaces used for sessions, which were cleaned down after use.

4.7.5 Seventy-two attendees arrived and registered on the first day of WOW. Arrivals were staggered and attendees split into groups to help avoid queueing and to help with a more streamlined arrivals process. The team had support from the accommodation team who helped with key allocation and ensuring attendees understood how to gain access to the buildings and to their rooms.

4.7.6 In order to gain feedback, questionnaires were completed by all attendees on their final day at the WOW Summer School. Attendees' comments taken from the questionnaires included:

*'I have had a good experience with WOW, the event has been very reassuring.'*

*'Enjoyed WOW very much, thanks for putting it on.'*

*'I was worried to begin with, but I ended up having a lot of fun.'*

*'I enjoyed the experience of staying in a new place and meeting new people.'*

*'I have loved WOW because it has helped settle a lot of the nerves that have been growing since Applying and receiving an offer.'*

*'It's really helped ease my nerves.'*

*'Loved it! Amazing! So sad it's coming to an end.'*

4.7.7 Data and figures on WOW 2021 student attendance cannot be gathered until the end of their first full academic year at university, hence figures for the 2021 attendees could not be gathered at the time of this report. However, by considering the direct feedback and comments of those students who attended the school, the team can clearly see that again, the provision of WOW has been of benefit to those attending, decreasing anxieties and increasing confidence ahead of arrival.

#### **4.8 WOW Summer School 2022**

4.8.1 The Transitional Team began planning for WOW 2022 directly following the successful 2021 summer school. A dedicated webpage was updated with relevant information, a virtual booklet, videos and resources available, which 2022 pre-entry students were directed to, who were identified by the team as benefitting from attending. For WOW 2022, an online application form was embedded to ease the application process and lessen the requirements for student to physically print, complete and return a paper form. In consideration of numbers attending the summer school in 2021, seventy-five student places are available for WOW 2022.

4.8.2 The Transitional Wellbeing team also produced the 'How to run a successful summer school' virtual resource for institutions or organisations wishing to plan and offer a summer school to their own student communities. This information was shared sector wide with organisations such as AMOSSHE (Association of Managers of Student Services in Higher Education) and the NADP (National Association of Disability Advisors), for practitioners use and consideration:

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

#### **4.9 Fresh Start Workshops**

4.9.1 The Transitional Wellbeing team designed and developed the new 'Fresh Start' workshops to help students transition into university life, whether for the first time or for students returning to university following a break from their studies. The sessions were informal and covered topics such as adjusting to change, homesickness and being

independent. 'Fresh Start' sessions were delivered at known flashpoints throughout the year in October, when students first arrive, and in January, when returning after the festive break. Workshops were offered and delivered both face to face and virtually, dependent on the preference of the student. Workshop allowed students to understand they were not alone in their thoughts, they could perhaps 'normalise' some of the feelings they had during the early transition to university and meet other students, with similar concerns.

4.9.2 Guides were produced and shared more broadly for those unable to attend Fresh Start sessions, or for anyone who may benefit. A pre-recorded presentation was shared on the Student Wellbeing website along with a 'Fresh Start' digital guide:

Presentation: <https://youtu.be/p-hg5wBVGd4>

Digital Magazine: <https://flipsnack.com/uolswc/fresh-start-guide.html>

4.9.3 Evaluation was carried out by means of quantitative data gathered through post-intervention questionnaires. Participants were asked to rate the workshops for a number of factors on a Likert scale on the following questions, with 1 being not beneficial/not helpful or not in enough depth and 10 being very beneficial/very helpful and in enough depth:

- Was the workshop beneficial?
- Was the information helpful?
- Did the workshop go into enough depth?

4.9.4 A sample of participants in the 2020 workshops rated the effectiveness of the intervention highly with an average score of 8/10 for the workshop being beneficial, 8/10 for the usefulness of information provided and 7/10 for the depth of information provided. (n=17)

4.9.5 Based around this feedback, the team understood the value of the Fresh Start sessions and the continued importance of providing these regularly, at key points throughout the year, early in the academic term for transitioning students starting university and then again, when students transition back in after a holiday period. A sample comment noted:

*'Thank you for making me feel like I wasn't alone'.*

4.9.6 A powerful statement and for even one student to leave a 'Fresh Start' session feeling this way, shows that this provision is needed and necessary and students have benefitted from the team providing this vital support to those who need it.

## 4.10 School Student Focus Group

4.10.1 A student focus group was held at the project start, with twenty-five Year 11 students at a local High School. The session was based around an informal discussion, asking what students anticipate they would like to know more about or would like support with, should they receive informative workshops prior to leaving school.

4.10.2 Comments received (in italics) were based around numerous topics, which directly helped to shape future content produced by the Transitional Wellbeing Team. These comments and resources connected to each are detailed as follows:

- *'Who do you go to when you're in trouble?'*: Inclusion of knowing your support network and when to reach out for support was provided within the 'Managing Change' and 'Emotional Fitness' sessions.
- *'Living on own'*: Information about becoming independent and living with others was included within the 'Managing Change' session and resources produced by student content creators.
- *'Lifestyle of a typical Uni student'*: Elements and insights were included within the 'Managing Change' session and resources produced by student content creators.
- *'Stress'*: Strategies to manage stress were included within the 'Emotional Fitness' session and various student content creator resources.
- *'Workload'*: Time management strategies were included within the 'Getting Ahead' session and various student content creator resources.
- *'Support Groups'*: Details on support networks and the importance of these were included within the 'Managing Change' session.
- *'Healthy Living'*: Numerous references to the benefits of healthy living were included within the 'Managing Change' and 'Emotional Fitness' sessions, as well as the '5 Ways to Wellbeing' video and various student content creator resources.
- *'Managing on your own'*: Details about becoming independent were included within the 'Managing Change' session and various student content creator resources.

## 4.11 Student Advisory Board

4.11.1 A Student Advisory Board made up of Student Wellbeing service users was already established within the Student Wellbeing Team. As they were familiar with Wellbeing and Mental Health related support and resources, their comments and thoughts on digital content were gathered and included:

*'I usually prefer to access resources in a video format as they engage multiple senses at the same time. With a podcast or a reading, I tend to often get distracted by what's going on around me and lose most of the information that is presented to me.'*  
(Student Advisory Board member, academic year 20/21)

*‘Animated short video – it was easier to digest, short and engaging. I think podcasts are good for some people but not all which is why a short & concise video does the trick the best as getting the message out.’ (Student Advisory Board Member, academic year 20/21)*

4.11.2 The group provided feedback as a whole, noting their preference for graphics and animated style video content, which they felt were engaging and easier to watch and follow, commenting that content like this would make them ‘stop and watch’ on platforms such as Instagram for example. All students listened to the podcasts, however the group all preferred visual content, noting they would engage with this more than listening in to a podcast.

4.11.3 Feedback received was collated and shared with the Digital Student Experience team to gain further understanding on students’ preferences to the styles and format of content being produced. This has helped to shape future content as the Digital Student Experience team have further worked with students in producing video content, on varying lengths, topics and styles, with the understanding that student-led, visual content is helpful in engaging students when browsing resources.

## **4.12 Summary of Transitional Wellbeing Activities**

4.12.1 Transitional Wellbeing activities have been hugely successful despite the limitations presented by Covid-19. Based around early student focus groups, a suite of resources and content had been produced by the team, provided to numerous schools and colleges throughout the duration of the project. Evaluation data shows that transitional outreach sessions were very well received by schools and colleges and positively viewed by many of the student participants. The information has also been welcomed and valued by teachers who have received sessions for their students and accessed digital resources to utilise independently. Several schools booked repeat visits, showing the continued value of the support received.

4.12.2 Fifty-nine separate outreach sessions were delivered to 36 schools and colleges across the duration of the project, despite limitations put in place during national lockdowns and subsequent school closures. Twenty-four virtual sessions and 35 face to face sessions were delivered by the team, with many schools and colleges booking follow up or repeat sessions the following year.

4.12.3 Transitional outreach sessions were directly delivered to over 5,300 school and college students across workshops, presentations and education fairs. Whilst it is not known from that number, how many students will choose university or the UoL as their destination following school or college, the evaluation data shows that students felt that the information delivered has enabled them to manage change better. A sample of feedback taken during outreach workshop sessions shows that students rated their confidence with managing stress and emotions and confidence with managing change

and being independent higher post-intervention, than they did pre-intervention. All students felt better equipped with knowledge and strategies following outreach support from the team.

4.12.4 Project resources were shared across a much wider reach of schools and colleges than the outreach sessions themselves, with digital resources directly shared with over 230 institutions following personal phone calls to staff. This personal contact meant that project staff were able to speak directly to the relevant academic staff members within each institution, to introduce and explain the project and resources available for students and staff.

4.12.5 Despite the limitations presented by Covid-19, the adaptation of resources and move to virtual delivery meant that the team were able to reach a wider target audience, delivering virtual sessions as far as the West Midlands, Bedfordshire and Norfolk.

4.12.6 Engagement with schools and colleges increased during the project, in number of sessions and students seen, as both the project progressed, and information was shared to more institutions. Had the project and subsequent funding the ability to continue, it is anticipated that the trend with schools having repeat sessions in following years and collaborative work in accessing a wider reach of institutions would have therefore increased provision of outreach support to more students over time.

4.12.7 Transitional activities had a known audience reach of over 17,800, including support provided by the team during live online sessions for the university as well as other project stakeholders, such as LINCHigher, delivery of the WOW summer school and outreach sessions. Many of those who were reached with transitional outreach activities, particularly school and colleges students, would not have received this specialist information and support without the direct input of the project.

4.12.8 Qualitative data transcribed from video interviews with students from all the WOW summer schools delivered throughout the project, indicated that students valued the opportunity and experience, and from all three WOW summer schools, student attendees stated that attendance had reduced their anxieties and increased their confidence. Quantitative data taken following each WOW summer school, shows that WOW students during their first year, statistically attend university higher than the UoL average and the UoL average for students with disabilities.

4.12.9 It is clear that all Transitional Wellbeing activities have been a success, outreach sessions, pre-entry support, transitional events and dedicated workshops have all helped in support students transition from school and college, into and through university. Elements of these activities and this model of support can be adapted and embedded into the work of other institutions. Whether this be transitional activities and events for incoming students pre-arrival, a staff member or contact for schools and colleges to engage with to support pre-arrival students, or shared information and resources to local

education providers. Each element has its own measured success and through this project, has proven to be of benefit to the mental health and wellbeing of transitional and incoming university students.

## Part 5 Digital Student Experience Team Activities

### 5.1 Background

5.1.1 The Digital Project team were recruited at the project start, with the appointment of a Digital Project Lead in July 2019 and two Digital Content Creative Assistants (1 FTE, 1 0.5 FTE) from Sept 2019, sitting within the University's existing Digital Student Experience team.

5.1.2 A diverse range of digital content was produced by the Digital Project team during the duration of the project. Student co-production took place throughout, on a range of content covering varying topics, but all based around mental health and wellbeing. Several videos were also produced by the team including a project overview video and informational video covering the services offered, for use at open days. A successful podcast series, 'Fresher Take', was established, with 28 student hosted episodes created and released during the project. Although work with Fika and the use of their app ceased part way through the project, work continued throughout with UniWellbeing in the production of the health tech app, 'Student Life', providing valuable information and resources for pre-entry and incoming UoL students, which received continued good engagement. Overall, during the project Digital Student Experience produced content and resources had an audience reach of over 138,000 across all social media platforms. Feedback was gathered via social media metrics and focus groups, concentrating on content produced and digital apps.

### 5.2 2019 Digital Focus Group

5.2.1 Early focus groups were undertaken with UoL students on digital content developed at that time. At the commencement of the project, a focus group was held with 7 students from across the university, on varying levels of engagement with mental health content. This provided the project team with an understanding of the types of content and resources that students felt were both useful and informative.

5.2.2 Students were asked how they rated the current mental health content seen around the university. Five students felt that the mental health content is 'good', with one rating the content as 'excellent' and one as 'fair'.

5.2.3 When asked how many times they had accessed Student Life content in the past four students stated they had 'often' accessed content, with two noting they had 'sometimes' accessed Student Life content and one stating they had only 'rarely' accessed the available content.

5.2.4 The focus group student participants were shown varying content available through the UoL, which included:

- A copy of the 'Wellbeing World' digital magazine, created by the Student Wellbeing team.
- A student created 'Settling in' video.
- A Digital Student Experience team created 'World Mental Health Day' promotional video.
- A 'Wellbeing Whiteboard' video, again created by students and the Digital Student Experience team.
- A popular 'Mental Health Myths vs Stats' video, created by students and the Digital Student Experience team.
- A 'Men's Mental health' video, again created by students and the Digital Student Experience team.

5.2.5 When asked how they would rate the quality of the overall content showcased at the focus group, six students stated that they felt the overall content was 'good', with one rating the content as 'excellent'.

When asked why they had scored the content in this way, students commented:

*'Gives you a large amount of content in many forms and highlights lots of important subjects.'*

*'Raises awareness above all which is the most crucial, it educates and informs, makes you feel better.'*

*'The majority of videos were very engaging. Personally, I don't think I would read the wellbeing magazine because I prefer to watch things rather than read.'*

*'It comes from relatable people, a lot of it gives you a feeling that you're not alone in it.'*

*'The men's one was the best. The white board one and the settling in one were the weakest videos for me. Not enough substance.'*

5.2.6 Students were asked if they would recommend content to a friend, of those asked, five students said they were 'likely' to recommend this, with two stating they were 'extremely likely' to recommend content. Again, when asked why they would do so, comments included:

*'It's a good start to help them begin in their problems so they can seek help and it could be a good way for them to seek the right amount of help they need.'*

*'Very informative and on the whole visually pleasing and enjoyable to watch.'*

*'The overall student engagement with the content that is produced specifically for students is incredibly low. This needs to change, showing people it is a good way to start.'*

*'I think you can learn a lot from just watching a video that's a few minutes long. They also encourage you to talk about your emotions which I think is so important.'*

*'It's an important discussion so I like to spread awareness, I think the react ones are good for people to see.'*

5.2.7 In considering the comparative 'usefulness' ratings provided by the student focus group, of all mental health content showcased, the results shown in Figure 6 show that specific videos produced by students on mental health topics, were considered 'extremely useful' by student participants, whilst the majority of content reviewed was valued as 'moderately useful' to 'very useful' by students.

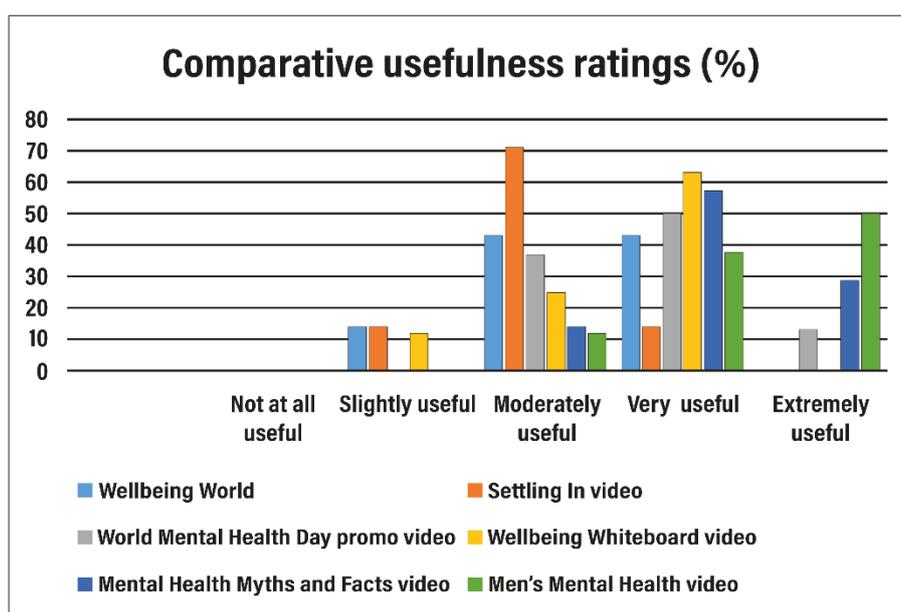


Figure 6 Comparative usefulness ratings of mental health content

5.2.8 When looking at the comparative ratings for 'effectiveness of communication' provided by the focus group student participants, again, across all mental health content showcased, the results shown in Figure 7 show that specific videos produced by students on mental health topics, were considered 'excellent' by student participants, with the majority of content reviewed within the 'good or 'excellent' categories.

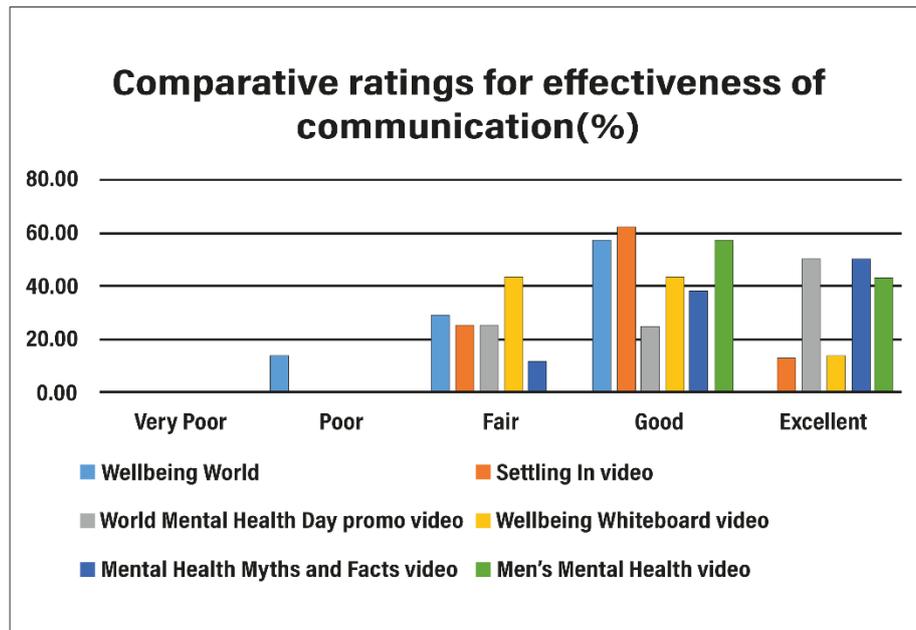


Figure 7 Comparative effectiveness of communications ratings of mental health content

5.2.9 This gave the Digital Student Experience team an understanding of the style of content that was preferred by students at that time, that was deemed useful and effective, showing that in particular, student created videos on specific mental health topics were valued highly amongst the focus group participants.

### 5.3 Fika App Trial and Focus Group

5.3.1 The Fika digital health app was an original partner of the project, offered to all students both pre-entry and existing, to support their transition, as well as strategies to support their own continued wellbeing and mental health. Early work with Fika was good, they responded quickly to the Covid-19 pandemic for example, producing a range of additional resources for app users, such as 'Cope with Remote'. The Fika app was provided to all UoL students in early 2020, and feedback was sought through a 2019 study with UoL student participants, and a small focus group undertaken by the Digital Student Experience team.

5.3.2 A study in 2019 by the School of Psychology at the UoL in collaboration with the Department of Psychology at the University of Hertfordshire and Fika, was undertaken with first year UoL Psychology students. The study considered the effects of a multi-component positive psychology intervention (MPPI) on students' mental health and wellbeing, particularly during transition (Bretherton et al., 2022). Student participants registered interest within the first two weeks of teaching and following informed consent provided, completed an online survey, to consider their own 'baseline' measures of life satisfaction and self-efficacy, both positive and negative. Students were then either randomly allocated the Fika app, with 46 student participants, whilst a further 46 were

allocated a generic journaling app. Students were unaware of which app and therefore with group was the experimental group.

5.3.3 Student participants were sent weekly reminders to use their apps for five minutes, three times a week for six weeks. Those using the Fika app were asked to use the 'Daily Workout' feature, a dedicated 5 minute workout on varying themes, such as 'Being Grateful' and 'Use your Strength'. The students using the generic journaling app, were simply asked to write about their day for 5 minutes. Interestingly, participants who were allocated the Fika app used the app more frequently than those assigned the journaling app, possibly connected to the nature of tasks, style and delivery of strategies via the app itself. The trial showed that the control group students using the Fika app had a significant increase after 3 and 6 weeks in their reported 'life satisfaction', whilst a further increase was seen in participants positive affect and self-efficacy, combined with decreases after 6 weeks in negative affect. The full findings note that app based MPPI's '*can improve the psychological metrics associated with better adjustment to university in first year students*' (Bretherton et al., 2022), whilst also noting the benefits to students on using such interventions with the '*less stigmatising language of 'mental fitness''*'.

5.3.4 The results of this study demonstrate that the provision of digital tools has been of evidenced benefit during the difficult period of transition for students entering HE. It also aligns to the early findings noted in the literature review around the importance of the provision of digital tools, whilst also being mindful of de-medicalising language used within information, resources and support provided. There is value, therefore, in the offer and promotion of health tech apps provided to pre-entry and incoming students to help them to additionally support their own wellbeing, should they choose to do so.

5.3.5 A small focus group was held by the Digital Student Experience team with 8 UoL students to gather their thoughts on the Fika app, its content and best support for incoming university students. A set of questions were answered by the student participants, a sample of those questions and responses included:

- How can we (*the project team*) use the current features on the app with incoming students?

*'Directing them to specific videos and resources that help with starting uni/managing stress/confidence. If students know of a specific resource for a specific struggle, they may be more likely to access it than if they're just directed to Fika generally.'*

*'The community section for upcoming students to voice concerns about university life and the workload, and for current students to post reassuring tips.'*

*'I think the connections and confidence areas of the library would be particularly useful as it will give people the skills they need to make friends when starting university.'*

- How can we (*the project team*) encourage students to use the app?

*'Engage on social media platforms – get current and new students to post about it across all social media platforms; Add it to the end credits of Student Life videos possibly – the same way we do with Instagram, Facebook and TikTok (or on videos with a special focus on mental health support); Create short, engaging videos with first year students talking about their experiences with the app, so new students can see other students engaging with it; Promotion through Student Wellbeing and Residential Wardens as both of them will deal with first year students and mental health support.'*

*'Maybe promoting it at the beginning of the year, at fresher's fayre and open days. Setting challenges on social media to complete tasks and awards.'*

*'Make them aware that it exists and that it's free to use. I had heard of the app before but didn't know we were able to get it for free at uni, so I think we just need to promote it a lot more.'*

- What content would be useful for A-level students?

*'Hearing what first year students have to say about their first year at university (or their first few weeks) – top tips for moving to university, engaging with your university community, surviving Freshers week, things they've learnt and wished they'd known before coming to university; Preparing for the move to university – packing tips, leaving your friends and family. Employability tips and talks for those who are not attending university; Interview tips and advice for university or job interviews.'*

*'Motivation and focus would be good for a-level students who are doing exams and revising. In the 'manage stress' section, there is a video called Prepare for What's Next, which would be useful for a-level students transitioning into whatever they're planning on doing after school.'*

*'I would say content that is about that transitional process, so perhaps packing checklists, advice on what to do if you don't get the grades, case studies from people who didn't do so well at a-level and are now really successful.'*

- What content would be most beneficial at the start of university?

*'I think connection would be most important as they have probably just moved away from home and want to make new friends. Two other factors could be motivation – as they may feel down with all the change of moving to a new uni and such – and focus; starting classes, and moving to a new house requires a lot of organisation, focus and attention – it would be good to home in on these traits whilst starting uni.'*

*'Beating homesickness, making friends, staying in touch without staying dependent on those at home, managing your workload, sports and society benefits, testimony from students who may have struggled in first year but that overcame their issues and went on to really enjoy university, easy recipes for healthy meals.'*

*‘Making friends, what to do if you don’t really like going on nights out and drinking and therefore feel like you’re missing out on making friends and fitting in with flatmates.’*

5.3.6 From the comments received by the focus group student participants it was apparent that the video content within the app in particular was valued, and that students felt that embedding UoL specific resources and content was also desirable. Interestingly, although continued work with Fika changed after this point of the project, student produced videos and Lincoln specific content was a focus of the resources shared within the UniWellbeing hosted ‘Student Life’ app. Comments received during these early focus groups were also valuable in helping to shape the content of future digital app provision.

5.3.7 It was of further use to the team to hear from university students what they considered would have been beneficial support to have received whilst still at school. Themes such as homesickness, making friends, organisation and hearing from existing students were all mentioned by the participants. These same topics were all within the planned activities of the Transitional Wellbeing outreach team, whilst also being themes that the Digital Student Experience team would cover within the content and resources produced.

#### **5.4 Digital Content and Reach**

5.4.1 Throughout the project, the Digital Student Experience team produced a wealth of content and resources, released for students over varying social media and digital platforms. Information was also shared with pre-entry students, providing details of the ‘Student Life’ app and relevant content and resources within a ‘New Student’ email. The team worked collaboratively with the UoL admissions team, whilst also maintaining a ‘student-led’ approach, with student content creators writing the email messages shared, encouraging students to engage with resources provided.

5.4.2 Data gathered on specifically produced content and resources was captured on release, as shown in the tables below. This is based on a total known audience reach for the duration of each evaluation period. Digital Student Experience team output produced and released at the beginning of the project, between 1 June 2019 and 30 November 2019 is shown in Table 11. Although work commenced at this time, with roles secured for the project team, output was also high with well performing, valuable resources and content produced.

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Student participation	Total
Transitional VoxPop video	326	2	5	333
World Smile Day short film	561	2	7	570
World Mental Health Day promo video	8,000	2	5	8,007
World Mental Health Day 'Wellbeing Whiteboard' video	885	2	4	891
Students React to Myths and Facts	1,908	3		1,911
Mo or Less video – men's mental health myths and facts	3,071	5		3,076
Independence: A Student's Guide Vlog	357	1		358
The Importance of talking about Mental Health at University Blog	21	1		22
Exercise and Mental Health blog	27	1		28
Fika Trial			92	92
'SafeSpace' Louth filming/ video		1	5	6
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>15,156</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>118</b>	<b>15,201</b>

Table 11 Digital Student Experience output between 1 June 2019 and 30 November 2019

5.4.3 During the onset of Covid-19, alternative ways to produce content were explored. However, content and resources continued to be produced by remote means, with the introduction of more graphic and animated resources. Digital Student Experience team output produced and released between 1 December 2019 and 31 May 2020 is shown in Table 12:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Student participation	Total
Estranged Students Infographic and Video	958	2		987
Student Life Blogs	3,130	5		3,135
Student Life Blogs	1,153	5		1,158
Vlog: Self-Care at University	433	1		434
Fresher Take Podcasts: Handling Homesickness, Dealing with deadlines, Social distancing, self-isolation and remote study, Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice	195	2		197
Project Overview video	2,538	2		2,540
20ish Questions : Eating Disorder Awareness Week	665	1		666
Fika App trial			8	8
Graphic Content including 'Self-care Sunday' illustrated series	5,019			5,019
Study Happy Q&A with Wellbeing	702	1		703
Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) Trial			19	19
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>14,820</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>14,847</b>

Table 12 Digital Student Experience output between 1 December 2019 and 31 May 2020

5.4.4 During the latter half of 2020, work continued and numerous resources were developed. Engagement dropped slightly at this time, which could be due in part to the holiday period, and some students perhaps not engaging with content in the same way as they may have done during term time. However, continued engagement is seen from incoming students, accessing the newly provided 'Student Life' app and utilising content and resources via that platform. Digital Student Experience team output produced and released between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020 is shown in Table 13:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Student participation	Total
Fresher Take Podcasts: Emotional Fitness, Transitioning to University, Next Steps After Graduation, Being an International Student, Living in Shared Accommodation, Being Independent at University, Your Students' Union, Staying Positive,	810	3		813
Student Life/ UniWellbeing App released	882			882
Vlogs released during the evaluation period included: Dealing with the anxiety of lockdown, Mindfulness advice, My experience with CBT,	4,949	5		4,954
Videos released during the evaluation period included: World Mental Health Day animated short, 5 Ways to wellbeing, Making friends at university, Maintaining a healthy relationship	4,563	5		4,568
Articles released during the evaluation period included: Emotional fitness, Maintaining a positive mindset, Living with OCD in the pandemic	1,580	5		1,585
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>12,784</b>	<b>18</b>		<b>12,802</b>

Table 13 Digital Student Experience output between 1 June 2020 and 31 December 2020

5.4.5 Resources and content continued to be produced by the team, with engagement from students increasing, particularly around topics such as 'Post-lockdown worries' and 'How to deal with uncertainty' which were supportive for all students during that time. The 'Student Life' app saw less engagement, but this is shown in the app statistics, with the majority of app activity and new registrations occurring at the beginning of the academic year. However, metrics show that some app users do continue to utilise the app throughout the whole academic year. Digital Student Experience team output produced and released between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2021 is shown in Table 14:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Student participation	Total
Fresher Take Podcast: Review of the Year, We've Been Vaccinated Against COVID-19, Stress Management, Planning for the Future, Finding Your Confidence, Building a Budget, Developing a Healthy Routine	130	3		133
Student Life/UniWellbeing App	665			665
Thirty-three Instagram stories and polls were released during the evaluation period including: How do you keep in touch? Time to talk day, Do you have someone you can turn to if you're struggling?, Look after your mate campaign, How to make friends in lockdown	4,949	33		4,982
Eighteen videos were released during the evaluation period including: How to deal with uncertainty, Project promotional showreel, How to make friends during lockdown, Positives of social media	18,250	18		18,268
Fifty articles released during the evaluation period including: Support for disabled students, Tips to support friends, Post lockdown worries, When to get help, Coping with a mental health diagnosis at uni, Six ways of keeping in touch, Managing social anxiety	23,836	50		23,886
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>47,830</b>	<b>104</b>		<b>47,934</b>

Table 14 Digital Student Experience output between 1 January 2021 and 30 June 2020

5.4.6 During 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2021, topics and themes of Digital Student Experience team output produced and released, were of particular interest to students at the time of transition such as ‘Transitioning back to uni’, ‘Timeline of moving to Lincoln’ and ‘Making new friends in Lincoln’. This increase in engagement across all platforms can be seen in Table 15. The ‘Student Life’ app also received good engagement, in part due to the app being promoted to pre-entry students in advance of enrolment and being used by LMS students as part of the app trial.

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Student participation	Total
WOW summer school: filming, editing and podcasts		3	7	10
Fresher Take Podcast: New Host Handover, Coming to Uni in a Covid environment, Fresher Take – The Festive Period	122	5		127
Student Life/UniWellbeing App	1,140			1,140
32 Instagram stories and polls were released during the evaluation period: UniWellbeing app promos, Students guide to Lincoln Medical School, Transitioning back to uni, Socialising without going out out, 5 ways to reduce food waste, World Mental Health Day, Stress Awareness Day, International Men’s Day	10,840	32		10,872
8 videos and 2 promos were released during the evaluation period: Students guide to Lincoln Medical School, World Mental Health Day, Staying Productive with ADHD, Being Independent, Stress Awareness Day, Staying Safe and Making Friends at Uni, Growing Veg at Home, International Men’s Day	5,153	8		5,161
50 articles were released during the evaluation period including: Timeline of moving to uni, Making new friends in Lincoln, The best places to visit in Lincoln, You’re finally a medical student, Transitioning back to uni, Top tips for being independent, How to make the most out of first year, How to deal with stress whilst managing lots of things, Answering your questions – Agony aunt student life.	17,493	50		17,543
Lincoln Medical School focus groups			10	10
Lincoln Medical School student survey			48	48
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>34,478</b>	<b>98</b>	<b>65</b>	<b>34,911</b>

Table 15 Digital Student Experience output between 1 July 2021 and 31 December 2021

5.4.7 Production of resources and content continued until the project end in March 2022. This ensured that content and resources remained available to the next intake of pre-entry students, to support their transition. Digital Student Experience output and activity between 1 January 2022 and 28 Feb 2022 is shown in Table 16:

Description of output/activity	Engagement	Student Producers	Student participation	Total
Fresher Take Podcast: Darker Evenings, Academic Stressors	60	2		62
Student Life/UniWellbeing App	353			353
2 Podcast promos were released during the period	855	2		857
19 Instagram stories and polls were released during the evaluation period including: What is Veganuary? 5 eco-friendly plastic alternatives, How to deal with the expected change at new year's, Homesickness, Blue Monday, Therapeutic creativity, Using art to improve mental health, Diet culture in the new year, How to stay Organised at University, Managing your mental health during deadline season,	4,329	19		4,348
24 articles were released during the evaluation period including: What is Veganuary? Veganuary – start simple: go veggie, 5 eco-friendly plastic alternatives, How to deal with the expected change at new year's, Homesickness, Blue Monday, Therapeutic creativity, Using art to improve mental health, Why music is great for your mental health, Diet culture in the new year , How to stay Organised at University, Managing your mental health during deadline season, Promoting Healthy Relationships, Small things you can do to make someone's day, Have Pride in your mental health.	7,661	24		7,685
<b>Total Engagement</b>	<b>13, 258</b>	<b>47</b>		<b>13, 305</b>

Table 16 Digital Student Experience output between 1 January 2022 and 28 February 2022

5.4.8 Digital Student Experience activities had a total known engagement reach of 138,326 during the time period they are evaluated, with content created by 55 student content creators and three editors. Across the projects duration 114 articles and 110 videos and vlogs were published, with some shared more than once during the projects duration due to relevance and popularity. Nearly 8,000 followers were gained on the @UoLStudentLife accounts across all social media platforms during the time of the project.

5.4.9 Student content creation work continued in earnest until 31 March 2022, however, for inclusion into this report, statistics and data are provided from July 2019 – February 2022. The body of work that continued to be produced by the Digital Student Experience team and student content creators, will remain with other resources, as a legacy of work from the project. This work can continue to be utilised in future years, to support students, both pre-entry and enrolled at the university.

5.4.10 By looking at the second and fourth internal evaluation reports, statistics show that there had been a student engagement increase of over 35,132, which could be based on numerous aspects. As the 2<sup>nd</sup> internal evaluation report covered June – December 2020, when lockdown restrictions first began to ease, many students may not have been accessing resources as frequently when not at university, and would have returned in early October 2020. A second lockdown began again on 31 October 2020, so content produced at this time was impacted, output was changed, but student engagement begun to increase again.

5.4.11 From the first internal evaluation report to the fifth full report, engagement has more than doubled. This is in part due to an increase in further learnings from the team, a greater understanding of relatable topics and relevant content produced, the introduction of the 'Student life' app and also, more students being directed to Digital Student Experience content via the 'Student Life' app. Engagement spikes, with more interactions and views on content and resources, can be seen both ahead of and during transitional periods.

## **5.5 Fresher Take Podcast Series**

5.5.1 The 'Fresher Take' podcast was established as part of the project and remained a popular output of the Digital Student Experience team. The podcast was released across a range of platforms including Spotify, Buzzsprout and Apple Podcast sites. Each episode was hosted by student content creators who are employed through the project and cover a range of wellbeing and practical issues such as making friends, homesickness, budgeting and living with others. A number of videos and articles are also produced to compliment and promote the series. Three students were involved at the start of 'Fresher Take' in 2019, conceptualising, briefing, recording, editing, creating subtitles, thumbnails and promotion.

5.5.2 Engagement with podcasts remained consistent throughout the project, with the majority of listeners accessing the series via Spotify, Buzzsprout and the Apple Podcast sites. While the geographical location of listeners varied for each episode, most listened from Lincoln, with statistics showing listeners from across the country. Some episodes gained listeners from countries as far afield as the United States, Australia, Canada, India, Romania and China. This data perhaps points to the podcasts being listened to by prospective students to the university in advance of arrival, with episodes such as 'Living in shared accommodation' and 'Transitioning to University' of particular use.

5.5.3 Due to the popularity of the podcast and the interest in students to continue to produce and host the show, two new students took over to continue the series after the original hosts graduated in 2021. 28 episodes of 'Fresher Take' have been written and produced and this provision will continue post project, managed by the Digital Student Experience team at the UoL.

## 5.6 Student Life (UniWellbeing) App

5.6.1 The 'Student Life' app was launched in August 2020 and developed in conjunction with partners UniWellbeing after work with original app project partners Fika had ended. Work had already begun with UniWellbeing and their app, ethos and approach aligned better with the project, which focused on building healthy habits, engaging content and activities and informative resources.

5.6.2 The provision of the app also aligned with the evidence sourced and provided through the literature review, that digital tools such as this help to support students for whom accessing services face to face can be an additional challenge, whether this be due to self-perceived 'stigma' in accessing mental health support or an anxiety in doing so. It also further highlighted the important of students supporting students and the inclusion of specific student created content and resources meant that information was less 'medicalised' in its language and nature, and more engaging and effective in its support for the student community.

5.6.3 The 'Student Life' app has witnessed good levels of engagement to date. The app is constantly being developed to offer new features, with the aim of becoming a 'one stop shop' for student mental health support through a range of tools and resources, including student content created for the project which is uploaded by the project team. The app is available free of charge to all registered and enrolled students and staff using their UoL email address. It is also available (and promoted) to all incoming students, who can select 'future student' at registration. Following this, they are then prompted to register later using their university email address.

5.6.4 The app contains various elements such as videos, articles, podcasts, 'habits' wheel, journal, challenges and mood tracker with a 'feed' being the prominent feature around which the other elements are based. Evaluation across the project duration shows that some content performed better than others and some elements were preferred over others by students. In order to understand the full impact of the app for incoming students, a trial was undertaken with first year LMS offer-holders and students, the results of which show that the app was valued and specifically helped students who used it during their transition to university. However, student feedback also indicated that an app offering richer functionality, such as access to timetable alongside student-created content, would promote better student engagement on an ongoing basis and could increase the numbers of new students downloading and registering on the app. The team is therefore investigating possible solutions that could provide this functionality in the future.

## 5.7 First Year of Student Life App Usage Report

5.7.1 A report from the first year of the 'Student Life' app, from August 2020 – August 2021 showed that the app had 1,323 unique active users. During term time, there were

typically 75-115 users each day. This was higher at the start of the academic year last October, demonstrated with the clear spike in active users on October 6 2020, the day that new registrations peaked.

5.7.2 'Unique Active Users' looks at the numbers of individuals using the app during a specified time. Time periods for major drop-offs in active users correlate to Christmas break and Summer, but no similar drop in usage was seen for the Easter break. As shown in Figure 8, usage was highest in the first term of the 2020/2021 academic year, which along with the general tapering of use, may suggest that newer students have used the app and then more committed users have continued over time.

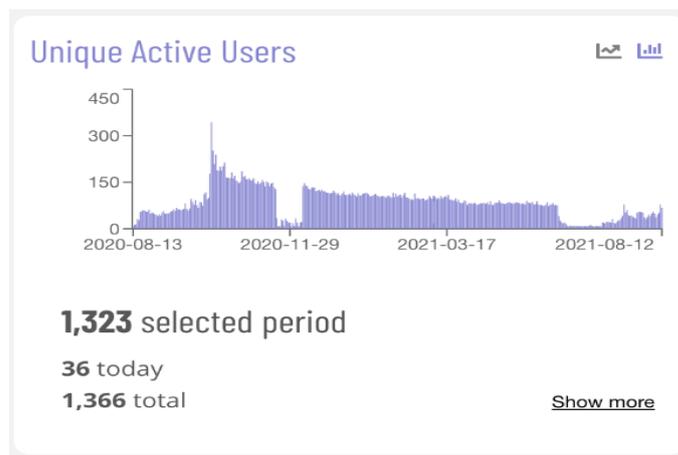


Figure 8 Unique Active User activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app

5.7.3 There were 1,458 new registrations between August 2020 and August 2021 and this activity is shown in Figure 9. Most new registrations occurred on 6 October 2020, with 185 new registrations seen on this date. This was during 'Online Orientation Week Lincoln' week so an increase in registrations during this time would be expected. October 2020 saw 555 new registrations in total, the highest month for new user sign ups in the first year usage report.

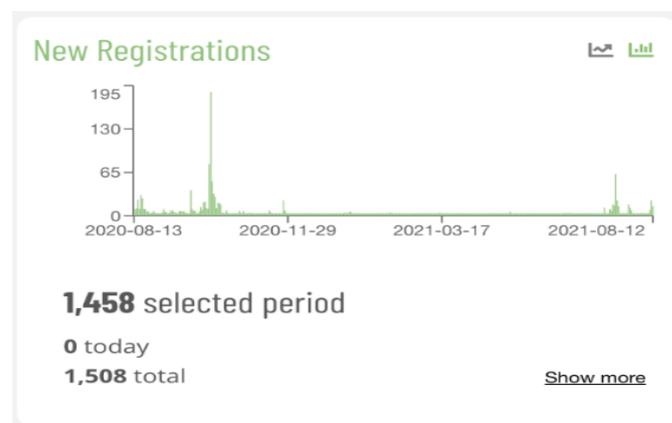


Figure 9 New Registration activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app

5.7.4 Within the app, challenges and personal habits are available that the user can participate in and track and ‘Wellbeing Days’ measures how often this happens. There were 219 ‘Wellbeing Days’ (habits and challenges) taken in the first year of the app as seen in Figure 10 and ‘Wellbeing Days’ also peaked on 6 October 2020, with new users more likely exploring the app. Challenges were more frequently used in the first term and this could be due to less generic challenges included (e.g., ‘sleep well challenge’) and more catered towards new students who are the app’s primary target audience (e.g., move in challenge).

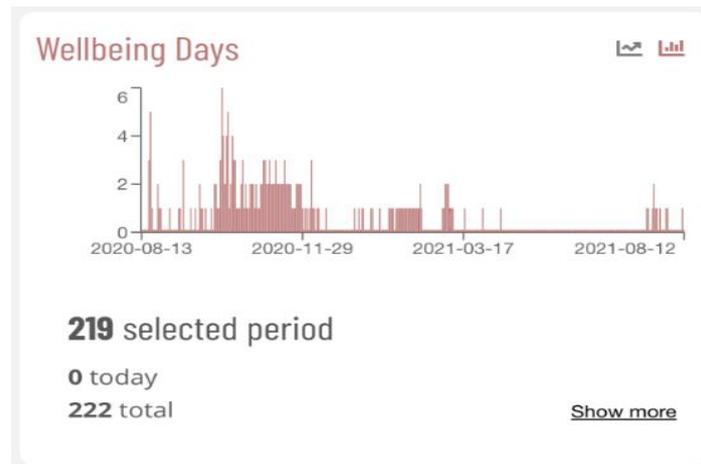


Figure 10 Wellbeing Days activity during the first year of the ‘Student Life’ app

5.7.5 ‘App Events’ are the number of interactions/notifications and so on, that happen within the app during the given time period. This includes every click made by a user and notification sent via the app. This detail gives a good measure of interaction and actual usage by students. In the first year of the app, there were 2,472,437 ‘App Events’, with the activity and dates shown in Figure 11. ‘App Events’ follow a similar pattern of use to ‘Wellbeing Days’ where usage can be seen to ‘drop off’ over the year. However, it is interesting to note that where ‘Unique Users’ drop, ‘App Events’ don’t. This may be due to the app sending more notifications. However, this alone doesn’t account for all differences, so it may also show that students who continue to use the app are a more dedicated userbase, regularly using and checking in. These figures roughly amount to five ‘App Events’, per user, per day.

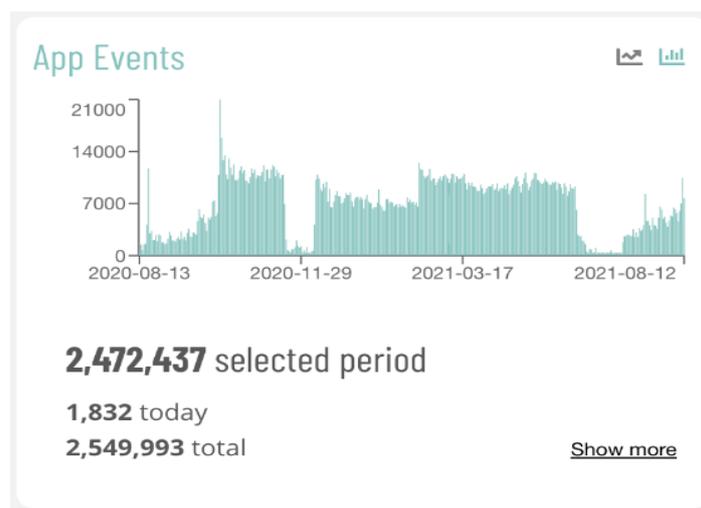


Figure 11 App Event activity during the first year of the 'Student Life' app

5.7.6 Users are also able to capture and report their mood when logging onto the app each day via a 'Mood Cloud'. During the app's first year, users have reported their mood 559 times. The breakdown of 'Mood Cloud' responses by students during the first year of use were as follows:

- Excited: 190 times
- Scared: 119 times
- Joy: 113 times
- Sad: 81 times
- Guilty: 29 times
- Angry: 27 times

5.7.7 'Excited' and 'Joy' were typically the most reported mood each week, with 'Sad' generally increasing over more historically 'stressful' times, such as exam periods. App users continued to report their mood throughout the year and at least one user reported a mood to the app every week. This feature gained consistent use, perhaps due to its quick and accessible nature and the prompt for users when opening the app.

5.7.8 Between August 2020 and February 2022, throughout the projects duration and since the app had been provided, it saw a total of:

- 2,261 new registrations
- 4,272,376 'App Events'
- 398 'Wellbeing Days'
- 197 podcast views
- 844 engagements with the 'Mood Cloud'

5.7.9 Analysis of available data suggests the following considerations for future app use with students, with a particular focus on supporting transition:

- Promotion of the app to students prior to arrival would increase students' awareness and encourage usage in advance of enrolment, particularly useful to aid their transition. Feedback from focus groups suggested promotion of the app as early as receiving a university offer would be best timed, to feel prepared, connected and make the most use of the app's content and resources.
- Topics relating to students' current experiences performed consistently better, it would be useful to continue to consider what students may be experiencing, due to time of year, exams, holidays and cater content and resources specifically timed and relevant to these experiences.
- Podcasts were not readily accessed through the 'Student Life' app and this may be in part due to the element not being 'user friendly'. The listener has to stay in the podcast section of the app with their phone unlocked to access this feature. Feedback has been provided to the app developers on these results to shape the future app design.
- It would be useful to implement regular posts into the app's feed to promote other sections of the app that may not perform as well, such as the podcasts for example. It may also be useful to promote the podcast by referring to it directly from the app.
- Student use tends to wane after the initial first months of university. This is not necessarily a negative response, as the app appears to be fulfilling its intention of providing students with transitional support, and the spike in registration and timings of student use also suggest this. However, the use of an app with additional, wider functionality, such as access to timetables, could encourage a greater take up of new students at the start of term and retain engagement on an ongoing basis.

## 5.8 Lincoln Medical School 'Student Life' App Trial

5.8.1 A project was established with the Lincoln Medical School (LMS) to create content to support their students transition to university, primarily through the 'Student Life' app. The Digital Student Experience team worked with several LMS students as content creators, developing content on topics of use and interest to medical school students. Students were able to access the 'Student Life' app ahead of enrolling and focus groups were held with students during October 2021 to gauge their thoughts on the app, their usage, what content had been supportive and helpful and what else would be useful. The feedback was summarised and shared with the app developers for future consideration in the app design and the Digital Student Experience team were able to work on content ideas with student content creators based on their thoughts.

5.8.2 LMS students starting in September 2021 were given information about the app within all their pre-arrival communications, from June 2021 onwards and additionally encouraged to explore the app ahead of arrival by LMS academic staff.

5.8.3 During an introductory session with Academic staff on 1 October 2021, a short, in-session 'Poll Everywhere' survey was undertaken with the cohort receiving 94 responses. This was provided as part of the seminar by an academic and students used their mobile phones to anonymously respond to questions live on screen, with the following results:

- 71% of students responding had started using the Student Life app, 29% had not.
- 30% of those students using the app, said they were still using it.
- 36% of students who had used the app said they had found 'some' of the tools and resources useful, with 2% of students saying 'all' the resources were useful.
- 18% students said they would keep using the app, with 48% students responding that they would start using it.

5.8.4 Students noted the following as reasons why they were initially apprehensive about using the app:

*'I am unsure what this app offers.'*

*'I do not know much information about it.'*

*'Haven't seen any resources useful to me yet...only downloaded a few weeks ago and haven't checked it since.'*

*'Didn't find much use for it personally.'*

*'It just didn't seem very useful for me/didn't understand the purpose of the app.'*

*'Not mentioned regarding this app before today's session so I had no clue it existed. I will look into the app and download it and see if it's useful.'*

5.8.5 Focus Groups were held with first year LMS students during October 2021. Ten students attended across two separately held groups. A sample of the questions and transcribed comments from audio recordings of these focus groups included:

- Were you already aware of the Student Life app? (Six of the ten students were already aware of the app and downloaded it ahead of arriving at university.)

*'I think I heard about it from the email, I know it was sitting on my phone, not being used for a while but I think there was something else that pointed me to the app and I decided to go on it and found it pretty useful actually and pretty unique.'*

*'I know I got it mentioned in an email, I downloaded it after it was mentioned, I didn't use it that much, but I did use it occasionally, especially when I first originally downloaded it I did use it to see if there was anything of interest regarding the course or anything. I knew about it; I've had it for quite a while actually I think.'*

- Do you understand the app and its purpose now?

*'Making sure you are looking at your wellbeing and your mental health, so it just reminds you to look after yourself as well.'*

*'It was a good transition tool to see the differences and things to expect that were coming through the checklist.'*

- How did you feel when you started university?

*'It's quite overwhelming, I can speak for everyone probably, being bombarded with how much your life's changed now, and how different it's going to be, but yeah, the app's helpful for that, especially like I said, with the how to cope section of the app.'*

*'Missing home and all of that, like just being on your own, I mean, it's just really, really different, it's nice to have that app there, with all of those resources and all of that information, so yeah, it's pretty good.'*

- Have the tools and resources helped to make transition easier?

*'... I'm lucky in that I've got a good support network of friends and family, I tend to just reach out and chat to people, speak to people.....But what I know from moving to University.... especially when you don't know many people, is that it can be really isolating and actually I think what's really important, looking at some of the videos and content on the app.....you're not going to develop that support network in week one, say like all your friends are off at other universities, people aren't necessarily going to want to say, oh I'm not having the best time, or I'm having a bit of a wobble today, because people often don't want to be honest with people, or they feel like a bit vulnerable, so at least you've got that content there, that people can access, they can get that support without necessarily having to put their hand up, and tell people how they're feeling..... because they want to keep up that façade of everything's going great and I can do anything. The reality is probably not quite the same, the reality is quite a lot of people feel like that.'*

*'It's a nice self-help type of thing, like you can do it, hidden type of thing.'*

- Which elements of the app have you used, and which did you find most useful?

*'I like it, it's something.... it's more interactive, it's not just information type thing, it's asking for my input and feelings and stuff, so then I can actually tailor it to what I'm feeling and how it can help me through my daily activities and stuff.'*

*'I quite like the videos, because sometimes when you're looking for an answer an article can be really waffly and it doesn't really clearly tell you sometimes and if you're looking at something and you're tired you're more likely to take it in if it's in the video format, because it's something you can relax and watch, you can have it on in the background and just pick up and pause it and go back and it's quite easy to follow, I quite like the videos because it's more engaging than reading an article.'*

- Would it have been useful to know about these things prior to university?

*'It is so overwhelming; information prior would definitely have helped.'*

*'Even a lot prior, like as soon as you get your offer maybe, because then it means that you can plan a trip down to Lincoln, you can, you know, you know what to expect sort of thing.'*

5.8.6 A follow up survey was undertaken with LMS students in November 2021, offered to all years and received 48 responses. 3 Foundation students and 14 first year students responded to the survey, with the remaining students from years 2 and 3. Of the total students who responded:

- 30% had used the app.
- 15% were still using it.
- 15% had used, but were no longer doing so.
- 58% were not using the app.
- 12% hadn't used, but would consider doing so.

5.8.7 Of those who were not using the app, 93% stated it was because they were not aware of it. Four first year students stated that using the app had directly helped their transition to university. Students commented:

*'It helped me to understand what to expect in regards to my course and also uni life. In addition to this it gave me an insight into how my life might change, and when I arrived and things changed it allowed me to navigate these differences and understand that they were normal.'* (First year Lincoln Medical School student)

*'Calmed me down at times I was feeling stressed.'* (First year LMS student)

5.8.8 Those students also noted resources that had been of particular help, which included:

*'The articles on managing different things have helped me understand how I'm feeling and how to cope with stress and anxiety.'* (First year LMS student)

*'Articles/videos on moving away from home and workload.'* (First year LMS student)

5.8.9 From fourteen students across differing years who had used the app, twelve stated they felt that the content had been relevant to their circumstances. App elements that were preferred by students included (more than one selection could be made):

- Healthy habits: 21%
- Newsfeed: 19%

- Explore: 10%
- Journal: 8%
- Links and Information: 6%
- Challenges: 4%

5.8.10 Whilst interestingly, for the Digital Student Experience team, the format and style of content that was the most appealing to students was noted as (more than one selection could be made):

- Articles: 35%
- Student created videos: 29%
- Animations: 19%
- Podcasts: 17%

5.8.11 This feedback supports the intention of the app content and the ethos of the project, peer to peer and student-led support. For students to state that their preference is student articles and student created videos shows the impact of content of this kind. The survey results showed that the first year students who used the app, valued the content and that it was directly beneficial with their transition into university:

*'It is helpful particularly in the transition period into uni as it makes you aware of many things and makes the adjustment easier.'* (First year LMS student)

5.8.12 Whilst second and third years would have welcomed more information, to have known more about the app:

*'Advertise it more!'* (Second year LMS student)

*'If it was advertised more and I was made aware of it, I would definitely use it.'* (Third year LMS student)

5.8.13 When asked what other tools, content or resources would be helpful, answers received included:

- Interactive activities (Foundation)
- A search bar, a way to filter and find the articles you want without scrolling endlessly (Year 1)
- Q and A (Year 1)
- Easier way to see what events societies are putting on (Year 1)
- Meditation, stretching, staying active (Year 2)
- How to stay motivated (Year 2)
- Quizzes (Year 3)

- Content for mature students (Year 3)
- More student experience stories (Year 3)

5.8.14 Information, comments and suggestions from focus group student participants, were summarised and shared with UniWellbeing, the app developers. Comments have been hugely valuable and will help to directly shape the future design of the app and its features for all users, not just those at the UoL.

5.8.15 The Digital Student Experience team have also been able to consider future content and student work produced, to support transitional students following the project end, such as Question and Answer features with existing students, more relevant student stories and for LMS students, 'medicine specific' content.

5.8.16 The project team considered looking at student retention and attainment figures for first year LMS students, to understand if information developed, shared and targeted towards helping students in the 21/22 academic year helped to impact on these figures. However, in discussion with Academic colleagues from the school, it is understood that very few students 'drop out' or 'interrupt' in early years medicine, so there was no tangible data to draw from in that particular area. First year medical students also have summative assessments at the end of the academic year, so the impact could not be seen on student performance by the time the project ended.

5.8.17 Following the LMS trial and subsequent focus groups, a LMS Senior Tutor who collaborated closely with the project team commented that:

*'Collaborating with the Student Life team on the Mental Health Student Support during Transition project has been a really positive experience for the Medical School staff and students. Our students typically find the pressures of applying to university very stressful and anxiety inducing, due to the extremely competitive nature of the application process to medicine programmes. We also experience a student cohort with higher than average levels of pre-existing mental health conditions when they arrive at university. As a school, we are frequently looking for innovative ways to provide support and guidance, and this project has allowed us to trial an approach that was new to us. We have valued the opportunity to work with our student content creators to design and develop resources that provide focused and subject specific peer advice and support. The student creators have found it a rewarding role and they report having grown in confidence at talking about the stress of transition and how best to provide wellbeing support to peers. Our incoming students praised the pre-arrival resources they received, and their use of the app shows that they benefitted from the content. The enthusiasm from existing and new students has resulted in us deciding to embed this approach as part of our core transition support content in future academic years.'*

5.8.18 From analysis of the qualitative data and comments received, provision of the app has been of benefit to those students using it, with some suggesting that it has made their transition into university easier. One student noted that it helped prepare them in advance of arriving, giving them an *'insight into how my life might change'*. Provision of the digital app and relevant information has helped them to manage their own wellbeing and helped them to *'navigate these differences'*. From that perspective alone, the app is successful in its provision in supporting students during the challenging period of transition into university.

5.8.19 Earlier focus groups suggested that student participants were perhaps unsure of the purpose of the app, noting their preference for an app serving as a 'one-stop shop', including timetables, local restaurant listings and social chat options. More explicit information on the purpose of the app, its intended use to aid transition and relevant signposting to other information of use to students would be beneficial to consider.

5.8.20 Considerations for future promotion of the app to pre-entry and incoming students can be taken from the student comments. Comments received noted that promotion earlier would be more suitable to aid student transition, from as early as the offer of a university place. Only 30% of students surveyed (n=94) on the first teaching session on 1 October were still using the app after arriving at university, but 71% (n=94) said that they had downloaded and accessed it prior to starting. This shows the team that the app is being used as intended, to aid student transition, but consideration does need to be made about effective and appropriate promotion of the app for incoming students, to ensure they utilise and benefit from the app pre-arrival and, as mentioned previously, whether an app with richer functionality would ensure a greater initial take up and retain student engagement.

## 5.9 Student Content Creators

5.9.1 Part of the project ethos is 'student-led' and the team wanted student inclusion from the outset. With this in mind, students were recruited to the project working alongside the Digital Student Experience team, as content creators, editors and podcast hosts.

5.9.2 By using students as content creators for the project, mental health support resources and the content produced was less 'medicalised' in its language and nature, detailed as an evidenced concern within the literature review undertaken at the project start, and therefore more engaging and effective. Available data from UoL student focus groups showed that students preferred to access content from their peers:

*'It comes from relatable people, a lot of it gives you a feeling that you're not alone in it.'*

5.9.3 Roles for content creators were advertised via the UoL Campus Jobs team and also shared with academic colleagues, to disseminate directly through their schools. This ensured that a more diverse range of applicants and as many students as possible from varying courses were given the opportunity to apply. Students were also provided information of roles and opportunities to work on the project directly via events such as the annual Freshers Fairs.

5.9.4 Students were encouraged to apply to Digital Student Experience roles if they had an interest or mix of interests in blogging, journalism, video and vlogging and social media. As part of the application process, students submitted a piece of content to help the team identify any areas of training or additional guidance needed, but all students were provided opportunities and support was always provided via the project staff and wider Digital Student Experience team. All students received mandatory training and workshops as staff members, as well as optional courses that may be relevant or pertinent to their particular roles, such as Mental Health First Aid training.

5.9.5 Student Editors working for the project were given set hours and worked more regularly with the team, whilst content creators worked on a freelance basis to work around their studies and attended fewer regular meetings. However, all students were actively involved, receiving regular contact and updates from project staff.

5.9.6 Editors and content creators were always encouraged to share ideas, review content and resources, approached for feedback and involved with meetings whenever possible. As students are at the heart of all that the project undertook, they were included with everything the Digital team produced. Student involvement took place through planning and creation of content, script or question writing, presenting, camera operating, planning, editing as well as posting on all social media channels.

5.9.7 Fifty-five student co-producers and three student editors were involved, actively producing content with the team. Between July 2019 and December 2021, Digital Student Experience activities, during the time period evaluated, had a total known engagement reach of over 138,000. Across the projects duration 114 articles and 110 videos and vlogs were published, with some shared more than once during the projects duration due to relevance and popularity.

## **5.10 Student Content Creator Survey**

5.10.1 It was of some importance for the project team to understand the impact that working on the project had for students, to better understand if there were benefits or challenges students themselves had recognised and, crucially, if they felt they had gained any new knowledge or skills. The external evaluators Wavehill gathered feedback from students working on the project, but those results were confidential and therefore not shared more widely with individual project teams.

5.10.2 In January 2022, an online Google questionnaire was shared with sixteen student content creators who were working on the project at that time. Seven students responded and the comments received were hugely positive regarding the project, work produced and the benefits to individual students on being involved.

5.10.3 All students noted they felt that working on the project had been of benefit to them, in particular, responses of interest included:

*'... I have learnt a lot from being a part of it, such as techniques to actually help with mental health, which I have to understand in order to present the information in videos. I've also increased in confidence when it comes to presenting in the videos and on my course. I've learnt to be concise in my presentation too.'*

*'... working as part of the Mental Health project has helped me gain confidence and helped me gain many new skills such as social media training and interpersonal skills.'*

*'I have found working on the mental health project really interesting and have found out lots of information through my research for articles that I can actually apply to my own life, as well as offering it as suggestions to help other people.'*

5.10.4 When asked if working on the project had increased their awareness of support and resources available to help students mental health and wellbeing, a sample of student responses included:

*'I have definitely found out more about the services available at the university and when/where these services are available for students to access. Not only have I been able to signpost other people to these resources, but I have also been able to use them myself.'*

*'Yes, absolutely - resources like these feel more accessible to me now.'*

*'Yes, since working on the project more resources have been made clearer and have been promoted well. For example, resources for international students have been made widely available and have helped them feel more at home at the university.'*

5.10.5 The students shared their thoughts on the value of the project, particularly for students as they transition into university. This was really valuable for the project team to understand the perceived impact from an existing university student point of view. Comments included:

*'I think the MHP (Mental Health Project) gives student content that makes them realise they are not alone. As well as creating MHP content I read and watch it too. I find other creators content so useful and I think it's important to have a student's perspective. When I read student life content I know someone at MY university having MY experience has made it and has gone through the same things as me rather than an academic or website that is external.'*

*'I believe the project is a wonderful resource to students that are transitioning to uni and not sure what to expect. I think that the range of resources that the project provide helps students with most, if not all, of the struggles that students face at uni.'*

*'I definitely think the project would help both current students and those who are heading to university. I think seeing that there are resources available to students throughout their university journey will make people feel much more at ease. I also think that a lot of the content Student Life has available including things to do with coping with stress or worries and helping with cooking and living type issues will really help not only those who may need extra help in terms of their mental health but also those who don't - the resources and information available are really useful for everyone.'*

5.10.6 All students were grateful of the opportunity and to be involved with the project, and in particular noted:

*'I am glad to have worked on the project as they gave me a new insight into my own wellbeing.'*

*'I've really enjoyed making content for the project as it's beneficial to the creator and the viewers of the content.'*

*'I think this project is brilliant and I'm so glad that there is content made for students by students on this topic!'*

*'It's a great opportunity and gives experience to students interested in writing and producing in important subject matters.'*

*'I really enjoy working as part of this project as I enjoy helping people with suggestions to help with their mental health as it is something that I have personally experienced.'*

5.10.7 The feedback gained from student content creators on the project is valuable, the project enabled the team to provide students with paid opportunities, but the benefits far outweighed the employment in many respects. For students to leave the project with a greater understanding of their own mental health and wellbeing, techniques, strategies and support available to help, but to also carry that knowledge forward and support their peers, was a valuable, additional outcome to come from the project and its activities.

## **5.11 Senior Tutor Newsletter**

5.11.1 The Digital Project Lead liaised early in the project with the Senior Tutor Forum at the UoL, who provide coordination and first line support for Personal Tutors within each school at UoL. The forum enabled collaboration between Senior Tutors and a platform to share good practice between schools. The Digital Project Lead attended an early forum to discuss the project, the content produced and how best to disseminate these valuable resources through tutors to their students.

5.11.2 It was from these early discussions that a Senior Tutor Newsletter was developed. This was produced monthly as a PDF document, shared to a SharePoint site for Senior tutors to download and shared amongst colleagues and students as appropriate. Links from the newsletter were provided to video, article or podcast content.

5.11.3 As the newsletter was provided monthly, the team were able to select the most appropriate new, or well performing older content, that would be of relevance at that time. Topics such as 'Top tips for being independent' or topics themed around national awareness campaigns, such as 'How to stay productive with ADHD' during October's ADHD Awareness Month, were all of use for staff to share with students, or have further understanding of.

5.11.4 The 'Student Life' app was also shared as part of each newsletter, noting that by downloading the app, further supportive, daily content could be accessed. This was particularly important to ensure a wider reach of staff and students had an awareness of the app, its intention and benefits, to be able to support the further promotion of this support.

5.11.5 As the project closed, a survey with Senior Tutors was being undertaken by the Digital Student Experience team to ascertain how the Newsletter has been received and whether this valuable information sharing can continue, and most importantly, how best to do so for the benefit of UoL staff in supporting students at the university.

## **5.12 Digital Collaboration With Partners**

5.12.1 Work was undertaken with BGU to help support their student content creators and work specifically done with the team, in provision of student co-production training, via an induction session and workshop. Work also took place with colleagues from BGU in providing updates and content to their 'My Day' platform for students.

5.12.2 Student content creators from BGU provided regular content which was shared by the Digital Student Experience team on the UoL's social media channels as part of the project. Resources were also hosted on the project website and BGU's own website:

<https://www.bishopg.ac.uk/about-bgu/what-we-do/autism-resources-and-community-hub-arch/autistic-voices-blogs-arch>

5.12.3 Topics and themes produced by BGU contributors centred around mental health and wellbeing, whilst also considering studying at university with a diagnosis, such as 'Starting university as an autistic student' and '5 tips for starting uni with dyslexia'. These themes ensured that a more rounded view was provided for transitional students from a variety of differing perspectives.

5.12.4 The team also worked with Northumbria University to assist them with arranging student content creation as part of their own OfS funded Project. The team ran an

induction session and content creation workshop. The workshop was delivered by the Digital Content Creative Assistants and covered types of content and topics the students could consider covering, as well as vlogging tips, such as framing, the 'rule of thirds', consideration towards lighting, sound and editing tips of use. The project team also included suggestions for students to consider when planning work such as: 'Ask yourself – would I watch this?', helping to re-enforce the message that content created by students, is for students, to offer information, advice and peer to peer support.

5.12.5 Northumbria students were given deadlines and the group of 6 content creators returned to Northumbria staff to manage. The Digital Student Experience team remained available to assist with any editing support as required and articles were edited by the team for Northumbria to use as needed, within their own social media networks.

5.12.6 The Digital Student Experience team worked with the Lincoln Students' Union Wellbeing Network and Wellbeing Champions in the production of an informative '20 questions' style video on the support and work they do for students. This was of particular importance as the Wellbeing Network is a 'signposting' service, helping to source and provide relevant and correct information for students to access the most appropriate support. They do not provide one to one support directly and the production of the informative yet engaging '20 questions' style video, helped to share this message with the wider student community.

### **5.13 Summary of Digital Student Experience Team Activities**

5.13.1 The Digital Student Experience team and student content creators were prolific, producing a wealth of content and resources throughout the project. Digitally produced content had a known audience reach of over 138,000 across all social media platforms during the projects duration. Fifty-five student content creators and 3 student editors worked with the project team, including 5 student hosts on the 'Fresher Take' podcasts, all creating relevant and relatable content.

5.13.2 The 'Student Life' app performed extremely well in its early months, with active user rates for the UoL double that of other universities. During the second year of the app, unique active users were almost the same in the first six months, than the entire first year of the app being available, with spikes in engagement at transitional points of the year. As the app is primarily for supporting students with their transition into university, the increase of numbers at the start of the academic year, shows that the app and resources were of benefit to pre-entry and incoming students and continued to do so, into the apps second year.

5.13.3 A trial of the 'Student Life' app use by LMS first year students, showed through analysis of the qualitative data and comments received, that provision of the app was of benefit to those students using it, making transition into university easier. One student noted that it helped prepare them in advance of arriving, giving them an *'insight into how*

*my life might change*'. Provision of the digital app and relevant, timely information helped them manage their own wellbeing and helped them to *'navigate these differences*'.

5.13.4 Whilst engagement with general Digital Student Experience team content dropped off during the pandemic, the project mental health content continued to perform well. Older articles also performed well around transitional periods, which is additionally promising when considering the project legacy, as it shows lasting endurance and relatability, past the project end.

5.13.5 Consideration for similar future projects would be to look at more focused cohort support so that definitive feedback and analysis could therefore be undertaken, particularly when looking at the benefits of work to increase student confidence and aid their retention for example. Due to the sporadic nature of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns, this was not pursued, but a more dedicated focus on this area would be beneficial.

5.13.6 Feedback from students working on the project as dedicated content creators, details the benefits they gained from being involved. Students felt their confidence had increased in varying areas, which they have been able to carry forward into their academic studies, such as presentation skills. But of key interest to the team, is that students noted their mental health awareness had increased. Being directly involved with the project helped to further their own understanding of mental health and wellbeing, and of the institutional support available and in turn this helped them to support their peers.

5.13.7 The dedicated Digital Student Experience team, alongside employed student content creators, produced much needed, relevant and timely content and resources throughout the project duration. It is clear from available statistics and data, that content was engaged with and engagement increased throughout the project, demonstrating relatability of topics covered and endurance or resources post project, particularly as students re-visited the content and articles produced. The benefits to pre-entry, incoming and existing students shows through the combination of engagement with content and interaction with the 'Student Life' app, 'Fresher Take' podcast and the comments received from the student content creators themselves.

## **Part 6 Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP)**

### **6.1 Background**

6.1.1 Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) (Niemic, 2014) is a programme focusing on a combination of mindfulness alongside character strengths. The eight week programme, as developed by Niemic, aims to enhance wellbeing, increase strengths use and increase self-efficacy, an individual's belief in their ability to succeed and achieve their aims. Previous studies of the programme with undergraduate students in particular have shown to improve student wellbeing and retention (Wingert et al., 2020). This style of support aligned with the project aims, helping to provide positive psychological interventions with students in order to help increase their overall wellbeing, engagement and achievement. An informative video on MBSP produced by the Digital Student Experience team was also included within the information provided to attendees of the 'Fresh Start' sessions delivered by the Transitional Wellbeing team, to inform students of the practice and the potential benefits in managing their own health and wellbeing.

### **6.2 MBSP Study**

6.2.1 A study was undertaken by UoL staff and students to assess the benefits on student mental health and wellbeing, following provision of the MBSP programme (Park, 2020). The study was advertised through lectures and student participants were offered a gift card as an incentive for taking part.

6.2.2 The study employed a randomised waiting-list control trial, where participants were randomly allocated to one of two conditions. In condition A, student participants completed MBSP in the autumn term of the academic year. Condition B student participants acted as waiting list controls for the first three measurement points on varying scales, including self-efficacy and strengths use, and then completed MBSP in the spring term. All participants completed the measures at five time points: before and immediately after MBSP in the autumn term, before and immediately after MBSP in the spring term, and one further 6-week follow up.

### **6.3 Results**

6.3.1 In total, 38 first year undergraduates aged between 18 and 27 were recruited to the trial, however, some participants withdrew before and during the study due to difficulties attending the required programme elements at allocated times. Of the 19 remaining, the results of the study showed that the MBSP group of student participants reported increases in mindfulness, strengths use and self-efficacy. Student participants completing the MBSP programme also reported increases in wellbeing compared to the controls.

6.3.2 Consideration was given to the provision of an MBSP programme as part of the initial project bid, particularly for those students entering university, exploring its benefits of

and, if positive, making it a more widely accessible, sustained programme, available to students and delivered by trained staff.

6.3.3 The study results are positive, in understanding that participants do report increases in mindfulness, strengths use and self-efficacy after following the programme. A wider study or further provision of a MBSP programme to dedicated cohorts was unable to be pursued as part of the project, due to the onset of Covid-19 altering teaching methods and delivery and changes to academic responsibilities.

6.3.4 However, due to the positive results of the MBSP programme trial with undergraduate students, it is clear that such a provision is of benefit, to complement other areas of support for students to enhance their wellbeing and mental health, whether this support is through professional services teams or self-sought and administered.

## Part 7 Dissemination

### 7.1 Background

7.1.1 Throughout the project, dissemination has been a priority, sharing 'best practice' along with content, resources and work produced at national events sector wide, for external events and partners and internal university events.

7.1.2 Dissemination work included presentations at the following external events:

- National Teachers Conference (November 2019).
- LID2020 (Lincoln Inclusion and Diversity) Conference (February 2020).
- Go Higher West Yorkshire Conference (June 2020).
- British Education Research Association (BERA) Mental Health Special Interest Group Conference (July 2020).
- Inside Government Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Conference (October 2020).
- SUMS Consulting Conference (November 2020).
- National Teachers Conference (November 2020).
- HE Student Wellbeing Taskforce (May 2021).
- National Association of Disability Practitioners (NADP) Virtual International Conference (June 2021).
- Study Higher Annual Access (Virtual) Conference (October 2021).
- Universities UK Mental Health in Higher Education (Virtual) Conference (November 2021).
- Student Mental Health Research Network (SMaRteN) Virtual Lab Group (November 2021).
- Globally MindED (Virtual) Conference (December 2021).

7.1.3 Along with numerous internal presentations including:

- Lincoln Academy of Learning and Teaching (LALT) Academic Professional Apprenticeship Workshop (October 2019).
- Lincoln Higher Education Research Institute (LHERI) Presentation (October 2019).
- Graduate Teacher Education Programme Workshop (February 2020).
- Australian University Visit with Vice Chancellors Office, Presentation (Including the Director of Student Experience at Queensland University of Technology, Chief Information Officer for Swinburne University and Head of Student Services at Swinburne University) (March 2020).
- School of Education Summer School (July 2020).
- Teaching, Student Experience and Graduate Outcomes (TSEGO) Committee (July 2021).
- Education and Student Life Committee (January 2022).
- Senior Tutor Forum (January 2022).

7.1.4 Articles, Case Studies, newsletters and blogs have been published with the following:

- British Education Research Association (BERA) (October 2019): Member newsletter piece on 'New Developments'.
- British Education Research Association (BERA) (April 2020): Member newsletter piece on the project evolving to adapt to overcome the challenges of the Covid-19 pandemic.
- IMPact Journal (January 2020): Project overview:

<https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/c/8316/files/2020/04/IMPact-Short-notice-Cate-Neal-2020.pdf>

- IMPact Journal (June 2020): Project response to the Covid-19 pandemic:

<https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/c/8316/files/2020/10/IMPact-Short-notice-Cate-Neal.pdf>

- Office for Students (June 2020): Case Study 'Supporting Transitions':

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/coronavirus/coronavirus-case-studies/student-mental-health/>

- Office for Students (August 2021): Case Study 'The role of digital mental health support tools and the importance of the student co-production model in supporting their development':

<https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/student-wellbeing-and-protection/student-mental-health/the-role-of-digital-mental-health-support-tools-and-the-importance-of-the-student-co-production-model-in-supporting-their-development/>

- NADP Journal of Inclusive Practice in Higher Education (June 2021): Article 'The importance of supporting student wellbeing during transition into Higher Education:

<https://nadp-uk.org/issue-13-1-summer-2021/>

- FACE – Forum for Access and Continuing Education (September 2021): Project Overview Blog:

<https://www.face.ac.uk/blog-post/transitioning-students-effectively-a-student-led-approach-to-mental-health-support/>

- Wonkhe (October 2021): Comment piece 'Virtual is new reality in support student mental health':

<https://wonkhe.com/blogs/virtual-is-new-reality-in-supporting-student-mental-health-2/>

- Innovative mental health support for student transition to Higher Education, Conference Brochure (March 2022):

<https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/8/8519/files/2022/03/Conference-Brochure-Final.pdf>

7.1.5 The team held an end of project conference ‘Innovative mental health support for student transition to Higher Education’ on 17 March 2022 in Lincoln, to disseminate project activities, findings and key learnings from the project, its partners, stakeholders and guest speakers. The day, opened by UoL Vice Chancellor Professor Neal Juster, included sessions from the project team, along with informative presentations from project partners LPFT, LiNCHigher, BGU, Dr Roger Bretherton and Lincoln Students’ Union Wellbeing Network.

7.1.6 The project team were delighted to receive one of the first ‘Levelling Up’ awards, part of the Rt. Hon Justine Greening’s Social Mobility Pledge Initiative in Summer 2021.

## Part 8 Project Staff, Partner and Stakeholder Feedback

### 8.1 Project Feedback

8.1.1 The independent evaluators, Wavehill, conducted interviews with project staff, partners and stakeholders as part of their evaluation process. These results were not shared with the wider project team.

8.1.2 Short Google surveys were instead shared with these parties, to better understand their thoughts on the project, the communication, collaborative working and challenges and whether they would continue with initiatives and resources within their own working practices, particularly when supporting student and the wider student community.

8.1.3 Five responses were received, giving an insight from a small selection of varying staff from differing organisations, externally and also from within the university. When asked what had gone well during the project, comments included:

*‘Collaboration between the two projects has felt easy and productive, meaning that we have been able to support students in Lincolnshire with high impact, innovative and unique opportunities to better prepare for their transition into HE, and inevitably increase the possibility of high student success and transition rates through HE. This was a gap in the provision available to schools and colleges - outreach seemed to focus on getting students to HE, but not prioritising giving students the information and skills necessary to thrive in HE, and the Transition project filled that void.’*

*‘I think the interaction with the Schools and highlighting and pitching the right information with the students has been so valuable. The Schools outreach has most certainly been enhanced with this project.’*

8.1.4 The project team recognised that there was a lack of specialist support for students during their transition from school and college into university, hence the initial bid for the project itself. To hear the same from partners working on the project only solidified those views and the evidenced need, that there is a requirement for support of this nature. A recommendation from this project is for consideration to be given by HEI’s, schools and colleges, to increase their understanding of these challenges for students entering HE and the importance of support provided during this time.

8.1.5 When asked what had been a challenge, responses included:

*‘COVID is naturally a challenge that has faced the sector, but the team adapted quickly and have supported us massively in delivering and developing high quality digital resources to ensure that students are still being worked with!’*

*‘Partner relationships - often difficult to engage and build relationships.’*

Covid-19 was a challenge for all, effecting delivery and also partner engagement and at times, involvement with the project. Whilst a 3 month extension to the project was granted by the OfS due to the impact of Covid-19, this was not enough time to recoup partner time or involvement on some of the challenges that were faced.

8.1.6 When asked about using the resources or findings within their own practice, comments noted:

*'Yes...as well as encouraging project partners to fill the gap in delivery that the Transition team will unfortunately leave!'*

*'Yes we will...take aspects forward as being sustainable with the resources that we have.'*

8.1.7 In considering the project legacy, it was important to understand that partners had benefited from the resources and ultimately, felt able to continue with aspects of these resources for use within their own practice post project.

8.1.8 When asked if there was anything that could change, regarding the project, delivery or involvement, comments included:

*'A better understanding and plan of how partners were to be involved in project delivery.'*

*'I would keep funding it, so that the students can continue accessing the resource and expertise of the team!'*

*'Just to extend and be able to maintain parts of the project.'*

*'I think it would have been great to track a student's journey...from being delivered a session in Year 13 and tracked their progress through university and how their wellbeing is.'*

8.1.9 Recommendations from the project, particularly for future ventures, are to include funded roles from the budget for external partners. Due to the very busy nature of many organisations involved with the project and the onset of Covid-19, had a dedicated, funded role been based within those areas, then perhaps a greater understanding, more robust working relationship and further collaborative activities could have taken place.

8.1.10 A further recommendation for future projects or HEI's to consider would be to follow a student or group of students from school or college into HE, a consideration recognised by the project team and also mentioned via the feedback submitted from staff and partners. Following a student or group of students would enable staff to fully understand whether support and initiatives that students receive at school, via specialist outreach sessions or dedicated advice and support for example, has been of benefit to their confidence, coping skills, mental health and wellbeing when they arrive at university, and navigate through their new HE environment.

## Part 9 Project Legacy

### 9.1 Background

9.1 Evaluation and Activity plans completed during the project by the Project Manager and wider project team considered sustainability and a 'legacy' of work produced, to continue past the project end. From the project work and close links with other teams, both within the university and within the City, provision has been made to allow content and resources to continue to be shared more widely.

### 9.2 Legacy

9.2.1 A project website will last after the project completes, with links to both Transitional Wellbeing materials and Digital content and resources produced:

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

9.2.2 The student-created content developed as part of the project will continue to be utilised on an ongoing basis, to support student transition on the Student Life website, app and social media channels, as well as, increasingly, on the main University website and social media channels:

<https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/starting>

9.2.3 The UoL Education Liaison team has provided vital support to the project throughout its duration, connecting the project team with many more schools and colleges. Where appropriate within their work, the team will utilise project content and resources, particularly presentations and use these wherever possible, within the schools and colleges outreach sessions they undertake. For details, please contact the team:

[educationliaison@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:educationliaison@lincoln.ac.uk)

9.2.4 The project worked closely throughout its lifespan with LiNCHigher, a local Uni Connect consortia partnership of education providers and organisations supporting young people in schools, colleges and community groups across Lincolnshire. To support the project and continue its legacy, again where appropriate, LiNCHigher Officers will utilise project resources, such as presentations and workshops, within their outreach work with schools and colleges in the local area.

9.2.5 Alongside availability of resources on the dedicated project website, resources will also be available post project on LiNCHigher's 'Future Focus' website, a hub which brings together 'all aspects of careers, education and training for young people, parents/carers, adults and teaching professionals.' Resources hosted on the 'Future Focus' website are detailed:

Emotional Fitness online magazine: <https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk/resources/detail/173>

Getting Ahead resources: <https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk/resources/detail/178>

Next Steps resources: <https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk/resources/detail/177>

Fresh Start resource: <https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk/resources/detail/174>

Fresher Take podcasts: <https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk/resources/detail/175>

Teacher Resources: <https://www.thefuturefocus.co.uk/resources/detail/500>

9.2.6 The LiNCHigher team also collaborated with the Transitional Wellbeing Team in producing 3 videos, part of a series of 30 undertaken with other institutions and support team's county wide, to be hosted and shared on their Future Focus website:

Emotional Fitness: <https://youtu.be/Y9C4PQPScUY>

Fresh Start: <https://youtu.be/SgMEbUC4mDI>

Getting Ahead: [https://youtu.be/mcATW\\_Wm7kw](https://youtu.be/mcATW_Wm7kw)

9.2.7 LiNCHigher also provide Lincolnshire students an account with 'LiNCHigher Learning', a free online learning programme which currently has 45,000 student accounts. Information and resources are all provided via that website, that students and students can utilise and view in their own time or be directed towards relevant resources as appropriate or needed by their teachers and academics.

<https://www.linchigherlearning.co.uk/>

For full details, please contact the LiNCHigher team: [linchigher@bishopg.ac.uk](mailto:linchigher@bishopg.ac.uk)

9.2.8 Project initiatives that will remain within the UoL after project end include:

- The WOW summer school will continue to be overseen by the Student Wellbeing Team, with work already begun by staff for WOW 2022 and pre-entry students already securing places.
- 'Fresh Start' sessions will again, continue to be provided by Student Wellbeing staff, to follow the same format and offered to students at the same times of year.
- The 'Fresher Take' podcast initiative is hoped to remain within the Digital Student Experience team due to its popularity.
- 'Student Life' app will continue to be monitored by the Digital Student Experience Team, to consider the provision of this resource in supporting student transitions and update or amend the app provision as necessary.
- Student content creation will remain within the Digital Student Experience team as a valuable and much needed resource for both student content creators and the wider student community who engage with the content.
- The Senior Tutor Newsletter initiative will continue to be explored as an ongoing provision from the Digital Student Experience team.

9.2.9 Other resources that have been developed and produced as part of the project, shared for others to use as needed included - 'How to run a successful summer school', a 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>

9.2.10 Despite the challenges in maintaining engagement of student content creators at other institutions, the Digital Student Experience team continue to pursue opportunities to develop bespoke student content creation training, offering support to other institutions looking to develop their own, similar initiatives. If successful, this could provide a future revenue stream for the UoL.

9.2.11 Feedback from focus groups has been actioned by app developers, to help shape the future design of the 'Student Life' app. The findings from the project, particularly in relation to the app, are being used to strengthen the case for the procurement of a more advanced UoL app, with more interactive features and key student resources alongside student-created content, such as timetables, which could help to ensure better and longer term student engagement. Pending budget approval, the Digital Student Experience team are hoping to introduce a new app in the 22/23 annual year.

## Part 10 Findings and Recommendations

### 10.1 Findings

10.1.1 The project aimed to develop a peer-to-peer approach in supporting student mental health and wellbeing, particularly during transition from school to university. It aimed to partner with other institutions, support services and student representatives to develop initiatives to enable students to support each other and themselves, with students being central to project activities. The project achieved most of its aims, despite the limitations presented from the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic and subsequent national lockdowns. Those limitations served to help the project team explore other ways in which to provide continued support to students and students, such as virtual and remote delivery and content production.

10.1.2 A successful outreach programme was established and delivered by the Transitional Wellbeing team, with the support of university and local community partners to increase contacts and broaden the reach of delivery. Available evaluation data shows that students and staff at schools and colleges welcomed the support and information provided via outreach workshops. Resources were developed following initial focus groups at local schools, which gave the team an understanding of the content and themes pertinent and relevant to students' needs. These same resources were provided digitally and available for all, included pre-recorded presentations, videos and workshop resources on a number of themes. From the project start, it was the team's intention to create resources that could be utilised widely across the sector and by schools and colleges, to support students irrespective of their future destination. The content created was not exclusive to UoL, but available to others as indicated.

10.1.3 Available data shows that content was welcomed and valued by school and college students, teachers, parents and guardians as well as incoming and current UoL students. It is clear from evaluation data that transitional outreach sessions were valued by school and college staff and positively viewed by many of the student participants.

10.1.4 The WOW summer school grew from 40 student spaces provided, offered to 80 across the project duration, and is now being provided to more incoming university students since the project ended. Feedback shows that attendees are positive about the provision which makes a positive difference to their ability to manage change ahead of arriving at university. Available data shows that WOW students' attendance at university is higher than the UoL average and the average for UoL students who disclose a disability. The project has enabled WOW places to be increased, and support is now offered to more students for whom transition and change can be a challenge, including care experienced or estranged students. The WOW Summer School will continue as part of the annual provision managed by the Student Wellbeing team post project.

10.1.5 *'Transitioning students effectively: A student-led approach to mental health support'* was the project title and the 'student-led approach' has been key, embedded into the project throughout its lifespan, particularly within the activities of the Digital Student Experience team. Student involvement has been encouraged and recognised throughout, from pupil focus groups within local schools to help shape outreach content, student focus groups to understand the impact of resources produced and learn more of supportive content that students would like to see, to students actively producing and hosting their own podcasts, students working in Ambassador roles at the WOW summer school and Students' Union elected sabbatical officers joining school and college outreach sessions, sharing their lived experiences.

10.1.6 The project ethos focused on student involvement and actively encouraged student voices to be heard within its planning, creation and delivery. This helped to produce and develop initiatives that were relatable, engaging and of value to the student community. Student input included:

- Early focus groups with school students on content and information that will be of benefit.
- Focus groups with UoL students, on resources and content produced.
- Trials, focus groups and surveys with students on the Fika and Student Life apps.
- Student content creators and editors, who designed, created, produced and edited content throughout.
- Feedback directly from students on schools and colleges outreach work.
- Feedback directly from university students on content and resources, Podcasts and Apps.
- Feedback from the Student Advisory Board on a sample of content and resources.
- Students sharing 'lived experience' and personal video stories, for use in schools and colleges.
- Feedback from WOW summer school attendees.
- Student Ambassadors at WOW Summer School who were previous WOW attendees, offering peer to peer support.
- Feedback from students attending Fresh Start Workshops.
- Students' Union elected sabbatical officers joining school outreach sessions sharing lived experiences.
- Feedback from student content creators on the benefits they had gained from being involved with the project.

10.1.7 Fifty-five student content creators were employed as part of the project across its lifetime and they felt that their involvement helped to increase their confidence and further their own understanding of mental health and wellbeing, and of the institutional support available and in turn this helped them to support their peers.

10.1.8 Sustainability of project resources is provided by the project website as well as collaborative work with the UoL Education Liaison Team and LiNCHigher. However, it is important to note that this level of support is not the same as that which was provided by the Transitional Wellbeing outreach team. Staff will utilise resources where they are able, but cannot offer the same dedicated level of delivery on these topics as was provided by the roles funded via the project.

10.1.9 Where appropriate, project partners have utilised the projects numerous resources and shared them amongst their student communities. As demonstrated by BGU, for example, their students were also involved as content creators and shared resources on their own 'My Day' platform.

10.1.10 Projects such as this, the initiatives they generate and the outcomes they create, are of major strategic and operational importance. This work is valued and necessary and there is scope to broaden the breadth of support provided and to link it into government, sector organisations and other university future plans. Through supporting student transition, and thus aiding and bolstering students' emotional and mental health, confidence and aspirations can also be strengthened.

## **10.2 Recommendations for Higher Education Institutions**

- Whilst widening participation (WP) outreach activity is already provided by numerous organisations and universities nationwide, specialist support on mental health, wellbeing and emotional fitness when managing change is not readily available, nor is it provided by Higher Education (HE) professional services staff, as far as the team are aware. Universities should consider embedding support within the institution, such as a dedicated Transition Co-ordinator, to work within existing Student Support Teams and alongside education providers and organisations, in support of pre-entry and incoming students.
- By working collaboratively together with the local authority and existing WP support teams as well as schools and colleges, institutions can collectively utilise existing skills sets, to effectively support students in their journey from compulsory education, into Further Education (FE) and HE.
- Provision of digital health apps are of evidenced, short term benefit in aiding student transition into university for those students using them, providing strategies and techniques in supporting their own mental health and wellbeing.
- Provision of specialist wellbeing programmes, such as the Mindfulness-Based Strengths Practice (MBSP) programme, are of benefit in supporting student wellbeing, with students reporting increases in mindfulness, strengths use and self-efficacy following MBSP programme delivery.
- Available data shows that students prefer content and resources directly created by students, particularly around mental health. If not already available, the creation of

roles such as student content creators within Digital Teams to enable the production of continued, relatable, engaging and informative content are encouraged.

- Pre-enrolment transitional events provided to pre-students which offer advice, information and familiarity, can in turn promote their confidence to manage the changes that lie ahead.
- Building on the experience of developing and running a student content creation initiative as part of the project, the UoL's Digital Student Experience team is actively offering to support and enable other institutions to set up similar initiatives with the aim of enhancing the student experience across the sector.
- Timing of support, resources and content is key. The provision of apps, student produced resources and supportive content to aid transition should be made available to pre-entry students at the earliest (and most appropriate) opportunity. Data shows that students recommend information on transitional support is provided as early as receiving a university offer to garner the most benefit.
- The University Mental Health Charter from Student Minds notes that consideration should be given to transition, recognising the evidence of this being a difficult time for students and that positive impacts can be gained by students when pre-entry interventions are provided. There is an evidenced need for support such as that provided via this project, even early pre-intervention support whilst potential university students, are still at school, making future decisions and beginning to take responsibility for their own independence, health and mental wellbeing.
- Consideration could also be given to local Youth Council support, in gathering and providing thoughts and concerns from young people to best manage their transition into HE.
- Similar, future projects should also consider sourcing research governance advice during the initial planning stages, to mitigate outcomes should the lines between evaluation and research become 'blurred'.

### **10.3 Recommendations for Schools and Further Education Providers**

- Topics such as coping with change and preparing for the future, becoming independent, living with others, managing emotions and knowing when to seek help, should be given consideration, if not already done so, and included within the Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) education curriculum. This project recognises the value of these topics to students, particularly prior to leaving school or college.
- When considering support for school and college leavers, attention should be given to particular groups of students to ensure that their voice is heard and support is available and provided. Care experienced or estranged students, for example, for whom transition is an additional challenge due to a lack of 'social capital' in terms of the limited practical, emotional or financial support on offer, can put these students at an additional disadvantage when moving on from compulsory and FE.

#### 10.4 Recommendations for Future OfS Funded Mental Health Projects

- Partnership working, due to the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic and its subsequent demands on time, staff and resources for project partners, was often compromised. The inclusion of dedicated, project funded roles which sit within partner organisations wherever possible, rather than 'in kind' support, would lead to more robust collaboration from partners, facilitating more shared working and partnership involvement.
- Evaluation of the long-term impact of outreach work on students is a particular challenge. Not all students within sessions at schools and colleges are planning on applying to university, or were prospective students of the UoL. For that reason, the team felt that capturing the benefits of the sessions and the information provided during the sessions itself whenever possible, pre- and post-intervention, rather than trying to identify students at university in the future, had more immediate benefits to the project recommendations. However, future projects might consider the longitudinal tracking of students and their outcomes in order to effectively analyse the benefits for those who had received specialist support in advance of leaving school or college, through and into university and beyond.

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## Part 12 Appendices

### 12.1 Project Resources: Available Links

Date	Title	Link
<b>Whole Project Resource</b>		
2019 -	Project Website	<a href="https://mentalhealthproject.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/">https://mentalhealthproject.blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/</a>
March 2020	OfS Transitional Mental Health Project - Video	<a href="https://youtu.be/4sYAb8igEsw">https://youtu.be/4sYAb8igEsw</a>
April 2021	OfS Transitional Mental Health Project – New video	<a href="https://youtu.be/B9ObK23h1T8">https://youtu.be/B9ObK23h1T8</a>
March 2022	Innovative mental health support for student transition to Higher Education – Conference Brochure	<a href="https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/8/8519/files/2022/03/Conference-Brochure-Final.pdf">https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/8/8519/files/2022/03/Conference-Brochure-Final.pdf</a>
March 2022	Student Review	<a href="https://youtu.be/bd6RKZzqrE">https://youtu.be/bd6RKZzqrE</a>
March 2022	Podcast Compilation	<a href="https://youtu.be/NbDqVIOoVel">https://youtu.be/NbDqVIOoVel</a>
March 2022	Project Showreel	<a href="https://youtu.be/gC75v1CLZKg">https://youtu.be/gC75v1CLZKg</a>
<b>Digital Project Resources: Videos</b>		
September 2019	WOW 2019 Promo Video	<a href="https://youtu.be/BuJqkZSQ1PY">https://youtu.be/BuJqkZSQ1PY</a>
September 2019	Student Tips for New Starters – Living at University	<a href="https://youtu.be/SBPRx7ffc-A">https://youtu.be/SBPRx7ffc-A</a>
September 2019	Student Tips for New Starters – Learning at University	<a href="https://youtu.be/5CAni82QT9Q">https://youtu.be/5CAni82QT9Q</a>
September 2019	Student Tips for New Starters – Working Together at University	<a href="https://youtu.be/byu2Qs2JeOg">https://youtu.be/byu2Qs2JeOg</a>
October 2019	Settling in at university	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6CzPF0QS-I">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6CzPF0QS-I</a>
October 2019	Wellbeing Whiteboard Video	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y09W4fDcrg">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-y09W4fDcrg</a>
November 2019	World Mental Health Day Video	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTBslcRH2p0">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zTBslcRH2p0</a>
November 2019	Students React: Mental Health Myths and Facts	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1o2DkmBQsU">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L1o2DkmBQsU</a>
November 2019	Students React: Men’s Mental Health Stats	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jh19tFWqn4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jh19tFWqn4</a>
November 2019	SafeSpace (Louth) Student Video	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gv7bJtz4a3c">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gv7bJtz4a3c</a>
December 2019	Fika Vlog	<a href="https://youtu.be/XBR47OglgE0">https://youtu.be/XBR47OglgE0</a>
February 2020	Five Ways to Spend a Self-Care Sunday	<a href="https://youtu.be/KZ1Kro6wSCI">https://youtu.be/KZ1Kro6wSCI</a>
February 2020	Students React: LGBT+ Mental Health Stats	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiXlORlZg0Y">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tiXlORlZg0Y</a>
February 2020	Estranged Students	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiKeAKFjxDk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CiKeAKFjxDk</a>
March 2020	20ish Questions for Eating Disorders Awareness Week	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ip1b6qCRsY4">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ip1b6qCRsY4</a>
March 2020	20ish Questions SU Reps	<a href="https://youtu.be/3Cedb2t_fwg">https://youtu.be/3Cedb2t_fwg</a>
March 2020	Wellbeing Centre Tour	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCNd365UqHY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TCNd365UqHY</a>
March 2020	B-Global Mentors	<a href="https://youtu.be/EiA1LjqD4U0">https://youtu.be/EiA1LjqD4U0</a>
March 2020	Look after your mate campaign – SU	<a href="https://youtu.be/VRd5iFOd00">https://youtu.be/VRd5iFOd00</a>
April 2020	Student Cooking – Food cupboard edition	<a href="https://youtu.be/YPce10_J92Q">https://youtu.be/YPce10_J92Q</a>
May 2020	Study Happy: Student Wellbeing Q&A	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1ppTTjybGE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R1ppTTjybGE</a>
May 2020	Study Happy: Digital Education Q&A	<a href="https://youtu.be/EnHPDSge-ok">https://youtu.be/EnHPDSge-ok</a>

May 2020	Study Happy: ICT Q&A	<a href="https://youtu.be/SXm-ZsA37i4">https://youtu.be/SXm-ZsA37i4</a>
May 2020	Study Happy: Student Support Q&A	<a href="https://youtu.be/aV0LpyGyqz4">https://youtu.be/aV0LpyGyqz4</a>
May 2020	A message from Support Services	<a href="https://youtu.be/xM5V-VKYHMg">https://youtu.be/xM5V-VKYHMg</a>
May 2020	Studying from home – Dr Anna Symonds	<a href="https://youtu.be/m_mtZWIR2K8">https://youtu.be/m_mtZWIR2K8</a>
May 2020	Mental Health Quotes	<a href="https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1890882884380221">https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1890882884380221</a>
May 2020	My Experience trying out Fika	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzhT4hiHYFk">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rzhT4hiHYFk</a>
May 2020	Anxiety Video	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFfo9ibt8r8&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EFfo9ibt8r8&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
May 2020	Emotional Fitness, Meditation and Making a Routine	<a href="https://youtu.be/4CjgYC1CyHM">https://youtu.be/4CjgYC1CyHM</a>
June 2020	Wellbeing Centre Open Day Video	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSGnOtH9JSg&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iSGnOtH9JSg&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
June 2020	Mental Health Awareness Week	<a href="https://youtu.be/YYuRjGA2Yfw">https://youtu.be/YYuRjGA2Yfw</a>
June 2020	3 Healthy and Easy Recipes	<a href="https://youtu.be/6xQ9baE9XO4">https://youtu.be/6xQ9baE9XO4</a>
June 2020	Cooking as an International Student	<a href="https://youtu.be/OgayMyNsgwM">https://youtu.be/OgayMyNsgwM</a>
July 2020	Healthy Eating on Campus	<a href="https://youtu.be/aj9YxrcLD4g">https://youtu.be/aj9YxrcLD4g</a>
July 2020	I tried linked in learning	<a href="https://youtu.be/aydUySxD50A">https://youtu.be/aydUySxD50A</a>
July 2020	My experience with anxiety and CBT	<a href="https://youtu.be/ArGc48bzSvc">https://youtu.be/ArGc48bzSvc</a>
July 2020	I tried Thought Journaling for a week	<a href="https://youtu.be/QDjMsyP_3Lo">https://youtu.be/QDjMsyP_3Lo</a>
August 2020	5 Ways to Wellbeing	<a href="https://youtu.be/KoaCAnRxhy0">https://youtu.be/KoaCAnRxhy0</a>
August 2020	Maintaining a Healthy Relationship	<a href="https://youtu.be/-CKFqZp_BVA">https://youtu.be/-CKFqZp_BVA</a>
August 2020	Being Alcohol Free	<a href="https://youtu.be/7MmBzEU2Tk4">https://youtu.be/7MmBzEU2Tk4</a>
August 2020	Tips for Starting university	<a href="https://youtu.be/PPhyVTAG1SQ">https://youtu.be/PPhyVTAG1SQ</a>
October 2020	English Language Centre	<a href="https://youtu.be/SkTqAg-maNw">https://youtu.be/SkTqAg-maNw</a>
October 2020	Student Support Centre	<a href="https://youtu.be/mz_eKTgl8sA">https://youtu.be/mz_eKTgl8sA</a>
October 2020	Multi Faith Chaplaincy	<a href="https://youtu.be/kTPMoiNp9IY">https://youtu.be/kTPMoiNp9IY</a>
October 2020	How to deal with the anxiety of lockdown at university	<a href="https://youtu.be/clMxseXc7u8">https://youtu.be/clMxseXc7u8</a>
October 2020	Being a mature student	<a href="https://youtu.be/my-13eujhB0">https://youtu.be/my-13eujhB0</a>
October 2020	The Manwell Support Group	<a href="https://youtu.be/a5Tqt0LBsNQ">https://youtu.be/a5Tqt0LBsNQ</a>
October 2020	How to deal with pandemic anxiety at university	<a href="https://youtu.be/4nNogem_gvA">https://youtu.be/4nNogem_gvA</a>
November 2020	Staying Motivated at Uni	<a href="https://youtu.be/76OY3k7EqE0">https://youtu.be/76OY3k7EqE0</a>
January 2021	MBSP 20ish Questions with Roger Bretherton	<a href="https://youtu.be/vmlsv-aPMT4">https://youtu.be/vmlsv-aPMT4</a>
March 2021	I used Fika for a week	<a href="https://youtu.be/7Jq76x3PY5c">https://youtu.be/7Jq76x3PY5c</a>
March 2021	Photography Wellbeing Walks	<a href="https://youtu.be/2EmOJKMB05I">https://youtu.be/2EmOJKMB05I</a>
May 2021	Hobbies and their benefit on mental health	<a href="https://youtu.be/7irNUcD5Epc">https://youtu.be/7irNUcD5Epc</a>
May 2021	How to spend the night before and morning of your exam	<a href="https://youtu.be/9Yid7AMWvuE">https://youtu.be/9Yid7AMWvuE</a>
June 2021	Relaxing after exams	<a href="https://youtu.be/fcimoicQQOY">https://youtu.be/fcimoicQQOY</a>
June 2021	Positives of social media	<a href="https://youtu.be/sQn6FxmwoWU">https://youtu.be/sQn6FxmwoWU</a>
July 2021	How to unwind at the end of term	<a href="https://youtu.be/Hgsd-CV1Emk">https://youtu.be/Hgsd-CV1Emk</a>
July 2021	What to expect from a foundation year	<a href="https://youtu.be/M7VXojM-14">https://youtu.be/M7VXojM-14</a>

August 2021	Taking a step back from social media	<a href="https://youtu.be/lluwOCqEHZ4">https://youtu.be/lluwOCqEHZ4</a>
September 2021	Health Service	<a href="https://youtu.be/URXKRqWXOUE">https://youtu.be/URXKRqWXOUE</a>
September 2021	Student Wellbeing Centre	<a href="https://youtu.be/77bw7Lg5Ozc">https://youtu.be/77bw7Lg5Ozc</a>
October 2021	Clinical Experience Week	<a href="https://youtu.be/B6WFQC_nslA">https://youtu.be/B6WFQC_nslA</a>
October 2021	Students Guide to Lincoln Medical School	<a href="https://youtu.be/PGwYA1iG5cc">https://youtu.be/PGwYA1iG5cc</a>
October 2021	World Mental Health Day	<a href="https://youtu.be/ZamHnTh-pMA">https://youtu.be/ZamHnTh-pMA</a>
October 2021	How to stay productive with ADHD	<a href="https://youtu.be/DhK9PomM2A0">https://youtu.be/DhK9PomM2A0</a>
October 2021	Moving to Uni (Emily – WOW student)	<a href="https://youtu.be/1MYBH5rW3fo">https://youtu.be/1MYBH5rW3fo</a>
October 2021	Living Independently	<a href="https://youtu.be/740uLazAjZc">https://youtu.be/740uLazAjZc</a>
October 2021	What does Black History Month Mean to you?	<a href="https://youtu.be/wgYa5ruaq4g">https://youtu.be/wgYa5ruaq4g</a>
November 2021	Stress Awareness Day	<a href="https://youtu.be/khesqTQHcSU">https://youtu.be/khesqTQHcSU</a>
November 2021	Growing Veg at home	<a href="https://youtu.be/iMeI-yf-DyM">https://youtu.be/iMeI-yf-DyM</a>
November 2021	International Men's Day	<a href="https://youtu.be/NLyglKotpE4">https://youtu.be/NLyglKotpE4</a>
November 2021	Student Diaries – Moving In (Rebecca – WOW student)	<a href="https://youtu.be/FdfNhHVcpy8">https://youtu.be/FdfNhHVcpy8</a>
November 2021	WOW 2021 Promo Video	<a href="https://youtu.be/tADbTqeZ49k">https://youtu.be/tADbTqeZ49k</a>
December 2021	Being Disabled in Lincoln	<a href="https://youtu.be/unYDoljVOUc">https://youtu.be/unYDoljVOUc</a>
<b>Digital Project Resources: Articles</b>		
October 2019	The History of World Mental Health Day	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2019/10/10/the-history-of-world-mental-health-day/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2019/10/10/the-history-of-world-mental-health-day/</a>
November 2019	The correlation between exercise and good mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2019/11/21/the-correlation-between-exercise-and-good-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2019/11/21/the-correlation-between-exercise-and-good-mental-health/</a>
February 2020	MBSP and University Life	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/02/08/how-can-mindfulness-based-strengths-practice-mbsp-help-me-prepare-for-and-cope-with-university-life/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/02/08/how-can-mindfulness-based-strengths-practice-mbsp-help-me-prepare-for-and-cope-with-university-life/</a>
March 2020	The Social Side of University	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/04/the-social-side-of-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/04/the-social-side-of-university/</a>
March 2020	When in a mental health crisis	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/06/when-in-mental-health-crisis/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/06/when-in-mental-health-crisis/</a>
March 2020	5 Tips for Starting University	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/23/5-tips-for-starting-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/23/5-tips-for-starting-university/</a>
March 2020	Managing Anxiety	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/27/managing-anxiety/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/03/27/managing-anxiety/</a>
April 2020	Mastering Time Management	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/04/27/mastering-time-management/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/04/27/mastering-time-management/</a>
April 2020	How gardening can improve your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/04/27/how-gardening-can-improve-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/04/27/how-gardening-can-improve-your-mental-health/</a>
May 2020	Talking about mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/05/16/talking-about-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/05/16/talking-about-mental-health/</a>
May 2020	Mental Health week – seeking support and reaching out	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/05/18/mental-health-week-seeking-support-and-reaching-out/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/05/18/mental-health-week-seeking-support-and-reaching-out/</a>
May 2020	Healthy Self Esteem	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/05/29/healthy-self-esteem/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/05/29/healthy-self-esteem/</a>
June 2020	Fika app review	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/06/19/fika-app-review/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/06/19/fika-app-review/</a>
June 2020	The importance of emotional fitness	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/06/29/the-importance-of-emotional-fitness/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/06/29/the-importance-of-emotional-fitness/</a>
July 2020	Things I wish my parents had told me before I started uni	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/07/09/things-i-wish-my-parents-had-told-me-before-i-started-uni/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/07/09/things-i-wish-my-parents-had-told-me-before-i-started-uni/</a>

July 2020	Best of - Advice I'd give my first-year self	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/07/30/best-of-advice-id-give-my-first-year-self/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/07/30/best-of-advice-id-give-my-first-year-self/</a>
August 2020	Positive state of mind	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/08/03/positive-state-of-mind/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/08/03/positive-state-of-mind/</a>
August 2020	Best of - Talking about mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/08/27/best-of-talking-about-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/08/27/best-of-talking-about-mental-health/</a>
September 2020	Why I try to use the Student Life app every day	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/09/22/why-i-try-to-use-the-student-life-app-everyday/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/09/22/why-i-try-to-use-the-student-life-app-everyday/</a>
September 2020	Best of – Self Care Tips	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/09/27/best-of-self-care-tips/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/09/27/best-of-self-care-tips/</a>
October 2020	Best of – Stress Busters	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/10/22/best-of-stress-busters/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/10/22/best-of-stress-busters/</a>
November 2020	Coping with Change the new normal	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/11/03/coping-with-change-the-new-normal/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/11/03/coping-with-change-the-new-normal/</a>
November 2020	Using your intuition	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/11/06/using-your-intuition/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/11/06/using-your-intuition/</a>
December 2020	Solution Focused Based Therapy Approach	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/12/08/solution-focused-based-therapy-approach/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2020/12/08/solution-focused-based-therapy-approach/</a>
January 2021	Stress Bucket – Managing your stress	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/01/21/the-stress-bucket-managing-your-stress/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/01/21/the-stress-bucket-managing-your-stress/</a>
February 2021	Life Satisfaction	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/02/08/life-satisfaction/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/02/08/life-satisfaction/</a>
February 2021	Managing your Money	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/02/11/managing-your-money/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/02/11/managing-your-money/</a>
March 2021	Looking After your Mental Health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/06/looking-after-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/06/looking-after-your-mental-health/</a>
March 2021	Mental Health on International Women's Day	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/08/mental-health-on-international-womens-day/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/08/mental-health-on-international-womens-day/</a>
March 2021	Supporting anyone who might be struggling on Mother's Day	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/11/supporting-anyone-who-might-be-struggling-on-mothers-day/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/11/supporting-anyone-who-might-be-struggling-on-mothers-day/</a>
March 2021	Best of: Finance	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/16/best-of-finance/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/16/best-of-finance/</a>
March 2021	Managing Social Anxiety in the current climate	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/18/managing-social-anxiety-in-the-current-climate/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/18/managing-social-anxiety-in-the-current-climate/</a>
March 2021	International Day of Happiness, how to turn it around when you are feeling down	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/20/international-day-of-happiness-how-to-turn-it-around-when-you-are-feeling-down/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/20/international-day-of-happiness-how-to-turn-it-around-when-you-are-feeling-down/</a>
March 2021	Building Confidence at Uni	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/23/building-confidence-at-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/23/building-confidence-at-university/</a>
March 2021	Coping with a mental health diagnosis at Uni	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/31/coping-with-a-mental-health-diagnosis-at-uni/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/03/31/coping-with-a-mental-health-diagnosis-at-uni/</a>
April 2021	Creating a positive virtual ecosystem	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/05/creating-a-positive-virtual-ecosystem/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/05/creating-a-positive-virtual-ecosystem/</a>
April 2021	Money lessons I have learnt as a care leaver	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/06/money-lessons-i-have-learnt-as-a-care-leaver/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/06/money-lessons-i-have-learnt-as-a-care-leaver/</a>
April 2021	Six ideas for keeping in touch (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/08/6-ideas-for-keeping-in-touch/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/08/6-ideas-for-keeping-in-touch/</a>
April 2021	Victim Blaming what did you do to provoke him	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/16/victim-blaming-what-did-you-do-to-provoke-him/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/16/victim-blaming-what-did-you-do-to-provoke-him/</a>
April 2021	Dealing with grief at university	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/19/dealing-with-grief-at-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/19/dealing-with-grief-at-university/</a>
April 2021	Planning for the future	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/20/planning-for-the-future/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/20/planning-for-the-future/</a>
April 2021	A week's meal plan for when you have limited time to cook	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/22/a-weeks-meal-plan-for-when-you-have-limited-time-to-cook/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/22/a-weeks-meal-plan-for-when-you-have-limited-time-to-cook/</a>

April 2021	Unusual ways to reduce stress	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/26/unusual-ways-to-reduce-stress/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/26/unusual-ways-to-reduce-stress/</a>
April 2021	How a good night's sleep could benefit you	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/27/how-a-good-nights-sleep-could-benefit-you/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/04/27/how-a-good-nights-sleep-could-benefit-you/</a>
May 2021	Starting university as an autistic student (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/03/starting-university-as-an-autistic-student/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/03/starting-university-as-an-autistic-student/</a>
May 2021	Hobbies and their benefits to mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/06/hobbies-and-their-benefits-to-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/06/hobbies-and-their-benefits-to-mental-health/</a>
May 2021	When it's time to get help with your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/12/when-it-is-time-to-get-help-with-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/12/when-it-is-time-to-get-help-with-your-mental-health/</a>
May 2021	Overcoming the challenges of being an autistic student (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/13/overcoming-the-challenges-of-being-an-autistic-student/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/13/overcoming-the-challenges-of-being-an-autistic-student/</a>
May 2021	Meal ideas for when you're short on time	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/20/meal-ideas-for-when-youre-short-on-time/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/20/meal-ideas-for-when-youre-short-on-time/</a>
May 2021	A students view on post lockdown worries	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/24/a-students-view-on-post-lockdown-worries/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/24/a-students-view-on-post-lockdown-worries/</a>
May 2021	Dealing with mental health issues (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/31/dealing-with-mental-health-issues/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/05/31/dealing-with-mental-health-issues/</a>
June 2021	Autism and Masking	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/02/autism-and-masking/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/02/autism-and-masking/</a>
June 2021	Tips to help your friends and support each other	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/08/tips-to-help-your-friends-and-support-each-other/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/08/tips-to-help-your-friends-and-support-each-other/</a>
June 2021	Past the stereotypes of autism	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/23/past-the-stereotypes-of-autism/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/23/past-the-stereotypes-of-autism/</a>
June 2021	Benefits of swimming on your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/24/benefits-of-swimming-on-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/24/benefits-of-swimming-on-your-mental-health/</a>
June 2021	Support available for disabled students	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/28/support-available-for-disabled-students/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/28/support-available-for-disabled-students/</a>
June 2021	Benefits of yoga on your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/30/benefits-of-yoga-on-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/06/30/benefits-of-yoga-on-your-mental-health/</a>
July 2021	Keeping safe with food storage (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/02/keeping-safe-with-food-storage/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/02/keeping-safe-with-food-storage/</a>
July 2021	Chronic illness life hacks for mental and physical health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/05/chronic-illness-life-hacks-for-mental-and-physical-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/05/chronic-illness-life-hacks-for-mental-and-physical-health/</a>
July 2021	Freezing food and using leftovers (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/07/freezing-food-and-using-leftovers/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/07/freezing-food-and-using-leftovers/</a>
July 2021	Benefits of getting outdoors on your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/09/benefits-of-getting-outdoors-on-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/09/benefits-of-getting-outdoors-on-your-mental-health/</a>
July 2021	Volunteering and its benefits to mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/14/volunteering-benefits-to-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/14/volunteering-benefits-to-mental-health/</a>
July 2021	Balancing your studies as a new student (BGU student content creator)	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/16/balancing-your-studies-as-a-new-student/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/16/balancing-your-studies-as-a-new-student/</a>
July 2021	Avoiding getting overwhelmed by climate change	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/19/avoiding-getting-overwhelmed-by-climate-change/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/19/avoiding-getting-overwhelmed-by-climate-change/</a>
July 2021	Stepping back from social media to protect your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/21/stepping-back-from-social-media-to-protect-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/07/21/stepping-back-from-social-media-to-protect-your-mental-health/</a>
August 2021	Benefits from healthy eating on your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/08/03/benefits-of-eating-healthy-on-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/08/03/benefits-of-eating-healthy-on-your-mental-health/</a>
August 2021	How to grow your own herbs	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/08/17/how-to-grow-your-own-herbs/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/08/17/how-to-grow-your-own-herbs/</a>

August 2021	5 tips to help you season your food like a pro	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/08/20/5-tips-to-help-you-season-your-food-like-a-pro/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/08/20/5-tips-to-help-you-season-your-food-like-a-pro/</a>
September 2021	Self-compassion and nature	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/01/self-compassion-and-nature/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/01/self-compassion-and-nature/</a>
September 2021	Timeline of moving to uni	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/08/timeline-of-moving-to-uni/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/08/timeline-of-moving-to-uni/</a>
September 2021	Best of: How to find your community in Lincoln	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/09/best-of-how-to-find-your-community-in-lincoln/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/09/best-of-how-to-find-your-community-in-lincoln/</a>
September 2021	How to meet other students before starting	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/20/how-to-meet-other-students-before-starting/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/20/how-to-meet-other-students-before-starting/</a>
September 2021	Tips for saving at the supermarket	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/23/tips-for-saving-at-the-supermarket/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/23/tips-for-saving-at-the-supermarket/</a>
September 2021	Settling into Lincoln	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/29/settling-into-lincoln/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/09/29/settling-into-lincoln/</a>
October 2021	Top tips for being independent	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/07/top-tips-for-being-independent/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/07/top-tips-for-being-independent/</a>
October 2021	5 Ways to reduce food waste	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/14/5-ways-to-reduce-food-waste/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/14/5-ways-to-reduce-food-waste/</a>
October 2021	Isolating in a small room	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/15/isolating-in-a-small-room/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/15/isolating-in-a-small-room/</a>
October 2021	How to keep your student accommodation clean during Covid tips and tricks	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/27/how-to-keep-your-student-accommodation-clean-during-covid-tips-and-tricks/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/27/how-to-keep-your-student-accommodation-clean-during-covid-tips-and-tricks/</a>
October 2021	Being a bookworm with dyslexia	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/29/being-a-bookworm-with-dyslexia/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/10/29/being-a-bookworm-with-dyslexia/</a>
November 2021	Ways to deal with stress whilst balancing lots of things	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/03/ways-to-deal-with-stress-whilst-balancing-lots-of-things/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/03/ways-to-deal-with-stress-whilst-balancing-lots-of-things/</a>
November 2021	Friends are for all seasons	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/12/friends-are-for-all-seasons/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/12/friends-are-for-all-seasons/</a>
November 2021	Answering your questions – student life agony aunt	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/21/answering-your-questions-student-life-agony-aunt/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/21/answering-your-questions-student-life-agony-aunt/</a>
November 2021	The nights are getting darker again	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/23/the-nights-are-getting-darker-again/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/23/the-nights-are-getting-darker-again/</a>
November 2021	Homesickness	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/24/homesickness/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/11/24/homesickness/</a>
December 2021	Not all disabilities and health conditions are visible	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/03/not-all-disabilities-and-health-conditions-are-visible/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/03/not-all-disabilities-and-health-conditions-are-visible/</a>
December 2021	Positive benefits of eating healthily on mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/05/positive-benefits-of-eating-healthily-on-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/05/positive-benefits-of-eating-healthily-on-mental-health/</a>
December 2021	Spending Christmas away from home	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/15/spending-christmas-away-from-home/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/15/spending-christmas-away-from-home/</a>
December 2021	Christmas gift ideas focused on mindfulness and wellbeing	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/16/christmas-gift-ideas-focused-on-mindfulness-and-wellbeing/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/16/christmas-gift-ideas-focused-on-mindfulness-and-wellbeing/</a>
December 2021	Your mental health over the festive period	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/16/your-mental-health-over-the-festive-period/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/16/your-mental-health-over-the-festive-period/</a>
December 2021	How spending time with people can improve your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/17/how-spending-time-with-people-can-improve-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/17/how-spending-time-with-people-can-improve-your-mental-health/</a>
December 2021	How journaling can help your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/17/how-journaling-can-help-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/17/how-journaling-can-help-your-mental-health/</a>
December 2021	How baking can improve your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/18/how-baking-can-improve-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/18/how-baking-can-improve-your-mental-health/</a>
December 2021	Short Story Day!	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/21/short-story-day/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/21/short-story-day/</a>
December 2021	Writing down your thoughts	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/21/writing-down-your-thoughts/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2021/12/21/writing-down-your-thoughts/</a>

January 2022	How to deal with the expected change at new years	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/15/how-to-deal-with-the-expected-change-at-new-years/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/15/how-to-deal-with-the-expected-change-at-new-years/</a>
January 2022	Homesickness	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/17/homesickness-2/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/17/homesickness-2/</a>
January 2022	Blue Monday	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/18/blue-monday/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/18/blue-monday/</a>
January 2022	Therapeutic creativity scrapbooking	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/22/therapeutic-creativity-scrapbooking/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/22/therapeutic-creativity-scrapbooking/</a>
January 2022	Why music is great for your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/27/why-music-is-great-for-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/27/why-music-is-great-for-your-mental-health/</a>
January 2022	Using art to improve our mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/28/using-art-to-improve-our-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/28/using-art-to-improve-our-mental-health/</a>
January 2022	Diet culture in the new year	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/30/diet-culture-in-the-new-year/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/01/30/diet-culture-in-the-new-year/</a>
February 2022	How to stay organised at university	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/02/how-to-stay-organised-at-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/02/how-to-stay-organised-at-university/</a>
February 2022	Body pressure at university	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/03/body-pressure-at-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/03/body-pressure-at-university/</a>
February 2022	Managing your mental health during deadline season	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/07/managing-your-mental-health-during-deadline-season/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/07/managing-your-mental-health-during-deadline-season/</a>
February 2022	Suitable study spaces on campus in busy hours	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/08/suitable-study-spaces-on-campus-in-busy-hours/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/08/suitable-study-spaces-on-campus-in-busy-hours/</a>
February 2022	Stress around campus and solutions	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/10/stress-around-campus-solutions/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/10/stress-around-campus-solutions/</a>
February 2022	Role of Valentines Day in modern stressed life	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/14/role-of-valentines-day-in-modern-stressed-life/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/14/role-of-valentines-day-in-modern-stressed-life/</a>
February 2022	Promoting Healthy Relationships	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/16/promoting-healthy-relationships/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/16/promoting-healthy-relationships/</a>
February 2022	Small things you can do to make someone's day	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/17/small-things-you-can-do-to-make-someones-day/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/17/small-things-you-can-do-to-make-someones-day/</a>
February 2022	Have pride in your mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/19/have-pride-in-your-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/19/have-pride-in-your-mental-health/</a>
February 2022	Toxic Friends at University	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/24/toxic-friends-at-university/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/24/toxic-friends-at-university/</a>
February 2022	National Eating Disorders Awareness Week	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/28/national-eating-disorders-awareness-week/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/02/28/national-eating-disorders-awareness-week/</a>
March 2022	Top 10 Medical Student Survival Tips	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/09/top-10-medical-student-survival-tips/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/09/top-10-medical-student-survival-tips/</a>
March 2022	Role of Fitness in Mental Health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/12/role-of-fitness-in-mental-health/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/12/role-of-fitness-in-mental-health/</a>
March 2022	Top 5 tips for budgeting your student loan	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/14/top-5-tips-for-budgeting-your-student-loan/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/14/top-5-tips-for-budgeting-your-student-loan/</a>
March 2022	Talking about mental health	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/15/talking-about-mental-health-2/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/15/talking-about-mental-health-2/</a>
March 2022	How to make a productive to-do list	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/15/how-to-make-a-productive-to-do-list/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/15/how-to-make-a-productive-to-do-list/</a>
March 2022	Showing friends you love them and appreciate them	<a href="https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/20/showing-friends-you-love-them-and-appreciate-them/">https://studentlife.lincoln.ac.uk/2022/03/20/showing-friends-you-love-them-and-appreciate-them/</a>
<b>Digital Project Resources: Fresher Take Podcast</b>		
2020 - 2022	Fresher Take podcast site (all episodes)	<a href="http://freshertake.buzzsprout.com/">http://freshertake.buzzsprout.com/</a>
February 2020	Fresher Take: Trailer	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXObygNdnpE">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WXObygNdnpE</a>
June 2020	Extra Take: MBSP	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8J3a4_wuUJY">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8J3a4_wuUJY</a>
June 2020	Extra Take Clip: meditation	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHzv2wfXtBQ">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mHzv2wfXtBQ</a>

June 2020	Fresher Take: Behind the Scenes	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iAQskdfBMA">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5iAQskdfBMA</a>
July 2020	Fresher Take: Coming to Uni – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/3HKoL5K_EeY">https://youtu.be/3HKoL5K_EeY</a>
December 2020	Fresher Take: Staying Positive – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/XqdIJZdcckQ">https://youtu.be/XqdIJZdcckQ</a>
January 2021	Fresher Take: We Tested Positive for Covid-19	<a href="https://youtu.be/API1DbmUP1k">https://youtu.be/API1DbmUP1k</a>
February 2021	Fresher Take: Building a Budget	<a href="https://youtu.be/gHO_ultqSFk">https://youtu.be/gHO_ultqSFk</a>
February 2021	Fresher Take: Building a Budget – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/o81XLe1gvwY">https://youtu.be/o81XLe1gvwY</a>
March 2021	Fresher Take: Finding your confidence	<a href="https://youtu.be/Ao8lrN2HezQ">https://youtu.be/Ao8lrN2HezQ</a>
March 2021	Fresher Take: Finding your confidence – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/tG1LYIRklwI">https://youtu.be/tG1LYIRklwI</a>
April 2021	Fresher Take: Planning for the future – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/HFMoxIYJfqw">https://youtu.be/HFMoxIYJfqw</a>
April 2021	Fresher Take: Stress Management – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/64SvNnqFRYI">https://youtu.be/64SvNnqFRYI</a>
June 2021	Fresher Take: We've been vaccinated against Covid-19 – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/9bpMC2d-8VY">https://youtu.be/9bpMC2d-8VY</a>
July 2021	Fresher Take: Review of the Year – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/mwkYzVvmaKo">https://youtu.be/mwkYzVvmaKo</a>
October 2021	Fresher Take: New Host Handover – Full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/5fX72CAYGN0">https://youtu.be/5fX72CAYGN0</a>
October 2021	Fresher Take: Coming to Uni in a Covid-19 Environment – full episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/iDg9UvPFDQ">https://youtu.be/iDg9UvPFDQ</a>
December 2021	Fresher Take: The festive Season – Full Episode	<a href="https://youtu.be/bIFKrps-ZQ0">https://youtu.be/bIFKrps-ZQ0</a>

### Wellbeing Project Resources

March 2020	Parents and Guardians Guide	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/a-guide-for-parents-guardians.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/a-guide-for-parents-guardians.html</a>
March 2020	Teachers Guide	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/a-guide-for-teachers.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/a-guide-for-teachers.html</a>
May 2020	Managing Change Presentation and Voice Over	<a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohjyTlw_76c&amp;feature=youtu.be">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ohjyTlw_76c&amp;feature=youtu.be</a>
May 2020	Managing Change Presentation only	<a href="https://prezi.com/view/CJXiocBZOVbH0bUWcctb/">https://prezi.com/view/CJXiocBZOVbH0bUWcctb/</a>
March 2022	Managing Change Online Workbook	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/managing-change.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/managing-change.html</a>
May 2020	Wellbeing Bingo Workshop Resource	<a href="https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2021/09/Resource-Wellbeing-Bingo.pdf">https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2021/09/Resource-Wellbeing-Bingo.pdf</a>
May 2020	How Many Positives Workshop Resource	<a href="https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2021/09/Resource-How-Many-Positives.pdf">https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2021/09/Resource-How-Many-Positives.pdf</a>
June 2020	Emotional Fitness Presentation and Voice Over	<a href="https://youtu.be/tQ2kYeDcygg">https://youtu.be/tQ2kYeDcygg</a>
June 2020	Emotional Fitness Presentation only	<a href="https://prezi.com/view/qX9myn2q0a3SqzEevzKB/">https://prezi.com/view/qX9myn2q0a3SqzEevzKB/</a>
June 2020	Emotional Fitness Online Workbook	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/uolswc-emotional-fitness-digital-magazine.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/uolswc-emotional-fitness-digital-magazine.html</a>

June 2020	Emotional Fitness Workshop Resources	<a href="https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2020/11/EF-Workshop-Resources.pdf">https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2020/11/EF-Workshop-Resources.pdf</a>
June 2020	Next Steps Presentation and Voice Over	<a href="https://youtu.be/ot4GI0b0sYU">https://youtu.be/ot4GI0b0sYU</a>
June 2020	Next Steps Presentation only	<a href="https://prezi.com/view/E8dVHlfavH3cxOUSZOvh/">https://prezi.com/view/E8dVHlfavH3cxOUSZOvh/</a>
July 2020	Next Steps Online Workbook	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/next-steps.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/next-steps.html</a>
July 2020	Next Steps Workshop Resources	<a href="https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2020/11/NS-Workshop-Resources.pdf">https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2020/11/NS-Workshop-Resources.pdf</a>
August 2020	Getting Ahead Presentation and Voice Over	<a href="https://youtu.be/myw9gRyTBII">https://youtu.be/myw9gRyTBII</a>
August 2020	Getting Ahead Presentation only	<a href="https://prezi.com/view/EpgNlvYNxGBV8cbQhgUB/">https://prezi.com/view/EpgNlvYNxGBV8cbQhgUB/</a>
August 2020	Getting Ahead Online Workbook	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/getting-ahead.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/getting-ahead.html</a>
August 2020	Getting Ahead Workshop Resources	<a href="https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2020/11/Getting-Ahead-Resources.pdf">https://cpb-eu-w2.wpmucdn.com/blogs.lincoln.ac.uk/dist/4/8317/files/2020/11/Getting-Ahead-Resources.pdf</a>
August 2020	University Information Guide, for school and college support staff	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/guide-for-school-college-support-staff.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/guide-for-school-college-support-staff.html</a>
September 2020	You're at University, now what? An introductory talk to university life.	<a href="https://youtu.be/zXNAIyeQafk">https://youtu.be/zXNAIyeQafk</a>
September 2020	Fresh Start Wellbeing World	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/wellbeing-world-september-2020-a-fresh-start.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/wellbeing-world-september-2020-a-fresh-start.html</a>
October 2020	Fresh Start Presentation and Voice Over	<a href="https://youtu.be/p-hg5wBVGd4">https://youtu.be/p-hg5wBVGd4</a>
October 2020	Fresh Start Workbook	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/fresh-start-guide.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/fresh-start-guide.html</a>
January 2020	WOW Summer School 2020 booklet	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/wow-2020-virtual-guide.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/wow-2020-virtual-guide.html</a>
August 2020	WOW Parents Video 2020	<a href="https://youtu.be/7TUQD5Apa6o">https://youtu.be/7TUQD5Apa6o</a>
January 2021	WOW Summer School 2021 booklet	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/wow-summer-school-2021-guide.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/wow-summer-school-2021-guide.html</a>
June 2021	WOW Parents Video 2021	<a href="https://youtu.be/q6VD3_JgVwA">https://youtu.be/q6VD3_JgVwA</a>
October 2021	WOW Summer School 2022 booklet	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/wow-booklet-2022.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/UOLSWC/wow-booklet-2022.html</a>
November 2021	WOW Summer School 2022 virtual resources	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/virtual-wow-2022-resources.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/virtual-wow-2022-resources.html</a>
December 2021	How to run a successful summer school – virtual resource	<a href="https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/university-of-lincoln-how-to-run-a-successful-summer-school.html">https://www.flipsnack.com/uolswc/university-of-lincoln-how-to-run-a-successful-summer-school.html</a>

## 12.2 Transitional Outreach Session Student Feedback Form

# Transitional Wellbeing Team

Supporting Students Mental Health and Wellbeing



Student  
Wellbeing  
Centre

## Feedback Form

Thank you for allowing the Student Wellbeing Team to visit your School and deliver a session based around transitioning from Further into Higher Education and factors to consider that may impact on students overall mental health and wellbeing.

We would be grateful for any feedback that could be offered to us about the session, so that we can continually work towards making this relevant and accessible for all students and incorporating elements of the PSHE programme of the curriculum.

<b>Name of School/College:</b>																				
<b>School Contact Name:</b>																				
<b>Was the content of the session relevant and useful (please circle on the scale as appropriate)</b>  <table border="0"><tr><td><b>1</b></td><td><b>2</b></td><td><b>3</b></td><td><b>4</b></td><td><b>5</b></td><td><b>6</b></td><td><b>7</b></td><td><b>8</b></td><td><b>9</b></td><td><b>10</b></td></tr><tr><td>(not useful)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(very useful)</td></tr></table>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	(not useful)									(very useful)
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>											
(not useful)									(very useful)											
<b>Would you use any of the strategies or considerations discussed?</b>																				
<b>Did anything surprise you?</b>																				
<b>Was the delivery and language used by the presenters, helpful and appropriate? (please circle on the scale as appropriate)</b>  <table border="0"><tr><td><b>1</b></td><td><b>2</b></td><td><b>3</b></td><td><b>4</b></td><td><b>5</b></td><td><b>6</b></td><td><b>7</b></td><td><b>8</b></td><td><b>9</b></td><td><b>10</b></td></tr><tr><td>(not helpful)</td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td>(very helpful)</td></tr></table>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	(not helpful)									(very helpful)
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>											
(not helpful)									(very helpful)											
<b>Lastly, is there anything you would like to have heard more about, that wasn't covered in the session?</b>																				

Thank you for your time, we appreciate your responses so that we can continually improve and evolve the workshops we deliver.

Please return completed forms to: [transitionalteam@lincoln.ac.uk](mailto:transitionalteam@lincoln.ac.uk) or call 01522 886400 for more information

### 12.3 Transitional Outreach Session Staff Feedback Google form

#### *Transitional Team Post-Session Feedback Form*

*Thank you for having the Transitional Wellbeing team deliver a session to your pupils, on the transition from Further Education into the next stage of their lives.*

*We would be grateful for any feedback about the session, so that we can continually work towards making this relevant and accessible for all students, incorporating elements of the PSHE programme of the curriculum.*

1.Name of School/College/Sixth Form

2.School Contact Name

3.Was the content relevant and useful?

4.Would you use any of the strategies or considerations discussed with pupils?

5.Did anything surprise you?

6.Was the delivery and language used by presenters, helpful and appropriate?

7. Lastly, is there anything you would have liked to have heard more about, that wasn't covered in the session?

*Thank you for your time, we appreciate your responses, so that we can improve and evolve the sessions we deliver and work that we do.*

## 12.4 Fresh Start Feedback Google Form

1. How beneficial did you find the workshop? *(1 not beneficial, 10 very beneficial).*

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

2. Did you find the information useful, or helpful? *(1 not useful/not helpful, 10 very useful, very helpful).*

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

3. Did you feel the workshop has gone into enough depth to answer your questions? *(1 not enough depth, 10 enough depth).*

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

4. What other workshops would you like to see running?

5. Would you be interested in any resources on the following subjects? (Check all that apply).

- Resilience
- Managing Healthy Relationships
- Confidence
- Anxiety
- Organisation
- Being Independent
- Emotional Fitness

6. Please let us know your suggestions on how we can improve the workshop or if there is any other information you would like including?

## 12.5 WOW (2020) Feedback Form



UNIVERSITY OF  
LINCOLN

Thank you for attending the WOW Summer School.

We hope that you have enjoyed your time here and it has given you the opportunity to learn more about the University and therefore feel less anxious about starting your studies.

We would be grateful, if you could please answer the following brief questions, so that we have a greater knowledge of how the Summer School has been for you and any areas you feel could be improved upon.

Name (optional).....

Course (due to attend).....

Disability or condition.....

After attending WOW, how anxious would you say you feel now about starting University?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

(not anxious)

(anxious)

Have you enjoyed WOW?

What has been the most helpful session for you?

What other sessions might have been helpful?

After attending WOW, how confident do you feel with your ability to manage change?

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

*(least confident)*

*(very confident)*

Would you recommend WOW to other students?

What (if anything) could the Transitional Wellbeing team have done differently to support you?

Did you try the FIKA app? And if so, how did you find it?

If so, would you now continue to use this throughout your studies?

Any other feedback or comments that you wish to share?

## 12.6 Lincoln Medical School Student Focus Group Questions

Lincoln Medical School Focus Groups – October 2021

Aims:

- To understand students use of the 'Student Life' app
- To understand any limitations or avoidance of usage
- To understand how content has helped transition
- To understand how /what can be provided via the app to support students

The focus group will be audio recorded, to allow for the comments to be transcribed after the session. Participants will be provided with a £20 Amazon voucher for their time and contribution.

Were you already aware of the Student Life app?

- *How did you find out about it?*
- *Do you understand its purpose?*
- *Did you use it before starting University?*
- *How often do you use it?*
- *If you no longer use it, when did you stop?*

How did you feel when you started university?

- *Would the tools and resources have helped to make transition easier?*
- *If you already had the app, did the tools and resources help?*
- *Which tools and resources would you like to see more of?*
- *What other support might have helped?*

Were you already aware of the tools, resources and support sessions available to students?

- *Which resources were you aware of?*
- *Where did you hear about them or see them?*
- *How could we better promote the resources?*

Which elements of the app have you used and which did you find most useful?

- *Why were they useful and how did they help?*
- *Are you aware of how elements of the app can be of use to you?*

Which other tools and resources have you accessed and which did you find most useful?

- *Why were other tools and resources useful?*
- *Why were these different to Student Life app content and resources?*
- *Which would you recommend to a friend?*

What format and style of content do you find the most appealing?

- *e.g., app content, animated video, high-production video series, student-created videos, articles, podcasts*
- *Why does this format appeal to you?*

How are you most likely to find and access content and resources?

- *i.e., through the app, through university webpages, through social media channels – if so, which channels?*

Would it be useful for you to access tools and resources prior to starting university?

- *At what point would resources be most useful?*
- *How would you like to be made aware of pre-entry resources? (i.e., through school or college, through open days, offer holder days etc).*
- *At what time would it be most useful for students to access resources?*

Would you recommend the app to a friend?

Any other comments?

## 12.7 Lincoln Medical School Student Follow Up Google Form Survey

Lincoln Medical School student, 'Student Life' App survey November 2021

A short survey to understand student use of the 'Student Life' App, to help shape future content and design.

Which year of study are you in?

- Foundation
- Year 1
- Year 2
- Year 3
- Other

Have you been using the Student Life app?

- Yes
- No
- Have used, but no longer
- Not used, but would consider

If not, why not?

- Time
- Difficult to navigate
- Content not relevant
- Don't like app style
- Wasn't aware of it
- Other

If you are no longer using the App, when did you stop?

- Last week
- Last month
- Unsure
- Didn't really use

Has the App helped with your transition into university? (or back into university for returning students).

- Yes
- No
- Unsure

If yes to the previous question, how did it help?

Have any of the resources or content helped you manage your own wellbeing and mental health?

- Yes
- No
- Unsure
- Other

If yes, what resources or content helped and how?

Do you feel the content posted on the App has been relevant to your circumstances?

- Yes
- No
- Other

If no, then why?

Which elements of the App do you find the most useful?

- Newsfeed
- Challenges
- Healthy habits
- Explore
- Journal
- Links and information
- Other

What format and style of content is the most appealing?

- Student created videos
- Animations
- Articles
- Podcasts
- Other

What other tools, content or resources would you like to see on the App in the future?

If you are currently using the App, will you still continue?

- Yes
- No
- Maybe
- Unsure

Any other feedback or comments on the App?

Do you follow @UoLStudentLife on any other social media platforms?

- Instagram
- Facebook
- Twitter
- TikTok

- YouTube
- None
- Other

If you would like to be involved in future content creation, please provide your email address and the team will be in touch.

## 12.8 Student Content Creator Google Form Survey

*A short survey to help project staff understand the thoughts of student content creators involved in the project.*

1. Do you feel that working on the OfS Mental Health project has been of benefit to you? (i.e. - new skills, increased confidence or self-esteem, new friendships or connections).
  
2. Since working on the project, are you more aware of support and resources available to help students with their mental health and wellbeing?
  
3. Are you more aware of your own wellbeing now along with when and where to seek help and support should you need it?
  
4. What piece of content that you have created for the project are you most proud of and why?
  
5. Do you feel the project is of value to students, particularly during transition into university?
  
6. Is there anything about the project that you would have changed or done differently?
  
7. Any other comments to share, about working as a content creator for the project?
  
8. (Optional question) Current Year of Study –
  
9. (Optional question) Age –
  
10. (Optional question) Gender –
  
11. (Optional question) Nationality –