



‘Getting Started’ using technology to enhance student transition into university

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Using Technology to Enhance Learning
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Session Learning Outcomes

- By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:
 - Identify the benefits of transition support for students entering higher education.
 - Review the value of the early development of ‘research-mindedness’ and ‘preparation for academic practice’ through pre-induction activities.
 - Describe alternative technologies for providing pre-entry support.
 - Consider the effectiveness of early preparation for academic practices.



Workshop format

1. Initial presentation
(15 min)
2. Delegates divide into small groups to consider the issues involved in using technology to provide transition support in own discipline or institution.
(15 min)
3. Group feedback and discussion
(15 min)



Initial Presentation

- Getting Started; pre-enrolment support for student higher education experience.
- Pro-active management of transition key to student retention and success.
(Yorke & Longden, 2008)
- All students in receipt of a 'firm' offer invited to participate (July-Sept 2011).
- Generic site and five Faculty sites containing subject specific content.

Student as Producer

- Introduction to academic practice.
- Introduction to Student as Producer, 'research mindedness' and the role of research at the heart of academic practice.

(<http://studentasproducer.lincoln.ac.uk>)



Getting Started Home Page

The screenshot shows the Blackboard interface for the University of Lincoln. At the top, there is a navigation bar with the university logo and the text 'Blackboard 2011 / 2012'. Below this, a secondary navigation bar contains tabs for 'Getting Started 2011', 'The Graduate School', 'Home', 'Sites', 'Library', 'Community', and 'Content Site'. The main content area is divided into three sections:

- 'Getting Started' 2011:** This section welcomes users to the project and features a 'Getting Started' button. It explains that the site is for getting ready for higher education and provides two main areas of information. A note at the bottom indicates that links to these sites are in a module box below.
- 'Getting started' Any Questions?:** This section features a question mark icon and explains that the 'Any Questions?' discussion forum is for students who are 'experts' or have questions about university expectations. It includes a link to go straight there.
- 'Getting Started' Find the University of Lincoln here:** This section promotes the university's social media presence, showing icons for Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube, along with screenshots of the respective pages.

The bottom of the page lists various 'Getting Started' sites available to users, such as 'Beginnings with 5b', 'Biopsychology', 'PGCE Online', and 'Social Work Online Courses'.

Getting Started Main Site

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Sue Watling My Places Home Help Logout

UNIVERSITY OF LINCOLN Blackboard 2011 / 2012

Getting Started 2011 The Graduate School Home **Sites** Library Community

gettingstarted-1112 'Getting Started' Main Site

Announcements



Announcements

Welcome all new students to Getting Started

Posted on: Thursday, September 8, 2011

Hello everyone; welcome to **Getting Started**. This site is all about offering information about coming to university and preparing here like writing assignments and making notes in lectures. If you have any queries please post them to Lindsay and James in (left) who are answering from their own experiences as students here at the University. Don't forget to check out your Faculty G subject specific information for you. Any problems with links or anything you don't understand send me an email - I'm Sue Watling swatling@lincoln.ac.uk

- gettingstarted-1112 ('Getting Started' Main Site)
- Announcements
- 'Any Questions?'
- Living in Lincoln
- Getting Organised
- Academic Practices
- StudentasProducer
- The Library
- Disability Service
- Students' Union
- Evaluation



Research findings

- Over 2000 potential students accessed Bb.
- Over 650 responded to the survey so far...
- **What did students like?**
 - Getting Organised.
 - Introduction to Academic Practice.
 - The Library.
- **What did students want?**
 - Reading lists and Activities.
 - Contact with existing students and staff.
 - More help with using Blackboard.



Institutional issues

- Using technology to enhance student transition into university requires:
 - Buy-in from Senior Management.
 - Technical Systems and Helpdesk Support.
 - Departmental/Faculty leads.
 - Guidance for programme level content.
 - Clear navigation to Faculty content.
 - Staff and existing student engagement across the Summer.



Quotes

- ‘By introducing a ‘Getting Started’ package it made settling into uni here so much easier.’
- ‘It was a great ‘keeping warm’ strategy that made me feel part of the Uni before I even started.’
- ‘Helped to calm me down and think rationally about what uni was going to be about.’
- ‘I found the discussion forum with previous students the most useful as you could ask almost anything and they were able to help from past experience.’



Group Questions

- **VLE or Not?** What are the advantages and disadvantages of using an institutional online learning environment compared to Facebook or another freely available social media site?
- **Key issues?** From your own experience, identify areas students find challenging in the first Semester.
- **Solutions?** How might support be presented to students prior to enrolment; e.g. book lists, websites, self-diagnostic tests, discussion forums, contact with an existing student.
- **Any other issues?**



References

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