# 4 insights to help you increase student retention

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Education Guide

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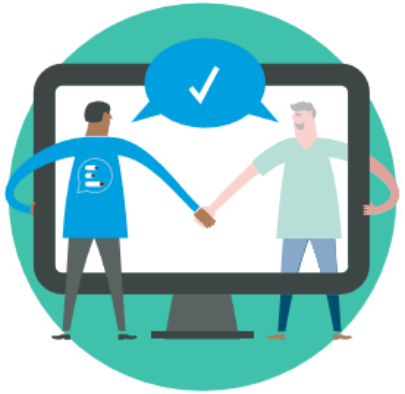
Real-time polling

# Outline and Introduction...



- In this guide we first take a quick look at the What Works? reports. What are they? How were they conducted? … and … Why students retention is so important?
- We will then share 4 ways to increase student retention, reflecting on direct advise from within the What Works? reports and sharing our suggestions in how this can be achieved.
- Additionally we draw in evidence and research taken from a Meetoo commissioned survey of 500 UK students earlier this year.
- The aim of this guide is to provide insight into how engagement, collaboration and interaction can improve student retention and satisfaction. Providing ideas and options to take with you into the classroom.

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# What are the What Works? reports

- **What Works?1** (2012)
  - A three-year programme initiated and funded by the Paul Hamlyn Foundation and the Higher Education Funding Council for England.
  - Undertaken between 2008 and 2011, with £1 million supporting seven projects and involving 22 institutions.
  - The report examined various interventions and approaches to improving student retention and success.

- **What Works?2** (2017)
  - Drew together evidence from 13 institutions and 43 discipline areas.
  - The purpose was to further examine similar objectives to the first report, but particularly and crucially, develop an understanding of how to implement change in large and complex organisations.

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# Why is student retention important?

***"Every student that drops out of their higher education course is a loss: a loss to their university or college, a loss to the future economy and, above all, a loss to that individual."***

***Professor Patricia Broadfoot, CBE***

***University of Bristol***

***Chair, What Works? Advisory Group***

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# #1

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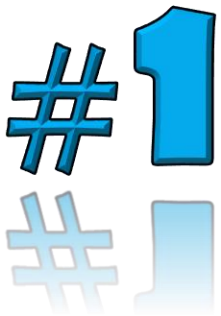

# Increase students' feeling of belonging at initial lectures and beyond

## The What Works? advice…

- **The human side comes first:** Finding friends, feeling confident and, above all, feeling a part of your course of study and the institution.

- **Interventions increase interaction:** Interventions or activities should aim to enhance student engagement and belonging through interaction between staff and students.

- **Early engagement:** Essential to student retention and success is engagement from the start.

# Increase students' feeling of belonging at initial lectures and beyond

## Our suggestions …

- Great create fun, interactive, engaging welcome, induction and training sessions.
- Use live polling to break the ice for example:
  - What part of the world are you from?
  - Who hear took a gap year?
  - What's your top choice for choosing this subject?
  - Who's your favourite Star Wars character?
- This will help promote belonging and familiarity between the group and give them talking points. Making students happier and more comfortable increases retention.

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# #1

# Increase students' feeling of belonging at initial lectures and beyond

## Our supporting research showed…

- We found that 53% of students leave lectures wondering if everyone else was as confused as you.
- Allowing students to know if others feel the same increases their engagement and connection with others in the class.

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# #2

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# Connect with your students

## The What Works? advice…

- **Encourage collaboration:** Activities should encourage collaboration and engagement with fellow students and members of staff to develop meaningful relationships.

- **Proactively engage students:** Activities should proactively seek to engage students and develop their capacity to do so.

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# #2 Connect with your students

## Our suggestions …

- Regular activities such as the below build the on the student-lecturer relationship and can be achieved inside the classroom not take up time outside the classroom.

- ✓ Q&A sessions to increase lecturer engagement with students.
- ✓ Discussion space to create an open platform to share and generate ideas.
- ✓ Teaching feedback through Q&A or polling.
- ✓ Supporting students when on vocational training with open Q&A boards and weekly feedback polls.

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# #2 Connect with your students

## Our supporting research showed...

- 75% of students felt they would ask more questions during lectures if they could ask anonymously.
- Making lectures more inclusive by giving everyone a voice through Q&A allows students ask when they don't understand. Anonymous Q&A in most situations encourages participation and removes any embarrassment factors.

- Over 50% of students said lecturers who follow a traditional lecture format need to find ways to make their sessions more engaging.
- The format of lectures are changing and students want to be engaged and use modern technology that they use in their day to day lives in class.

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# #3

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# Vary the technology and/or media being used in your lectures

## The What Works? advice…

- **Early engagement:** Early engagement is essential to student retention and success, with a variety of media being used to convey information.

- **Active learning:** To support active learning as part of your teaching course.

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# #3

# Vary the technology and/or media being used in your lectures

## Our suggestions …

- There are 100’s of technologies available to lecturers and teachers. Finding a tool that works for you and can deliver more than one type of collaboration/interaction helps save time and gives students a consistent way to interact.
- Some of the ways Meetoo can help engage your class are:

  - ✓ End of topic or term assessment and revision
  - ✓ Quick poll assessment to check understanding
  - ✓ Discussion forum to generate and share ideas
  - ✓ Q&A answered at set break points during the lecture
  - ✓ Feedback/MFQ/Evaluation polls
  - ✓ Welcome week & training session engagement
  - ✓ Measuring learning is taking place with before & after polls

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# #3

# Vary the technology and/or media being used in your lectures

## How others have combined technology…

- You can use tools like Meetoo alongside other technology like in this example from Southampton University where they used Skype and Meetoo to connect 2 lecturers to one classroom.

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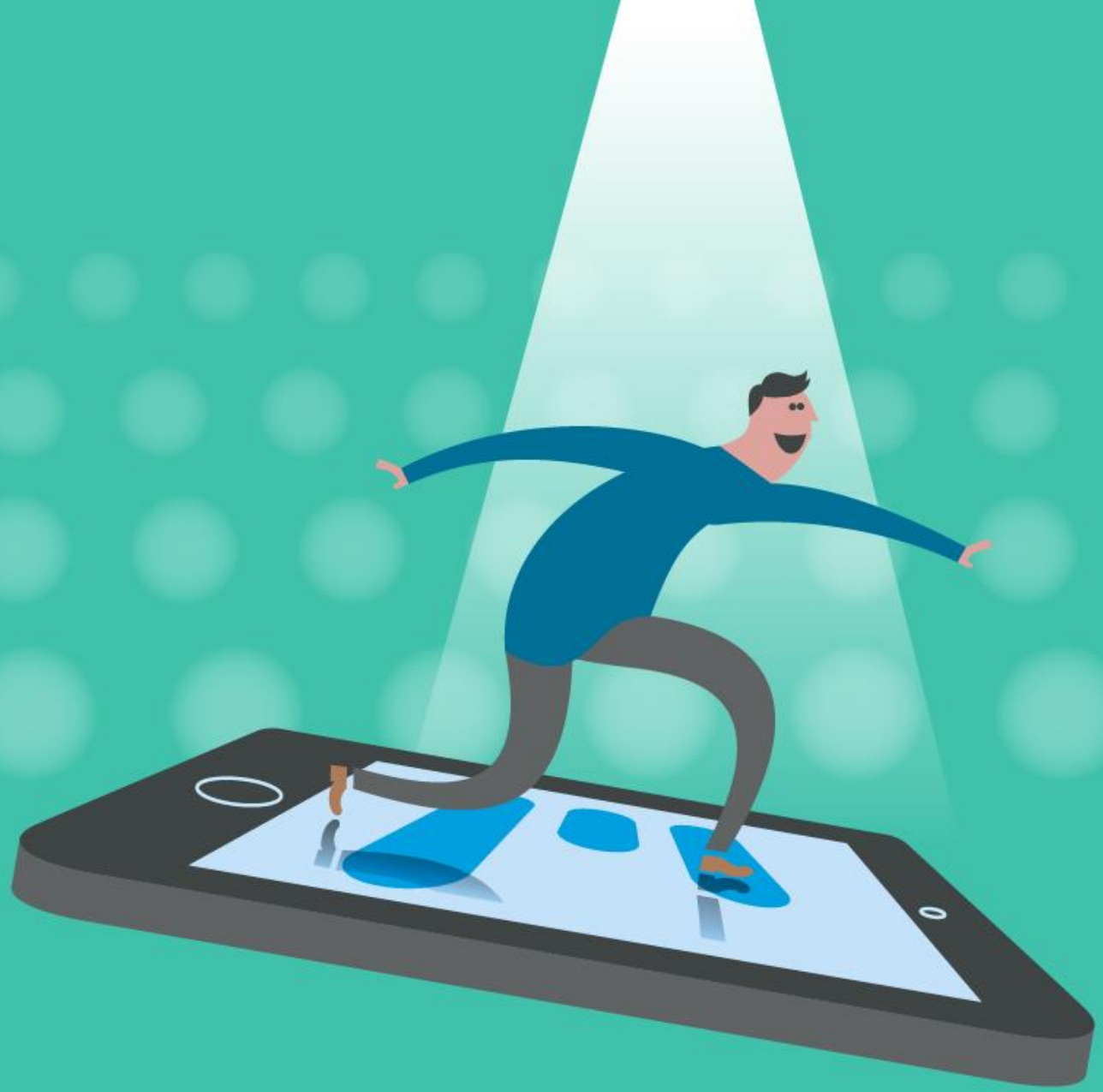
# #4



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# Help students evaluate their knowledge throughout the course

## The What Works? advice…

- **Realistic progress:** Importance of a strategic, coordinated approach to supporting the transition from school/college to university.

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# #4 Help students evaluate their knowledge throughout the course

## Our suggestions ...

- Help students measure their understanding through regular assessment and allow them to be aware of any knowledge gaps. An important check point in getting to grips with HE learning.
- Ask quick polls to gauge understanding levels before moving onto the next topic.
- Allow students to ask questions anonymously, allowing them to avoid embarrassment and avoid peer pressure but still ask when they don't understand or need to clarify something.

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# #4 Help students evaluate their knowledge throughout the course

## Our supporting research showed...

- 56% of students leave lectures feeling they have a lack of understanding in terms of what the lecture was about.
- 64% of students leave lectures wishing certain topics had been more fully explained.

- Opening up communication channels, allowing students to easily ask questions and running quick checks on understanding makes a difference, giving the students what they need and improving learning.

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# #5 Bonus Tip!

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# Support success across the institution

## The What Works? advice…

- **Whole-institution approach:** Insights show the importance of a whole-institution approach to improving student retention and success.
- **Continued embedded engagement:** Interventions and approaches to improve student retention and success should, as far as possible, be embedded into mainstream academic provision.
- **Monitoring:** The extent and quality of student engagement should be monitored, and followed up where necessary.

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# #5 Support success across the institution

## Our suggestions …

- ✓ Find an engagement tool that provides a structured and simple approach to onboarding and managing staff use.
- ✓ A simple and accessible system for staff with seamless integration of technology into their ways of working.
- ✓ A variety of support formats and methods available to staff, enabling them to find the resources they need and in a format they prefer to use.
- ✓ Reporting and analytics for management to understand and measure success.
- ✓ A tool that students will find easy to use and enjoy engaging with.

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# Summary

The What Works? reports show there is strong and clear evidence that ‘one size does not fit all’, and thus there is no single intervention that will address the complexity of student success.

However class engagement tools do go a long way in providing may of the needed interactions that lectures are often missing.

#1 Increase students’ feeling of belonging at initial lectures and beyond

#2 Connect with your students

#3 Vary the technology and/or media being used in your lectures

#4 Help students evaluate their knowledge throughout the course

#5 Support success across the institution

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We hope this guide gave you food for thought.

If you'd like to try out Meetoo for free get started here

Alternatively contact the education team for more information at

education@meetoo.com

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