

# Shaping Pre-induction Experiences with Students - University of Hertfordshire's Getting Ready to Study at Herts MOOC

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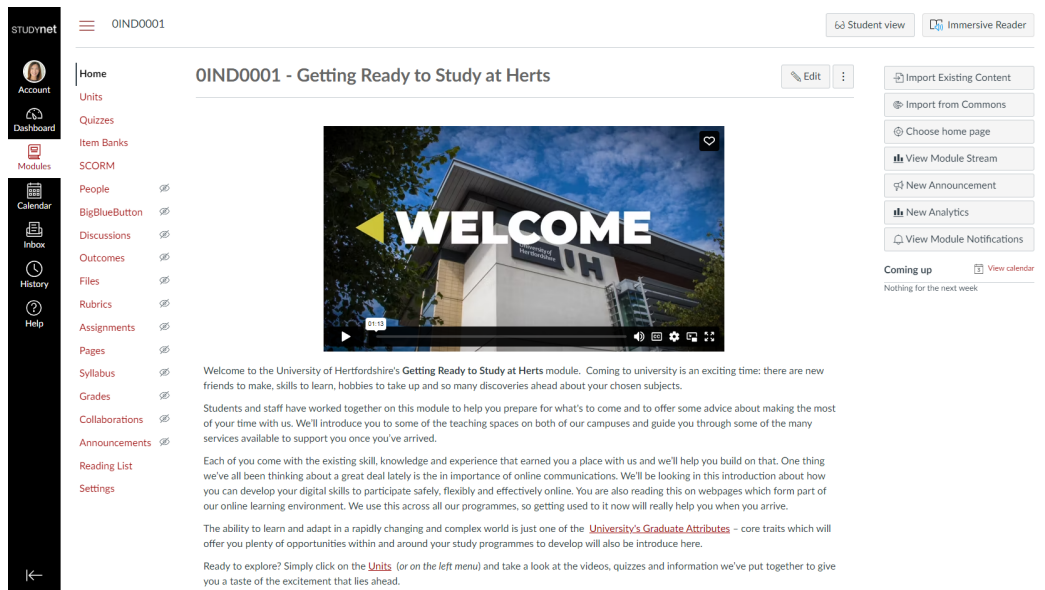
# Introduction

Student onboarding experience is a key event here at Herts.

Vital to help **strengthen students' sense of belonging and engagement with their learning** (*Woods & Homer, 2022*).

Ultimately, a successful and positive onboarding experience significantly impact **overall student retention**.

# Getting Ready to Study at Herts, (GRSH) MOOC - Overview



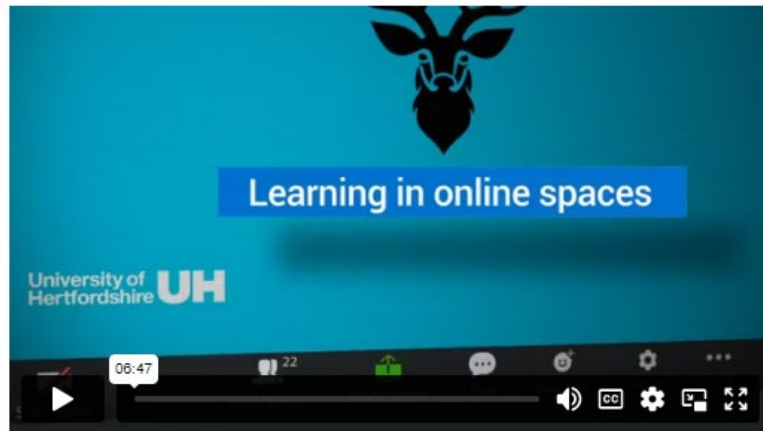
The screenshot shows the user interface of the Herts VLE. On the left is a dark sidebar menu with icons for Account, Dashboard, Modules, Calendar, Inbox, History, and Help. The main content area is titled 'OIND0001 - Getting Ready to Study at Herts'. It features a large video player with a 'WELCOME' overlay and a play button. Below the video is a welcome message: 'Welcome to the University of Hertfordshire's Getting Ready to Study at Herts module. Coming to university is an exciting time: there are new friends to make, skills to learn, hobbies to take up and so many discoveries ahead about your chosen subjects. Students and staff have worked together on this module to help you prepare for what's to come and to offer some advice about making the most of your time with us. We'll introduce you to some of the teaching spaces on both of our campuses and guide you through some of the many services available to support you once you've arrived. Each of you come with the existing skill, knowledge and experience that earned you a place with us and we'll help you build on that. One thing we've all been thinking about a great deal lately is the importance of online communications. We'll be looking in this introduction about how you can develop your digital skills to participate safely, flexibly and effectively online. You are also reading this on webpages which form part of our online learning environment. We use this across all our programmes, so getting used to it now will really help you when you arrive. The ability to learn and adapt in a rapidly changing and complex world is just one of the University's Graduate Attributes - core traits which will offer you plenty of opportunities within and around your study programmes to develop will also be introduced here. Ready to explore? Simply click on the Units (or on the left menu) and take a look at the videos, quizzes and information we've put together to give you a taste of the excitement that lies ahead.'

<https://herts.instructure.com/courses/518>

- Develop to offer tips and advice around making the most of their time at Herts.
- Introduces students to some of the teaching spaces (*both formal and informal*)
- Share the wealth of University central provision of services available to support students once they arrive.
- Upskilling their digital skills e.g. participate safely, flexibly and effectively online.
- Familiarising themselves with the VLE use on their programme of study

# GRSH MOOC - Background

- First pilot of the MOOC developed in 2018-19
- Re-developed in 2019-20
  - Students involvement
  - Challenges during the Covid-19



# GRSH Design approach and principles

- Takes a “*collaborative approach to the design and creation of learning and teaching experiences*” (Bovill, 2013).
- Student voice capture through feedback each academic year with current students.
- Equitable involvement of both staff and students in the co-creation of the resource/content that are relevant, important, and engaging for new students.



# Examples of enhancement work



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and staff have worked together on this module to help you prepare for what's to come and to offer some advice about be with us. We'll introduce you to some of the teaching spaces on both of our campuses and guide you through some available to support you once you've arrived.

## Independent study



Learning and teaching activities include sessions of different lengths with varying numbers of students and each program range from lectures with everyone who's studying the subject that year to seminars or workshops with 20-50 of your peers where just a handful of students work closely together with a tutor.

You can see some of the learning and teaching rooms in our [learning spaces page](#). Some disciplines also have specialist simulation suites. We'll use these places alongside the online environment you are exploring now and, where needed, we'll offer online and interactive sessions alongside some recorded resources to give you the best possible experience. You may find [recordings and enhance how you learn and study](#) guidance useful to help you engage better with your overall learning and revise for assessments and exams.

Exactly how these elements fit together will be explained by your teaching team, who'll explain about working and staying in teaching sessions, assessments and expectations for how you should study and prepare in between these. You'll no doubt be encouraged to **independent learning** and it's worth thinking in advance about what this means.



Independent study is learning that you do in your own time. Particularly in the first year, your tutors will specify what it is best to read/view/do as you explore new topics. As you progress through your course you'll increasingly take responsibility for your own learning. You'll build up skills of learning in your subject, you'll know how to find out your own way to understanding. Most of us are now used to Google search, but, easy as it seems, it's often not the best place to start. Your tutors will help you find relevant things for the topics you are working on – and beginning with a search engine to sift through millions of hits from the web. There's more about this on the [independent study](#) video sharing with you his take on independent study and ways you can be a successful learner on your course.

# Examples of enhancement work

- Students offer some tips
  - Things I wish I'd known before starting university
  - International Students' Perspectives**
  - Get in touch with our students



## International Students' Perspectives

When coming to Herts from another country, you may have lots on your mind and some of you may feel anxious what start of term will look like and how you will get on with your course. We want to reassure you that you will be joining a globally diverse community and you will be part of a supportive learning environment from the start.

Why not have a listen to a short conversation between Amanpreet and Vivian sharing their experiences as international students and some tips on how to make the most of your study experience here at Herts.



You can also watch the full 13 minutes conversation between Amanpreet and Vivian's [here](#) or alternatively you can press the play button below to listen to Amanpreet and Vivian chat about their experience.

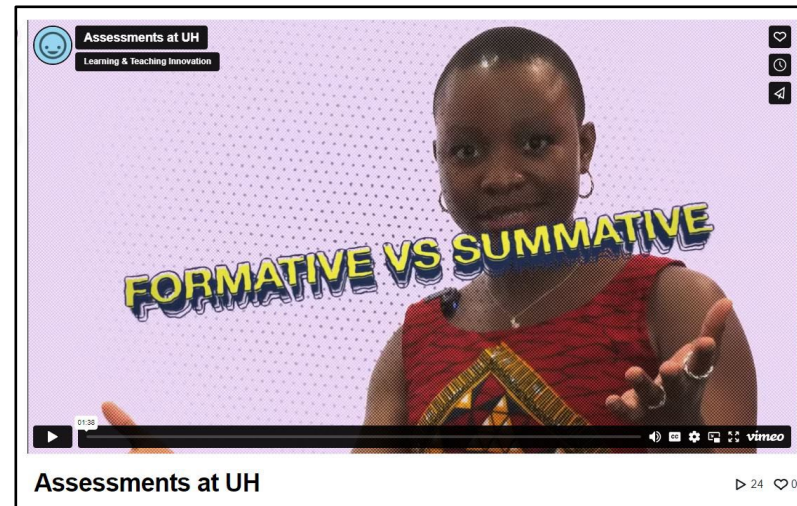


And here is Vivek sharing how he best make use of his time in between teaching sessions.

Finally, you might also like to check out this [Future Learn site](#) (external website) that will help prepare you for university study in the UK by familiarising yourself with UK culture and higher education.



# Examples of enhancement work





# Next steps

- Creating a better stepping off point from the GRSH MOOC to Programme of Study
- Further enhancement work around academic skills and international student experience
- Linking the engagement with the GRSH MOOC with the University's Go Herts Award



# References

- Bovill, C. (2013) Students and staff co-creating curricula: an example of good practice in higher education? In Dunne, E. and Owen, D. (Eds) *The Student Engagement Handbook: Practice in Higher Education*. Emerald.
- Collins R (2019) How to focus on student success. Wonkhe. Available at: <https://wonkhe.com/blogs/how-to-focus-on-student-success/>
- Woods, K., & Homer, D. (2022). The staff–student co-design of an online resource for pre-arrival arts and humanities students. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education*, 21(2), 176–197. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14740222211050572>