



Teesside University Excellence Case Studies

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Empowering Student Wellbeing:
Digital Innovations at Teesside University
Vik Brown





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“The project demonstrates the potential of digital resources to provide flexible, accessible, and effective support for student wellbeing.”

Vik Brown

Introduction and Background

Vik Brown, a Student Lifestyle Advisor at Teesside University, has been pivotal in addressing student well-being through innovative digital solutions. Over the past year, student referrals for lifestyle support surged from 92 in 2022/23 to 242 in 2023/24. Despite this high demand, 123 referred students did not attend any support sessions, highlighting the need for more accessible, student-driven support mechanisms.

In response, Vik created engaging and accessible digital resources using Adobe Express, focusing on key areas like sleep and nutrition. These visually appealing and interactive resources were designed to be student-friendly and easily accessible, allowing students to manage their well-being flexibly to fit their busy lives.

Objectives

The primary objectives of this initiative were to:

- Provide accessible and flexible support for student well-being.
- Address the significant increase in student referrals.
- Create engaging and student-friendly digital resources that encourage self-care and healthy habits.

Implementation

Vik created visually appealing, interactive, and accessible digital booklets on sleep and nutrition using Adobe Express. She is also starting drop-in sessions for informal advice on these topics. A master's health psychology student collaborated on the nutrition project, contributing design and content based on psychological insights and evidence-based practices.

A case study is being initiated to evaluate the impact of sleep resources on students' sleep patterns and overall well-being. This integration of academic research ensures the resources are practical and scientifically validated, providing a framework for continuous improvement and demonstrating the initiative's positive impact on student well-being.

Vik will continue collecting quantitative and qualitative data from the drop-ins and lifestyle service to evaluate their impact and support further development of the service.

Challenges

Several challenges were encountered during the implementation of this project. A major challenge was reaching students who were referred but did not respond to or utilise the support services. To improve attendance, Vik advertised the sessions on screens, Blackboard, and events calendars. Also, balancing the need for detailed information with the risk of overwhelming students was another significant challenge that had to be addressed.

Outcomes

Although the initiative has just begun, the four students who accessed the service have made significant lifestyle changes and seen substantial improvements in a short time. For example, one student bought blacked-out curtains to improve their sleep hygiene (thus reducing light pollution within their room). Another student developed a solid bedtime routine to prepare the body and mind for sleep. From this, they started reading again and due to sleeping better, having more energy and helping around the house more which has improved relationships with parents.

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and younger siblings. Hopefully, the numbers will continue to go up within attendance as student referrals have already up to 45. The two resources Vik created are available here.

[Link to Lifestyle magazine resource](#)

[Sleep Booklet resource](#)

Benefits

The project offers numerous benefits, including enhanced student well-being through improved sleep and nutrition. It also offers greater flexibility and control for students in accessing support and increased efficiency for the CCI team in delivering well-being support. These benefits collectively contributed to a more supportive and responsive environment for student wellbeing at Teesside University. The lifestyle service's figures showed that 119 students engaged and saw an improvement in their overall well-being, which in turn improved their attendance and attainment.

Lessons Learned

Key lessons learned from the project include:

- Allow time to explore and become familiar with digital tools.
- Create flexible resources that can be easily adapted and updated.
- Use visually appealing designs to engage students.

These insights will be valuable for future projects and initiatives aimed at enhancing student well-being.

Future Plans

Vik is already thinking about what's next for the project including:

- Expand the range of digital resources to cover additional aspects of student well-being.

- Continue to refine and improve existing resources based on student feedback.
- Explore new features of Adobe Express and other digital technologies to enhance support.

These plans aim to build on the success of the current initiative and further enhance the support available to students.

Recommendations

For others considering similar projects, consider the following:

- Invest time in learning and experimenting with Adobe Express embracing its versatility.
- Focus on creating flexible and student-friendly resources.
- Utilise the extensive Adobe Stock Library.

Conclusion

This case study highlights the successful use of digital tools to enhance student wellbeing at Teesside University. By addressing critical needs in sleep and nutrition, the initiative has made a significant positive impact on student health and engagement. The project demonstrates the potential of digital resources to provide flexible, accessible, and effective support for student wellbeing.

Contact Information

For more information or to explore the use of Adobe tools in education, please contact the Digital Learning Specialist Team at adobehelp@tees.ac.uk.