

Transitions, retention and progression: New transitions webinar

Webinar transcript

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Transcript

RUTH: Welcome everybody to the Webinar. I will just open the Webinar and we will be beginning shortly. We'll just wait and give everyone the opportunity to arrive. We are using Webinar software, so that means you don't have to worry about being muted or unmuted or cameras on. We use this software because it uses a lot less bandwidth which means it is more accessible to lots of people to be able to use. You can ask questions in the Q&A section, which is an icon at the bottom of your screen, if you are on a desktop, an iPad or tablet, it is at the top but it is Q&A icon and you can ask questions on there. Welcome everybody. We are extremely happy to have you at today's Webinar. We will be posting links and information in the chat bar, so you will be able to see those and follow them and we have a great line-up of speakers today. The Webinar is also being captioned, so please access those if you would like. A transcript will be provided at the end of the session as well. As well as the session recording. So, welcome everybody to this Webinar today. The numbers seem to have settled, so I will go over the housekeeping one more time and I will hand over to Ben to be able to start today's session. So, welcome to the Transition, Progress and Retention Webinar. As I said already, we don't have the chat on but you can ask questions through the Q&A your videos and microphone will be muted. I will hand over to Ben Brabon now who will open the session.

BEN: Thank you so much, Ruth for that introduction. I can see colleagues are still joining us. So, I will just work through my introduction, so that everyone is in the room when the panels start speaking. Again, thank you for joining us for this Transitions Progress and Retention Webinar. We really are very lucky to have five esteemed panellists. I will give you a brief introduction and then their presentation, their words will speak for themselves. So, we have - well, we are delighted to welcome Hillary Gyebi-Ababio the Vice President for Higher Education at the NUS. Approximate we have Michelle Morgan, Dean of Students at the University of East London and Luke Millard, Dean of Education and Learning at Abertay and we have Alison Torn Senior Teaching Fellow at Leeds Trinity University and Christine Rivers, Director of Learning and Teaching and co-director of the Centre for Management Education at the University of Surrey. Thank you, colleagues for joining us. In a moment I'm going to hand over to Hillary before we begin. I want to encourage colleagues to post any questions they have into the Q&A box. We have crowdsourced some questions beforehand and we have those already, ready to go, but if there are other questions that you have as we move through the session, please post those questions and I will try and make sure that we have the opportunity to answer as many questions as possible. Without any further ado, I'm going to hand over to Hillary to start us off, thank you so much, Hillary.

HILLARY: Thank you so much Ben, and to Advance HE for inviting me here today. I think it is so important, that as we are now in the "welcome period", many of you have moved in, doing your welcome weeks or students haven't come back and you are hurriedly preparing for students coming back to campus. I think it is important that students are coming back in a context which really has been so different to what the student experience looks like, I have been saying everywhere I go, the biggest thing that stuck in my mind since the pandemic started, I can't remember where or when but somebody said at an event I was at, that this is the biggest change in education since the Second World War. If you think further than that, we are now in an

environment where there are a generation of students living under the current education system, living under an education system that they are charged tuition fees for, living under an education system that has increasingly become more open to different groups from different backgrounds and different identities. So, we are in a really interesting place right now and a really fertile place for change in the sector. But I wanted to start off by giving some context and talking about what students have gone through, what students are arriving with and the sort of things we are reckoning with, with the students now at university, navigating this environment. So, let's start from just before the pandemic. I remember, before the pandemic started, it was already quite a weird environment. Students were talking about so much that was going on in their campus and were being really vocal around what they were thinking about and experiencing through education. I know that beforehand, students wanted to do more with universities to co-create curriculums and their student experience and be part of that creating and planning process and I know students were campaigning in key issues like mental health, campaigning for support and justice around sexual violence, and I know students were really talking about how they can really engage themselves in wider society and really be involved in their students, at their universities doing bigger things than just the learning that you do at university. So, when the pandemic hits, students were in place where they were so energised that the pandemic, removing quite fundamental parts of the university experience that students resonate with, like face-to-face teaching and learning, like the activities and meeting up with their peers and getting to know people in that very physical way, was taken away. I think for students it had a massive knock-on impact. I remember when NUS started to do COVID surveys, it was so interesting to see, over the course of the pandemic, we were hearing more students speak about isolation and loneliness and more students talk about the fact that they were worried about what the future of their education will look like, let alone life.

So, it is interesting... Things that weren't new. And throughout the pandemic, students have been speaking to us about a whole host of issues. I think everybody in society has been experiencing some of these. Things like grief, lots of people have lost loved ones, family members, even colleagues in the workplace. So, it has been a difficult time around grief. Students have been speaking about mental health and accessing support services. You know, with a lot of the physical aspects shut down during lockdown, students have felt a difficulty in knowing where and how to access support and what it looks like to be supported in an environment, where you might not necessarily see other people that you might have automatically known to go to for support or even see your peers. And students have really been experiencing a time of learning in a completely new way for them. So, online teaching and learning has been something that students - although students are predominantly really familiar with the online environment generally with social media and lots of online activity we do, the onset of online teaching and learning in touch a way was a transition for students really to be able to adjust to and find their way around and speak about, in terms of whether it was accessible, whether it was enabling them to get the teaching and the learning and the student experience that they were wanting. And I think that is to say that, students have gone through a lot of hard things, staff have gone through a lot of hard things throughout the pandemic. So has wider society. I think students have been at the centre of really experiencing a change in the way where they don't know how to shape it and they don't know what is coming. So, they have been in real limbo about what their education looks like. But I do think there is light at the end of the tunnel. I'm not much of a doom and gloom speaker, as much as I like to speak about hope and what the future can hold and what we can do to move forward in a way that speaks to the change that we have the opportunity to make, speaks to the change that is so needed in this sector for students, for staff and academics, and everybody that is a part of this

sector. So, I wanted to pick out some key things I think are important in terms of thinking about what it looks like to change some of these pieces and look forward.

So, first of all, I do want to say that although students have struggled a lot with online teaching and learning, I think it is important to say that it doesn't mean that online teaching and learning has been a failure or has not been something that has not been worth it. But what it does mean is that students are looking at what it means to be learning in mixed mode, I will not say hybrid or blended. I recognise there is a lot of confusion around what that means in the student community. Students really learning how to work in that mixed-mode environment has been so interesting. Especially because students are from backgrounds where they are disabled, or are part-time carers and part-time students and mature students, have really benefited from being able to access learning in a new and flexible way. That is worth taking forward. If we are finding new and flexible ways of engaging students on teaching and learning, from different backgrounds, with different identities with how and what they learn, it is really beneficial to think about how we can move forward doing that in a way that is sustainable and in a way that is meaningful for students. I also recognise it is important that as universities, as a sector, we have a responsibility to use this time to really innovate. I think it is going to be really easy, in the next few months or next few years, to feel we are trying to recreate or bring back the traditional, bring back what we used to do before. For me, I think it is a challenge for all of you here: Where are you looking for the students to really think about where you can do things differently? Where you can do things better? Where you might throw something away to introduce something big, new and radical and exciting for students to engage with. I think it is also important that, as a sector we think about what it looks like to support students and staff. I keep saying "students and staff" because I think our experiences are inextricably linked. Where are we really making available the support, the services that students and staff really need to be able to navigate the new university environment in a new way. Colleagues, just before this call or this Webinar started, were speaking about what it is like to be on campus right now, I been to a lot of SUs and universities over the past weeks and I felt a buzz of excitement. People are excited to see faces and see some sort of semblance of the university experience they expected. But what I have also felt is nervousness and anxiety. It is different knowing how to trust people in an environment where it is not just about the dynamics of how people engage with each other. It is about things that you can't really control in such a linear way. How do you control how people feel safe around health? How do you control how people feel safe around their environment? It is not something you can tangibly control or check for. But I think it is important that we really, really think what it looks like to create a safe environment at university in a tangible and organic way. How are we continuing to speak to students and really get what they are feeling in an organic and constant way? How are we really looking to make sure that students and staff are engaging in a way that they feel safe and they feel they are getting the fullness of that experience?

And so, I could go on for longer but I did promise my fellow colleagues that I wanted them to have their say, because they have interesting contributions to give. But what I wanted to end on, amongst the many challenges I'm always giving the sector: I think we are now in an opportunity, a time, where we must be able to rebuild, renew and reinvent our education system. There is no doubt about it. We cannot go back to what this environment looked like; I want to say - in the olden times - but it was only 20 months ago. We cannot go back to the 20 months' ago model when things were different. We are seeing it now; we have to be transformative and think about how we are using this time of opportunity to create change and impact and something that students feel

they are a part of. Something that feels like it is moving and growing and that it is actually involving everybody, as a key stakeholder, as an inherent part of our education system. And how we are being vulnerable compassionate and adaptive, I think that is a word or maybe I have invented it but adaptive, and not just finding a way for being safe for the sake of being safe but being safe and stable for the sake of looking forward to what our education system could look like. What our university environment can look like, and all of that is about transition, and transition for students, transition for staff, and transition for universities. So really think about looking forward in a way that is compassionate and the vulnerable and radical and scary in many ways.

So, I want to leave it on that. I want it to be quite challenging. I want to leave you on questions that you would like to talk about and discuss and hopefully, through the course of this event and this conversation, we are able to pull out some of these key things and obviously, I will contribute a lot of the student perspective but I will leave it there for now. Because I could talk forever. As Ben knows a lot. I will hand it over to you Ben, thank you for listening to my opening remarks.

BEN: Thank you so much Hillary. I think it is really provocative - a call not to go back, to use the moment as a moment of transition, while you are recognising some of the positive aspects of the precarious lives we have lived over the last 18 months. It is not all negative. Thank you for reminding us of that as well but also to challenge us. On the point of questions, I can see there is a question already in the Q&A box. We will keep those and keep moving forward so that all the panellists have had a chance to be part of the conversation and then we will have time at the end to come back to these questions. So do reflect on what the panellists are saying and feel free to keep posing questions and then we will pick them up after the panellists have had their chance to speak. I will now hand over to Michelle. Again, thank you so much, Michelle.

MICHELLE: Good morning, everybody. Hopefully you can see my screen. Fantastic. Just to say, I'm going to break probably many rules in the book about presenting, but I have some slides that contain quite a bit of data. But it is so that actually when you get them afterwards, you can read through them and read through and understand in context what I have said. If you want to circulate them to colleagues, they should still understand it. So, I'm going to very briefly in the next ten minutes touch upon supporting transitions this year. I'm going to touch upon what we need to think about in the coming year. Many of you may recognise this quote by Donald Rumsfeld in the early 2000s. COVID has created known unknowns and although Covid-19 issues are known we still have to deal with the known unknowns and as we start to unlock, the reality is we don't know what to expect in the next few weeks and months, however hopefully, having been through the last year, we should be able to predict and be prepared for numerous eventualities. This year is particularly challenging for us, we have three types of prior learning experiences of students in higher education. Let's start with new students. We have those who studied pre-COVID and got their entry qualifications up to 18/19. Those affected in 19/20, who may have decided to take a year out or repeat the year and those who are coming straight from school and college from 20/21. You will have experienced challenges of the different situations. A key challenge yet again this year is the different experiences of students in schools and colleges. Returning students, we have students whose experience of being on campus and their pre-COVID learning experiences ranges from "never been on campus" to "only being on campus for a fraction of the duration of their course." So, we are going to have to really treat many of the returning students as new students in

terms of them knowing the campus, using facilities and practice and easing them in. What we must not do is adopt the approach of - throw them into the deep end immediately and expect them to be able to swim.

One thing is similar across the globe and Hillary mentioned earlier, this is probably the first time anything like this has happened in education. And they are the challenges faced by schools and colleges the world over. Even during the Second World War, education was still maintained. A UNICEF report states Covid-19 has disrupted the education of 1.6 billion students worldwide. And we had immediate closures across 188 countries in April 2020. We used alternative ways to actually attempt to provide continuous education but we know, using the internet, TV and radio that were explored, there were major major challenges, especially in many low- and middle-income families and countries.

What we are seeing is UK data starting to come through, about the loss of learning and how behind students are and this is really, really pivotal in helping us bridge the gap. This report is from the Association of Colleges. The link is on the bottom of the slide if you wish to look at it. In this study, 79 colleges respond, which comprise of 65 general FE colleges, five sixth form colleges and nine specialist colleges. The report looks at how far behind students are. Worrying, it shows that 19% of colleges said that 16-18 months were more than two weeks to a month behind. 75% said it was one and four months and 6% said that students were behind a greater time, and that was a period of six months. I gave a talk to teachers at the University of Portsmouth and asked the delegates a range of questions about learning experience during 2021, which included the lockdown in January and March. The key areas of concerns listed by the teachers and advisers are listed here. They include: Lack of social engagement. Gaps in knowledge, impact on mental health and wellbeing. These findings highlight that we must not make assumptions about students prior learning experiences. And it is going to be more important than ever to bridge those gaps and address concerns. At a recent pedagogic conference organised by a fellow teaching colleague based at Lincoln, I asked delegates what their worries were this coming year, there is a lot of data that came out of this. But this is an important slide. You can see across all study levels, health and wellbeing was the greatest concern for new students and returning students, followed by engagement issues due to online fatigue. And anxiety about physically being on campus was third. So, it is very much from a staff perspective.

I asked them about their main concern for each level of study and here is what they said: New undergraduate students, knowledge gaps, mental health and wellbeing, engagement issues, the top three. For returners, you can see, it was similar but maybe in a slightly different order. And for post graduates, it was also about the practical experience at this level. What is key, is to provide our students with the right information at the right time, and empower them to help themselves, especially where mental health and wellbeing is concerned. You know, so what are the students feeling? Over the years I have done an awful lot of research on student expectations on entry and prior learning experiences. And at the end glide, you will see a number of links to a number of reports I have written. We know from previous pre-arrival academic questionnaire data, coping with the level of study is a major issue pre-COVID and during COVID and these findings from university in 2019/20 where I used to work at the University of Bournemouth, with 20 options, you can see confidence about study and fitting in with students was the top of the list. When repeated it at a similar institution, the top two concerns were about studying online and concerns about COVID. If you remove those two, you can see the remaining concerns are quite similar. What is

very interesting, though, as you start to dig deeper into the data, there are differences between males and females who identify as males and females but also on entry qualifications, age and domiciled status. So, it highlights how important it is not to think about a one-size-fits-all. What is coming out from the data this year from the two universities participating in the pre-arrival academic questionnaire is online and concerns about COVID are still concerns, but they are dropping down the scale. I suppose it is not a surprise as a degree of normality starts to come back. This can be due to a range of reasons, including learning to live with Covid-19. Time to provide better management of expectations - this is how learning is going to take place. I'm currently analysing the post-graduate taught concerns from both universities. As soon as they are analysed provide advice on them based on them but what is concern for staff and students is mental health and wellbeing. There is a range of data information and sources students and staff can use and students can be encouraged to read. You know, Student Minds have fantastic information and they have Student Space is going to be continuing until at least January. So, it is a very, very useful place to direct students for advice and information.

But, also, just as looking after students, we have to look after ourselves through the study life cycle. And Liz Morrish developed and wrote a very, very powerful paper. It's very important for us all to read this. but we could also start to put in a solid framework to help students and staff by universities working towards the University Mental Health Charter. At the conference I asked staff about IT concerns, they felt poor Wifi and safe study workplace will continue to be issue for new students, returners and staff. I know at the start of the pandemic, students were given dongles, to try to help with intermittent wifi. But the no safe/private space is a great, great concern that maybe we do need to think about. At the start of 2021/22, we mustn't make the following assumption that are highlighted on this slide and as Hillary said, understanding how students are feeling will be essential but with traditional insight and feedback mechanisms, weakened it could be tough for us to understand how students are getting on in real-time and the needs of specific groups. It has never been more important for us to enable students to be part of a one, supportive community and for universities to know what is and isn't working. None of us know how it'll play out in terms of the wellbeing; we need be able to predict accordingly. The journey is not easy and COVID has exacerbated T we need to be honest with students and they need real models not just role models. Importantly, we need to provide support but also tell students about the classic pressure points and tell them that it is normal. This was a document that Advance HE asked me to write on classic pressure points that included COVID issues last year. It is a resource, please use it, I hope you find it useful. Stress and anxiety accompany pressure points. The issue is if it continues for a long time. we need to be mindful about the pressures of returning to campus, which could include emotional and physical employment. And staff being employed during the pandemic getting up to speed with in-person assistance. We need to be supportive, kind and mindful. As I conclude, more than ever, we need to provide explicit information and adhere to some basic rules of engagement in order to deliver expectation. Some are listed here. And they include planning for potential conflicts, setting boundaries, milestones and building in a period of discovery, which will be important for returning students. I won't go through these now but it is essential to include a range of things, include avoiding a one-size-fits-all approach, and thinking about the three Ts, type of information, targeting and timelessness information, plus compassion and kindness. We need to know what worked well and what didn't. There are numerous websites offering pragmatic advice and collating advice of good practice that has happened across the sector and some is listed here. As I conclude, it is important to wife stress these key areas: Be aware of the student's entry. We have to prepare them. School and college is very different to university and, you know,

the last 18 months has exacerbated that in many areas. Remember then to tell the students about the pressure points, and importantly, look after yourselves. Einstein said: "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." If the last 18 months has taught us anything, it is that. We need to keep building on the amazing work we have achieved across the sector, keep reflecting and keep evolving, thank you.

BEN: Thank you so much, Michelle, thank you for sharing some research data and ending on such a wonderful quotation and thank you for sharing the concerns of staff and students and really getting us to think about some of the challenges and some of the concerns that we all have around things like knowledge gaps. Around perhaps elements of impostor syndrome, now we have experiencing, as students and staff are transitioning back into uncanny learning environments, that seem familiar but, in some ways, unfamiliar. Thank you, Michelle. Colleagues, again, I encourage you to post into the Q&A box if you have questions. We are going to keep going and I will hand straight on to Alison to continue. Thank you.

ALISON: Thank you to Hillary and Michelle. Hopefully you can see that. OK. I'm Alison Torn, I'm a Senior Teaching Fellow at Leeds Trinity University where I lead on delivery and I'm senior lecturer in the psychology department. I teach to a large cohort. My level 4s will be due their first meeting in about three hours' time.

So, what I want to do in this presentation is give you some of the context around Leeds Trinity University and what we have been doing in the past year and the way we are looking at addressing some of the issues, not only for the upcoming academic year but beyond that as well, and how our practice has changed. So, just thinking from an institutional context, the shape and size and demographic of our students, we have 3,500 undergraduates and post graduates. Outside Leeds city centre, there is a nice green space. About 3,500 students on campus and around about 200 academics but we also have apprenticeship degrees and partnerships. We really strive to be a diverse and inclusive university. We have around about 25% of our student cohort as students of colour. We were the first university in Yorkshire to receive a race equality chartership award. That was last year. We have a high number of first-generation students, 45% and 50% of our students come from High areas of high deprivation. 25% mature students and around 20% disabilities, the majority in relation to learning needs but that figure is probably higher because more identify... So, support relationship is key. We have the USP, you are a name not a number. That has been really important in distinguishing us from larger universities in the area and also it drives successful recruitment. So, student like the community and feel they like the family feel of the university. So, one of the key challenges for us, you know, during the past weeks and months is how we could enable that sense of connectedness and learning in an online environment. And in addition, for myself, forecasting, and other colleagues, who teach to 200, 300 student cohorts, just because we are a small university doesn't mean all of our cohort sizes are small. We also have the challenge of larger universities as well. So, the campus is small and intimate. But it has, yes, a nice family feel I would like to say but our cohorts can be large. So, working in a smallish institution around 3,500 on campus, the community is really at the heart of our campus. Building our community and building about relationships is key to our strategic plan. You can see here I have a definition of community from Conrad. You can read that for yourselves. I will not read that out to you. But that definition really reflects our university and our community, it is about connection, belonging and comfort, key to developing a strong, social presence. And that social presence underpins students' learning. Over the past year, we, like many of the institutions have looked at how we can look at

belonging and connectedness. Again, I have a definition of connectedness here for you to read. In this definition, by Lee & Robbins, it is quite old but they really emphasise relationship and emotional elements of connectedness and the different layers of connectedness as well, around personal and societal. However, for me, I feel this is something about connectedness itself as to how students are grounded and we are all grounded in our own identity.... [distortion of sound] struggling with different identity and feeling connected with within themselves. Not only do they negotiate a new identity as university students and some students may not have knowledge of, that but they may also be trying to connect with different elements of their identity as well, such as sexuality and gender, you know, perhaps they feel that coming to university is a new start for them, you know. So, they may not feel connected within themselves, never mind kind of with other people. And that emotional distance within themselves and between themselves and others may be very [inaudible] for some. One of the key questions, when you think about that initial transition is: How are you prepared for university and are they prepared for university? In my experience, I don't think that students are very well-prepared to come to university. And Michelle, you may have some thoughts on that coming from your research, from what you have been saying and that is something that I think that perhaps we can come back to in today's discussion, is how we prepare students for university and where does that preparation lie? I just want it briefly mention some focussed research we conducted with students themselves which linked through to how they have prepared for the academic year and beyond so. We did three focus groups with students and staff and we had three key themes which came out from the focus groups. The largest of the things was around developing connections. All the focus groups thought we were all in this together, so there was a real sense of connectedness between staff and students but also a real sense of temporality as well. We were on the journey. And students talked about what they came into, the online pandemic experience with, and what past experiences they were building on. And how that has developed during the past 18 months and what they have envisaged for themselves in the future in terms higher education and what they wanted that to look like as well. So, they very much came from different starting points. And finding the digital social spaces, you know, finding and owning the social spaces online. You know, students really struggle to find that. You know, where they were within the university. A key thing that students reflected on was about how the design and connection with spaces was really important. You know, [inaudible] working groups. You know, with transformative work but making them work online, asynchronously, really helped them to connect. Having virtual cafes really helped students during a very difficult time. And finally, some of the barriers and enablers. You know, there was a real - and the technology has been a real enabler but also a barrier, in terms of what Michelle said and Hillary in terms of access to broadband and Wifi and what our university did in terms of sending out laptops and dongles and everything else, but also the connect was seen as a real point of connection as well. And then, the online versus in-person. Students have a lot of views on the merits of online. They could see the merits of having online learning in terms of being able to manage their own time better and access things asynchronously and connecting with people asynchronously, and taking responsibility for their learning but they really wanted to get back on campus, as we all did, as what they missed was the social connectedness. So, looking at social connectedness, there are challenges for all students across the board. And Michelle went through those in her presentation. So, I don't want to go over those again but obviously there are challenges around experiences in accessing teaching and study skills, you know, social and the sense of community, community opportunities. I think something I want to point out is, thinking about my own cohort of third years that I'm going to start teaching next week. These students are coming back for their final year after two very disruptive years. And including, I think, it is really important to point out, two years of no safety

nets(?) so we need to be mindful of the returning students and the impact on that. But Michelle gave a good overview of that. One thing I do want to say, is that research on our focussed groups, the experience [distortion of sound] ([inaudible]) are struggling more so than any other year. They need to be thinking about what is the different levels of student experiences over the last 18 months.

So, what are we doing? I have highlighted a few things here about what we are doing, looking at this current academic year and also building better as Hillary has pointed out, for the future. It is about doing things differently and being transformative in the way they are looking at things. So, we have our Freshers' Week and Refreshers' Week; the Welcome Week for new students and continuing students as well and we have developed a system of micro sessions. So, it is information that is accessible throughout the year, that they can clearly access through their university app. They can go back to those videos. We really think that induction is not just one week or intros should not be one week, it should be launched and continued throughout the academic year. Our in-person sessions are really focussed on the programme teams and student support. So those front-facing, friendly staff, you know, around wellbeing, your programme team, your model tutors, who you are going to see. Student mental health. But not overwhelming students with too much information. And making sure that the welcome is clearly focussed on social activities, co-ordinated with our student support team and the Students' Union. We have a learning hub for student staff and academic staff and we have a student achievement team; to look at the academic skills and we have targeted support as well, our peer support champions, who are current students, they are employed to support students in the model and they can be a port of call for signposting. Some of the key people within that learning hub are our student liaison and engagement officers and they are going to be - well they are always key but even more so - around attendance monitoring and engagement. Being able to identify students quickly and put plans in place, with the tutor's level tutors and model staff and we have look at the outcomes with students, in terms of that engagement or not. That really comes in, that information is supporting the analytics that has been brought into the university and we will be rolling out in this academic year as well. Race equality is a huge area that we are embedding across the university and I will give a shout out to my colleague who is in the audience today, doing this work around equality in the curriculum, but it is around looking at diversity, culture, developing a shared identity. And some of the things that can support this is a RE:Tension short film which Ricardo Bass (?) and it is around the film, it has won awards and it is supporting by a staff toolkit training as well. Addressing the areas around the learning and teaching experience that has been development. We have a staff student seminar, around race equality. So, we have [distortion of sound] to staff and students, and we have students from the last year presenting their award-winning research around black and ethnic experience. Around music genres and also women's experience. And there is our community project. It is about our community reaching university. The sentence of belonging. So, there are various events and campaigns around that. [distortion of sound] and finally, there is the academic staff, sign-posted for students and for staff adds well and again it is supported around analytics. So, I will go back a bit. So, there we are. Leading on from what Hillary and Michelle were saying, it is about keeping the good things that worked well from last year. The students we spoke to are very positive about many things. One of the things is the blended approach, I know hybrid or blended, it is up for debate but blended approach to learning and teaching, so, you know, we are not ditching technology by any stretch of the imagination, we are engaging and progressing it further. That is going to remain central to moving forward. Higher education has been changing for a long time. But it is in sharp focus and the shift to a more blended approach has been

expedited. So, we have a pre, live and post, which is about keeping the contact the same for students. [distortion of sound] and keeping the stuff that we have, like the virtual cafes. The virtual cafe I ran in my module, I thought I would have about two students a week, I had about 80 coming to the virtual cafe. It was important in terms of connection. It is something I couldn't do on campus so easily. You know keeping the asynchronous collaboration spaces for students again. OK. So, a couple of references there, that will go into the chat. And I just want to thank you for listening and inviting me to speak. I look forward to answering questions.

BEN: Thank you so much, Alison, thank you for sharing your approach about the connectiveness and belonging and also raising the question of preparation and how well-prepared students and staff are for this new academic year. I'm sure I will revisit that. I will move straight on in one moment, but to keep encouraging colleagues to post into the Q&A, I can see Michelle has been kind and responded to one question. So, thank you. I'm going to open up the questions to the floor once we have been through Luke and Christine's presentation but do keep posting there and we will share, obviously, after this event, obviously the recording and any resources, as well, the presentation slides. Again, do look out for those, we will make them available. I will hand straight over to Luke now, thank you very much, Luke.

LUKE: Thank you very much, Ben. Thank you very much Advance HE for the invitation. It was interesting, when we were given the brief, Ben said. "Give your insight into your experiences of first year and retention" which made me feel very old as well, which I probably am. But it made me fundamentally think of why do I do stuff? Why do I believe in what I do? And do I have some sort of coherent rationale for the ways in which we do things? And for me, that was quite a useful exercise because it made me start to think about the journey I have been on and what I really believe in, you know. So, it is interesting to see and hear Hillary and Michelle and Alison talking about the focus for what they do. For me, the focus is around the personalisation of student learning, it is around the individual. I think, given where we are at present, as we pass through the pandemic, is even more important. We have all heard from the various other pieces about the change that students have gone through over the last 18 months. So, there is absolutely no way we can treat students as a homogeneous unit. We have to look at the individual and for me, that goes back to what I believe in and where I have come from. I'm a dean of teaching and learning, so you are going to get pedagogy in there, a few frameworks and models for you to think about.

RUTH: We can see your notes rather than your presentation.

LUKE: Can you see those?

RUTH: Yes, and go to "open the slide show." That is showing us the slide show rather than the slides.

So, at the very top of the screen, in the interest, "display settings".

LUKE: I haven't got any of that. Do you want to show the slides?

RUTH: We will do it that way.

LUKE: I will just keep talking. To individualised personalised learning which is key for me. So, if I talk about some models quickly, and share those foundations, I will be going back to the 19 0s where it is talked about students and a sense of mattering. These students matter at a university. Does anybody take any particular interest, you can create that with peer connections through other students or can you create it through academic engagement with staff? Even, if you take an institutional perspective, how do they connect to a particular staff working across particular areas of the university? Whether that be in the library, etc? How do we cope with that sense of mattering? That was really developed, as I say, back in the '80s. But that has been taken forward in many ways in many shapes and forms. Alf Olivio(?) talked about the five... How Olivia do we work with them, with the capabilities. Purpose is a key thing, for students coming from colleges and schools. Do they know why they are here; do they know where they want to go, how do we help them with that and make them feel connected? And the culture within our staff teams, within our programmes, within our institutions do we see retention? Do we see the student experience at the core of what we do? I think a lot of, every strategy document for the university says we do, but do we live it? Do we really live it? Do we engage it into what we are doing at the university? The senses piece, and I remember the sense of mattering was talked about, what Liz Thomas and colleagues did, when they introduced the sense around belonging and the belonging piece is interesting in part of the what works activities but the real learning for me, from that piece was - how do we embed what we are doing into the academic turf? That is the key. If we are not shown to be valuing what we are doing, in terms of academic and social integration into a university and we don't build it into the academic sphere, we don't value it. We don't show to our students that we value it, therefore, why should the student value it? Therefore, why should a student do it? If it is seen as an add on, why should they participate? A really interesting piece of learning for me and I think for the sector as well. Recently, I have come across a couple of pieces of work I wanted to share, two very readable ones. One from the States about becoming a student-ready College. How do our systems help our students succeed? What barriers do our systems at universities create to students and their engagements and their participation at university? How do we, and it goes back to the sense of culture, how do we, as institutions enable our students to succeed, not prevent them from succeeding? And finally, a nice piece of work from Peter Felton and Leo Lambert around relationships. Relationship and reputation, how do we enable those relationships to happen? How do we build it into the design of our learning and teaching at our universities? How do we build that into the student's experience? So, I have this, I suppose, it is almost matrix going around in my head when I'm starting to think about activities and how I support that across the university and students in developing activities that enable our students to be successful at university.

One of the things that - and it was interesting, Hillary gave us a radical challenge. Thank you, Hillary I think we do need that. And absolutely, we shouldn't go back to the ways in which we did things previously but also not everything we did previously was obviously bad. So, we need to build on the strengths. One of the things we have decided to do at Abertay University is look at how we might utilise diagnostic settings in student support there. and diagnostic setting, produces horror with people but this isn't actually about great analysis it is about identifying strength and challenges for students and we have a couple projects looking at the same thing but what we have chosen to do at Abertay is focus in on the personalisation piece I mentioned earlier. Trying to make sure that all first-year students who come to the university, undertake this five-credit module or ABE101. There used to be a 20-credit elective in the first year that students can do but we, as an institution, have seized the opportunity to divide that 20-credit module into a suite of micro

credentials. Every student will come to the university and do ABE101. I think the assessment point for that is this week for ABE101. Early assessment. Can we see who is engaging early and can we help them? As I say, the ABE101 is interesting, you then have a diagnostic, which enables students to have micro credentials and they are worth five credits. What the diagnostic does, it steers them to areas of challenge, really, it'll steer them to - you are not confident around your writing, digital or research skills. Well, actually, not very confident. One of the interesting areas is ABE108, which is welcome to the CommuniTAY, that is run by the association, and it'll be fascinating how we can integrate students into the social life of the universities. You have heard about universities connecting us. I think it is interesting we have been able to work with our student association to have a credit-bearing module, so shows that we value what they are doing, in this element of the university, the social piece being just as important as the academic piece in that transition. There are also elements around wellbeing and again, which people have picked up as well. So, it'll be interesting to see which ones students are seeking to access. And which ones, perhaps, are the ones that ensure that students survive, succeed and thrive at our university and that is going to be one of the really interesting things that we are looking forward to sharing with the sector. So, I'm going to draw to a close now and hand over to Christine and probably back to Ben first. But before for me, the challenge that we were set was: Why do you do it? I think for me, it is around that personalisation piece. It is around that every student at the university matters. And they need to know that they matter. I think through that connectedness, people have talked about, and through perhaps the approach that we are adapting at Abertay, I hope we are Ability to make them believe that we do. Thank you, Ben.

BEN: Thank you for sharing your pedagogy and practice there and giving us a great example that of module and those micro credentials at being successful at Abertay. Thank you, also, for connecting with the other points raised by the other speakers around that sense of social and academic belonging. I think one's it is a theme through the presentation data. I will say no more. I will encourage colleagues to pose questions. If we don't manage to answer them all, we will take them away from here and I will find a way to feed back some of our thoughts and answers and some of the resources associated with those questions after the event as well. But let's keep going, I will hand over to Christine. Thank you so much Christine, thank you.

CHRISTINE: Thank you so much, Ben, thank you colleagues. I'm going to share my screen. I hope everyone can see that.

Fantastic. Right. So, we are heard an awful lot about fantastic data, great practices and services in other universities, and of and how we can help transition our students. Now, I hope I can add to what has already been said, maybe in a little bit of a different way. Not just looking at the transition, but also what it means in terms of progression and retention.

So there are five areas I want to think about. First: Who are we talking about in this context, actually? What are the challenges that students face currently? How do we know that there are actually issues? How can we address these issues? And what skills do we feel that students need? And I start with the "who" first? I think it is hugely important that we understand our students that Michelle has already said and she has presented immense, rich data about the difference between the starting students, post grad students and so on but it is really important that

we know who they are at a sort of deeper level and really distinguish between what are the fears of the final year students or a BAME student or also, a small group of students that are mature students, for instance and really, really break that apart and then we can take it from the student-perspective way. Michelle has drawn on that a lot and shared the data, so I will not go into it, but I want to keep it on mind while we are going through this journey. So, what are the challenges that we see that students are facing? Some of those we have already discussed at length. So, we will not go too much into it. But there is one area in particular I do want to draw attention to. So, first of all, obviously there is a big, huge question mark about what the future holds. And this morning on BBC Radio 4, the day thought was around living in the present. We cannot predict the future and we cannot confirm ourself in the future because we don't know what the future brings but the only thing we can do is live in the present. I think that is a thought that we should take with us every single day but even more so, share with our students. But that means that we need to help them to understand how to embrace the present and not be too afraid of it, therefore. The second area that we find students are really challenged by is a lack of clarity. What I mean by lack of clarity is for themselves, where to go, where to strive to? How to approach things? How to learn? How to prepare for exams and assessments in general? So, also, where to find support. There are so much rich services out there and Alison has drawn on those and given many great examples and I'm sure there are in other universities as well. But there are other times where students feel overwhelmed by that and staff as well. But the third area, anxiety and stress is the biggest challenge we face. [inaudible] and that is that there are ever-increased levels of anxiety and feelings of stress. And that has a number of issues. On the one hand it goes back to the uncertainty and lack of clarity but it also goes back to pressure on performance and meeting expectations. So, it is not just all COVID-related. Obviously, these were there before COVID but they have been heightened through the pandemic, of course as well. And so, it is really a question of how can we help those students with anxiety and stress levels. Not only with our students but what was incredibly insightful was that a lot of those students have those incitements of stress but they wouldn't necessarily categorise as a mental health issue. This is where we have to be careful about labelling students. We have a number of students who don't want to be labelled. But go through the anxiety and distress to disclose that they have that. But our students have found a couple of work arounds and I will come to those later. So, taking on board how students feel when they are not just transitioning to university but also progressing from one level to the next. And how does this relate to anxiety and stress. I'm sure people can report an increase in extenuating circumstances, which was probably the biggest sign for us that there is a heightened level of anxiety and stress. That students submit extenuating circumstances, before they have been completed their assessment. Before they are actually in the exam situation, before they are encountering a problem, it becomes a prevention method. We have a self-certified and then anything that is more than that, in terms of extenuating services is looked at in the [inaudible] spaces. But we can see that the reason for extenuating circumstances is around anxiety and stress. We talk about the fact that they can connect but also that there is anxiety around, which is something that students give as a reason. Talking about computers crashing down. So, they are trying to predict a future that they cannot, but they are always living in this uncertainty and feeling that uncertainty as well, by their behaviour.

And then, there is withdrawal, where we see a lot of students can't cope with what is going on at the moment and their only answer is to move away. To take time out. Whatever they are feeling, or reflecting. And again, this is due to the heightened levels of anxiety and stress but also, it is the lack of clarity. Where can I get the support? Where can I actually go and find somebody who can

help me? And I think that is really important. Again, we have to understand - is there another way that we can find to collaborate and connect with our students that reduces that anxiety around being labelled? Well, obviously we have already talked about disengagement and you have seen the figures from Michelle earlier as well. And that is definitely a concern. I think the whole disengagement, you know, conversation that we are having, has a number of aspects: What we see as disengagement might not be perceived disengagement by students. There is a lot more work we should be doing. But I also mentioned when we do deal with people with disengagements. Having conversations with them through our wellbeing services because we see disengagement as potentially a mental health issue. So, one of the questions obviously that we then have is: Are we making conclusions too early? Are we actually labelling our students far too early? Do we need to have more conversations around that? So, how can we address these? Obviously, we have fantastic wellbeing services and they have delivered immense support to a great number of students before the pandemic started, during the pandemic and continuing. There is also the personal tutoring. We have reviewed our personal tutoring approach, not just in the business school where I am, but also across the university. And it was really about how can we utilise our personal tutoring system in a better way, to make those connections that Alison was talking about. To have the more personalised approach that Liz was referring to and making sure we are not just talking about the number but that we are talking about that we know who our students are, actually and that means that we need to think about how we can develop and help our staff to accommodate that. Because, is someone happy to be the person's tutor and really engage at that first level. I think there needs to be the development opportunity be on both sides. I will come back to mindful education in a minute but it is definitely important to raise here. And I will talk about that in a minute, more in-depth. We also talk about pedagogy of care or pedagogy of kindness. A very recent article, by Fiona Mari(?) with a five-step plan, talking about the pedagogy of kindness and that leads into the mindfulness approach and we need to really think about how use our language, to be deliberate in the words that we choose, it goes back to care, compassion, reflection and evolving and Michelle, I think you talked about that already, in a way. One of my sticking points that I have is with the word "learning outcome", "assessment" they are all negatively fuelled. Can we move away from, that can we call them growth and develop? Can he talk about purpose and value, rather than outcome? These are the sort of things, I think would really help to us make those connections. And to use our language to reduce anxiety and feelings of stress in the first place. Those conversations, language is hugely important and obviously then support and in the middle is something that is very close to my heart, meditation. And I mentioned it here because we found that while we have students who were putting forward extenuating services. Seeking advice on wellbeing, withdrawing am everybody has to tell their story. We also found pockets of students who took matters into their own hands. To started online meditation groups. They decided - yes, I have anxiety, yes, I have feelings of stress but I don't need and I don't want to be labelled. I don't want to share all my past life. I don't want to be told how to make my coffee in the morning. I want to find a way, to quiet my mind. I want to learn to focus, I want to learn to concentrate and what I want to do is, I want to continue my study and find the tools and techniques and instruments that can help me to continue in my life that way. So, for a lot of students, meditation and yoga was a way to do that. I'm really proud at the University of Surrey we have started to do a mindfulness project which will offer meditation to our students, particularly around, I have to use the word "assessment" time. Because that is something that they were using it for.

So, finally, what skills do students need? Students need to learn to manage their emotional and mental challenges in the long run. It is not about just put... [distortion of sound] it is about how can

we manage the emotions and overcome panic attacks, for instance and meditation is a real way to do that. To be there, to reflect, evolve and to connect, to connect with one's self, Alison you spoke about that. It is hugely important. What happens is this becomes a life-long learning tool for them but you also think about flexible assessment approaches that can allow them to have a learning opportunity and to aid progression. I strongly believe our students will be able to transition and progress in a far better way if we think about those flexible approaches in more detail. Learning how to learn. It is actually something that I have asked, and my parents were continuously saying. Why do I have to learn? We actually assume that students know how to learn but they don't.... [distortion of sound] learning to focus and quieten the mind and to have that focus. And that means learning how to become, instead of focussing on the outcomes all the time. Instead of being feeling pressure and seeing what you need, instead of the 70 or 80 or 90 of what you want. So, my key theme for addressing, transition and progression is to have a mindful approach and to think about the students and the individuals, what we want them to be, not just becoming responsible leaders of the future but responsible and mindful leaders of the future. So, thank you very much.

BEN: Thank you so much, can you Christine, thank you for sharing your mindful education approach and philosophy, but also, again, almost a call to arms for the sector to really think deeply about what "becoming" is, not just learning to learn but the idea about becoming. I think it is a powerful way for us to go into the Q&A so, again, thank you to all panel members for what is going to be, I'm sure, a lively discussion in the next 20 minutes or so. You have already, panel members, you have been responding to some of the questions and if there are any questions of that have been posted about resources, we will make sure they are shared with the recording of the session. I can see straight away there have been challenges accessing some of the resources. But if you don't mind, colleagues, I would like to throw open a question that you may have seen in the Q&A box about what are you keeping from the pandemic? What are you taking forward? You may be leaving some things behind? What actually what has worked? What are you taking forward with you? What would you actually recommend? I will throw it open to the panel, feel free to unmute yourself and jump in.

ALISON: I will share our blended approach to delivery. We are keeping our contact hours. Our face-to-face and personnel the same. Students aren't losing out on that at all. But we are, like I said, supplementing it the pre-activities and post-activities, so we are still putting short micro lectures, you know, 10 minutes, 15 minutes, maybe some reading, stuff that we have to do to get settled in, and then they come to the session, ready to work and you know, ready to engage. So we are, you know, looking at rolling out some of the things across the universities and Ben knows it well, looking at the standards. Really, for the classroom. What we can put online and what we can deliver, but without the issues. That is the key thing. We don't want to say - here is three hours of work or four hours of work that you need to do before you come in with campus on me and then here is another two hours work, for every single module. It is making sure that, you know, it's succinct. It kind of does its job in terms of preparing them but not overloading them. So perhaps being mindful of what their learning looks like from a programme perspective and not just your own module. It is great for my module but what are they doing in their other three or four modules, whatever. So, to have a broad overview of what a student's workload is like and making sure they are not overloaded. So that is kind of, you know one thing that we are doing and another thing like

I said is keeping, certainly I will be keeping the virtual cafes going. I have answered questions around Q&As around those and how they are structured. They have become important spaces for students. And I think, you know, somebody put in the Q&A, are students not overwhelmed by the amount of virtual cafes that are on? I think they are optional. They are not part of, although there may be some modules, but they don't have to go to them. They are not losing out on key modules, they are optional and they will not lose out. So those are two of the key things, but I will leave it open to others as well.

BEN: Thank you, Alison. Other colleagues, like Luke?

LUKE: And what Alison said, I would echo. I mean one of the - if we just flip it, I have the fortunate learning piece that my son is a first-year student at a Scottish university. Not Abertay I should hasten to add, so I see what is happening, how he is engaging with it, whatever. He has a father who has been working in higher education for a long time and he has no idea how a university works. Not a clue. Yeah. And so, and Alison, exactly right. Virtual cafes, you don't have to go to all of them but he doesn't know that. And turning it on its head and explaining to students how universities work, when, you know, they have had this fragmented experience for the last 18 months, they haven't known whether they are in school or college or not and there are bits online. My son at his other university, I think he has to go to three different places to find his timetable. One piece is online in one place, one piece is on-compass learning. You know, no idea. And I think, you know, it goes back to that piece I talked about: How, as institutions, do we change our processes and structures to make sure that the centre is at the centre and not the systems of a university and it is a good challenge in the long run?

MICHELLE: I would also add, I think there are a couple of things to add into the great responses from colleagues. There are a couple of things that have worried me over the years and, you know, it has been mentioned about university being quite different from school and college. Students come in, and even during the pandemic, the traditional way of learning, schools and colleges hand-written notes and of course textbook. Yet we expect students to walk in and be experienced digital learners. This is not the case. You know, the data, the data looking at undergrad and post-grad even at post-grad level but especially for under-grad when you look and ask how many have used the library to access information, when it is around 35%, you start to realise you need to embed those learning resource sessions into the curriculum. We have lost 1,000 public libraries in the last ten years. Schools and colleges have been getting rid of libraries because of cost and because of space. We are worrying and have been planning for the increase in 18-year-olds from 2021, understand that schools and colleges have been preparing for that for the last ten years, so we have actually really been on the back foot. So actually, understanding the experience of the learning experience is essential in bridging the divide and I have been doing some research with Leeds Beckett and UEL looking at the experience of learners in 19/20 and 20/21. In 19/20, in the sample and this was commonplace because I spoke to the schools and teachers' association about the findings, is that in March 2020, when the schools shut down, in March 20, students weren't required to do any more learning. B-Tech students and college students were, because the decision of what to do with their qualification happens a lot later but as soon as lockdown happened in early April, A-levels were cancelled. So, something like over half of those who were studying in 19/20 and came in 20/21 had done no structured learning between April and August.

Now, that again, in 20/21 changed and so, the different experience of students changed. When students went to school because they may have been students of children of key care workers, they were still learning online, in the school. They weren't having face-to-face. So, that whole online fatigue that students were talking about, and experiencing and teachers' starting to come through the data is really important to actually understand. I know from colleagues in Australia, when lockdown first happened, the engagement online was phenomenal because it was the only social interaction that students had. So, the challenge we have got, as lock-lift starts, how that disengagement with online learning, for some students, may occur. But for me, moving forward and this is always the case - if we can get and I'm responding really to Terry Gough and Elisabeth Parker made brilliant questions in the chat, in the question box. We need to provide support to students in multiple ways, in a mixed economy. We know some students don't want to go one-to-one. But if we can provide a chat facility that feels anonymous to provide students the confidence to ask the questions. If we have a mixed tree of fruit and we give a student a basket, they will pull the different fruit off that they need. They can pull off the different support services, requirements that are right for them. But we need educate and empower them. You have to remember; students don't know what they don't know and when they come to university, they have this box of chocolates opened up with loads and loads of support but they don't necessarily have that in schools and college. So, we have to really encourage them and educate them and introduce them, slowly, to the kind of support they may need and throwing it at them, in the very first couple of weeks saying - this is what you have got, you know, and then leaving T they may not need it then. They may not need it in four weeks' time or six months but they may need it in a year. So, every student is different, as we know and it is so important for us to actually scaffold and provide the information in the right way, timely, targeted and in small amounts.

BEN: Thank you so much, Michelle. Colleagues I am mindful of time and questions but I want to give everyone in the panel a chance to respond but can welling this, perhaps to another question around those pressure points that perhaps staff and students feel and are there any quick wins? Some recommendations that you might have individually, to alleviate some of those pressure points that we all know about and experience, both for staff and students?

HILLARY: I don't know if it is worth me jumping in, my thoughts are still forming. If at some point, I become incoherent, it is because my brain is in overload. I think this is an interesting question. I think it is interesting because I haven't heard people use the term "easy wins" for a long time. I think the pandemic has not been easy for a lot of people who have been doing hard things to win in whatever situation they find themselves in, so it is really interesting to hear that again. But what I would say is, I think it is interesting in thinking about, now we are past the big pressure part of "welcome" or we are getting past it or trying to. Going forward into performing what business as usual looks like, will be a really interesting part, especially as we get into the autumn term and different things happen around A, the pandemic and B, around how students are going to live and C, around what we are going to be planning going forward; I don't think I can give you an easy win but what I can say is that sometimes it is easy to overcomplicate what we need to do and it is easy to overcomplicate making plans for the future where sometimes, I don't know why this has become such a big part of what I'm thinking about recently - but sometimes we have to be organic, sometimes it takes for you to do the simplest and easiest thing of listening to students, listening to your staff and then taking that time to figure out what you can put in place to make it work for them.

And so, I would say, given that there are likely to be a lot more pressure points than we would have usually expected in a normal year, it's really important that, you know, if you are finding really easy ways, now we have digital on our side to work through that, to listen to staff and students, do that. If you had the resource or the time or the space to put on things that continue to reintroduce people back to the university environment, do that. You know, welcome week or freshers' week or however you call it in different institutions, shouldn't just be isolated to September and October, as times of really easing people back into an environment that they haven't been in for almost two years now. It is also going to be important when we think about the pressure points. And think being how we are using this time not to be pressured into doing things really quickly, when we saw those pressure points but actually, how are we realigning our thoughts around what pressure looks like and actually making sure that we make the important interventions when we see pressure. I think it is easy over the past year to make rash decisions, because we need to get something fixed or get something moving or get an answer it people but some of the things I have seen be most effective during this time is when I see institutions and individuals take a step back and be - look, I don't know exactly what the answer is right now but I'm prepared to partner with your students and staff to find what works and to try things that we haven't tried before, until we find what works. So, I'm sorry that is not an easy win but I think unless you take time to listen, slow down, be vulnerable, be transparent I love that Michelle talked a lot about being kind. We are not going to be able to really work through pressure points in a way that is meaningful and actually takes a step forward, making sure that whatever changes we do put in, don't have impacts that are unintended and harmful, as opposed to impact that are meaningful and sustainable. That is what I would say for that but I really welcome hearing what other colleagues think about that, too.

BEN: Thank you, Hillary. Colleagues are posting into the chat box and sharing other thoughts in response. I would like to get a related question in circulating around the discussion, around wellbeing, in all its different forms. And this is related it what Hillary and also the other panel members, have been saying. The question came through the crowdsourced questions around: How do we actually genuinely monitor student wellbeing? I think it was in the context of perhaps some of the systems we currently use are not being effective? And this connects with what Christine was saying about the idea of a mindful education. How do we really know how we feel, I suppose in the broadest sense? Would you have any advice, from your experience, about how we actually monitor or how we actually really understand student and staff wellbeing?

HILLARY: I have an answer but I don't want to be go first, given I have just spoken; so, colleagues go before me and then I will come in.

BEN: Just to interrupt. It has to be a quick one, we have a matter of minutes. But please do.

MICHELLE: Do very, very quick post-checks every four weeks. Students do it on a mobile phone, you can do it in class, start to see what the issue is, turn it around. Thank you. **BEN:** Alison.

ALISON: I was going to say, we do have the facility to see students face-to-face a lot more but online, I was going to say, I can't read the room, you know. It is setting up those relationships with the communication and [inaudible] it'll be a key thing about identifying students at risks. The personal tutors, key.

BEN: Thank you Alison.

HILLARY: Don't assume that wellbeing and mental health is trapped in the traditional areas. Some are affected by so much more than just what you might see in a lecture theatre. So, really look at the whole student experience when you are trying to track what wellbeing looks like, if students are being affected by something, you will find it in their student life. So, not just the student life, look at the traditional parts where it is easiest to track students and their engagement.

BEN: Thank you so much. If there are no last words from the panel, I have to bring this session to a close. Again, I want to thank all our panel members. So, really for a lively debate and for creating a series of presentations that connected so well with each other, from very different perspectives. Thank you so much for that. Again, thank you to all the participants for their wonderful questions but also for joining the session at such a busy time of year. Thank you, colleagues, have a good day and we will share the recording and resources from this session as soon as possible.

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Our strategic goals to enhance confidence and trust in HE, address systemic inequalities and advance education to meet the evolving needs of students and society, support the work of our members and the HE sector. We deliver our support through professional development programmes and events, Fellowships, awards, student surveys and research, providing strategic change and consultancy services and through membership (including accreditation of teaching and learning, equality charters, knowledge and resources).

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