

RETURNERS WELCOME: What we learned in a year in SBS

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RETURNERS WELCOME

What we learned in a year in SBS

Rich Telling, Mark Godson & Hayden Cronk

19th March 2024



We will discuss...

- The ask within BTE
- What we did
- What was the impact?
- How we developed it
- Some early findings
- Key takeaways

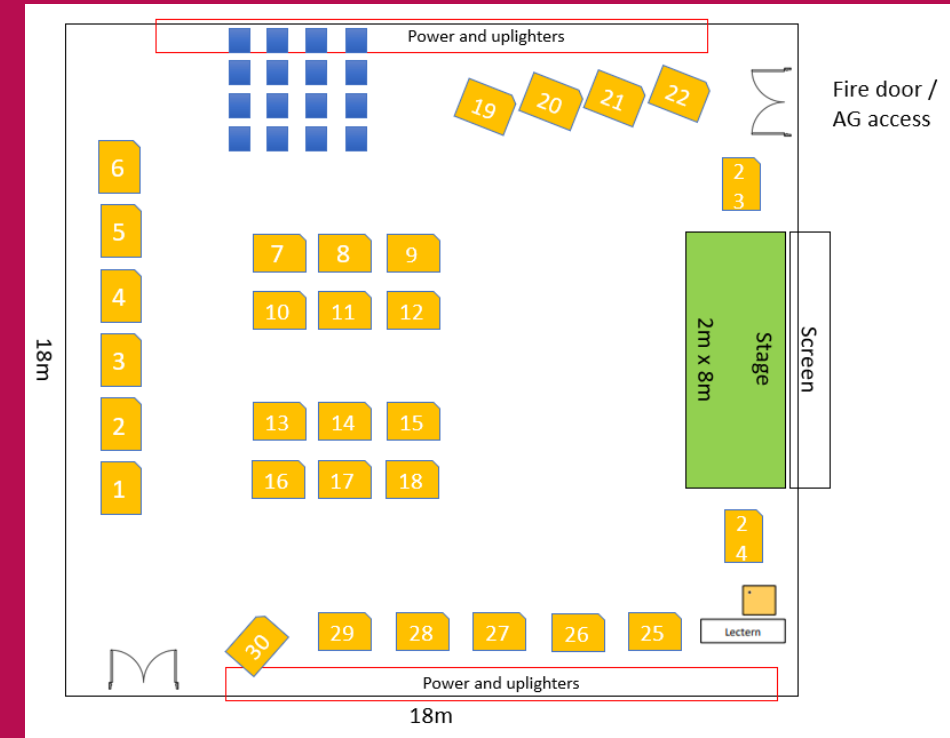


The ask of SBS

- Design a Welcome Week event specifically for L5 + L6 students
- Emulate some good practice already within the College
- Expo style
- Fully committed despite the risk

SBS Welcome Back fair

- **7 Students' Union stands:** Meet your Dept Reps; 4 stands for Academic Societies; Advice Centre; Course Rep sign ups
- **5 Student Entrepreneurs:** Cherry Toosh' prints and products; Jacob's clothing brand; Ellie's artwork prints; Maqqadas' climbing business
- **4 Academic stands:** Thrive at L5; Success at 6; Delivering impactful presentations; Let's look at what makes a 'First'
- **3 BTE Employability:** Careers and Employability stand; Exploring the digital offer; Recruitment timeline and interactive quiz
- **3 BESE Employer Partnerships team:** Pricecheck; Ola's Health and Wellness coaching; The Celtic Collection
- **2 SHU Enterprise:** The Enterprise Residency offer; The Sandwich Placement offer
- **2 BESE Work Experience team:** Meet your placement reps; Meet the Work Experience Specialists
- **2 Guest Speakers:** Bank of England; Alber Bar
- **1 SETL:** Do you know your Academic Advisor?



What it took to deliver

- Working with stakeholders across the university
- Monthly planning meetings
- Securing an appropriate venue
- Choosing an appropriate time
- Support from Hallam Welcome team
- Included on every L5 + L6 Course Induction Schedule
- Theme: Resuming your studies confidently

What was the impact?

- Approx 120 students attended

College Research and Enhancement Project 2023/24

2023

- Jul – Deadline for applications
- Aug – Successful applicants notified
- Oct – Student researchers assigned
- Dec – Converis application approved



2024

- Feb – Recruitment of participants
- Feb / Mar – Discussion groups conducted



Sample and questions asked

3 discussion groups

- 2x Level 6 discussions; 11 students
- 1x Level 5 discussions; 2 students

1. Awareness and understanding
2. Communication
3. Benefits
4. Preferences and moving forward



The reasons why students do not attend Hallam Welcome vary

- *I'm too lazy to commute from Wakefield to like Sheffield so that's a huge factor for me as well to turn up. –Participant 1*
- *We've got our group now we know we enjoy who we spend time with and if we want to, we'll go and find a different way to socialise with other people, rather than just do it in that first week. –Participant 8*
- *It's your busiest year anyways, you gotta get like your head down. –Participant 2*
- *I didn't go because I couldn't...Work and that, yeah. –Participant 6*
- *I think I had to miss even the first day of lectures because I couldn't finish my placement, my job before then. –Participant 7*
- *I don't know if it's like my downfall for not checking my emails enough. I've seen stuff like that, but I didn't know what was going on when –Participant 5*
- *A lot of people couldn't get here because they'd only been given less than 24 hours' notice...so there was only two of us that turned up. –Participant 8*

The role of the Course Leader

- *We only found out the day before because our course leader emailed us. We didn't get any e-mail from the uni about Welcome Week. –Participant 8*
- *I think it was just the Course Leader and that's it. – Participant 6*
- *We got told right at the end of first year saying, oh, by the way, they'll be like this extra week. That was good to sort of put my calendar okay –Participant 2 (L5)*

Suggestions going forward

- *When you actually meet your tutors again, because some of them like are quite new –Participant 1 (L5)*
- *The Academic Adviser as well, because some of us came back from 18 months away from uni. That is a big time out of academia – Participant 5*
- *Postgraduate study as well, in case you want to do it –Participant 1 (L6)*
- *Maybe including a little trip in it would be good...rather than just meeting up in a lecture room somewhere –Participant 6*
- *Involve local businesses as well –Participant 1*

Key takeaways

- Course Induction is not a 'thing' unless the Course Leader is actively communicating about it
- What students need from Hallam Welcome evolves as they reach level 6, what they desire from social activities becomes more nuanced
- Returning placement students are an important group to consider