Level Up Mentoring at Birmingham City University
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A Transitional Tale of Staff & Student Collaboration to Influence the Institutional Change Management Process for Enhancing Engagement, Belonging, Retention & Success at Birmingham City University
Shameless idea magpies...
& freedom fighters from our self-created shackles!
Engagement in the academic sphere: engagement and belonging can be nurtured throughout the institution (academic, social and professional services), but the academic sphere is of primary importance to ensure all students benefit.
Follow your dreams Cancelled

Desire to Tackle Retention
Our Pledge:

Our pledge: redeveloping first year experience as institutional priority, integrated with service provision. 

#EFFE2014 pic.twitter.com/h4geFBWKnK
Engagement and belonging can be nurtured throughout the institution (academic, social and professional services), but the academic sphere is of primary importance to ensure all student benefit.
“The academic and social sides of university have to be carefully balanced, however the Level Up scheme if it truly wishes to reach as many students as possible must address both aspects of University life.” Jon Bridgewater, 2013
IT STARTED WITH A PLAN...

You've got 6 weeks, ... GO!
What is Level Up?

• Online pre-induction initiative
• Student led, created by students, for students
• Smooth the transition from FE to HE
• Introduce students to academic, social and professional services of University life
• Pilot in Birmingham School of Media 2012
• Starts 5 weeks before arrival at Welcome Week
• School-specific adaptation across the institution

• On its 5th iteration!
Welcome

Birmingham School of Media
Welcome to the Birmingham School of Media

Congratulations on your results and welcome to the Birmingham School of Media 2015 Level Up mentoring programme

Level Up is a student-led project designed to help you to settle into life within our School. Find us here: www.bcumedia.com/welcome/

Remember to keep a record of your MySRS login details (sent to the email address you registered with UCAS) as you will need these to complete your module options prior to your arrival in September

Join the conversation with our student mentors, and each other, on:
Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/groups/luvbcu2015/
Twitter: @BCUMediaLevelUp

Keep updated with our Students’ Union activities here: www.bcusu.com
Element 1: Social Media

- Initiative officially commences 5 weeks before induction
- Facebook/Twitter as a site for LUVMS to aid directing and conversing with new students.
- Wider engagement implications
Element 2: The Level Up Website

Welcome to Birmingham School of Media

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

At the Birmingham School of Media, we aim to fuel your passions and throughout your studies with us, you are encouraged to be creative and explore the world of media in its many shapes and forms.
As you will have seen in your Welcome Packs we are asking you to make your Year 1 Module choices online by 30th August 2015. You’ll have received information about the Modules you can choose in your packs, but above is a film that we’d like you to watch, where the Degree Leaders outline the various Modules for you. Please watch all of the videos before you make your final choices.
Element 3: Academic Xoodle Site
Academic Pre-Entry Assessment

**TASK:** In 500 words identify and outline an area of the media you are interested in researching and justify and explain why this is the case. You should also think about how you could go about investigating the area in a scholarly manner. You don’t have to actually undertake the investigation. This task is more about justifying why your area of the media is of current interest and creating a plan for how you may investigate it.

The 500 words are about outlining your interest and how you may explore it further. This is what we do all the time in scholarship. Your idea should come from your own media interests with regard to the contemporary media (that means what is going on today).
Personal Tutors Support the System

Your Personal Tutor

Upon entry to the Birmingham School of Media, you are each allocated a Personal Tutor.

Personal tutor lists will be available on the Online Learning Environment (Moodle) under the Induction Week section. Your Personal Tutor will be a member of the teaching team and will be the person who you go to for personal and professional advice for the duration of your time with the Birmingham School of Media. You can get to know a little bit about the Personal Tutors within the School by clicking on the links below. Some of your Personal Tutors feature in videos elsewhere on the Level Up website. Explore the site and see if you can find them.
Exploring Birmingham with Twitter – Welcome Week Activity

Horsey off on his travels? The BRAND NEW New Street Station @NetworkRailBHM #Horsefair #BCU

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0lzsISmQ3CE&feature=youtu.be
How did the students find Level Up (15-16)?

• How important has it been for you to be able to speak to existing students?  
  74% of students scored 7-10 out of 10.

• How helpful have the ‘LUVMs’ (Level Up Venture Mentors) been in providing general support and information?  
  85% of students rated the support between 7-10 out of 10.

• How successfully has Level Up helped you to familiarise yourself with Birmingham?  
  65% of students rated its success from 7-10 out of 10.
On the other hand....

How useful has the pre-entry written task been in helping you prepare for the course?
Continuing Engagement with Level Up Module Mentors

- Designed to enhance retention in a specific module
- Support for core theory
- Continue cross-year integration beyond Welcome Week
- Carried out through Semesters 1 and 2
- To reflect on the significance of Pre-Entry task
Upon reflection, how useful was the pre-entry task for preparing you for this particular module?
Level Up: An Integral Part of the First Year Experience

- Module Options
- Pre-Entry Task
- Personal Tutoring
- Welcome Week Activity
- Level Up Module Mentors

And...
"Level up has been so helpful in understanding the course, uploading assignments, finding friends or group work, or just meeting fellow course mates when we first started! Using Level Up felt like a step-ladder into university! I really recommend it for any student who is a bit anxious over Higher Education."
A role to enhance retention and success: 
Graduate Student Success Advisors

- Pre-induction (Level Up)
- Welcome Week
- Personal Tutoring
- Attendance Monitoring
- Applicant Visit Days/Open Days
- Core theory support – resubmission retrievals
Impact, Since 2012?

- 7% increase in retention for School of Media
- Increase also noted in English
- Shortlisted for Times Higher Education Award ‘Outstanding Contribution to Leadership Development’
- Graduate Student Success Advisers, and Level Up implementation beyond Art, Design & Media!
“I absolutely loved being part of the Level Up team, the work we have done together over the scheme has created a little family that I am extremely proud to have been part of. Level Up gave me opportunity to give back to the university. It also opened my eyes to the work that lecturers and support teams do behind the scenes that not every student sees and gave me a whole new respect.”
Shared Institutional Pride

Partners for Success
Embedded Belonging

Through Institutional Student Engagement
Over to you...

1. What resource do you have already?

2. How might you plug into this to support student transition?