



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Embedding Welcome All Year Round

Jenny Hamlin & Lucy Bentley
University of Leeds



Why are we doing this?

- Building on Covid mitigation to move welcome week online, transformed into an Institutional process
- Students want to feel connected to their School and each other, beyond the buzz of September / October
- Many students still don't feel they've found their place at Leeds after the disruptions of the past few years
- Move away from traditional Fresher's Week to extended Welcome opportunities
- Central communications and initiatives go some way to resolving this, but local initiatives have much greater impact
- Building on strong foundations and practice pre and post pandemic, as evidenced by surveys such as the International Student Barometer



Vision

Engage with a collaborative network of colleagues in academic and professional teams, working in partnership with Leeds University Union to deliver a programme of year-round welcoming activities.

These will enable all our students and postgraduate researchers to form the connections, and access information advice and guidance, so they feel settled and to develop, and sustain, a sense of belonging within the University of Leeds community, wherever they are in their University journey.

Who is it for?

All new and returning students and postgraduate researchers, those transitioning between years, and returning from placements, leave of absences.





Approach

- High quality, holistic, student centered experience co-created, designed and delivered by students peer to peer
- Collaborative partnerships – Services, students & academics
- Evidence based informed ISB, NSS, Digital Student Experience and research
- Permeable – not an initiative but blending new and existing activity into a whole cohesive welcome programme and framework that is not prescriptive
- Strategic Communications – what, when & how - curated messages
- Developed an overarching timeline of activity/provision



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Moving to year-round Welcome

- Initiatives launched over the last few years including 'Leeds & You' welcome events, enhanced international arrivals support, Buddy Scheme, Fresh Start Festival, Campus Live
- Supporting local activity to help students feel more connected to their School, their programme and their peers – 'must have', 'could have' approach
- Central repository of resources, support and communications developed and shared
- Creation of a cohesive year-round programme with a dedicated Student Welcome Team
- Development of a Welcome, Induction and Transition Network of some 350+ people





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

International Arrival Support

August – October 2022

- 4359+ students booked Airport pick-up from Manchester and Leeds Bradford airports
- 5370+ students booked a Welcome food box
- 43 students worked on delivering the services

"That was an amazing experience. I was not worried at the time to reach my flat. The student guide was helping us to get our coach and they also gave a bottle of water and snack, and it was nice welcoming experience."

"The International Welcome team was fantastic. They were my first in-person contact with the University of Leeds and they made a great impression."





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

International Orientation & Welcome Week

- 2,200+ at 30 International Orientation sessions & webinars
- Social welcome programme of Global Community, Leeds University Union, Student Welcome and Chaplaincy events
- Enhanced web information supporting international journey & online Welcome Hub information
- Extended welcome weeks to end of October for School /team Induction and Transition activities with designated space and support/resources

"I was feeling all alone and unsure of whether I'd survive here or not but the session has helped me realise it's not that hard and I can do it and find help for it through the university as well."





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Student Information Service

- 8,200 students engaged with Ambassadors and 5,000 with Advisers on campus during welcome weeks
- 4 Information Points – In person support alongside a helpline and email service (24-hour maximum response time).
- Roving Student Ambassadors on Campus
- Dedicated Student Information Service team supported by Student Education Service staff and students
- Working in collaboration with Student Welcome Team, Schools and Faculties

'Thank you for the quick response and help.... it feels lovely to have joined the University of Leeds, already making me feel at home.'

'Thanking you for the help, everything is sorted now and I am feeling now like I have arrived and belong with Leeds.'





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Events & Opportunities

- Careers Fair and Global Opportunities Fair with 3,000 attending (October)
- Student-led online orientations to prepare for Fairs with 150 students attending
- Volunteering Fair, STEM fair, Law fair and Global Opportunities fairs in October and November – expecting 200 more employers and 5,000 students to attend
- Campus Live Event running for 11 weeks (Oct – Dec) bringing campus alive with over 83 events, installations and interactive experiences
- Winter Festival and Worlds Unite Festival (December)
- Fresh Start Festival (January)
- Leeds University Union Climate Week, Fairtrade Fortnight,
- Spring Break and Summer in Leeds Programme





UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

**What does a great
year-round welcome
look like?**

Any Questions?



UNIVERSITY OF LEEDS

Jenny Hamlin
Student Welcome Manager
Student Education Service
University of Leeds

Email: J.L.Hamlin@leeds.ac.uk

Lucy Bentley
Student Welcome Project Officer
Student Education Service
University of Leeds

Email: L.G.Bentley@leeds.ac.uk