

## PURPOSE

The purpose of this process is to describe the main procedures associated with the delivery of key services and activities of the First Year Support Coordinator.

## RESPONSIBILITY

The First Year Support Coordinator (FYSC) provides a range of support and advice to first year students from Orientation Week right through the first year experience.

First and coordinating point of contact for information, advice and direction, particularly if students are experiencing any doubts about their studies or circumstances during their first year and for those wishing to transfer, defer or withdraw.

The FYSC develops and implements initiatives which seek to ensure that the highest possible percentage of new students to UL are engaged, retained and progress successfully through their chosen programme of study.

This role is also part of a 'virtual' Student Engagement and Success Unit, which comprises a position from Students Affairs, the Library staff and Centre for Teaching and Learning.

## PROCEDURE

The primary procedures associated with delivery of the above services include:

- A. Assists first year students in the transition from secondary school to third-level education
- B. Develop and implement initiatives to improve student engagement and retention
- C. Data Capturing
- D. Make recommendations on UL policy and strategy developments around student engagement and success

### **A. Assists first year students in the transition from secondary school to third-level education.**

#### **a. Orientation:**

- Address first year students at introductory Orientation talks in the UCH.
- PowerPoint Presentation (<10 mins)
- Be in FYSC Office to meet Orientation Tours during Orientation Week
- Visit course specific orientation talks where possible. E.g. Arts, Computing Technologies

#### **b. Conducts individual meetings with first year students**

- Record meetings in Meeting Record Data on SharePoint
- [https://sharepoint.ul.ie/SiteDirectory/StudentAffairs/First%20Year%20Experience%20and%20Retention/\\_layouts/OSSSearchResults.aspx?k=18230008&cs=This%20List&u=https%3A%2F%2Fsharepoint.ul.ie%2FSiteDirectory%2FStudentAffairs%2FFirst%20Year%20Experience%20and%20Retention%2FMeetingRecord](https://sharepoint.ul.ie/SiteDirectory/StudentAffairs/First%20Year%20Experience%20and%20Retention/_layouts/OSSSearchResults.aspx?k=18230008&cs=This%20List&u=https%3A%2F%2Fsharepoint.ul.ie%2FSiteDirectory%2FStudentAffairs%2FFirst%20Year%20Experience%20and%20Retention%2FMeetingRecord)

- Talk through all the options available to the student given their particular situation and assist them to reach an informed decision that addresses their issue.
  - Encourage and arrange subsequent meetings with relevant member of staff/support services or identified individuals that may be of support to the student.
- c. Timely response to student queries by phone/email.**
- Insofar as is possible, respond to all telephone and email queries within 48 hours of receipt of query
  - Where parents of students make contact, ensure that the student has confirmed in writing that they have given their permission for the parent to get in touch on their behalf.
- d. Conduct exit interviews**
- Students who wish to exit UL, must have their exit form signed by the FYSC
  - Have a good discussion with the student, ensure they know their options with regard to other opportunities and how they could make these happen
  - Ensure student is aware that they must submit the Exit Form to SAA for processing.
  - ACTION: It is necessary to have a better Data capturing system than currently exists for recording EXITS. At the moment SAA do not record the reason for exit and that information would be very useful to the institution in terms of review and planning
- e. Deliver Transitions Module to first year students as part of the SESU**
- Deliver the content of 'Making the Leap', a 2-hour module that is designed to provide them with tools and techniques to assist First Year students to successfully manage the transition to university

## **B. Develop initiatives to improve student engagement and retention. Implement these initiatives and programmes to address student issues and support gaps.**

- Collaborate and coordinate with UL units and teams involved in transition events, activities and programmes

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### **Passport 2 Progression (P2P) Peer Mentoring Programme Procedure**

Passport 2 Progression (P2P) is a six-week programme established with the primary aim of providing peer assistance to first year students that were identified as 'at risk' of failing a particular module based on grades received to date (lower than a C3).

Weeks 1 & 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decide on modules to be part of the programme based on analysis of progression data and meetings with module leaders.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Module leaders to identify mentors and participants and make contact with them.</li></ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Training of mentors: mentors attend generic training provided by the PSLC. Module leaders deliver module specific training to mentors, they have discretion as to how this is delivered but all provide at least a basic understanding of mechanisms, and techniques of working with students to cover topics, review material, and deepen understanding.</li></ul>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Initial meeting of all mentors and participants, decisions taken among group with regard to logistics of sessions. E.g. Time, day, location</li></ul>
Week 5-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Delivery of mentoring programme.</li><li>• Each peer mentor had to fill out an online review at the end of each mentoring session, detailing what he or she covered and how they covered it.</li><li>• Student participants complete an evaluation at their last P2P session, to identify positive and negative aspects of the programme</li></ul>
Week 11-13	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Evaluation of programme: Run debriefing session: all of the mentors to get their feedback on the P2P programme, its positives and negatives and changes they would recommend.</li><li>• Meet with module leaders to gain feedback from them with regard to their opinion of the programme and its efficacy</li></ul>

## Student Leadership Programme Procedure

This initiative is delivered through the interaction of three layers of people within an academic programme; i) first-year students, ii) programme peers appointed as student leaders, and iii) academic staff. The approach will utilise a peer leadership structure to aid the transition of first-year students into their programme. This is facilitated through a structure of student leader support and academic staff mentoring of student leaders.

Week 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First Years provide contact permission</li> </ul>
Week 1-3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Student leader with their first years and attendance at introduction evening confirmed makes contact.</li> <li>• Staff mentor makes contact with their student leaders and attendance at introduction evening confirmed.</li> <li>• All leaders and their mentors have an initial meeting before the beginning of the Introduction Evening</li> <li>• Faculty/Programme contacts, SESU, student leaders and first year students meet at the Introduction Evening (Pizza, food provided).</li> <li>• Student groups decide on method of communication</li> <li>• Leaders outline the plan and structure for their group for Semester 1</li> <li>• Leaders highlight the role of the academic advisor (aligned with F7W theme)</li> </ul>
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Time management (Social, personal and academic)</li> <li>• Assessment planner</li> <li>• Navigating the campus (UL Today App)</li> <li>• Attendance</li> </ul>
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Info re Learner Support Centres</li> <li>• How to survive Programming from a student perspective</li> </ul>
Week 8	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Social - Team building exercise - Designed by leaders together.</li> </ol>
Week 10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understanding QCA</li> <li>• Facilitated evaluation and next steps.</li> </ul>

## Procedure for Developing Retention Strategy with an Academic Programme

### Student Engagement Initiatives: Sample Programme Schedule (Arts)

Week 0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Orientation Session:</b> welcome to UL and LM002 – discussion to include introductions, course housekeeping; management of expectations vis workload; SESU and supports.</li> </ul>
Week 1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise and agree date for peer mentoring training. Book venue &amp; refreshments.</li> </ul>
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Students and advisors meeting</b> in Foundation Building</li> </ul>
Week 4 & 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Class Council Reps</b> chosen in tutorials – names fwded to JC &amp; CR. <b>Tutorial Collectives and titles:</b> Each tutorial group will be given a name to create a unique identity, these groups will then be added to</li> </ul>

	a unique email list; – the aim being to foster a sense of class identity. OR discussion forums for each class are set up on SULIS.
Weeks 4, 7 and 12.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Course Director Visits:</b> JC to visit a range of lectures for five minutes meet and greet. Less formal recap of Review mentor applications.</li> </ul>
Weeks 5-10	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Record short videos:</b> Engage ITD to record short videos (2mins-ish) with staff. These will address the points covered in orientation, preparing for exams etc. and will be shared on cohort Sulis page and via email. One vid will be released in week 5, another in week 8, another in week 10.</li> </ul>
Week 7	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Cohort meetings:</b> Second years to meet with first years at event</li> <li>• <b>(S)elect Class reps for Course Boards</b> from Student Council</li> </ul>

## C. Data capturing

- a. Assist in the analysis of university data of new students with regard to student engagement and retention data to provide evidence to inform institutional strategy and direction

## D. Make recommendations on UL policy and strategy developments around student engagement and success

- Proposes and collaborates on developing new strategies for effective first year integration into UL.

## DOCUMENTATION

N/A

## RECORDS

Any student records created within the Unit are stored in accordance with UL’s [Records Management and Retention Policy](#).

## PROCESS VERIFICATION

Evaluation of the Mature Student Office Process effectiveness is carried out using internal audits. Changes to the process are put in place as required and as appropriate.

## REVISION HISTORY

Revision No.	Date revised	Approved by:	Approval date & meeting	Details of Change	Process Owner
1	Nov '18	Quality Team	QT meeting, 05/12/18	<i>Initial Release</i>	First Year Support Coordinator