

# **Belonging by Design: Student-Led Approaches to Shaping Belonging in Higher Education through Co-Creation**

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# AGENDA

- 1** Context: The Personal Tutoring Scheme
- 2** The Co-Design Process
- 3** From Newsletter to Website
- 4** Outcomes and Implications
- 5** Take Away

# CONTEXT: The Personal Tutoring Scheme

- Introduced to address student attrition.
- Evolved to support students with a broader range of academic and non-academic needs.
- Activities include:
  - Providing academic and pastoral support,
  - Signposting to services and resources,
  - Promoting events and opportunities.

(Calabrese et al., 2022; Lindsay, 2011)

# CO-DESIGN PROCESS



Points of engagement with the student voice

(Adapted from Rose, Spinks & Canoto, 2015)

# Belongingness in Higher Education

- Students who experience more joy, motivation and success at university are found to have a stronger sense of belonging.
- Educators can utilise space (areas where students meet with peers and other members of the higher education community) more effectively.

(Pedler et al., 2022; Wong, 2024; Bond et al., 2020)

# Belongingness in Higher Education

## Physical Space

The tangible areas including physical structures and objects.

## Digital Space

The virtual realms which are accessed through digital technologies.

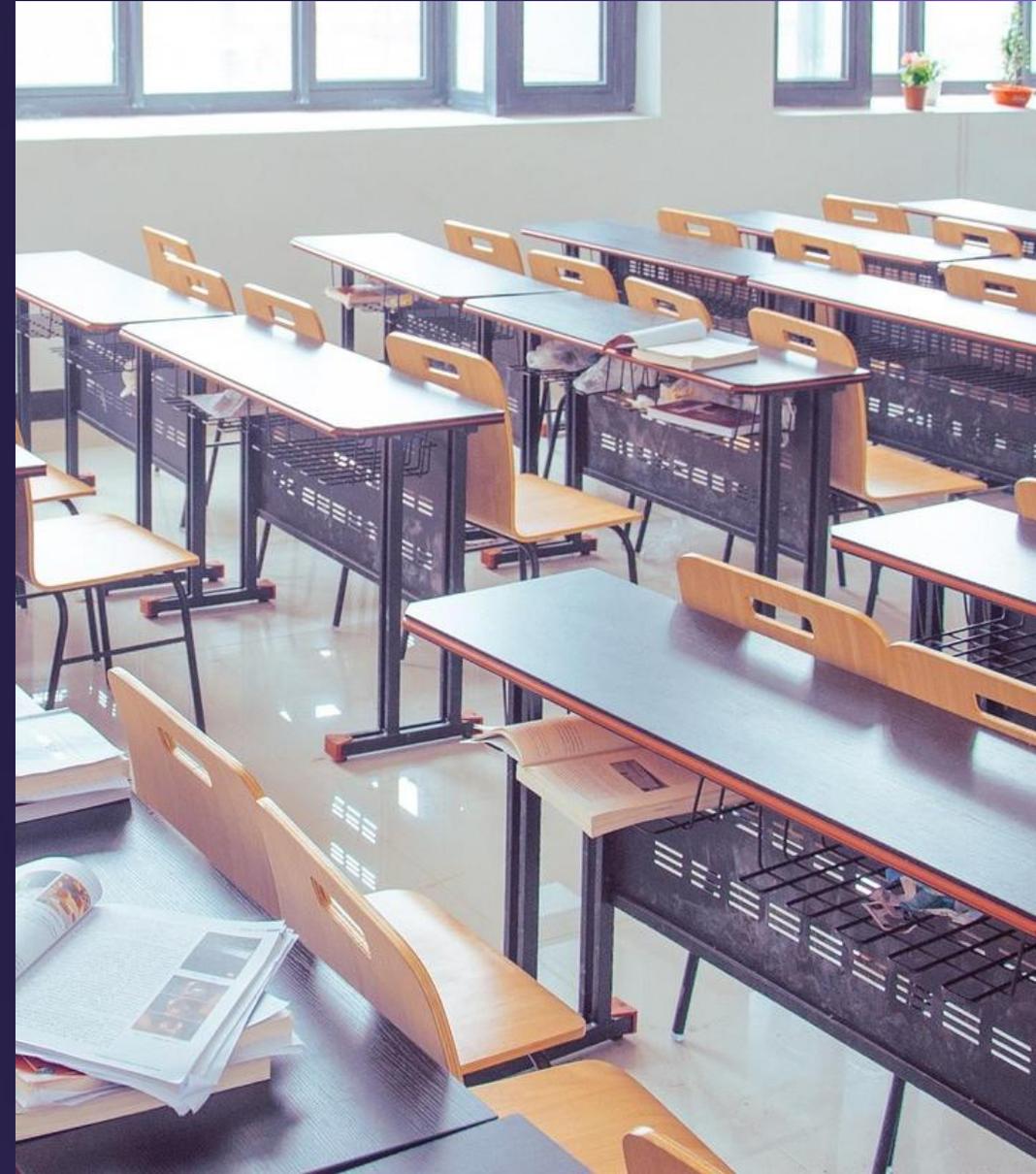
## Relational Space

The quality of the bond between the student and others (i.e., people, objects or beliefs)

## Structural Space

A higher-level space encompassing how space and practices are organized.

(Wong, 2024)



# The Newsletter

- Contact details or services available at the university
- Promoting events and opportunities available to the students
- Links to resources for academic skills and wellbeing



Support for students over Christmas 2023.pdf  
3 MB



## New Year Goals

New Years Resolutions are set by many people all over the world. If you have one in mind or you want to take some time to think about here, I can help you make a plan. If you want to talk through ideas, help making them achievable, or who you have amongst your family or friends who can give you support, you feel that I could help.

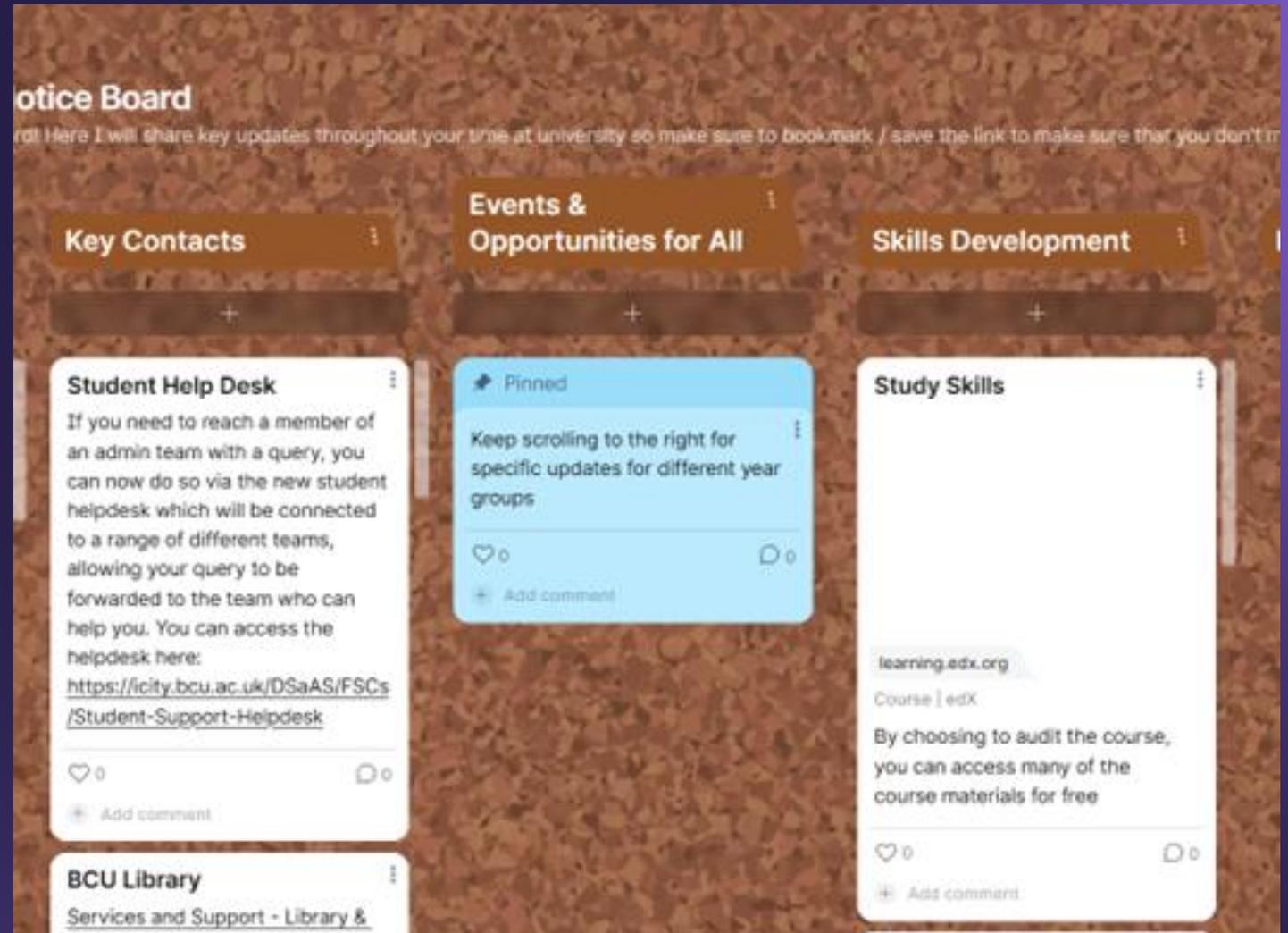
## Voluntary Research Apprenticeships – College of Psychology

**Application Deadline: Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

The VRA is a blended learning approach that gives students the opportunity to work collaboratively with members of staff while at the same time promoting your development to an

# The Noticeboard - Padlet

- Contact details or services available at the university
- Adverts for events and opportunities available to the students
- Links to resources academic resources



# Student Feedback

## Positive Feedback

- 50% agree content met academic and personal needs
- 75% agree the information shared is useful
- It is “a very useful tool”
- It is “good to navigate”

## Constructive Feedback

- “I would like more year tailored specific boards”
- “Maybe external links to outside sources”
- “Explanations would be helpful”
- “I don’t like the layout or how you have to scroll to view the information”

# The Noticeboard Redesign

- Retained the positive qualities
- Provided more specific detail about the services available
- Signposted to academic resources within and beyond the university
- Created dedicated year-specific pages



# Outcomes & Next Steps

- The website integrates student feedback, increasing usability and perceived value
- ~60% have engaged with the website
- A re-evaluation is due to assess the current iteration
- Potential for wider applications:
  - A communication strategy for module / cohort level support
  - Adapt to a resource hub for specific needs e.g., dissertation students

# Take Away

If students see the value, they will engage with that space.  
Embrace the power of the student voice.