UK Council
for International
Student Affairs

Planning and running orientation programmes for international students

UKCISA

UKCISA is the UK's national advisory body serving the interests of international students and those who work with them.

It does so through research, print and web-based publications, a national training programme, dedicated advice lines for students and advisors, and liaison and advocacy with institutions, agencies and government.

Its members include all UK universities, those further and higher education colleges which are active internationally, and a range of specialist and representative bodies.

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Section A – Introduction

This publication aims to provide guidance, ideas and a list of practical items that you can use to aid you in designing orientation events for your students. Different institutions have different needs at different times; you can pick and mix from this publication to put together what you need.

Colleagues in FE and HE and English Language teaching staff have been consulted in the writing of this publication, with some material being provided by Walsall College and icebreakers by a range of institutions. Practitioners should be able to select those aspects and ideas that are most appropriate to their institution and level of available funding. The term "institution" is used throughout and should be taken to mean college, school, university or whatever your organisation is called.

Some practitioners have the timing, budget and maybe even content of events and programmes imposed on them by senior managers. You may be able to use this publication's ideas to inform your management, to suggest additions or alterations to their demands. At the very least you should be able to develop what is imposed or introduce content you judge to be beneficial to your students.

Every effort has been made to include very practical information. It has been assumed that you will get from your own experience or other sources (eg UKCISA materials, your IT staff, local resources, printed materials etc) ideas about, among other things:

- cultural awareness training
- geographical or institution-specific information
- preparing official documentation
- budgeting procedures and funding
- how to get your students to your institution
- how to design web pages or to create pod-casts

1.   Orientation or Induction?

Dictionary definitions of orientation are "finding direction"[1] or "the adjustment or alignment of oneself or one's ideas to surroundings or circumstances"[2]. In the context of international (or home) student support, orientation is used widely for activities to support the transition into educational institutions in the UK.

[1] Cambridge Advanced Learners' Dictionary
[2] Oxford English Dictionary

It would be more accurate to describe these activities as induction. They are generally provided in a student's early days. Orientation need not – and ideally should not – cease a week or two after a student's arrival, as:

- periods of transition occur at many points of the educational experience
- orientation is a continuous, not a discrete, process.

In this publication, the terms will be used synonymously but the type of orientation detailed is induction, though this may go beyond the first few days. This type of orientation can go on for many weeks and can include sessions, events or activities throughout a student's first year in the UK.

In many FE colleges and other institutions, the activities that are labelled induction or orientation by the institution are heavily weighted to taking English tests, getting student ID, registering with the library and so on. A typical college describes their induction programme as: "This is where you will spend time settling in. You will receive a Welcome Pack and the International Office will give you help and guidance in areas such as completing an enrolment form for your course, opening a bank account, registering with a doctor, registering with the Police for immigration purposes."[3] International student practitioners may well be required to support students through all of this and the welcome that they can provide while doing this is invaluable. This publication aims to go beyond these administrative tasks and suggests some activities that can be scheduled in between or in addition to them.

Orientation into a new institution is valuable for a student coming from another part of the UK as well as one newly-arrived in the UK; however, this publication is aimed at those in the latter category.

2.   Why do students need orientation?

International students are removed from the cues, clues and familiar landscape of their own culture. More than home students, they are removed from their usual support networks and mechanisms. Many of your new students will be lacking direction, not knowing where to go, literally or metaphorically. It may help to consider the following:

How would a new student be feeling about moving to the UK?
They would have received an acceptance letter from their UK institution; torn open the letter, danced round the table with their mum, phoned all their friends to tell them the exciting news, arranged a celebratory evening . . . . and then started to wonder:

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[3] <http://www.brooklands.ac.uk/docs/prospectus/International%20Student%20Guide.pdf>

- I've never left India before – what will it be like?
- Will I make friends?
- Will I understand what people are saying?
- Will I cope with the work?
- Will my English be good enough to succeed?
- What about the food – will I be able to get the sort of food I like?
- I've heard so much about the British weather – is it really that miserable?
- What sort of clothes will I need?
- What about buses, trains, doctors?

They will have received a lot of information from their institution and now wish they had read it more carefully. They also wish they could remember what they'd done with it. They recall that there was mention of an orientation programme/activities and really hope that this will help.

If you have ever lived in another country, especially if you went on your own, you'll appreciate the many feelings of apprehension, excitement and strangeness.

"Is there anything more frustrating than being unable to make things work? I am thinking of the child struggling to tie his shoes or the agony of the man who has suffered a stroke, striving to make himself understood, to get change out of his pocket or even to feed himself. Equally frustrating though not quite so obvious are the common, everyday problems people face such as disorientation in space or the inability to get from here to there according to plan, or failure to progress in school or on the job or to control the social system of which one is a part. In these circumstances, life turns from an ego-expanding, joyous process to a shriveled, shadow world hardly worth the effort."[4]

How effective is written pre-departure information?

There is a great deal of emphasis on preparing to leave home, to gain entry to the new institution and country, but it is not possible to make much preparation for actually being there.

There will probably be written information about how things work but this will never be sufficient for all students. It is important that this should all be written down but there are major problems with information that is designed to be read and absorbed:
- students get so much information in print that they can't absorb it all or they don't know what will be of most use

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[4] Hall, Edward T (1976, reprinted 1989), 'Beyond Culture' p105, Anchor

- students' language skills may not allow them to understand all of the information
- too many students won't read what you tell them to! (Perhaps one important part of any orientation process is to encourage students to learn how important in UK culture it is to read or to look up information. You might consider training assistants/colleagues to encourage students to look up answers rather than to just tell them. Students need to learn a level of independence as part of the orientation process)
- you can only write down information about the formal routes. Every country, organisation or community has its cow paths – the routes that people take customarily, the short cuts that become the usual way of getting things done. Orientation can begin to make students familiar with those cow paths as well as the official routes

3.   What does orientation offer new students?

What do you want students to gain? What should they look like at the end of the process? The University of Sheffield[5] aspires for the fully orientated student (home or international) to:
- be well informed about academic and social issues
- understand the environment of higher education
- recognise the skills needed to succeed
- be engaged with their subject(s)
- feel confident about their future
- feel they belong
- know where to go for help
- have made friends

The College of Engineering, Computer Science and Technology, California State University, Los Angeles[6] reports that directors of eighteen minority engineering programmes ranked the following as the most important objectives of orientation:
- community building
- academic survival skills
- personal development
- professional development
- orientation to the school or college and the university

Of course, induction events that you organise can't achieve everything but can work

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[5] ‹http://www.shef.ac.uk/ssd/reg/orientation/departments/induction.html›
[6] Landis, Raymond 2005 "Retention By Design: Achieving Excellence in Minority Engineering Education" College of Engineering, Computer Science and Technology, California State University, Los Angeles

towards goals such as these:

Recognition of transition
- a welcome and a thank-you for choosing your institution
- congratulations on getting a place
- a safe environment to begin to find their way
- an opportunity to begin to feel ownership – this is <u>my</u> institution; I belong here
- a bridge between cultures
- cultural awareness:
    - "The first thing an Englishman does on going abroad is to find fault with what is French because it is not English."[7] Of course, this also holds true for international students coming to the UK.
    - Beginning to understand that being foreign is a challenge! Edward T Hall, speaking at a NAFSA conference in the 1990s, said that in any unplanned intercultural exchange, one party is likely to feel uncomfortable. His view was that it is better if the 'uncomfortable party' is the foreign individual since they can at least be prepared for the issues surrounding cross-cultural communication.
    - "A fish isn't aware of the properties of water until it is removed from it." This is a stage when students can begin – and need – to be aware of their own culture. If they don't understand that their responses to situations and interactions are based largely on their own culture, they will not be able to adapt their own behaviour or deal with those responses in a comfortable way.
    - Orientation is a bridge between the familiarity and safety of the home culture and the UK. It provides a safe environment in which new experiences can be shared and discussed with others who are experiencing similar feelings. It is a time when students can be helped to start to feel ownership of their new environment and encouraged to be confident in this new and exciting stage of their lives.
    - Much of what happens in orientation is about making new students aware of their own responses and attitudes and helping them to adjust them in new situations if they are not appropriate.

[7] Hazlitt, William (1824) "Notes of a Journey through France and Italy"

Helping Students Change Attitudes[8]
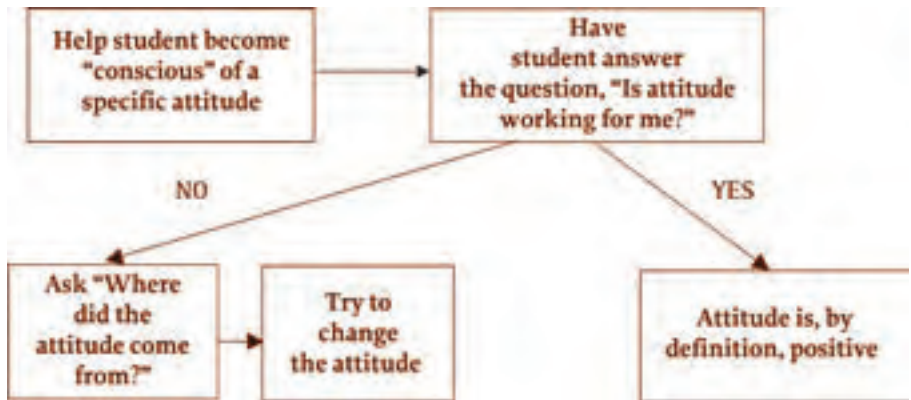
Preparation for success

"Orientation can be the defining moment in the transition to college for the student – a time in which basic habits are formed that influence students' academic success and personal growth and marks the beginning of a new educational experience."[9]

The students want to succeed academically; we want them to succeed. Orientation has an important role to play in contributing to that success. It is important for students to get to know the culture of the department/school to avoid getting things wrong relating to:

- relationships with staff
- how and when they can get help
- academic staff's expectations
- academic staff's requirements
- how work is presented and submitted

Ideally, those teaching or supervising the students will provide this academic orientation but you can contribute to new students' academic success by:

- preparing them for the fact that things will be different
- introducing them to the individuals and services that can help them
- encouraging independence by providing activities that necessitate them finding things out for themselves

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[8] <www.namepa.org/region_c/conference/retention_by_design-namepa_chicago_2007.ppt>
[9] Mullendore, Richard H., and Leslie Banahan. "Designing Orientation Programs." In *Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student: A Handbook for Improving the First Year of College*, edited by M. L. Upcraft, John N. Gardner, and Betsy O. Barefoot. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

- providing general study skills if you are able or have input from others
- providing knowledge, skills, awareness and information that will contribute to making their non-academic life easier; the less stress they have, the more comfortable they should be in their academic life

Make students receptive to essential information

Orientation has to be more than a series of information sessions. Staff in your institution will probably have many ideas about what students need to be told during any orientation activity. Many of these might be better incorporated into introductory talks or classes in academic departments. Nevertheless, the opportunity to pass on some information should not be missed. Your colleagues may well have picked up issues which are of general importance and value for all students participating in the activities. A summary of these might be:

- academic (both study skills and language skills)
- institutional
- legal (immigration, police registration, employment, police matters)
- health issues
- safety
- geography
- culture
- questions (encourage them to ask; this might be done by putting cards in a box)

Introductions

Students need to feel part of a community, where there are others they can relate to. During the orientation process you can help them to meet:

- other newcomers
- current students
- staff
- people from outside your institution

Preparation and confidence to allow students to join integrated events

The aim of orientation is, in part, to create the feeling of belonging to the international student community. Most practitioners know, however, that it is much more of a challenge to facilitate truly international communities – ones that include home students. A fail-safe formula for this would be a best-seller! In the meantime, practitioners can at least encourage international students to meet home students and people from the local community, and to take part in activities for all students. This can help the students make some contacts and, hopefully, friends. Most importantly, this can help them develop confidence.

4.   What do different types of students need?

All new students need you to address, as much as possible, all of the issues raised in 3 above. What might be different for different types of student is:

- the focus (as they may only be studying for a very short period of time and/or may be arriving mid-programme)
- group-specific items, eg
  - issues relating to guardians for under-18s only
  - research skills for PhD students
  - language skills for non-native speakers of English only

Whichever group you are dealing with, brainstorm with colleagues what the issues in 3 above mean for your students and your institution.

5.   Why do you and your institution need students to be orientated?

"Senior management say we have to"

This is one common reason for running orientation activities. Management may not realise how scant your resources are and may have a different agenda to yours; however, doing something for your new students is much better than doing nothing. So this should be seen as an opportunity – however challenging – not as a problem.

Marketing, and benchmarking against other institutions

Marketing departments need to portray their institutions in the best light. For parents and sponsors wanting the best value for their investment and comparing "products", knowing that you will provide support and care on arrival can be a factor in their decision-making. Newly-arrived students contact lots of people; so a positive experience early on means lots of positive marketing. Organisations such as I-Graduate include provision of orientation activities in their benchmarking.

Better prepared students save staff time

Through providing a comprehensive and effective orientation programme, fewer subsequent student questions will have to be answered and individual students will not be trickling through the doors of the International Office for weeks to come.

Better retention

Research has indicated that first-year Experience Programmes are relevant and necessary for student retention in higher education (Mullendore and Banahan, 2005[10]). New student orientation programmes are critical to this experience.

[10] Mullendore, Richard H., and Leslie Banahan. "Designing Orientation Programs." In *Challenging and Supporting the First-Year Student: A Handbook for Improving the First Year of College*, edited by M. L. Upcraft, John N. Gardner, and Betsy O. Barefoot. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2005

However, it is hard to find hugely significant data about comparative retention rates for those who did and those who did not attend orientation events.

At the University of California, Riverside, attendance at orientation appears to increase a student's success to a significant degree. Grade point averages (GPA) are increased; drop-out rates are decreased.

First year students at UCR in 2002-2003 who attended orientation "had a cumulative grade point average of 2.65 (on a 4.0 scale) at the completion of their first year, compared to a grade point average of 2.45 for those that did not attend Orientation."[11] Of that same cohort, retention rates were 7.5% higher for those who did attend orientation. It could be argued that students who are proactive and seek support are more likely to choose orientation, of course; however, there is general agreement among practitioners that a well-orientated student settles more quickly into academic and student life in general.

Students who have met support staff or who, at least, know where to find them, are more able to find guidance before a problem becomes a crisis or to obtain help in responding appropriately to a crisis.

Improved likelihood of nearing or reaching academic potential
Again, it is hard to find extensive, hard and convincing data but orientation can reduce the time wasted on settling in, finding out how to do things, making more mistakes than necessary and so on.

It is acknowledged that all of the above apply to all new students, not just those coming from outside the UK.

6.   What are the barriers to success?
Buy-in from senior management/budget holders
Not everyone's senior management are aware of the benefits of and need for orientation. You need support to be able to promote, fund, staff, locate and prioritise orientation activities. Hopefully, some of the issues in 1 – 4 above will assist in persuading them. It may be stressed that in particular the value of orientation activities are:
- as a marketing tool
- to improve retention post-offer
- to improve retention post-registration

[11] ‹http://www.orientation.ucr.edu›

Demands of staff
- teaching/academic staff who may prioritise activities in class before students have had any preparation
- non-teaching staff who may expect you to spend time helping new arrivals to complete administrative tasks

Transport/distance
Students living in private accommodation may find it more difficult to take part, especially where they are on homestay and have to be home at certain times for meals.

Section B – In the beginning: research and pilot

1.   Find out what is already going on

Do any departments or courses already run orientation activities for new students? If you have foundation or English Language classes, it may be that staff there already provide some. Rather than reinvent wheels, find out if there is anything you can copy, connect with or join.

2.   Pilot

If you have never run an orientation activity or programme before, it is advisable to start small and run a pilot in the first year. This will make it easier to identify the potential problems, and the successes and areas which need to be improved. When planning a pilot, you will need to consider the following:

Aims – Be clear about what your aims are for the eventual main activity/programme. Some time spent planning this will help you to identify what you want to get out of the pilot. Will this be a pilot for a much bigger programme? Is it mainly for students from a specific country, or for those following a specific programme?

Keep it small – Mistakes on a small scale are not such a disaster as those involving a lot of people or money!

Conduct the pilot orientation at an "off-peak" time, if possible – Choose a time when there is a new intake of international students but a much smaller number than your main intake. If possible, avoid the need to include a residential element.

Run the pilot in just one department or school or with just one group of international students.

Consult your English Language teaching staff/EFL tutors, as their involvement is important (see Appendix 4)

Try to include major items that will be in your main programme – for example, if you intend to use student assistants for the main orientation, use a small number for the pilot, giving them appropriate training (see Appendix 1). If you're going to run social events, then include at least one in the pilot.

Use this guide to plan the pilot although it is likely that you will hold more small group sessions than large-scale presentations. You will need to cover the most important aspects of a full-scale orientation programme.

Feedback, feedback, feedback – To get the most out of the pilot, it's essential that you obtain as much detailed feedback as possible. This will be central to evaluation of the pilot and to future planning. Ideally, you will need feedback from: student participants, student assistants and all relevant staff involved - international support, academic and English language/EFL, accommodation colleagues.

Monitor activities and events at every opportunity – Write notes as ideas or problems come to light. Keep them on a database, or centrally available, and encourage others to do the same.

Plan time to evaluate the feedback and your experience – If you had been planning a full-scale orientation, you might need to revise this. If you need more funding to carry out the full programme of activities, evaluations from the pilot can be highlighted as evidence for this. Some ideas may have failed completely; on the other hand, others might come to light.

Ask participants to complete questionnaires and/or attend feedback discussions

Do the same for staff working on the programme with you

Remember that people are far quicker to make negative than positive comments – Try not to be discouraged (see Appendix 9 for suggestions for evaluation.)

Put your experience and outcomes into planning the next orientation event or programme, and start to do it immediately while everything is fresh in your mind

Do not be tempted to expand your plans too much with the next one

Section C – Planning

No successful event can take place without careful planning. This section includes all the areas that you will need to consider before being able to run a successful orientation programme. Points 1-10 focus on forward planning and the major decisions you will need to make a long time in advance of the event itself. Points 11-16 look at more detailed areas that are likely to be decided upon nearer the time. Many of these elements can be adapted for ongoing orientation which might be a series of short events/activities or materials that can be used well into the study period. Appendix 8 gives examples of event planning checklists which summarise the areas covered in this section.

1. Ensure that everyone knows what you are planning

Liaise closely with:

- ELT staff, including EFL/ESOL teachers if appropriate (see Appendix 4)
- marketing and recruitment colleagues
- local agents, if your institution uses them
- feeder schools or institutions
- Head of Student Services
- colleagues in academic departments /schools: there may be staff with specific responsibilities for international student matters
- those responsible for:
  - offer letters
  - pre-arrival information
  - web pages (consider whether information is to be available in other languages as well as English)
  - enrolling or registering new students
- departments/schools that will receive those students
- Students' Union/guild/societies

2. When do you start planning?

The timing of your planning will depend on a range of factors, including:

- the culture and size of your institution
- the size of your programme/events
- whether or not it will be residential

- when it will occur – eg, if pre-term students will need their entry clearance to be valid from an earlier date, offer letters may need to mention the programme for that purpose
- funding round – do you need to apply for an additional budget, and what are the internal deadlines for doing this? Can orientation be funded from additional fee income?
- How far in advance do large venues need to be booked?
- If you are dealing with rolling enrolment, what spaces are not being used by teaching staff?
- Will there be a period during which staff involved will not be able to take annual leave? If so, they must be notified of this many months in advance
- Are catering staff normally available outside term time/office hours? If not, this must be negotiated or problems solved months in advance
- When does information go out to prospective students? You might need to have precise or at least approximate dates flagged in your main brochure/ prospectus and/or pre-arrival information so that students can plan flight bookings etc.

3. Where will students stay during the events/programme?

If events are before the students' studies begin, their accommodation will need to be available early or they will need to book temporary accommodation. Remember to consider the following:

- Will their accommodation be available at the time required?
- If students are to stay with host families, will their hosts be ready for them?
- Who will pay for this? If the students have to pay, this must be made very clear to them.
- If accommodation needs to be booked, when do you need students to confirm applications?

4. When can students have programme dates and times confirmed?

You will need to consult those responsible for all pre-arrival publications, mailings and web pages. This is easier where processes are centralised. If they are not, you will need to liaise on a school or departmental basis. If events are arranged other than at the beginning of the academic session (eg, for cross-sessional students, or in the case of rolling ESL enrolment), do the people teaching the students know what you are offering students or requiring of them?

5.   When and for how long?

You may have little choice about when your orientation programme takes place, and how long it will last because of resources, timings imposed by the institution, when the students will arrive and so on. A little time is better than none, so make the best use of what you have.

- If you have the opportunity to run a programme immediately post-arrival that lasts more than a full day, you may have to decide when it occurs. This is likely to be determined by when and what else is going on but generally this could be:
    - the week before term/programme/classes start (Week -1)
    - during any mainstream (not international) induction (Week 0)
    - the first week of term/programme (Week 1)
- If your programme/event has to be squeezed in before classes start, you can continue into term/programme-time by offering:
    - short events in evenings, spare periods, lunch hours. Once a term/semester is underway, it is notoriously difficult to get students to attend in any great numbers.
    - self-directed, peer-led or independent activities to ensure that there are activities for those students who are interested and/or in need at any time.
    - rolling programmes to "mop up" those who missed the slots offered previously or to cater for rolling enrolment.
    - some FE colleges have weekly EFL enrolment so specific provision may need to be on a 1:1 basis
- Orientation that continues beyond the initial arrival period can include much of the material from this publication but:
    - in more depth
    - over a longer period
    - linking to the students' experience, progress etc

6.   Which students?

Again, you may not have a choice; different institutions may impose different groupings or target those in most need or whose fees are seen to demand higher levels of service. You could run events or programmes for:

- all international students
- non-EEA only
- EEA only
- exchange only
- students with families
- by residence/campus

- by department/school/faculty/course
- by level of study
- by nationality/geographic region

It may be that you cannot run one programme for all. For example, you might need to run separate ones for those entering for foundation or conversion courses, for those entering part-way through a course (eg direct entry into second year) or for the part-time student spouses of full-time students.

7.   Staffing

Some practitioners work with a team that can be called on to staff orientation events. Others may work alone. Traditional orientation programmes take place at a time when work is particularly busy in other areas – ie, a time when new students are arriving and therefore need a lot of contact and support. It is unusual for all students to be involved in orientation activities at one time, so it is likely that the "normal" office will need to be staffed as well, which can place a lot of pressure on the team.

People need to know a significant time in advance if they are to commit themselves to helping, attending or involvement. At least, if there is to be some kind of reception or mass event (and this is recommended) then it's worth thinking about inviting:

- Principal/VC/Director – they may not be able to contribute on a day-to-day basis, but their availability to welcome students at some point can be very valuable
- VIPs who might be involved for the whole event (such as tea, dinner, welcome talk) or just to make speeches or mingle for part of an event and who might include:
  - Union/Guild President or other representative from the student body
  - Mayor or other civic representative
  - Someone from the embassy/consul (a country representative, eg the Chinese consul-general)
  - local community (councillors)
  - alumni/former students (especially those with country-specific links, who could be well-known to the students)

As well as your own team, try to think who else you can involve in the programme. Not only might this increase your available resource, it might also be a development opportunity for others or a welcome change from their normal routine.

You might include colleagues from:
- support services (health, counselling, advising)
- English Language Teaching, including EFL and ESOL
- other departments involved in international student work, eg recruitment, marketing
- registration/enrolment
- academic staff who will be working with the students
- administrative and clerical staff
- accommodation
- finance
- community representatives
- students
  - home/international
  - current and recently graduated/finished
  - volunteers or paid?
- union/guild/societies
- chaplains
- accommodation/residence staff
- recently retired staff
- security

Payment and reward of temporary staff

Some institutions rely on student volunteers to assist with orientation; others pay an hourly or flat rate. You may simply not have enough in the budget to pay them, or you may feel that students who volunteer are more committed to helping out. On the other hand, if the students are paid you can be more insistent about your expectations; you can reasonably expect them to work x hours a day, including some evenings, and feel more reliant on them. It's also easier to reject potentially unsuitable candidates.

Students may incur extra costs by taking part in your activities. This can include rent if they are coming back before they need to, travel expenses, absence from other part-time work. Remuneration or reward might take one of the following forms:
- hourly pay - do you want clock-watching in informal aspects of programme/events? This can be very costly
- "honorarium" or payment for duration
- certificate of employment to help them with future job-seeking
- credits towards any special awards your institution might offer.
- selection of student or other temporary assistants (see Appendix 1)
- training assistants/staff

There's no right or wrong way, but whatever you do a training programme need a commitment to attend on the part of the student assistants. Appendix 1 covers this in some detail.

8.   Location

This is a factor if dealing with large groups of students/events in particular. For smaller groups/one-to-one and shorter timescales, the usual teaching space may be all that is available or needed. In general, though, you need to consider very carefully:

- size
- type of room – lecture theatres can be rigid in layout etc
- accessibility – you must consider disability issues
- audio-visual equipment
- cost
- is catering available nearby?
- location – how easy will it be for students unfamiliar with the location to reach it? Will transport be necessary?
- if you are running events in the evenings, will students staying far from the institution be comfortable travelling outside "normal" hours?

9.   Funding

This guide aims to give you ideas and information to help you persuade budget-holders. For short events or for rolling enrolment where there is little time to do much before the students are in class every day, funding may not be so much of an issue. However, food will encourage students to attend events, but you should not be in a situation where you are having to run to the supermarket or prepare food yourself.

There is no magic way to get funds from your institution; however, there may be some things you can do to reduce calls on your budget or to make it go further.

Student contributions

Some practitioners feel very uncomfortable asking participants to contribute towards activities. There may be no choice if sufficient funds are not available from elsewhere. You may need to know in advance how many participants there will be. This is particularly important if you are paying for accommodation, catering, etc on an optional programme. Pre-payment can encourage students to commit to turning up (online card payment is likely to be the least labour-intensive way of collecting payment). Other ways in which they could contribute (full or subsidised costs) include:

- accommodation
- pay-as-you-eat meals
- entrance into events such as games evenings, clubs, etc
- buying orientation packs or leaflets
- transport costs

Institutional contributions

Maybe some other parts of your institution have more flexibility in their budgets and would be willing to contribute in cash or in kind.

- some marketing and recruitment departments would like to see such events being offered free to students. To avoid you charging your students, perhaps these departments can make some contribution to your costs or pay for one event at least – such as a reception for students – or for printing costs
- your VC/Principal/Director may wish to welcome students and fund a reception to do this. You could build other events, such as icebreakers or treasure hunts, around this that won't cost you too much
- schools/faculties/departments may be holding events to which you can add some activities of your own
- institutional accommodation providers may offer free or subsidised accommodation
- catering department may want to encourage students into campus/school outlets rather than external ones. Ask if they will provide some free catering or some special deals. This could be a reduced bill for you, or reduced-price vouchers for students, or a free bun with their coffee or free drink with their lunch.
- shop or gift retailers – ask any retail outlet within your own institution to provide items for prizes or discount vouchers for the students' first couple of days. If they sell items such as sandwiches and drinks, this could reduce your catering costs. If students feel that they are getting something at a special price, they may feel less negative about paying for their own lunch.

Local shops, businesses and organisations

- commercial food outlets – see catering below
- shops and other retailers – it can be more profitable to visit shops and talk to managers rather than write. If you have students helping, they might be able to do this for you.
- local tourist office – can they lead a tour, provide some prizes?
- travel agent – don't forget student specialists such as STA Travel or online agents. If they can provide you with one good prize, you can run one of your events as a competition that is really worth entering.
- student specialists – it may be worth approaching specialist organisations such as Endsleigh Insurance.

Do remember to mention sponsorship and support at events or in writing.

10. Publicity
- prospectus or brochure – ensure that the existence of the orientation programme or events is flagged.
- website – as well as making sure that dates are on the website, if you plan to use the web/online resources (such as podcasts, online videos etc), you will need to start talking to the technical people at this stage.
- how will participants receive information about events other than via the above?
  – a mailing notifying or inviting students. You will need to plan for the time and mailing costs this will entail
  – with the offer or enrolment letter; you may have to contribute towards the cost of mailing
  – with information sent out by school/faculty/department
  – leaflets distributed by agents or recruiters

11. Room Bookings
- book rooms early. In large institutions, where there is competition from conferences etc, you may need to do this more than a year in advance.
- think about:
  – where else students might need to go – eg, office issuing ID cards, fees office
  – competition for the space
  – noise
  – access (see Section C16)
  – availability of audio-visual equipment.
  – where students can go during breaks
  – smaller or break-out rooms nearby if appropriate
  – location

12. Transport
Private transport
Booking, funding and managing transport can add extra unwelcome effort and expense. If you can avoid using it, do. If there is no other practical way of students reaching events or if they would otherwise be vulnerable (travelling on unfamiliar routes late at night, for example) consider:

- cost
- reliability and flexibility – drivers need to be able to respond to your requirements as and when they change. Staff (or assistants) should be on the transport to liaise with the driver.
- traffic - at busy times of day, coaches can get held up in traffic which will interfere with your plans.
- parking – will coach drivers be able to drop off and pick up at convenient locations?

Public transport

Using public transport is an orientation activity in itself. However, it does require planning:

- can local buses manage the extra volume of passengers without the company or the students being inconvenienced?
- will the transport providers provide passes free or at reduced cost?
- tell students that they must have the appropriate loose change. In some areas, only the exact fare will be accepted, and no bus driver will be happy with a group of new students offering notes
- participants must be told about good landmarks or be given instructions to help them find their way around

Walking

This is free and can also be a good orientation exercise since many students may not be used to walking. They will find their way better if they have to do it for themselves. This can be a negative factor as well, though since:

- they may walk slowly
- they will probably want to look at new things on the way
- they may get lost
- groups tend to move at the speed of the slowest

You should schedule at least 50% more time than it would take you on your own.

Students walking in escorted groups

- a leader, and another member of the team bringing up the rear, can ensure a relatively brisk pace
- participants are likely to feel more confident if they are not alone and do not have to find their own way

13. Catering

You must offer something to eat and drink, as it is essential in most cultures to offer something in order to make people feel welcome. Your budget may not stretch to

providing everything free at the point of delivery but the first cup of tea and biscuit or meal should be free if at all possible. Students will find it more difficult to benefit from the sessions you offer if they are hungry and thirsty, and for those who have travelled long distances to be there, jet lag can make people hungry at unexpected times.

You will need to think about:
- where they will get food and drink; even if they are to pay, it must be easy to find
- when breaks will be
- time needed for:
  - getting to source of food and back
  - using toilets
  - going outside to smoke – ensure that they know that smoking is prohibited in any public place
  - participants' lack of familiarity with language, systems, food and money – all these will slow them down
- what is served and how is part of the orientation process increasing awareness of:
  - what is commonly eaten in the UK
  - interactions between customers and those serving (eg, smaller distances than they may be used to)
  - rules of turn-taking (eg, queues)
  - rules of language (eg, please and thank you)
- how will it be funded? – if students are expected to pay for their food at the point of delivery they must be told this in advance so that they arrange to have sufficient change to do so. It is also worth checking in advance whether you can you get special deals or offers, eg free biscuits with coffee, discounted prices, etc

Menus

You must consider and raise with catering staff:
- allergies and food intolerances
- religious needs - what foods are forbidden and what times of the year impact upon diet (eg, Ramadan, Passover)
- ingredients need to be checked for the above
- how will you find out about dietary needs? If students book onto your event/ programme, you can ask about this; if not, will this information have been supplied to others in your institution?
- don't rely on names of foods. The menu and/or staff should explain what things actually are; examples of names that don't help much are cod in batter, shepherd's pie, scone, custard

- students need to know how foods are eaten – eg, custard is eaten with dessert. Orientation is a safe environment in which such things can be explained
- students need to know what cutlery to use – eg, in the UK you don't usually eat the main course with a spoon
- who will serve?
  - are there enough staff? – it is especially important to consider this if your event is outside normal term or daytime schedules
  - what are the rules in your institution about catering/serving? Hygiene rules may prevent you from doing this yourself.
  - are staff aware of the issues above regarding different cultural attitudes to food and eating?

14. Scheduling

It is very difficult to schedule your events in a way that will please everyone, but you may want to consider the following:
- if too much time remains unallocated in a programme that lasts more than a day, students will complain they're wasting time
- if too little time is left unallocated in such a programme, students will complain that they don't have enough time to do things they need to do such as open bank accounts
- students will have personal or institutional business to take care of (enrolment, getting student ID, opening bank accounts, registering with the police, meeting academic staff etc)
- students who have travelled very long distances will need more break times to help them recover
- mealtimes will generally be considered too early
- students' views of what is too much or too little time will vary! So, you can't win. As mentioned above, however:
  - you will need more time than you think to get from A to B
  - language skills (or lack thereof) will mean that students need longer to complete procedures
  - jet lag affects the time participants take to do things and necessitates some rest times
  - new arrivals will take longer to look at everything

15. Joining programme/application procedure

You may wish or be required to put on events for allcomers. Or you may be the person seeing new students through their institutional procedures so they have to come to you. If so, there is no merit in pre-booking. If, however, you are providing accommodation, transport or catering, you need to know how many will be taking part.

- Is it possible to contact potential participants in advance? (see Section C10)
- When can they apply or inform you that they intend coming?
    - make the last date for applications early enough to be useful to you but late enough to be sure that participants have had time to find out about it and book flights etc
    - make sure that students know when you will start processing application dates so that they don't apply before meeting your academic requirements or before you can process them
- If events/programme are open to all, are they compulsory? If so, the benefits need to be very clear to participants. You can encourage attendance by making your event the one at which they:
    - get something they recognise that they need, such as ID cards;
    - meet their academic staff for the first time in a formal way
    - register with the police.
- payment/contribution to costs has been discussed above (see Section C9). In addition to those points, you should consider:
    - do you actually need it?
    - what will the costs and other resource be involved in collecting funds and, inevitably, chasing non-payment?

16. Disability and access issues

Some of your students may have disabilities or medical conditions which need consideration in planning and operation of events.

How will you know?

Ways in which you might find out include:
- from the student's application to the orientation programme
- from information given in the student's original application to your institution
- links with other offices in your institution to tie up information. This should be a two-way process, with you passing on information that a student gives you but may not have shared with other departments/offices.

If you can't find out in advance (eg, because there is no booking):
- ensure that rooms are accessible by those using wheelchairs or unable to climb stairs or walk long distances
- find out if the room has a hearing loop
- ensure that you have handouts relating to any talks – this is good practice for all students, especially those whose first language is not British English

Mobility needs
- Do you have information about the buildings, rooms, coaches or other means of transport that mobility-impaired students will not be able to access? If so, contact the students to discuss appropriate support to meet their needs and wishes.
- Do they want someone to escort them or push their wheelchair?
- Do they know what the local area is like for independent use of mobility aids?

Communication needs

Students who are hard of hearing or deaf, or who have a visual impairment, may be used to specialist support being in place. You may need to consider:
- large font publications, information sheets etc
- students who rely on sign language are unlikely to be familiar with British Sign Language. (You may wish to discuss this issue within your own institution: should deaf or hard of hearing students be required to be familiar with British sign language in the same way that a particular standard of English language ability is expected?)

Students who let you (or colleagues in other departments) know of specific needs in good time have the right to expect your institution to make reasonable adaptations. This includes access to locations and materials.

Section D – Methods of delivery

This section includes suggestions about methods of delivery. You can't – and shouldn't – do everything by standing up and talking or by putting it onto paper. Make full use of other audio-visual aids – DVD, film etc – and of other forms of technology.

1. Language

Whether or not your students are expected to have a good level of English by the time of your events, you should remember the following:

- keep the language simple
- keep sentences short
- explain anything which could cause confusion
- avoid using slang and dialect
- in print, highlight key words
- use bullet points

2. Presenting information

- words on screen or handouts make it easier to understand
- speakers – you must ensure that they (and you, of course):
  - are aware of what you need them to do and discuss this with you in advance. Don't include too much detail – the aim is to raise awareness and to let the students know where to go for more information
  - are aware of their own dialect or accent
  - avoid slang, jargon and very colloquial language
  - don't overlap or repeat information already given
  - are provided with written guidelines (on a sheet or in an email) to make them aware of these issues

3. Printed materials

If your budget is tight:

- a few photo-copied sheets are better than nothing
- find out what your local town hall or tourist information office has that you might be able to use

Other helpful materials might include:

- a checklist of what a student must do and what they should do is very useful
- a booklet or folder with all the materials students will need is ideal

- written information on where students can go for help during the early days and an emergency phone number. A small wallet card is good for this.
- a map of the campus or local area is very useful but bear in mind that some students will not be very familiar with using maps
- plans of the buildings they will be using
- pictures or descriptions of buildings in addition to map references can really help with finding the way

4. Tours
Guided tours – leaders need to be aware that:
- they must find quiet places to talk to the group
- they must project their voice well
- they must avoid using slang and jargon
- large groups won't work well
- they need to point out entrances to buildings where possible, not just the buildings themselves

Self-directed tours can be facilitated by means of:
- printed instructions
- treasure trails (see Appendix 3)
- podcasts (see below)

Virtual tours can be provided online to give information and orientation pre-arrival, as a pre-activity guide and to prepare students for what they will find when they arrive at the building/campus/town.

5. Podcasts
Podcasts are mostly suitable for information that students:
- will be motivated to download and listen to. (This might be information relating to places that students should go to, language skills that students will be able to use "out and about" or students' experiences that are interesting enough to replace music on an MP3 player!)
- will find adds interest to or helps in accessing visual materials online

Podcasts can be accessed online. Students can:

- listen to voice-overs as they view visual images or text
- download material to listen to information, instructions or guidance as they are "out and about"
- access materials printed on paper

This is very useful but:

- it relies on students having their own MP3 players or equivalent
- it requires students being able to access the material to download
- it cannot replace human contact
- it cannot do everything in a programme
- the information offered as a podcast needs to be attractive to the students for them to want to download or listen to it

Podcasts can be particularly effective where students:

- arrive at different times
- arrive in small numbers and activities have to be repeated many times through the year (for rolling or cross-sessional enrolment)
- are taking part in ongoing orientation activities which don't rely on meetings or group activities

Where staffing levels are very low, podcasts can be effective for:

- "showing" students around and explaining a range of issues
- preparing a student before arrival, since they do not rely on a student being present at the institution

6.   Presentations

Some information is best delivered in presentation format.

- "presentation" includes a practitioner sitting at a table with a very small group of students
- with larger groups, "presentation" does not mean that you have to be the one who does it all standing up in front. Try to pull together a range and variety of "invited experts" from both within the institution and outside. This will save your time and sanity and leave you time to provide other services which you may have to continue to deliver, despite running orientation events.

7.   Independent learning programmes

Independent learning programmes (ILPs) are online teaching resources that take participants through material in a progressive way, sometimes requiring that a student complete one section before progressing to the next and usually providing

opportunities for a mentor or member of staff to monitor and/or assess progress and provide further guidance. This method of learning is valuable in that:

- ILPs "online, [make] it easier for staff to access the information they need to personalise learning and support individual students"[12]
- staff running programmes over an extended period can check on progress at various points during the year or term
- taking students through material progressively has the advantage of indicating to a student that there are some gaps in their awareness and knowledge
- staff can assess a student's starting point to facilitate targeted support

Your institution may already use ILPs in areas such as the library or technology. You may get some ideas about house style or content from these (see, for example, Solihull College[13]). In designing programmes, it is vital that they should be "useful, user-friendly and used".[14]

One FE college's work[15] with a type of ILP called Visual Learning Environment (designed for library orientation but a concept suitable for adaptation to wider orientation) highlights

- the need for intuitive material to facilitate independent working
- the need for staff to be familiar with the material so that they can provide assistance if needed
- the value of customisable materials which also provide message boards, chat forums and a diary with reminder facility.

8. Websites

All institutions rely on web pages to ensure that prospective students can access marketing and post-decision information (see, for example, Southgate College[16].) They can be used for straightforward text, graphics, jpegs or DVDs or, if you have access to the skills or skilful staff, developed to provide more interactive resources such as:

- virtual tours (see above)
- progressive links from one topic or level to another (see ILPs above) which may or may not require one level to be completed before permitting progression to the next
- websites do not rely on students being on campus nor on staff being present

[12] Becta with LSC March 2008 "Technology Exemplar Network – Exemplar profiles", Version 1.2 <http://publications. becta.org.uk/display.cfm?resID=35071&page=1835>
[13] <http://learn.solihull.ac.uk/studentinduction/content/vide.cfm>
[14] National Research and Development Centre for Adult Literacy and Numeracy "Reflect online Issue 10 <http://www. nrdc.org.uk/content.asp?CategoryID=586&ArticleID=498>
[15] Tamworth and Lichfield College <http://www.leeds.ac.uk/bigblue/tamworthcs3.htm#purpose>
[16] <http://www.southgate.ac.uk/induction/>

- they can be useful in facilitating online communities of students pre- and post-arrival to aid socialisation
- if your own resources are very limited, links to larger organisations such as UKCISA or the British Council's[17] web pages can provide you with a way of keeping information up to date and reliable.

It is vital, of course, to exercise caution to ensure that students do brave the non-virtual world too; orientation cannot take place entirely in front of a screen or plugged into head-phones!

9.   Other online resources
DVDs and jpegs
These are useful in providing a different dimension to gaining information and guidance. Information can be given in these using film of:
- staff
- students
- external agencies such as local police officers

Information can be highlighted in this more attractive format, eg film of a student recommending that new students refer to certain publications or recommending particular web pages as a valuable source of support. Using students in these can also suggest a higher degree of relevance to viewers.

Social networking
Many students will not welcome us going into their virtual world; many may not believe that anyone over 20 really know how to access it!
- it is easy, however, to create our own Facebook, MySpace etc pages
- current students could include what we want students to know on their pages – although this could be a high-risk activity since we may not want to be associated with some of the personal, even intimate, material on their personal pages
- your institution may have a facility for blogging or accessing one-to-one contact with current students. This may be called an ambassador scheme, student-to-student, etc

Departmental or school portals
You can make use of what already exists within the organisation. Students will naturally be most interested in getting information from their respective departments and will have most interest in what is going on in them.

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[17] ‹http://www.britishcouncil.org/learning-qdu-redirect›

Self-directed or peer-led activities
These provide variety, good use of time and other resources, help independence and can facilitate making meaningful contacts – if students do things in groups away from staff

Some things can be done independently or even pre-arrival using online resources. The table below suggests the range of methods of delivery you might consider for different sorts of activity:

10. Range of methods of delivery

	Talks/ presentations	Info Fair/ Desks	Staff-led	Peer-led	Self-directed	Self directed podcast	Online	Facilitated discussion	Lecture	Printed materials
Ongoing orientation (beyond initial induction)	x		x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Buildings/ Campus[es]			x	x	x	x	x			x
Daily routes			x	x	x	x				x
Local town/city			x	x	x	x	x		x	x
Meeting each other and staff			x	x	x		x	x		
Transition	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x	x
Welcome	x	x	x					x	x	x

	Talks/ presentations	Info Fair/ Desks	Staff-led	Peer-led	Self-directed	Self directed podcast	Online	Facilitated discussion	Lecture	Printed materials
Institutional procedures /requirements/ culture	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
Immigration matters	x	x	x		x		x		x	x
Different health systems	x	x	x					x	x	x
Current crises	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
Sexual health	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
Safety and security	x	x	x				x	x	x	x
Money matters	x	x	x				x	x	x	x

Section E – Resources that students need for orientation immediately post-arrival

To enable you to plan your orientation you need to consider some physical aspects of your programme:

1. An enquiry/reception desk

- it is important to have something easily accessible and clearly visible which is staffed all day and, ideally, beyond the end of "office hours".
- can the college enquiry desk stay open beyond its usual hours, even if it is staffed by someone working with you rather than the usual personnel?
- this could simply be your office if you don't have sufficient resource to staff a second location or if students arrive throughout the year on almost any day. Your students will then know that they have somewhere to go where they can talk to a knowledgeable person

2. A central meeting place

Students will need to have a recognised space or lounge area where they can go just to talk with others, to read, access the internet, have light refreshments. If there is nowhere that can be given over to your programme exclusively, invite participants (any students who are already on courses at your institution) to use another space such as

- a catering space
- lounge
- entrance hall space open to all

To give it some purpose in participants' eyes, you could place there:

- newspapers including those from students' home countries if possible
- academic or professional journals relating to areas of study – this might be of particular interest to postgraduate students
- TV on world news channel
- noticeboard
- enquiry desk
- information desk relating to your institution's services
- table-tennis table
- board games

3. Signposting

Make sure you provide clear signs and signposting to campus buildings, accommodation and all services in use. Try and include:

- staff at entrances at peak times to give students confidence
- if you have rolling enrolment, you may need to lobby for permanent signposting of the same level that the institution might expect to put up temporarily at the beginning of the academic session
- plans and/or maps with basic geographical information about:
  - buildings, including photos/diagrams
  - campus[es]
  - daily routes – for example, from residences to academic departments, central services, the offices that students will need to register at, where they will need to go to sort out accommodation issues, banks etc. Include average walking times.
  - local town/city with distances from campus[es], public transport. Information can usually be sourced from the local tourist or visitor office

Programmes and noticeboards

- extra printed programmes for orientation
- programmes for main freshers or intro week (where appropriate) to encourage participation and integration
- programmes for events in coming weeks to encourage students starting at times outside "main" arrival times to join in what is going on for students who started earlier

Show changes to the programme through:

- daily news/bulletins
- physical notice board
- online notice-board
- printed documents

Section F – Content of orientation programme

There is always a temptation to try to fit too much in. Colleagues in the institution may ask (or even demand) that particular issues are included in orientation; you can call on a wealth of knowledge about what students will need during the course of their studies.

The key is to try to strike a balance between:
- including sufficient time for them to make their own new friends and trying to prevent loneliness
- equipping them with what they need to know and preventing information overload
- giving them what you can and encouraging independence
- their academic commitments and the need to improve skills and awareness to make good progress with their academic work
- what they need to do to get started on courses (getting student ID, enrolling etc) and what help they need to make those processes easier

Information will need to be repeated and reinforced throughout the course of the students' time in your institution and by others in the institution. Orientation provides an awareness of gaps to be filled, and sources of guidance, not everything the student will ever need.

This section aims to list possible items for events/programmes from which you can pick and mix according to your students' needs, your resources, the timing of the events (pre-sessional, mid-sessional etc), the time you have available and your strengths.

From these items you can design:
- a pre-sessional programme
- programmes or activities on day 1 of the students' time at your institution
- programmes or activities on the day[s] immediately after students start at your institution
- programmes offered at times other than the beginning of the term, year or semester. These are is particularly useful where participants arrive at other times as often happens with:
  – English language courses
  – exchange students
  – cross-sessional students
  – research students

1.　The start

Don't plan to start events or a timetabled programme on the day students are expected to arrive in the UK, if possible. After long journeys, students may be too tired to join in or benefit from activities. They will be anxious to settle in to their accommodation, open bank accounts and so on, on the first day.

Ensure that the students have information about everything that will happen in an initial programme and during the following weeks, both in print and on the website. People involved in working for the programme must have this information as well as staff in other offices where students are likely to go.

2.　Welcome

You will probably want to avoid lots of formal speeches; however, it is important that someone does say "welcome" in an official way. It is also important that someone thanks the students for choosing your institution and congratulates them on succeeding in getting a place.

- If you are dealing with small groups of students, particularly on many occasions/a rolling enrolment basis, you may be the person who says this on behalf of the institution.
- If you have a reception or large gathering, the welcome can be from a senior figure (Vice Chancellor, Principal, senior manager)
- If the programme is smaller in scale and you are the most senior person they will see, make sure that you include the welcome, thank them for choosing your institution,and acknowledge that they had a choice
- People that they will see again during the programme and beyond should also endeavour to give a warm welcome. This helps them to feel that they belong, that they are recognised and also to know who to go to.

3.　Introductions

Students need to be introduced to:

Each other

It will help a sense of community and belonging if students can meet others from:

- their own country
- their class/course
- those they will be living with/near
- those that they might not talk to by chance

A certain amount will just happen if you allow students space and time to mix, but it can be facilitated by using:
- icebreakers (see Appendix 3)
- wearing badges with name and/or country and/or department and/or interests
- team games such as soccer, quizzes, charades
- DVDs online
- social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace – though it is important that current students' personal details and postings are kept separate from any orientation-related ones

Staff
- staff they will meet during their first few days/programme
- core international staff
- other student services staff
- temporary staff
- catering and accommodation staff

This can be done through:
- formal talks or workshops
- information fairs or at information desks
- events where staff mingle with students
- the course of a treasure trail or other self-directed tours of offices
- staff wearing badges showing who they are and what they do and that they are open to talking with new students
- online ILPs, DVDs or podcasts

Current international students
These are the people best placed to tell them what life in your institution is really like and to understand participants' current feelings and experience. To facilitate such meetings and discussions you can:
- employ these students
- establish mentoring schemes – if there is already a mentoring scheme in your institution, it may be better to work with this than to invent a new scheme. One institution has a short-term mentoring programme of just a week or two that teams up one mentor with ten new students of various nationalities which gives students access to an experienced mentor plus nine other new contacts
- invite them to events
- include a Question & Answer session with them which does NOT include staff and may even be in a language other than English

Key local people

These may include those who will be contributing to the programme through:

- information fairs/desks
- attending events
- treasure trails or other tours

4. Acknowledgement of transition and cultural awareness issues

Training in cultural knowledge is an infinite business. All that can be included in any orientation programme, therefore, is an introduction to cultural awareness – an awareness that there is much that the participant does not know and that may make life uncomfortable at times.

Students need to be aware that it is normal to feel that things are "different" and that this can be included. Many institutions include an explanation of the U-curve of cultural adjustment at this stage[18]; this is a useful illustration but other issues that can be included are:

- UK culture, highlighting some aspects which may be different from home cultures
- acknowledgement that all cultures have more similarities than differences
- instances of confusing perceptions
- the fact that those from English- as well as non-English-speaking countries will also feel "foreign"
- verbal and non-verbal communication, for example, eye contact, accepted distance between people, pointing with fingers and local accents
- potential causes of barriers between people – behaviour which is acceptable in one country may not be in another (you might use as examples issues, perhaps even complaints, that have been raised by other staff in your institution, host families, etc.)
- relationships – these may include the following:
  - with staff – Many students will be used to a more formal style of teaching and will not be used to the more challenging teaching methods used in the UK. They may also be surprised that many (but not all) tutors expect to be called by their first name
  - with host families – There may be differing perceptions of status as well as differences in customs relating to behaviour within a house

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[18] One example of this can be seen at ‹http://www.freshmanseminar.appstate.edu/Faculty/Fac_Manual/Transitions/U_Curve.htm›

- male/female – British attitudes of men to women and women to men may be very different from those of a student's home culture. Public displays of affection may be offensive to some students.
- diversity and equality issues – students may come from a background where homosexuality is taboo or illegal or where women do not socialise in the same way as men. The students need to understand that homosexual relationships are legal and increasingly accepted in UK society

These issues can be addressed through a variety of methods:

ILPs
This is an area that can be very usefully tackled using ILPs over an extended period as:
- awareness of cultural issues will continue to strike new students over a period of months
- the time a student needs can be taken in a way that might not be possible if you have a very short time with students or have to provide this guidance on many occasions throughout the year

Talks/lectures
- highlighting issues which have arisen in the past
- about cultural awareness, acknowledging that humans are fundamentally shaped by their culture
- about UK culture, acknowledging that:
  - the UK is a very diverse country
  - there are differences between regions
  - the speaker's own culture is likely to influence what they say and how they perceive culture

Facilitated discussions
- asking new students what has surprised them
- asking what they would have expected to happen in that situation in their home country
- explaining why the experience is different in the UK because of UK culture, custom and practice

This format is something which can be repeated as the students gain experience in the UK

Discussions between students from different countries
These can illustrate the differences between cultures, their similarities and the fact that culture is not a polarised issue between the UK and the rest of the world.

Reading materials and film
- current students' experiences and observations
- academic materials
- publications (such as "Watching the English"[19] or "The Xenophobe's Guide to…"[20])
- online
- in leaflet form
- in information packs
- posters
- films, excerpts from soap operas, novels where cultural differences are a theme.

5. Information on networks, mentoring, community groups

Try to provide information (and introductions to representatives of) networks, mentoring, and community groups that will be beneficial to new students such as:
- national societies
- faith groups – being sensitive to the importance of not inviting in any group that will be aggressive or covert in recruitment activities
- volunteering organisers – volunteering in the community may be a good way of seeing UK life outside your institution
- institutional mentoring co-ordinators

6. Information about and preparation for institutional procedures, requirements and culture

Each institution has its complex procedures and its own culture. It is useful to provide details of:
- registration/enrolment: when, where and the importance of documentation. Some time invested by the staff responsible for registration or enrolment in talking to new international students can save significant time during the process later
- records and the importance of keeping details up to date
- publications: where to find them, which are likely to be the most useful and when

[19] Fox, Kate, 2005 "Watching the English – The Hidden Rules of English Behaviour"
[20] Humorous guides to the English, Irish, Scots and Welsh – ‹http://www.ovalbooks.com/xeno/index.html›

- web pages, particularly the most useful and appropriate starting points/ways in
- the importance of following rules and regulations
- how to find things out
- where to go to do it
- who to ask and their roles or job titles

This guidance and information could be delivered:
- face to face at information desks, in talks or presentations
- by staff or by current students – who must be properly briefed regarding institutional procedures
- in print via flow charts or publications
- online, using DVDs, regular text or ILPs

There will be issues which are likely to be new areas or concepts for some nationalities/ cultures or which have been particular problems in the past. Possible examples include:
- diversity issues relating to, for example:
  - sexual orientation
  - ethnicity
  - faith affiliation – "Students find it more helpful to be introduced to a college's policies and practices on good relations during their induction period."[21] Indeed, there may not be another time to raise this except after a problem has occurred
- plagiarism
- relationships with staff considering issues such as
  - expectation that students will be courteous to all staff in whatever role
  - expectation that students will do a great deal for themselves, not rely on staff doing it for them

7.   Accommodation
Procedures and contacts
You will need to ensure that information on accommodation is available to students through the following ways:
- staff should, if possible, be present to help and advise at information fairs, on information desks, at events and in a central location, where students might arrive, for example
- online

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[21] Department for Employment and Learning, Northern Ireland ‹http://www.delni.gov.uk/fe_02-06_cultural_diversity_ –_invitations_for_roll-out.pdf›

Location of residences

Students should be told exactly where the various residential options are located as well as being given information on where to get items (eg duvets) that they will need immediately

Rules and tips for students on homestays

Those students on homestays may need specific advice and assistance on:

- relating to host families
- what is expected from students
- what is expected from hosts
- who to talk to if there are problems

It is vital that staff working on orientation are familiar with procedures, locations and contacts to avoid participants being misinformed and to avoid trying to reinvent wheels that accommodation staff may already have invented.

8.   Immigration matters

There may be matters that have to be dealt with immediately, such as problems with entry into the UK being refused, but all non-EEA students will need to be familiar with sources of guidance and support. Most procedures will not need to be completed immediately but some will have to be dealt with straight away. These include:

- The requirement for under-18s to have a guardian's or parents' signatures for FLR[S] applications
- police registration – various issues will be need to considered, such as:
  - can this take place as part of the orientation programme?
  - can this take place within your institution if the numbers are so high that it could be difficult for local police to manage?
  - can you introduce students to officers or civilian workers who are involved by means of information fairs/desks, through taking part in events, via online or printed photos, or in DVDs shown as part of an information session
- moving to another institution – This is the last thing you will want for your students at this stage but with the introduction of the Points Based System for visas, immigration authorities will have records of which institutions students are attending. If students decide to move or change course, they must be aware of the reporting issues that can arise.
- employment regulations including the need to balance academic workloads with any part-time work
- common pitfalls and how to avoid them: this might include working more than 20 hours per week, taking leave/interrupting studies without clarifying the immigration situation, or repeatedly failing examinations

It would not be sensible to spend a lot of time on employment regulations or common pitfalls as they are rather dry issues and will affect very few participants. The aim of these is to raise awareness that students must seek guidance on anything relating to their attendance/enrolment at your institution. With regard to immigration matters in general, it is important to highlight at this stage:

- that students should always seek guidance
- that students should make a note of (or inform you, if you keep such records) of when their Leave to Remain expires
- where to find information
- who to go to within the institution for guidance

9.   Health issues

It is likely that students will be used to very different systems and cultures of health care. They may not be aware of issues such as:

- free consultation and treatment
- no self-referral to specialists
- one can usually ask to see a doctor of the preferred gender
- one can often speak to a nurse if this is more comfortable or appropriate than seeing a doctor in the first instance
- confidentiality – medical staff not being allowed to disclose any information about patients even to institution staff or family where the patient is over 16
- the location of services such as counselling and GP practices and how one accesses those services
- less likelihood of being prescribed antibiotics than in many countries (eg there is no cure for colds and flu)
- the likelihood of minor ailments in the early days is high (this applies to all students)
- not all hospitals have A&E departments, so students should refer to information provided about where to go in an emergency
- the stress of living and studying in a foreign country can increase the likelihood of mental ill health. There is less stigma attached to mental ill health in this country than in many others.
- sexual health provision. This is a very sensitive area. However, in many countries there is little or no sexual health education and often very little opportunity for the sexes to mix in private, so many international students may find that they now have the opportunity to make choices that they may not have had before about sexual relationships.
  Information must be presented in such a way as to make clear that there is no suggestion or expectation that students will act in a way that goes against cultural, religious or personal choices.

- current crises (if any), such as foot and mouth, BSE, bird flu. While these might not be causing mass concern in the UK, media in other countries may be presenting information in such a way as to cause alarm.

Some information will be absorbed most carefully in private but its importance – and existence – needs to be highlighted early on. In the orientation programme this can be done in several ways:

- formal talks or lectures
- information desks with staff from health services
- DVD, online or at a presentation – if it's online, students can access information in private
- printed information. Since some of the concepts (such as counselling or sexual health services) will be new to some students, first language information could be very useful.
- ILPs
- information that will remain visible, such as fridge magnets, pens, cards that fit in a wallet.
- student mentors or advisers

10.   Safety and security

Concerns about safety are often high with new international students. It can be difficult to get the balance right between making students aware of safety and security issues and helping them be confident in their new surroundings. Anyone talking to students about these subjects must be sensitive to this need for balance.

There are several things that students do need to know about as soon as they arrive and there are various methods of providing this information to students.

Providing general information on aspects of keeping safe
This would include information on the following:

- insurance, emphasising the importance of insuring personal possessions and that students cannot expect compensation (in general) if their property is stolen
- in residences:
    – keeping windows and doors locked
    – not allowing people who are not residents to enter
    – care of valuables
- safety while out and about
    – any local issues, such as areas best avoided at night, high crime areas, red light districts
    – window-shopping or going for a walk late at night not being usual and therefore making people vulnerable if they do it

- laptop computers, MP3 players, expensive telephones being attractive to thieves
- common sense guidance about how to be a bit "street-wise"
- personal safety, including availability of self-defence & assertiveness classes
- UK laws on
  - drugs
  - drink
  - weapons (knives, mace, etc)
  - driving – optional since most will not drive in UK
- scams – unfortunately, new international students can be the target of various scams or con tricks, sometimes carried out by people from their own countries. Scams that are more common should be highlighted and the messages given that:
- you don't give anyone your bank details or your cash even if they appear to be your friend
- if something looks too good to be true (eg, a laptop for £150) it probably is – don't hand money over to strangers
- fire safety
  - reliability of the UK fire service – people brought up in UK will almost instinctively dial 999 in case of fire but this will not be so obvious to many from outside the UK
  - fire exits in all buildings
  - fire safety in private accommodation
- security staff (if any) working in your own institution should be included in the programme or event

Including uniformed police officers in your programme
Many students come to UK from countries where uniformed services, such as the police, are not approachable; your programme/event will be a good way to encourage students to consider the police a service rather than a force. Include them by:
- providing an information desk
- including a talk by police
- using DVDs produced by police
- inviting police to receptions or to other events

Using drama to get your message across
This can be useful in raising the serious issues involved here, possibly in a light-hearted way to avoid raising inappropriate levels of anxiety in students:
- if you are lucky, the police may be able to include some role-play
- DVDs may have been produced for your area and be available online or to show at an event
- you could set up some scenarios involving the participants and/or existing students about safety issues

Providing information desks

These allow students to:

- collect printed information
- collect publicity/safety materials (pens, notebooks etc) provided by safety services
- talk to staff or representatives of services about concerns and to develop confidence

Individual Learning Programmes

ILPs can permit students to focus on the concerns uppermost in their minds and provide links to further information on these

11.   Money matters: banking and managing finances

Banks appear to be putting increasing obstacles in the way of international students wishing to open bank accounts in UK. It is not the remit of this publication to go into this in any detail but it will be an issue in almost every student's first few days. They need to open accounts; they will worry about it and may prioritise this over anything on your programme.

- ensure that there is time for students to go to banks
- let the local banks know when students are most likely to come in, if possible
- escort students to banks, if numbers are very low or students have very limited time before classes or once classes start (eg FE, language courses)
- make sure that the documentation students need to open accounts is recently checked with the banks to make sure it meets their ever-changing requirements and is available
- are some banks locally more helpful than others? Will they come to your event[s] to open accounts for students? (You may have concerns about appearing to recommend one rather than another. Find out who is willing to help – they will be best for your students!)
- students will need to buy basics in their first few days. Ensure that they have access to information about the average costs of food, clothing and books, which are the cheapest food shops and where they can buy second-hand books
- budgeting advice may be too early in any detail at this stage. However, it is important that students know where to go for this.

12.   Study skills (see also Appendix 4)

Study skills may be provided by the academic staff students will meet. If they will not be provided, or will not be all that is needed by students coming from outside the

UK, study skills sessions may be needed in the orientation programme. These should include:

- academic culture locally (ie, in department/school/institution), including teaching methods
- availability of English language help
- information about examinations and other forms of assessment
- note-taking
- essay writing
- expectation that students will discuss, analyse, challenge

If you are not able to provide the teaching yourself, you will need to get help from outside your programme for delivery. The ways of doing this might include:

- an interactive discussion session "What is a good teacher?" to allow students to exchange views and highlight varying cultural assumptions
- formal session[s] with English Language or study skills staff facilitating
- online modules or worksheets – you could include sessions for students to complete these during the programme
- mentors from academic departments

13. Opportunities for students to get together socially

Activities, both informal and during organised social and leisure events, are vital for students to meet others and relax at a stressful time.

There are many kinds of events you can organise or take students to. Some suggestions are listed here:

- icebreaker games (see Appendix 3 for suggestions)
- cinema or theatre visits
- shopping trips/visits, including local food shops and/or large mall
- meals
  - in your own institution
  - in restaurants
  - to show something about traditional UK culture such as Sunday lunch or afternoon tea
- card and board games
  - buy some to use from year to year. Internationally popular games such as drafts, chess and backgammon are suitable. Games that can involve large numbers of people, such as giant Jenga, can act as great icebreakers.
  - hire giant games to have in a central place or for one evening or day
  - ensure that games do not rely too much on language or cultural knowledge. Things like Trivial Pursuit may be unsuitable.

- quiz - team quizzes (in the format of a pub quiz) with prizes can involve a lot of people very easily. Make sure that the questions cover a whole range of countries and encourage mixed nationality teams (see Appendix 3)
- trips to local places of interest. A coach trip can provide participants with an opportunity to talk to others before you even get there.
- karaoke
- other games: bowling, frisbee (just letting students know that you have Frisbees to borrow can allow them to get together to play without any need for staffing or organisation), soccer, table tennis
- visit to sports centre, gym or pool
- DVDs that can be borrowed or shown to large groups at publicised times
  - licensing laws may prevent showing retailed DVDs to groups of people. Consider the content and language. It might be wise to avoid films with much sexual content; language should not be so colloquial that it won't be understood by non-native speakers of English
  - if you have students under the age of 18, this should be noted when offering videos
  - TV and DVDs can be a relaxing and safe activity for participants who are tired or overwhelmed by the constant presence of lots of new people and challenges
- social networking, through regional, subject or accommodation groups. Some networking will just happen naturally if there's a conducive atmosphere in a shared space, café or bar, lounge (create one for the event/programme if you don't already have one) and in catering facilities
- bars, cafes, fast food outlets
  - go for student-friendly venues – ask current students where they would recommend and check this frequently as trends change
  - under-18s cannot drink legally so bars should be avoided
- dance classes
  - your institution may have dance classes, courses, clubs or societies that could lead an event
  - you can hire a teacher or caller to facilitate
  - local bars or restaurants may run weekly salsa classes
  - salsa, ballroom, ceilidh or other folk dancing all work well
  - if you have large numbers of students for whom mixed dancing is inappropriate, you could suggest different groups in the same room or provide separate sessions.
- cooking classes or demonstrations

Staff working on the programme/event should look out for those who are on their own. Part of the job should be to talk to them, find out what they might like to do or benefit from, suggest or engineer introductions, or encourage participation in some of the "quieter" activities such as watching a film or playing board games.

14.　Religious issues

You will need to consider:

Local provision and contacts
- institution's own faith representatives
- local places of worship
- students wanting to attend communal acts of worship may need to do this before your programme/event (eg Friday prayers for Muslims, Saturday service for Jews, Sunday church services for Christians). Information needs to be available in an accessible way as soon as students arrive
- availability of foods required by particular faiths (eg halal and kosher)

Information about religious holidays and observance

Are there special arrangements within the institution, eg what if a student needs time off for religious observance? You need to know about local provision for any religious holidays which might fall during your programme, eg Ramadan, Yom Kippur.

15.　Local and regional travel

Information can often be obtained from transport companies and needs to be easily available immediately after participants arrive. This can be:
- in information packs
- on enquiry desks
- online
- on posters at main entry points to the campus

Representatives of transport providers (or institutional staff at enquiry and reception desks) may staff an information desk, but all need to be aware of:
- routes
- bus or tram stops and stations
- how passengers pay – for example, do they need exact change? Are tickets bought on board or beforehand?

16.   Accessing shops, services and other places

This is a useful way of helping students to navigate both around and within the institution and in the local area. This can be done by:

- self-directed activities, such as a "town treasure trail" (see Appendix 3 for example) are good if there is a high student:staff ratio or the participants have to be active and engaged; for example, they are more likely to learn a route if they have to find it for themselves than if following or observing
- virtual tours online
- podcasts to guide students
- guided tours
- maps or plans - pictures of landmarks can help students navigate, and entrances to buildings need to be marked if they are not obvious

Section G – Ongoing orientation

The ideal scenario would be an orientation programme that is heavily weighted to the arrival period but continues well into the study period. As has been stated earlier, there is not always time for much at the beginning and it may be necessary to load the ongoing period more heavily to compensate for this.

1.   Benefits

Although most information and advice will need to be provided in the first days and weeks of a student's arrival, there are considerable benefits to be gained by providing some form of ongoing orientation. These include:

- **Providing ongoing orientation activities has merit in its own right**
As mentioned earlier, orientation is not a discrete process. As the students live and study in the UK, and interact with people of other cultures, their need for orientation continues or even increases. The process begins to be more relevant as it can be related to their own experiences.

- **Students may not be able to take in much information at the beginning**
Many students may not be able to retain much more than the basic geographical and administration information that is provided to them in the first few days of their time in the institution. Only as they continue do they find out what skills they lack, what they don't know, how different life in another country can be.

- **The value of repeated information**
Some information needs to be repeated throughout a student's stay in your institution, such as information about:
  - safety
  - health issues
  - immigration

2.   Encouraging involvement

Once students are engaged with their studies, they may be reluctant to devote time to apparently unrelated work on orientating themselves. Getting them to attend events can be increasingly difficult. To counteract this, practitioners can try:

Asking teaching staff/supervisors to encourage involvement in ongoing orientation
The views of academic staff are likely to continue to be valued beyond the start date.

Seeking some form of reward for participation
This may include:
- academic-related credit
- a certificate of achievement or attendance that may be useful in the employment market – stressing the international or cultural component of your programme or activities may highlight their extra-curricular achievements

Providing food
An opportunity to eat in company may be very attractive to students who may be more isolated than they expected. Including a meal (even if students have to contribute towards the cost) in an event or tacking some orientation activity onto a meal may make it more attractive than a clinical-sounding or task-based event.

Highlighting the participation or involvement of home students
If your home students are well-primed and have your agenda in mind, they may encourage students to attend since they may not have found such meetings happening in a spontaneous way. This could be through informal, unstructured events or through structured activities such as:
- tandem language learning
- "speed chatting" – like speed dating but on cultural themes between home and international students

International students hosting or organising events
You could encourage international students to organise events to which UK students will be attracted. These could include:
- the "goldfish bowl" type of activity, such as cultural or food evenings
- international students inviting home students to meals involving their national cuisine (home cooked or in a local restaurant) and talking about food and mealtimes at home
- films or other cultural events from international students' home countries could be highlighted (if taking place locally) or organised, and a talk or discussion led by international students arranged beforehand or afterwards
- links to employment opportunities – working with your careers service or local employers, highlighting the need for familiarity with UK culture, skills that may be new and related to language, interview skills, CV-writing etc

Students may have established satisfying social lives and not feel the need or have the time to attend your events. If these are in multi-national communities, there may be little need for concern; some kind of orientation may be happening naturally. Your earlier efforts were a success! If, however, students are mixing only with their own nationality, this can mean missed opportunities and the risk that they could be less rather than more orientated as time goes on.

3.   Methods of ongoing orientation

Of course, not all activities need to involve you or other staff hosting meetings. Using the web, logs, mentors, paper-based activities, emails or other communications highlighting issues and opportunities all have great value. Students' *busyness* or withdrawal from the business of orientation will still affect their willingness to engage or the energy and effort needed to do so.

Monthly progress reports and welfare tutorials[22]

If you have the resources, you could set up regular progress reports or tutorials to discuss outstanding issues that students are facing. In addition to yourself/your own team, these could be facilitated by mentors or tutors

Open talks, forums or discussion groups

These may include topics such as:
- "How have we found the UK so far?" A panel of students give their perspective then invite questions from the audience
- Presentations from international students on their countries – especially useful for exchange students
- The work of the Health Service/Counselling Service/Student Services etc
- Christmas in the UK

Involvement of teaching staff/supervisors

Can you encourage teaching staff/supervisors to consider the opportunities to focus on orientation needs in their work with international students? This could be by:
- including discussion or examination of different academic cultures within the study environment
- using materials which highlight cultural issues
- raising awareness of issues – see Section A3 "Helping Students Change Attitudes"[23], discussing why issues arise or students feel uncomfortable
- inviting staff to attend activities and train themselves

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[22] Telford College of Arts and Technology
[23] Landis, Raymond 2005 "Retention By Design: Achieving Excellence in Minority Engineering Education" College of Engineering, Computer Science, and Technology, California State University, Los Angeles

Using web-based materials

You can encourage participation by:

- ILPs which involve monitoring or review
- links from pages that students will want to access at particular times such as those referring to:
  - exams
  - re-registration or enrolment
  - national societies or groups
- offering incentives, such as prize draws, credits towards certification, or events such as parties or award ceremonies where the students' progress or achievements can be acknowledged
- FAQs or "Why did that happen?" articles, requently updated to reflect students' real life issues and experiences, can provide a useful method of ongoing orientation. As well as current text, film or audio materials, keep an easily accessible archive.

You should be able to obtain records of which pages get the most "hits" and liaise with the "owners" of those pages to allow attractive links to the materials you want students to access. Make the links attractive and relevant by:

- changing them from time to time
- using web streaming, DVDs and voice-overs, preferably involving students

Regular bulletins

These could be on notice boards, in print, by email or online and could include, in addition to immigration and institutional news, issues relating to

- study skills
- life in the UK
- matters that have been particularly challenging to international students or the staff working with them
- real life stories about positive experiences and strategies that have worked for international students

Section H – Targeting specific types of student group

Many of the student groups in this section may be in the UK for a relatively short time. One could argue that such students need orientation less because of their short stay. Another view is that they are more in need of intensive support at the beginning of their studies or throughout the first weeks because they have less time in which to succeed.

All of the materials in this publication can be adapted, mixed and matched for any type or group of students. This section includes a few pointers to facilitate this.

1.   Further Education

Staff are more likely to have a range of responsibilities which means that they will have less time to dedicate to international activities. This will mean:
- less time for activities, particularly immediately on arrival
- more reliance on colleagues, student supporters, etc
- greater use of self-directed materials, such as:
  - ILPs
  - web pages
  - podcasts
  - very clear printed materials which require "validating" (eg stamping or signing) by staff/people where students go on tours

More than one or two starting points in the year will require materials and events which
- can be easily repeated:
  - photocopying materials (for tours, learning, guides to completing tasks etc)
  - having materials which are not date-specific – this is particularly important if students are to feel that their arrival has been noted and valued
  - online materials
- don't rely on large venues for events
- do not take staff from their other duties too often
- mean that students who are new to the institution will not have the support of crowds of others in the same situation

Students are likely to be living in private sector accommodation and therefore:
- may not have access to institutional staff outside office hours
- may not be available so easily for out of hours activities

Many students will not have the English language skills needed to benefit from presentations or a lot of independent activity which involves communication with non-specialist staff. Limited practitioner time is more likely to be used in supporting students through administrative issues. Orientation activities are squeezed into what time is left after those have been completed. They may need to take place:
- over a lunch break – providing the lunch free of charge can encourage students to attend. Suitable activities for this include:
  – facilitated and structured discussions about what students expect and are used to and how this compares with what is expected in the UK FE college
  – talks given by current students
  – DVDs
  – information desks on topics such as health, safety, study skills
- as part of their language studies:
  – in conjunction with language teachers
  – during language classes
  – as homework for their language classes

International student support staff may be responsible for ensuring that students complete all administrative activities. This cuts enormously into time and reduces opportunities for flexibility. To extend the time available, staff can encourage (or, with support from departments, require) students to:
- access orientation information and learning materials online independently
- work through information in work books
- keep logs or journals to be completed by a given time

Where a college provides both FE and HE, start dates can be very different. This can mean that resources are weighted towards the HE students arriving in October as opposed to the FE students starting a month earlier. Allowing FE students to join some of the HE (non-academic) activities will provide some ongoing orientation without reinventing wheels.

2.   Direct Entry Students

Students who join a programme after the majority of students (eg second or subsequent year) can be at a disadvantage. They will be "thrown into the deep end" when they are new to the country and have missed the period when the main cohort
- established networks
- benefited from concentrated study skills and other orientation activities
- had less expected of them academically because they were new

The level and intensity of work required can make students less willing to devote time to orientation activities. Teaching staff will need to stress the value of or, if possible, require participation in orientation activities. Staff supporting these students can:

- include direct entry students in any orientation activities being provided to first year entrants
- in liaison with teaching staff, provide intensive study skills sessions; more than students commencing studies at this level in UK, direct entry students will have developed habits and expectations that may be very different from those of their new classmates
- facilitate mentoring programmes with students who have completed first or subsequent years which these students completed abroad. This can be done:
  - one to one
  - in groups, as suggested in Section F3
  - using web streaming, DVDs etc – these should not be seen as a replacement for human contact but may be a useful addition
- provide ongoing orientation to review experiences and relate cultural and academic issues to these
- encourage or facilitate social activities to aid social integration, particularly with students who have been in the institution longer
- provide materials that can be worked through independently in recognition of the time needed for higher level study commitments

3.   Exchange students

For these students, many of the same issues apply as for direct entry students though the time available to students in the UK may be even shorter; the exchange programme may be as little as six weeks.

Orientation activities involving students who will later be going out on exchange can be valuable. Students planning an exchange may be more motivated than others to take part in mentoring, social activities, and facilitated discussions about cultural and academic differences.

The level of English language skills accepted by your institution may be lower than for students starting and completing an academic programme. This may necessitate a concentration on language learning and materials that do not require a high level of language ability.

4.   Research students

This is another group who may start at many different points in the year and, therefore, not benefit from any orientation programme run at the beginning of the academic session. Since they do not have taught classes, they can be quite isolated. So the need for social activities can be greater for them than for other groups.

Other issues which negatively impact on research students' motivation to take part in orientation activities include:

*   supervisors' expectations that research will commence soon after arrival
*   students' previous academic success making them reluctant to admit to a lack of knowledge needed to succeed in UK
*   pressure from sponsors/financial imperative to complete studies in as short a time as possible leading to a reluctance to spend any time on matters which do not obviously bring forward the completion date
*   students' dependants who need their support and any time left from their studies; arranging matters for them immediately post-arrival will naturally take precedence over our perception of the students' need for orientation

In addition to the range of activities listed previously:

*   Are there research skills classes or activities that students are required to undergo? If so, introducing or even running orientation sessions alongside these will ensure attendance.
*   Are there some of your institution's web pages which research students are motivated to view? These might be within their departments' pages, on pages about funding etc. Links within these – updated regularly so that they don't become invisible – to your materials are more likely to be picked up than those that appear on pages labelled "orientation"
*   Can you facilitate activities which could include dependants? Many could include students without dependants, or who are not research students, adding value and "hit rate" to the activity. Examples include:
    *   family parties
    *   attending children's film programmes at local cinemas
    *   picnics
    *   trips to venues such as the beach, theme parks, etc

5.   National groups

If one of the aims of orientation is to encourage integration, meeting people of other nationalities and benefiting from an international experience, it seems counter-intuitive to even think about orientation for one specific group. There might be times, however, when this is helpful or unavoidable:

- a cohort arrives together when no other student group does
- there have been particular issues faced by this group (or staff working with them) which you can seek to pre-empt by tackling it in an orientation event or programme
- a sponsor requires an additional activity for their students
- a consular or other official is hosting an event for students to which you are "tagging on"

You may consider using the students' own language if:
- language skills are not part of their studies
- their English is, as yet, too limited to cover what you want to
- some of the concepts or issues are culturally very different or sensitive and require a very sophisticated and subtle grasp of the language to convey without embarrassment or ambiguity. One example seen in some institutions has been raising awareness of health (particularly sexual health) issues with students of one nationality experiencing a high rate of unplanned pregnancies.

Raising awareness of cultural difference may be more straightforward when looking at only two cultures. Straightforwardness, however, is not something that is usually relevant in cultural awareness training; subtlety and absence of polemic and polarisation are more valuable.

Section I – Miscellaneous matters

1.   Parents, families and friends

Students of all ages may be accompanied by relatives, significant others, siblings, friends. There are issues to consider here:

Do you want to encourage or accommodate this?

If so:

- can you cater for additional numbers, refreshments, etc?
- who will help with all the queries and requests that they are certainly going to have?
- will this help or hinder your students settling in and making friends?
- are you able to include in the programme events specifically for them?

If not:

- you need to make this clear in the most tactful way possible in advance
- make sure that there is information available for them on accommodation, things to do and so on

What do you do if a parent's presence is holding a student back or causing them distress?

- explain that the event or programme is largely to encourage independence and to allow the student to make some new friends
- suggest another event at which they would be welcome, making it clear that they should not be at this one!
- introduce them to other parents and suggest that they do something specific together
- tell them that you don't believe that their son/daughter will be able to settle in while spending time with their parents (this is subtly different from and stronger than the first on this list!)

2.   Student parents

You may have students, usually mature and/or postgraduates, who arrive with their own family. This is a different situation but also one which needs to be thought about beforehand. You need to have this information well before the programme begins and, if providing accommodation for orientation, find out if any family rooms are available. However, such students will generally want to find their own accommodation.

- Depending on numbers, you might think about some events for spouses and children so that they, too, feel part of the programme
- Students with families often feel isolated from the younger students so it is important for them to feel included in the programme
- Liaise with staff responsible for mature student support to find out if anything is being arranged for UK mature students and their families and ensure that information is given to international students
- Do you have the resources to arrange something – for example, a children's party? This could (and should) be extended to the children of other students, both UK and international, and is an excellent way of bringing families together (see Appendix 3 for more detail)

3.   Illness and accident

New arrivals are more susceptible to minor illness in early days/weeks as the body adjusts to a new environment and recovers from jet lag. Information about what to do if a participant becomes ill during the programme must be available to:

- participants
- staff working on the programme
- staff on duty outside office hours (eg accommodation, security)

There can be lack of clarity about whether or not new arrivals are eligible for NHS treatment; if they have arrived to join courses of six months or more starting imminently (even if not yet registered/enrolled), they will be elligible. It is important that you are clear about this as local hospitals etc might not be.

Other things to think about include:

- Where do students go with minor injuries?
  - your own first aid station?
  - clinic?
  - NHS walk-in centre?
- Ensuring participants have information about the institution's own health service, where to register (especially whether time is allocated during the programme) and highlight other services available, such as eating disorders clinics
- Highlighting the existence of NHS Direct and providing the number
- Stressing the importance of having insurance for travelling abroad, getting home in case of a medical emergency or arranging for a close relative to travel to the UK in case of serious illness.

Some of the above will have been included in pre-arrival information but orientation is a good time to repeat and reinforce important points.

4. Lost luggage

Pre-arrival information should include advice about:

- preventative measures
- procedures at the airport
- importance of completing the "lost luggage" form, leaving a contact phone number and residential address
- importance of carrying overnight supplies in cabin luggage

You will need to reassure participants that lost luggage does generally turn up within 48 hours, but also what to do if it doesn't (ie, who to talk to)

5. Homesickness, serious problems

- Look out for students who seem to be alone or unhappy. Assign a member of staff to do this, if possible
- During the programme, prepare them for a change of mood. Tell them they may feel homesick, but also that not everyone is affected. UK students get homesick as well
- Give out information about mentoring, buddy schemes, community groups, residence groups
- Serious problems (eg health, family) during the programme must be addressed immediately, though not necessarily by you. But ensure you are kept informed and updated
- Ongoing support – ensure that students know where to go – the number of the first point of contact can be given on a wallet card with other important numbers

6. Internet access

Increasingly, students expect to be able to access the internet during orientation. Recent International Student Barometer surveys show that internet access can be the most important thing to new students. You'll need to think in advance about whether this will be open access, any time or restricted with some sort of time limit for each.

- will they be able to access their own student account before registration? Can they access other services? (This is not an issue if orientation participants register during the programme)
- if you have an open lounge area, you might want to install some computers here
- some students will choose to spend more of their time in front of the screen than talking to people. You can either accept this as a fact of life or you can take action to encourage participation in the programme. One of your staff

team could monitor computer use and prevent students spending too much time online. Alternatively, a system of cards with "Computer Credits" could limit access but would mean more preparation, so consider whether or not it would be worthwhile.

7. What to bring
- Ensure that students, particularly those coming from tropical countries, know that they need to bring clothing suitable for cold and wet weather. However, students often get the impression that the UK is constantly wet and cold so they need reminding also to bring clothes for warmer weather.
- Students need to be warned in advance that heating goes off at night so they need to bring warm clothes to wear at night. Other useful reminders are:
  – shoes – comfortable for walking more than they might be used to and not just sandals
  – an alarm clock
  – traditional dress for special occasions

8. Monitoring, review, evaluation and planning
It is important to get as much feedback as possible, from both student participants and staff (see Appendix 9). However, it is inevitable that some of the feedback will be negative, whatever you do. There is a tendency in all of us to focus on the negative comments but they will be far outweighed by the positive. Use the main points in the feedback to inform the next lot of orientation planning – which will start soon after you have recovered from this one!

It is important that all who have been involved in the planning, preparation and organisation of the orientation programme meet for a de-briefing session as soon as possible after the end of the programme. This should be a safe environment for people to share concerns, observations and ideas for the next orientation and all should be encouraged to express their views on what worked well, what could be improved, what might be omitted next time. It is a forum for you to thank and compliment all who have contributed to the programme.

9. A final word
Planning and running an orientation programme is very rewarding but it is also very, very tiring. This fact needs to be acknowledged and addressed at an early stage.

- you cannot, and must not, try to do everything and be everywhere yourself. You need to delegate carefully and sensibly to your permanent and temporary staff and this is where thorough selection and training are invaluable (see Appendix 1)
- make sure that the facilitation of evening and weekend sessions is shared between you and your permanent and temporary staff
- have a rota for first point of contact, especially for emergencies and out of hours, so that it is not you every night
- try to get a few early nights and look after your own health
- ensure that you get time to eat properly
  - eat with the participants
  - stock up your freezer in advance
  - check whether you can claim for takeaway meals so that you can eat something hot even if you are working into the evening.

Look at the participants when they are enjoying an activity or each other's company and give yourself a big pat on the back. A little while ago they were in different corners of the world and you have brought them together for one of the most significant experiences they will ever have.

The materials in the following appendices are examples and suggestions to help with the whole process of planning and facilitating an orientation programme at your institution. They are not intended to be prescriptive and not all components will suit you or your institution.

Appendix 1   Interviewing, appointing and training student assistants

You may have neither the budget nor the need to recruit student assistants or other temporary staff. At the very least, however, a helper to run errands in the middle of busy events, to escort lost students or other visitors, or to do the photocopying, may save your sanity at a time when you are under most pressure. Even if you intend seeking just one volunteer, many of the points in this section are pertinent.

1.   Recruitment of temporary staff

You may do this by:
- word of mouth
- head-hunting
- internal advertising using:
  - emails
  - student press/newsletter
  - Job Shop/Careers Service
  - noticeboard
  - recommendation

2.   Selection

What kind of people do you want? You may not have much choice and decide to appoint those who are most helpful and reliable only. Both of those qualities are vital but other criteria ideally should be taken into account. If you are looking for a team rather than a few individuals, the make-up of the team:
- should reflect the student population
- can be part of the orientation process in that it will introduce participants to different types of student
- can be a mixture of different
  - nationalities
  - genders
  - ages

- levels of study
- personality types – all quiet or all very extrovert will make participants at those extremes feel excluded
- should have good chemistry

In addition, you need to consider which students have heavy academic commitments at the time you need them.

The final team should be selected following group (or possibly individual) interviews. Consider:
- language ability
- ability to follow instruction
- ability to listen and speak clearly
- personalities and how they interact with each other
- Why are they doing this? Their agenda should be same as yours. This type of activity can attract students who are unable to make friends, who want to evangelise, want to "date" the new students etc.

You may not attract sufficient interest, but ideally you should be able to pick the best from a wide field and, importantly, to weed out inappropriate applicants. An unsuitable team member can be a great hindrance, increase your workload and have a very negative effect on participants.

If you envisage a large number of applicants, one way to reduce the time taken is to hold a pre-application information session. Potential applicants can come along and receive an overview of what's involved, pick up an application form and submit a written application soon afterwards. Some will decide it's not for them after all, so you won't waste time with applicants who later change their minds.

What to cover in the information session
- overview of the job
- interviewing procedure and dates
- date of training session
- expectations:
  - to represent the institution in a positive light
  - ability to listen and communicate effectively – including following your instructions
  - reliability
  - good timekeeping
  - flexibility
  - an understanding of the issues facing new students
  - an awareness that some will be very apprehensive

You can include selection activities in this session. If your institution is recruiting for other temporary posts (eg for registration, Intro Week) information about these can be given at the same session.

Structure

This large-scale exercise may seem harsh but can save a lot of time spent interviewing people who are clearly unsuitable. If you combine it with information on the role[s], it is also an opportunity for potential staff to find out if this is a role that they want at all. Allow one and a half hours for this session:

- book a large room or lecture theatre
- on arrival, each student gets a badge with a number and an application form with a corresponding number
- explain that you have far more interested people than you have posts, that this is a selection activity, and that you are looking for people who can interact well with others and follow instructions, etc.
- ask applicants to get into groups – having left the friends with whom they arrived
- give each group printed scenarios to discuss
- staff and/or student representatives observe throughout, making notes of those who:
  - engage with others
  - do not follow instructions or do not appear to understand them
  - are reluctant to be separated from their friends
- those who do not interact well or who dominate or fail to follow your simple instructions can be excluded from the process while those who come up with good responses to the scenarios, can work with new people etc can be included
- you can present some scenarios, based on common situations for new students and ask students to discuss them in groups. The staff/students observing can move around to see how people interact. At this stage:
  - you should not exclude quieter students – you need a mixture of personalities but do check that they are engaged, interested in others, etc
  - you should not exclude those who seem loud and over-enthusiastic – as long as they are not intimidating nor excluding quieter members of the group
- time for questions
- ask students to submit written applications on the forms you gave them if they are still keen
- collate notes from observers to ensure that you do not interview those who found the exercise too difficult and to be sure that you do interview those who impressed

- even if you do not want written applications or do not have too many applicants, this exercise is useful in that it gives potential team or crew members a chance to find out if it is really what they want and it saves a lot of time in the long run
- in addition, it's useful to include some points about equality issues and take care that the programme will not conflict with their academic commitments

Application forms can be very useful but will not necessarily indicate how well people communicate face to face.

Group or individual interviews are time-consuming but useful if you don't have huge numbers. Many of the exercises above can be adapted for small group exercises. Individual interviews may not show you how well a student interacts with others which is of vital importance unless that is not to be part of the role

"Who wants to be a millionaire?" activity if you have the technology. Set up a lecture theatre or auditorium with buzzers to answer multiple choice questions based on the knowledge you need your team to have or possible answers to scenarios they may have to face

3.   Interviews

If there are a large number to be appointed, group interviews of up to 10 applicants save time but also help to show how the students interact and so how they will work as a team.

- you can use some of the icebreaker exercises in Appendix 3 as part of the interview process
- ask some standard questions about what they can give to the programme
- if you did not have an information/screening session (see above), you need to tell them about the roles and responsibilities

4.   What to cover in a training programme

Training is a must – even if all staff already work together. It is important that everyone is familiar with the aims and objectives of your programme or events. You may have a day or two for training; you may have a couple of hours only. Consider who is going to deliver the training and whether this will include staff from other areas (eg, counselling) as well as your core international team.

The areas to consider below apply whether the team is made up of students or of permanent staff.

Timing
This can be difficult; you need to take into account vacations and other responsibilities

Customer care
This is an important part of the training process. If you don't like the term "customer", think of it as "helping students" or "making a good impression". Or have a discussion with the team about the whole concept so that a consensus can be reached. Your HR or catering people may have some useful resources that can help with this, such as:

- "Fish" DVD which looks at feeling good about your work and making others feel better after interacting with you. (Try not to be put off by the enthusiasm of it; student teams have really enjoyed it and found many of the concepts very useful.)
- "Welcome Host" – a national programme used in the hospitality industry which emphasises the importance of first impressions

Cultural awareness
Most of the participants will be fish out of water, culturally speaking. It is important that team members appreciate this fact and are aware of the importance of their own culture in determining much of their behaviour.

Roles and responsibilities
Remind those involved of the following:

- emphasise that they are working for the institution as a member of staff. This means:
  - loyalty to the institution
  - a professional approach
  - they can expect the same from you and your support if they get into difficulty
- the importance of punctuality and reliability
- their attitudes will help to form the students' (and possibly parents') first impressions
- make sure that they read the material sent to students so they can answer questions
- they must know that it's okay to refer difficult queries or situations on to staff
- they must know who's in charge
  - if you have a student who's worked for you before or who is particularly reliable, you could appoint them to co-ordinate or lead the team. The assistants will initially report to them.
  - is there someone in your office they can talk to if you're not there?
  - do they have phone numbers they can use if they are not near you?

- some participants or their parents might be difficult or unhappy. Your team need to know how to deal with them. A bit of time spent on assertiveness training can be useful to ensure calm and solid responses to anger or distress
- they must know their way around. Send them off with plans or maps to find their way if they don't already know – this can be a useful team-building activity (see below)
- a Code of Conduct is a useful checklist as well as a visible commitment. You could ask the team to sign up to it – make sure you can comply as well! (Example of Code of Conduct, see Appendix 2)

Practical matters
- If the team are expected to use mobile phones, can you hire some for the programme/period? If not, who will pay for calls?
  – how will team members be reimbursed?
  – will your accounts/finance people permit this?
  – can you be sure that this won't be abused by team members?
- Will team members incur expenses – for example, for meals on duty, fares? If so,
  – how will you set limits?
  – you must tell them that they must keep and submit to you receipts
- What other commitments might team members have at that time:
  – academic
  – employment
  – family
  – religious (eg Friday prayers, breaking fast at Ramadan, Jewish new year)

Programme
- the team need to be familiar with the participants' programme[s]
- go through with them, emphasising anything you deem relevant, anything that has been an issue in past programmes or that might seem unimportant to an inexperienced team

Team-building
- use some of the icebreakers in Appendix 3. The aim here is both for the assistants to get to know each other and for them to become familiar with the icebreakers which will be used during orientation. Try to use three or four icebreakers and give the team brief feedback.
- eat meals together

- spend time as a team on useful activities, such as making up information packs, that may be monotonous yet vital
- if you can afford it, have everyone share a leisure activity, such as bowling, laser quest, an outing or even just a walk around routes that they will show new students. All of this can help the team begin to gel

Questions
Ensure you leave time for these.

Appendix 2   Sample Code of Conduct for Student Assistants

A.   Representing the *[name of institution]*

1.   Assistants should be aware that they are representing the XXX and must conduct themselves in a friendly, courteous, helpful and positive manner at all times.
2.   Assistants are not allowed to consume alcohol during the day.

B.   Availability

1.   Assistants must be resident in XXX throughout the period of training and employment.
2.   Any absence between the start and the end of employment, including training, is not permitted unless it is unavoidable **and** authorised by your line manager.
3.   Assistants must attend all training including team building events as required.
4.   Assistants must attend all duties punctually and in appropriate dress.
5.   Residential orientation assistants must be in residence in the allocated accommodation. Orientation assistants are not allowed to have friends or relatives stay with them in the Hall of Residence.
6.   Orientation assistants must vacate accommodation with all luggage by *[date]*, leaving room in good condition.

C.   Conduct

1.   Remember at all times that the programmes with which you are helping are for the benefit of participants and that their enjoyment and engagement comes before yours at all times.
2.   At no time must assistants be/appear to be under the influence of alcohol.
3.   Assistants are not permitted to engage in personal relationships with participants during the period of employment.
4.   Assistants must not smoke while in uniform in public places with the exception of duties within a bar or café if required.
5.   Assistants must not give information unless they are 100% sure that it is correct. When in doubt check with a co-ordinator or manager rather than send the student elsewhere to find out information/give information which they are not completely sure of.

6. If in uniform or recognised by a participant (even if off-duty) assistants are expected to respond in a polite manner to requests for help.
7. New students have various compulsory timetabled events. You should be aware of this timetable and advise them to attend.
8. Assistants should recognise the boundaries of their employment and seek help if a student is too demanding or inappropriately dependent on them.
9. In case of complaints from students or their relatives, assistants should provide their name and contact details for their manager.

D. Dress
1. Wear uniform (where provided) while on duty.
2. Assistants should not dress immodestly.
3. Clothing must be clean and tidy at **ALL** times.

E. Financial
1. If you have been told by your line manager that you are eligible to claim expenses, obtain receipts for any reasonable and authorised expenses.
2. Return all items of clothing, equipment, receipts and floats (as requested or if appropriate) within one week of the end of the programme. After this date, the cost of items will be deducted from any salary owing.
3. Assistants who are authorised to claim for meals/refreshments while on duty can claim any for reasonable quantities and prices, in line with careful students' budgets!

F. Equal Opportunities
1. The University has equal opportunities and harassment policies. Assistants should familiarise themselves with these and not put themselves forward for employment unless they are sure they can comply.
   [insert link to relevant web reference here]
   Assistants will be required to work with students of any and all nationalities, religions, political groupings, sexual orientation, age, etc. This work is not appropriate for anyone who cannot work happily and with respect for all.
2. Assistants are not permitted to promote their own political or religious views. However, they should be prepared to refer students appropriately.

Appendix 3   Icebreakers and other activities

Icebreaker suggestions

1.   Three truths and a lie

Directions   Everyone comes up with three truths about themselves and one lie. The others have to guess what the lie is.

Preparation   None

Example   The three things I could say about myself are: "I have been to Africa. I am allergic to horses and I am one of 11 children." The people in the group guess which of the three is not true. Then, when everyone has made their choice the person reveals the lie: "The lie is I am allergic to horses."

Note   This is a great icebreaker or "get to know you" game.

2.   Non-verbal introductions

Directions   Divide the group into pairs. Taking turns, each member of the pair should communicate to their partner as much about themselves as they can without speaking or writing (drawing pictures is allowed)

Preparation   Have paper and pencils available

Example   They might point to a wedding ring or draw a picture of their house. To make the exercise slightly easier, and to keep the group to time, the facilitator could call out the topics and when to change over

Finish the exercise by having everyone introduce their partner (verbally). Also allow the partner to make corrections and fill in missing details.

3.　Body parts

Directions　Divide group into pairs or small teams, both of whom have to list body parts with only 3 letters. This can include slang, eg, leg, arm, bum, rib, eye . . . . . there are lots. Winner is the one who has the most.

Preparation　None

4.　Three facts

Directions　You have to find out and then present to a larger group three facts about the person sitting next to you.

Preparation　None

5.　Colour groups

Directions　Participants are given a coloured card (or sticker on folder) and told to make a group with all others with same colour and find out what they have in common –ie, why they have been given the same colour.

Preparation　Coloured cards or folders available

Note　Nothing is pre-arranged but the aim is to realise that everyone has a lot in common wherever they're from. Can be difficult for very large groups

6.　What's my line?

Directions　In small groups, each takes it in turn to introduce the person to their right. They do this by guesswork and assumptions and only speak to the person to ask their name. Person being introduced responds with correct information before introducing the next person and so on. How accurate are first impressions?

Preparation　None

Note　This is an extension of 1 (Three truths and a lie), and is taken from the ASTF Trainers' Sourcebook, Diversity

7. Who Am I (a)?

Directions   Divide into groups of 6 to 10. Take a ball (or a piece of scrunched-up paper) and throw it to anyone in the group, inviting that person to say three things about themselves:
- who they are
- why they came to orientation/what they're most looking forward to
- what they hope to get out of orientation

Then that person throws the ball to someone else in the group and the game continues until everyone has had a go.

Preparation   A few balls or large sheets of paper

OR

Pair everyone up for a five-minute exercise interviewing each other, asking:
- their names
- where they're from
- why they chose to come here (to orientation or the institution)
- what they are most looking forward to
- three things they have in common

Preparation   None

8. Who am I (b)?

Directions   Each person writes (secretly) on a Post-it note the name of a famous person. Keeping the name hidden, stick the Post-it to another's forehead. Each person takes turns to ask the group questions to figure out whom the unknown person is. The catch is that only yes or no answers can be asked, eg:
- am I alive?
- am I female?

If the answer is no your turn is over. If the answer is yes, you can ask another question. Keep going until you get a no or make a guess at who you are. If you guess right, you win. If you guess wrong your turn is over. Keep going until everyone has guessed or, if time is tight, maybe stop after a few right answers.

Preparation   Supply of Post-it notes

9. Chat Show

Great for groups of strangers, and avoids the dreaded pain of introducing yourself.

Directions Get the group to pair off and take turns to be a chat show host and guest. The chat show host has to find out three interesting facts about their guest. Switch the roles and repeat. Bring everyone back to the big group and ask them to present briefly the three facts about their guest to the group. Maybe go round the group randomly so people are less aware of their turn coming up next and panicking about it.

Preparation None

Note Watch the timing on this one as it has a tendency to go on too long if your group likes to chat too much.

10. Line Up

Ideal for a quick energy boost and finding out a little more about your group. If you've got a bigger group, split them up into smaller groups and see who completes each task quickest.

Directions Have your group ready to form a line in order of....
   a) Height, from smallest to tallest
   b) Birth months, from January through to December
   c) Distance they travelled from their home country, from nearest to furthest
   d) Anything else you think up!

To make it more of a challenge, get the group to do this silently, using sign language or other alternative communication.

Suggested extension for c): once everyone is lined up get the two people on each end to pair up, and so on down the line, therefore pairing those who have travelled furthest with those who have travelled the shortest distance and get them to do the remaining activities with that person.

Preparation None

11. Human Bingo

Directions Create a bingo sheet of 3x3 or 4x4 squares. Each one has a question on it. Keep the questions relatively simple, eg, the name of someone in the group who is an Elvis fan, someone who owns a cat, owns a Nokia phone, travelled more than 1,000 miles to get here, etc. Winner fills all the squares with different people's names.

Students have to go around the room, choose a question and choose a person to ask. If someone says yes they write their name in the box; if they say no they need to ask someone else and do this until the squares are filled up. Try and make sure all the questions will get a yes by most people. Also try and encourage people to fill boxes with a different name to encourage people to move around the room.

The idea could also be adapted to get students used to finding things on campus (eg, find the statue of . . . ., or find the building with the red door,etc). In this case students could be asked to write down the name of the building, statue etc.

Preparation Prepare the bingo sheets and have pens or pencils available.

12. Explore the room

Directions Get everyone wandering around the room, getting a sense of its shape and size, and perhaps paying attention to things you'd normally ignore – the carpet, the walls, the rubbish bin and so on (this frequently creates giggling, which is fine).

At a pre-arranged signal, stop and find a partner – talk to them about where they're from, what they expect from the course, what their name is, one thing which has surprised them so far, etc. Then, another signal, off they go again, wandering for a bit, then finding a new partner. Carry on for maybe four or five goes, perhaps throwing in different questions each time.

Preparation You'll need a large open space for this

Note There's something about making the "getting to know you" bit physical that helps, and absorbs some of the embarrassment.

13.   Favourite character

Direction   In pairs or small groups, ask each other questions such as: who is your favourite character from literature or cinema? If you were an animal, what animal would you be?

Preparation   None

Note   These can often be quite telling exercises, getting quite quickly to how someone is presenting themselves in the group.

14.   What's your name?

Direction   Say your name, and say something about it – have you always been called this, do you have any middle names, are you named after someone, etc? Again, this is surprisingly revealing, and obviously helps with getting to know one another by name.

Preparation   None

15.   A variation on a theme

Direction   Students are asked to imagine they are on a desert island, then to look in their bag/pockets and select three items that they would want to take with them.

They then share this with one or two others or the whole group if small. It's very interesting what people decide they need – eg, a credit card!

Preparation: None

Note   The act of looking in the bag also adds something quite tangible to the activity rather than imagining what you would wish to take. People start pulling things out of their bags/pockets etc.

16.   Name game

Directions   Everyone is seated in a circle and the nominated first person has to say their first name (or name they want to use) followed by an adjective that describes them in some way and which begins with the same letter as the first letter in their name, ie Jolly Jane.

The next person tests their power of recall and repeats Jolly Jane before saying their name and adjective and so it goes round until the last person in the circle has called all the names/adjectives of the group before adding his/her own.

Preparation   None

17. M&M game

Directions   People are split up into groups of five or six. Each group is given a cup of coloured M&Ms (not the peanut ones). They pass the cup round and take out an M&M. Before eating it, they look at the colour chart you will have given them, which lists all the M&M colours and their related stories, eg yellow – tell the group about the best thing you've experienced since coming to your new university. Blue – tell the group about the scariest thing you've ever done. Red – tell the group about the most embarrassing thing you've ever done. Green – tell the group something about yourself that they couldn't know just by looking at you.

Preparation   Need supply of M&Ms with the peanut ones removed

18. Devil stick game

Directions   In groups of six or seven, all participants hold a gardening cane using one finger only. Without any verbal communication, they have to work as a team to lower the stick down to the ground without any member of team letting go of the stick. The fastest team (that doesn't let go) wins.

Preparation   Gardening cane is needed for each group

Note   Good for non-verbal communication and building confidence in the team

19. Names and personalities

Directions   Participants have to think of an adjective which somehow relates to their personality and/or describes them, AND starts with the same letter as their first name: eg Curious Carolyn, Impatient Ismah, Lazy Lola, etc. This is a very clever little game which has been played

many times in groups of all sorts of people, and it does tease a lot out of people, as they are defining themselves, and it is a great way for a group to get to know each other and their names.

Preparation   None

Note   Ideal group size: 5-30 people

20.   Human chain in knots

Directions   This game involves participants forming a circle and holding hands. The leader of the game (a teacher, not a student), breaks the circle at one point. The leader takes the free hand of the person at one of the ends, and with everybody still maintaining their hands linked (ie, forming a human chain), s/he leads the person (and the chain that follows) in a random pattern which weaves in and out of the chain, in effect as if you were tying it in knots. Then the leader lets go, and the task is for the chain to untie itself without letting go of the hands. When played with an appropriate group this is an incredibly powerful and fun icebreaker.

Preparation   None

Note   Icebreakers which involve physical activity can be very good at getting a group relaxed and alert. However, they must be chosen with care, and cultural issues about body contact might render this unsuitable on occasions. Ideal group size: 15-30

21.   Charades

Directions   One participant mimes the profession, or course, etc., and the others have to guess what it is. Whoever guesses does the next charade.

Preparation   None

Note   This is a version of the old fashioned game. It can help highlight all sorts of cultural issues and assumptions. You need to adapt the game so that it is themed around topics on which you can expect a broadly common knowledge to exist (eg professions, or courses at the college). Ideal group size: 3-6

22.   What am I?

Directions   The old game where one person says, "what am I?" and the others need to ask questions to which the other person can only reply yes or no (eg, are you an animal? Have you got four legs?). Children often play this. But it is surprising how even 'grown-ups' get hooked and their curiosity piqued.

Preparation   None

Note   Ideal group size: 3-6

23.   Alphabetic table

Directions   Each participant draws a grid/table on a piece of paper with the following columns: Person's name, country, colour, food, job, object. The letters of the alphabet are written each on a piece of paper and placed in a hat or bag or similar container. You then get somebody to pick up one piece of paper and announce the letter. Participants have to think as quickly as they can of a person's name starting with that letter, a country starting with that letter, and so on, and write it on their grids. The person who finishes first calls out and wins.

Preparation   Paper, writing materials, bags containing the letters of the alphabet

Note   Ideal group size: 3-5

24.   Longer Game suggestion

A competition where you get students in teams of three or four and give them a piece of paper with a set of signs and their meanings (eg, turn left, search around this spot, etc). Put signs and hide messages along a route asking them to perform tasks at stations. They have to complete the circuit and get to the end having done all the tasks. Tasks can be things like: count how many nails there are on a door; or gather five pieces of paper, one yellow, the other green, the other so and so; obtain a feather; find a certain piece of local information, etc. The winner is whoever finishes first with all the tasks completed (you deduct points for each not completed). Have teams leave at 10-minute intervals, to give each team enough time ahead for doing things. You time when they start and when they end, to find out how long it took them.

Other event suggestions

25.   Campus Tour

A campus tour is most usefully done at the start of the programme but can be fitted in any time. The students should be provided with a clear map and given a set of instructions to enable them to find:

- their own department
- other departments
- the central library
- careers service
- other information services
- student union
- food outlets
- student services
- one-stop shop information centre

26.   Self-directed town or city tours

A self-directed town or city tour is an opportunity for new students to get to know where to find buildings, offices and public transport and to give them some idea of where things are in relation to others.

The tour needs to be prepared in advance by someone actually doing it and noting any problems, restrictions, closing times, fare prices, entry costs. Written instructions, together with a form to submit, are then given to the students with, if possible, a recorded version available for downloading onto personal MP3 players. It adds to the challenge and fun if the students are required to collect "proof" in the form of bus/tram/ train tickets and to have their forms stamped by, for example, gallery staff, shop staff, receptionists, and information centre staff. All this has to be organised in advance. You could ask them to stick these onto the forms or provide an envelope. The completed forms can be entered into a draw with one or two prizes awarded. The instructions need to be as precise as possible, eg "walk down from the main building along XX street towards the town centre. When you get to XX turn immediately right onto XX" and so on.

Try to include interesting buildings and services such as art galleries, theatres, monuments, town hall. It adds to the interest if you also include some relevant information about these.

The outline below is one example of town tour instructions given to students.

City centre tour and treasure trail competition

What do I have to do?
Read through the instructions below and follow them as closely as possible. The trail will take you into the city centre, and to various places of interest and importance.

Ensure that your tickets and receipts are firmly attached to your completed form.

Return your competition form to:

- International Office by *[date and time]*

What is the purpose of the treasure trail?
1. To give you the confidence and incentive to find your way around part of the city as quickly as possible.
2. To help you to use public transport.
3. To introduce you to various places/people (eg local police, Central Library, etc.)
4. To give you a chance to win a great prize!

What could I win?
£20 Book Token (donated by   ).

£10 Book Token (donated by   ).

How will the winners be chosen?
The first complete and correct competition forms drawn at random on *[date]* will win the prizes.

When can I do the Treasure Trail?
Between 9.00 am – 12:00 noon on *[date]*.

What do I need to take?
- this leaflet
- a pen
- a *[name of institution]* location map
- about £3.00 (minimum) for bus/tram fares

How long will it take?
About 2 - 2.5 hours.

RULES

1. One entry per student.

2. Only <u>new</u> international students are allowed to enter.

3. Only complete and correct forms will be considered. Any incorrect or incomplete form drawn will not win a prize.

4. It is entrants' responsibility to ensure that tickets and receipts are firmly attached to their forms.

5. The judges' decision is final. No discussion will be entered into.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT ORIENTATION CITY CENTRE TOUR AND TREASURE TRAIL

Competition entry form

Name .... Email/tel no. ....

[1] Walk down *[name of street]* to the Post Office

Go to the Post Office counter and **purchase the necessary postage stamps to send a letter to your home country** (keep these safe to use when you send your first letter home)

Ask the post office cashier to stamp your form here.

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[2] Leave the Post Office and turn left to Anywhere Street tram stop (outside the Italian restaurant) and catch the tram to the city centre (approx cost £1.20) Get off the tram at *[name of stop]*.

Attach your tram ticket here.

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│                        Tram Ticket                            │
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[3] Ask someone the way to the town's covered market.

Go into the market

What is the cost of: One kilo of onions ....
One kilo of carrots ....
One kilo of apples ....

Leave the market by the same entrance as you went in.

[4]   Directions to Another Road.

Cross over the road.
Turn left into *[name of road]* passing *[name of landmark]* on your right.
Turn left into *[name of road]*.
Take notice of the Police Headquarters on *[name of road]*.

[5]   Continue up *[name of road]* and cross the road at the pedestrian crossing by the GT News kiosk.
Turn right and cross at the pedestrian crossing towards TKMaxx. (This is a good shop for cheap clothes and items to brighten up your accommodation)
Next to TKMaxx is the City Centre Premier Travel Inn. This hotel, which is one of the largest in *[name of town]*, is a good choice if you have family or friends visiting *[name of road]*
Turn left and continue walking towards *[name of street]*
Cross *[name of street]*

What is the name of the large department store (shop which sells many non-food items) on your left?

[6]   Continue walking along *[name of street]*.
Turn left into *[name of street]*
Enter the large shop called "Boots".

On which floor is the Pharmacy/Dispensary?

            (a) Ground (street level)
            (b) Upper Floor (upstairs)

                                    ....

To which floor would you take your digital camera card to get some prints?

            (a) Ground (street level)
            (b) Upper Floor (upstairs)

                                    ....

Leave the shop and turn left down *[name of street]*.

[7]   **What is the name of the card/gift shop on your right? ....**

Turn right in between *[shop]* and *[cafe]* into *[name of square]*. Walk straight and turn left after *[name of shop]* (clothes shop).

Cross the road at *[name of street]* and go into *[name of square]*.

How many jets of water are there in the fountain?   ....

Cross *[name of square]* diagonally. Exit the square on the opposite side to where you came in. Turn left immediately and take the first left.
This will bring you to the back of the City Hall. Walk around the City Hall to the front.
The City Hall hosts over 400 events every year.

Which one of these is the City Hall used for?

      (a) Tax and Rent Collection
      (b) Short-Term Prisoners
      (c) Concerts and Plays

                          ....

Walk straight ahead past the fountains into *[name of street]*.
Walk straight on. Turn right opposite John Lewis onto *[name of street]*.
Turn left at the road junction and carry on past the *[name of building]*.

[8]   Turn right and cross the road at the traffic lights and enter *[name of area]* (note Debenhams, the Department Store on your right). Walk down the hill.

[9]   Turn round and walk back up *[name of area]* to *[name]*.
Cross the road at the same place as before.
Walk up *[name]*, past the *[name]* and Town Hall on your right.

Turn right into *[name]* and walk along until you reach Art Gallery.
Go into the *[name]* Gardens, walk straight through it and out of the doors at the back.

Walk back through the *[name]* Gardens and exit through the main entrance. Turn right and walk straight ahead.
Turn right and go into the Central Library
Go into the library. Have a look around!

You can become a member of the Library and take books away or use the extensive reference library and information services. All of these services are free of charge. On the third floor of the Library building is another Art Gallery. Here you will find an outstanding collection of 19th and 20th century modern art, including works by Cézanne, Picasso and Spencer. Admission to the Gallery is free of charge and it is open Monday – Saturday 10:00hrs to 17:00hrs.

As you leave the library, ask the librarian on the issuing desk to stamp your form here:

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[10]   Leave the library and turn right into *[name of street]*.
       Turn right into *[name of square]*.

       What is the name of the Theatre in this square?

       _____

       What is the name of the cinema you can see across the road? (Use your student card for discounted tickets on Tuesdays)

       _____

       Turn to your left and walk up past the side of the church on *[name of street]*

       What is the name of the church you pass on your right?

       _____

       You will pass the Visitor Information Centre on your left. Go inside and pick up any information you might find useful.
       Turn right back onto *[name]*
       Walk back past Boots on your right

[11]   Take the bus (36 or 37) back to the *[name of institution]*. You catch this from the bus stop just past Boots. To make the bus stop so that you can get on, hold your arm out with your palm facing the bus. Tell the driver where you want to go and s/he will tell you how much the fare is (approx 80p).

       Attach your 36 or 37 bus ticket here

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│                                                       │
│                      Bus Ticket                       │
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Return your form to: xxxxxx

forms must be returned by: *[time and date]*

Grateful thanks to the following:

Central Library

Name of Post Office etc

27. Team Quiz
- This brings together the whole group so you need to have a large room available
- Time: after dinner one evening in the middle of the programme
- Set up: tables and chairs in groups of up to 10
- Teams: students to organise for them selves but point out that people from different countries with a range of interests, subjects studied and skills are likely to make the best team
- Staffing: facilitator to ask questions, assistants to collect and score answer sheets
- Materials: prepared quiz questions for the facilitator, answer sheets and pens/pencils for each group, flip chart for answers, team prizes for winning team

Recommended: About 6 rounds of questions, 10 to a round. The questions, as in a pub quiz, can be themed for each round, but keep the respondents in mind and ensure that the questions are not too UK-centred.

Examples of rounds are:
- the institution itself
- sport
- capital cities
- literature
- food and drink
- music

28. Family party
For students who bring their own families, a party is ideal for them to get to know other students with families. However, the planning of such an event takes considerable time and resources.

Tips and recommendations
- liaise with whoever is responsible for mature student support, as something may already be planned
- consult the Students Union/Guild and get them involved
- plan well in advance. If possible, delegate this to a named member of staff
- book rooms – two rooms are ideal, one for the noisy games and one for quiet activities and where parents/carers can meet
- think about ages of children – do you want to keep it for younger children or include older ones?
- find out if entertainers/helpers need to be police checked

- Which students are you going to invite? If possible, include all current students with families, both UK and international. They are often very isolated.
- When will you hold it? The Sunday afternoon before the start of the academic year is a good time.
- What will happen at the party?

Suggested activities
- balloon animals
- professional children's entertainer
- face painting (very popular!)
- music and dancing
- games

Food and drink
This is a minefield! There are many possible allergies and food intolerances amongst children so it is recommended that refreshments are limited to drinks (including tea/coffee for the adults) and biscuits. If it is to be an afternoon party, this is sufficient.

Who will help to run the party?
If you have a Students Union/Guild, contact them in advance. They may have a (police checked) group of students who take part in volunteering activities involving children and who would be pleased to help out at the party. If not, use some of your temporary staff.

What else?
- have relevant information on display. You could invite representatives from local Under-5 groups to bring along literature
- include plenty of local information on transport, schools – or details of where to go
- board games, art materials and a computer are all useful for older children and those who don't want to join the noisier group in the next room
- try to get the participants to complete an evaluation – or just to tell you what they think. Chances are they'll really appreciate your efforts.

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[24] "New Horizons": The experience of international students in UK FE colleges (UKCISA, 2006)

Appendix 4   Orientation issues for English language staff

"The support services which students were most aware of, and made most use of, were college advice services such as the international office or student services. Language and study skills courses and social activities organised by the college were also well used. Levels of awareness of accommodation offices and careers advisers were marginally lower and lowest of all was awareness of orientation programmes. Students on English language courses were least likely to know whether an orientation programme was offered."[24]

The advice in the following section is aimed primarily at international student advisers and English language teaching and support staff. It is recommended that at least some of these issues be addressed during orientation.

English language support and study skills

Students need to know what to expect so advisers need to know (and reinforce during orientation):

- what preparatory courses are available for students. Are these courses generic or subject-related? (Some institutions assign credits to English Language programmes.)
- the IELTS entry score. If it is low, then students are going to need more help.
- the arrangements for writing classes. These may be mixed, including home and international, or solely for international students.
- how students are expected to learn and different teaching methods
- what level of support is needed, the nature of that support, where to access it and how it is to be delivered, including ALL relevant costs
- the key contacts for students and staff, eg, Student Union reps, counsellors, financial advisors
- any restrictions on the amount of language support and/or the students to whom it is offered
- who the students should go to if they are struggling with their course work and what help is available within academic departments for language support and cultural problems

Main academic issues facing students

These include feelings of isolation, falling behind other students on the course, not understanding the lecturer, taking more time to read and understand, not being able to participate fully in seminars. Academic staff tend to regard writing skills as the main problem but as well as language and comprehension difficulties, there are often cultural differences around the conventions of group participation.

A student might have been a star pupil in her/his own school and then fall behind once in the UK system due to differences in teaching methods and language difficulties. Thus good, successful students can be made to feel failures at the start of their courses.

Checklist of English language support

- time management and organisational skills
- setting their own deadlines
- avoiding plagiarism
- improving IT skills
- employment-related skills, eg, CV writing, giving presentations
- English language support can be delivered in a variety of ways – for example, 1:1 sessions, bookable individual sessions and within academic departments/ schools which may or may not be in conjunction with the English language support centre. Support within a student's own department or school is the ideal, with skills targeted at the requirements of the course and academic departments/schools having strong links with the English language support centre
- certain national groups may require more specific help
- postgraduates need a different kind of support. This will be primarily help with theses, from initial literature review to checking of thesis

Learning styles

- advisers and tutors need to take more account of prior learning styles. For example, rote learning, which is employed in many countries, is now devalued in the UK, but it can be a very useful skill
- within any course, there will be a diversity of tasks and a diversity of students and skills
- intervention needs to be done early and across the institution

Appendix 5   Top tips/checklist for students

Top tips for students (some examples)

	Tip	How	Where
1	Read everything which has been sent to you	Carefully!	Information booklet
2	Make a note of when various forms have to be returned	Is there a checklist at the back of the information booklet?	Information booklet
3	Get to know where you're going	Websites	University/college's website Local town or city website
4	Allow enough time for travelling so you're not rushing into anything straightaway	Check when you need to be there, check flight and/or train times	Information booklet
5	Attend the Orientation programme: it really will help	Application form	Information booklet
6	Don't think that everyone else knows where they're going and what they're doing – they don't		
7	Find out where to go for help and who to talk to		
8	Talk to other students, even if you don't feel like it		

	Tip	How	Where
9	Get to know your Student Union and what it offers	Find out where it is	Union web pages
10	If you don't understand something, ask. The chances are that others won't have understood either		
11	Don't expect everything to be wonderful all the time: you were sometimes a bit unhappy or in a bad mood in your own country – it's not always because you're away from home. Sometimes it's just how you are.	Think about times you felt like that at home	
12	Don't be surprised if everyday things are different from what you're used to: it's part of the whole experience of living and learning away from home.		
13	Make sure you contact your family to let them know you arrived safely – but don't call them too often		

	Tip	How	Where
14	Don't hide away in your room – there's always somewhere to go and someone to talk to		
15	Try out new food, sports and activities	Have a cooking session with your friends – invite others	Webpages Look in the union Local cafes
16	Consider keeping a diary/blog of what's going on each day. This can be shared.		
17	Keep up with your studies and hand in work on time		
18	Remember that UK students can also feel homesick. Help out with the next Orientation		
19	Don't be too hard on yourself – if your first language is not English then it can get very tiring speaking in English all day		
20	If you're from, eg, the US or Australia, you might be expecting everything to be the same – it's not, so don't be surprised if you experience some culture shock.		
21	Help out with the next Orientation		

Appendix 6 Orientation FAQs (for students and to include in your own publication)

Orientation FAQs

Question	Response: Where to find Who to ask	Page number
Where/when do I pay my tuition fees?		
What forms do I have to hand in?		
Where do I get my key?		
Where/when do I get my ID/Library/ Student card?		
Where/when do I register with the police?		
I have a problem with my visa		
I have a problem with my accommodation		
I don't yet have any accommodation		
How do I get internet access?		
Can my parents call me via the University/College?	No – please call them	
I feel unwell/have injured myself		
Where do I get insurance for my belongings?		
Do I have to pay for medical assistance?		
Will I be able to get Chinese food here?		
How far is it from my accommodation to the main campus?		
Will I be able to get a part-time job?		

Question	Response: Where to find Who to ask	Page number
When are the exams?		
Where can I get help with my written English?		
I'm not sure how to use the Library		
I have two children; will there be some activities for them?		
Will I be able to buy second-hand books?		
Can I bring my laptop?		
Where can I find a dentist?		
I'm a keen netball player – is there a team?		
Where is a suitable place of worship for me?		
Where can I go if I don't like clubbing/drinking?		

Appendix 7   Examples of different models of orientation programmes

This section contains examples of orientation or induction courses organised by a range of institutions. They vary in length from half a day to a week.

One day induction course

9.30am	Registration and coffee
10.00am	Welcome to the institution by the senior manager/ Principal/Vice-Chancellor and student leader/representative)
10.20am	Presentation on British culture
11.00am	The academic system
	or
	A discussion session followed by advice on immigration and financial matters
	(for undergraduate and postgraduate students)
12.30pm	Lunch will be served. Tickets (price XX) will be on sale during Registration from 9.30 am - 10.20 am. Members of the academic staff will be joining us at the lunch
2.00pm	Information and advice on living and working at the university
3.00pm	Tea
3.00pm onwards	Information display on travel and places to visit in the UK
3.40pm	Meet current international visiting and exchange students
4.45pm	Visiting and exchange students leave to meet their personal tutors
5.00pm	End

Half day induction course #1

2.00pm	Welcome – College Vice Principal/Pro Vice Chancellor
2.00pm	Introduction to Student Services – Head of Student Services
2.30pm	Progress in English
3.00pn	Home Office requirements
3.30pm	Making the most of your social and cultural opportunities in the UK
4.00pm	Afternoon tea – opportunity to meet members of staff and student union (with information fair)

Half day induction course #2

1.00pm	Lunch with returning students, Union and institution representatives
2.00pm	National/regional groups seated together in large hall
2.15pm	Welcome from Senior manager/Vice Chancellor
2.25pm	Welcome from President of Union of Students or equivalent
2.35pm	Welcome to the city by inspector of police (community policing)
2.45pm	Presentation on international student life including:

- DVD
- Cross-cultural issues
- Life in the UK

3.30-5.00pm	Information fair in second hall plus coffee/tea/networking area
3.30-4.00pm	Optional workshops:

- Introduction to English Language Teaching Centre/EFL/ESOL tutors (see Appendix 4)
- Icebreakers [see Appendix 3]
- Introduction to the Careers Service
- Money management
- National and international travel opportunities
- Study skills for taught students in science and technology

4.00pm	Optional workshops as above (but study skills for taught students in arts and social science)
4.30pm	Study skills for research students
5.00pm	Tea with Principal/senior manager and senior academic staff
5.30pm	Transport to residences

Two day induction course #1

DAY ONE

9.30am	Welcome to the institution by the Director
9.45am	Introduction to the course and its members
10.15am	Coffee
10.45am	Introduction to members of the Student Services Unit
11.15am	Information session: eg London transport, immigration, employment, health
12.30pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Religious resources in London – chaplain
2.30pm	Film & discussion with Metropolitan Police

4.00pm	Drinks & refreshments with academic and administrative staff and students

DAY TWO

10.00am	The media in Britain – a talk by a television reporter and a journalist
11.00am	Coffee
11.15am	Study methods and skills - help & advice from senior lecturer, Department of Physical Sciences & Technology
12.30pm	Lunch
2.00pm	All things financial: fees and money management
2.45pm	Tea
3.00pm	A visit to the student union for a talk and refreshments

A pack of information will be given out to each course member on the first day of the Induction Course.

Two day induction course #2

DAY ONE

10.00am	Icebreakers and introduction to the programme
10.30am	Checking records and registration forms
11.00am	Talk on registration, confirming modules by exchange co-ordinator
11.30am	Campus tour (led by current students)
1.00pm	Lunch in University/Union catering outlets
1.45pm	Study skills session
2.45pm	Welcome by the Union's International Student representative
3.15pm	Tea
3.30pm	Cross-cultural awareness
4.30pm	Talk on the institution's student services (including health, religion, welfare etc.)
5.00pm	Free time
6.00pm	Social event

DAY TWO

9.00am	Meet at library for introduction to services
9.45am	Talk on banking, managing finances, etc
10.30am	Treasure Trail competition around the city centre
1.30pm	Talk on British culture
2.45pm	DVD and talk on international student life/issues in UK
3.30pm	Tea with senior staff and student representatives

You could also include an optional trip to the local shopping mall and leisure complex – using public transport and student volunteers – or an optional pub/cafe lunch plus old v new football match

Four day induction course

DAY ONE
From
2.00pm	Resident students arrive
6.30pm	Dinner for residents
7.00pm	Slide show: "Amenities in the university and in the area"

DAY TWO
8.00am	Breakfast for resident students
10.00am	Introductory meeting for resident and non-resident students
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Icebreakers [see Appendix 3]
11.45am	Tutorials
12.30pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Information session – the English for International Students unit
2.30pm	Information session – student accommodation
3.00pm	Tea
3.30pm	Information from experts: immigration requirements, insurance, Post Office facilities, traffic regulations, police registration
6.00pm	Dinner for residents
7.30pm	Interactive discussion groups with current students
8.30pm onwards	"Pub" quiz in teams

DAY THREE
8.00am	Breakfast for resident students
9.15am	English Language Test. This test is compulsory for all students whose first language is not English to see whether they need further help with English.
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Tutorials
12.00pm	Talk – student health
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00pm	Talk – The University Library
2.45pm	Campus tour including Union of Students, led by students, then free time
6.00pm	Dinner
7.00pm	Theatre, informal games or activities

DAY FOUR

8.00am	Breakfast for resident students
9.30am	Presentation: University and city facilities
10.00am	Presentation: British culture
10.30am	Coffee
11.00am	Tutorials
12.00	Talk – Banking by the Manager, Lloyds Bank
12.45pm	Lunch
2.00pm-	
5.00pm	Coach tour of the city and surrounding area
7.00pm	Formal dinner
8.00pm	Social evening and entertainment – individuals and national groups are invited [Students depart for term-time accommodation the following day]

Five day induction course #1

DAY 1

10.00am -1.00pm	Arrival and registration
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00 - 4.00pm	Orientation session for programme
6.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Reception for students and staff

DAY 2

8.30am	Breakfast
10.00am -12.00pm	Student housing advice session
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00 - 3.00pm	Immigration and language
3.00 - 5.00pm	Living in London
6.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Film show with discussion

DAY 3

8.30am	Breakfast
10.00am -12.00pm	Introduction to British higher education
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00 - 5.00pm	Visit to central London
6.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Theatre visit (optional)

DAY 4

8.30am	Breakfast

10.00 -11.00am	Student welfare
11.00am -12.00pm	Student life in the UK
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00 - 4.00pm	Student housing
4.00 - 5.00pm	British cultural history
6.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Guest speakers

DAY 5

8.30am	Breakfast
10.00am -12.00pm	Enrolment: talks by course leaders
1.00pm	Lunch
2.00 - 4.00pm	Students' programmes
4.00 - 5.00pm	Contemporary British society and politics
6.30pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Reception and music

DAY 6

8.30am	Breakfast
10.00am -12.00pm	Open meeting with programme leaders
1.00pm	Lunch and depart

Five day induction course #2

DAY ONE

10.00am – 8.00pm	Arrival, registration and payment for programme
	Give out packs, badges, packed lunches
	Serve tea/coffee/biscuits
	TV lounge, newspapers available
6.00 – 7.00pm	Dinner
7.30pm	Optional activities:

- video/TV
- walk round residential area
- visit to sports centre for swimming/squash/badminton
- visit to local pubs or cafes
- bar open

8.00pm-midnight	Information desk open for late arrivals/problems

DAY TWO

8.00 – 9.00am	Breakfast
8.45 – 9.00am	Transport to lecture theatre
9.15 – 9.45am	Introduction to staff and programme
9.45 – 10.30am	Icebreaker exercises [see Appendix 3]

10.30am – 1200pm	Campus tour
12.00pm	Welcome to the Union by Union Officers
12.30pm	Lunch in Union (pay as you eat)
1.45pm	Talk on safety and security by director of security services
2.15 – 2.45pm	Concurrent workshops:
	• Introduction to ELT centre (EU students)
	• Immigration (single non-EU students)
	• Managing finances and banking (married non-EU students)
2.45 – 3.15pm	Concurrent workshops:
	• Introduction to ELT centre (single non-EU students)
	• Immigration (married non-EU students)
	• Managing finances and banking (EU students)
3.15 – 3.45pm	Tea
3.45 – 4.15pm	Concurrent workshops:
	• Introduction to ELT centre (married non-EU students)
	• Managing finances and banking (single non-EU students)
4.00 – 4.30pm	Buses back to residence
5.00 – 6.00pm	Regional/national group meetings led by student reps
6.00 – 7.00pm	Fish and chip supper
7.30pm	Trivia ("pub") quiz in mixed teams

DAY THREE

7.30 – 8.45am	Breakfast
8.30 – 8.50am	Transport to lecture theatre
9.00am	Lecture on cross-cultural issues
10.00am	Introduction to Careers Advisory Service
10.30am – 1.00pm	Science, engineering, technology students on City Centre Treasure Trail
10.30am – 12.00pm	Study skills for arts and social science students
12.00 – 2.30pm	Arts and social science students on City Centre Treasure Trail
1.15 – 2.45pm	Study skills for science, engineering, technology students
2.45 – 3.30pm	Information session on Welcome/Freshers week activities
3.30 – 3.50pm	Tea
3.50 – 4.30pm	British culture - talk by staff and student panel discussion
6.00 – 7.00pm	Dinner
From 8.00pm	Sober pub crawl OR walk round campus residences OR games OR night club outing

DAY FOUR

7.30 – 8.45am	Breakfast
8.30 – 8.50am	Transport to lecture theatre

9.00am	Talk/video on international student life – cross-cultural issues, culture shock etc
10.00 – 10.30am	Introduction to University Health and Counselling Services
10.30 – 10.50am	Coffee
10.50 – 11.15am	Local and regional places of interest (tourist board)
11.15 – 11.45am	National and international travel presentation (campus travel agent)
12.00 – 5.00pm	Coach trip to local stately home (packed lunch)
6.00 – 7.00pm	Dinner
7.30pm -	Cinema OR theatre OR sober pub crawl OR coffee and games

DAY FIVE

7.30 – 8.45am	Breakfast
8.30 – 8.50am	Transport to lecture theatre
9.00 – 10.00am	Panel discussion with current international students
10.00am – 1.00pm	Information Fair
1.00 – 2.15pm	Lunch
1.30 – 2.15pm	Co-ordinator to thank and debrief staff/volunteers
2.15 – 3.30pm	Evaluation/feedback/debriefing of participants
7.00pm	Transport to Town Hall
7.30 – 10.30pm	Formal dinner with civic and University VIPs
10.30pm	Early buses to residence
10.30pm – 1.00am	Night club/entertainment (buses to run every half hour)

DAY SIX

7.30 - 8.45am	Breakfast
9.00 - 11.00am	Depart, co-ordinating transport

Appendix 8   Event planning checklists

Event planner #1

You may find this planner helpful in the initial design and preparation of induction events. It can be applied to a long residential programme or equally to a half-day event.

Programme: Date: Co-ordinator:

1a)   Number of students attending/expected or maximum/minimum appropriate:
1b)   Age range: (How many will have accompanying families?)
1c)   Home countries:
1d)   Levels of study and courses:
1e)   Gender
1f)   Disability
2)   Describe as clearly as possible the reason for having this event.
3a)   When will your international students arrive in the UK? Are they likely to be tired/jet-lagged?
3b)   What is the best time for the event to take place? How long will the event be?
4)   What are the objectives of the course/event/workshop? What will your students be able to do as a result? How much can the event realistically accomplish? Which of your objectives are most important? Rank each one according to importance.
      a)
      b)
      c)
      d)

5)   What topics do you wish to cover in the event? Bear in mind the abilities, interests and attention span of the students.
6)   What methods will you use for the event? How long will each session take? Compare to the previous and following sessions (if any) to ensure variety.
7)   What facilities do you need/are available? eg data projector, video, rooms. What are your space and access requirements, room arrangements, refreshment needs?
8)   What is the room arrangement selected (U-shape, circle, board-room)? (Special needs:)
9)   How are you going to publicise the event to ensure the maximum possible number of students attend?
10)   Budget (build in contingency of at least 10% if possible)

- Programme planning/administration: £
- Resources personnel: £
- Participants: £
- Miscellaneous: £

11)   Workshop checklist
- Have you included an icebreaking exercise and further exercises gradually drawing people in?
- Is there a sufficient mixture and variety of activities?
- Have you allowed enough time for the sessions?
- Have you allowed breaks and time for movement between sessions?
- Have you provided enough information for the participants to do the exercises?
- If using written material for exercises, have you written clear instructions for the participants?
- Have you included an exercise to ascertain how participants will use what they have learned from the course?
- Have you considered the following factors which might influence an international student's understanding of the presentations and communicated them to speakers?
  - language
  - speed of delivery
  - use of training materials/techniques
  - other attitudes – warmth, professionalism and general style

12)   How will you evaluate the event and what other action should be taken?

Finally, remember to compile a final report on the event to disseminate amongst staff – including student assistants – for future reference and follow-up action.

Event planner #2[25]
Stage 1
- Ascertain funding/budget
- Assess actual and potential human resources
- Agree content and format – draft programme

[25] Making Workshops Work, Jeana McKinney (NAFSA, 1986)

- Book venue(s)
- Provisionally book accommodation if necessary
- Provisionally plan catering/refreshments
- Provisionally book transport
- Produce publicity
- Send out mailing to prospective students, sponsors and others
- Answer enquiries
- Receive applications/response

Stage 2

- Appoint, nominate, find staff/volunteers
- Confirm venue[s] and accommodation
- Plan detailed sessions
- Choose and invite speakers
- Send information to participants
- Update draft programme
- Draft working programme, detailing individual tasks to be completed by staff, things to check etc
- Facilities checklist:
  1. Number of participants expected
  2. Venue
  3. Contact
  4. Address
  5. Telephone
  6. Availability
     – Dates
     – Times
     – No. of meeting rooms
     – Total cost
  7. Accessibility: Good   Fair   Poor
  8. Meeting rooms [√ = acceptable / x = unacceptable]
     - O   room flexibility
     - O   furniture moveable
     - O   noise level
     - O   lighting
     - O   access to other rooms
     - O   entrance/exit adequate
     - O   wheelchair access
     - O   hearing induction loop
     - O   ventilation

9. Equipment available [√ = yes / x = no]
    - ☐ tables
    - ☐ room darkening equipment
    - ☐ variable lighting
    - ☐ data projector
    - ☐ microphones
    - ☐ video
    - ☐ tape recorder
    - ☐ flip chart
10. Refreshments (√ = catered / x = not provided]
    - ☐ coffee   £
    - ☐ tea   £
    - ☐ water   £
    - ☐ soft drinks   £
    - ☐ juice   £
    - ☐ ice   £
    - ☐ milk and sugar   £
    - ☐ cups   £
    - ☐ glasses   £
11. Catering
    - Caterer
    - Costs
    - Locations:
    - Approximate cost per participant: £
      - – Breakfast   £
      - – Lunch   £
      - – Dinner   £

Stage 3
- Arrange video, radio mikes, projector, flip chart etc as needed
- Produce maps and plans of the locality, accommodation
- Produce badges and any other materials needed for activities
- Confirm catering
- Produce:
  - – final working programme for each member of staff/volunteer
  - – background papers
  - – final programme for participants
  - – list of participants
  - – evaluation form

Stage 4
- It happens!
- Evaluation – by participants and staff involved – after each session
- Make detailed notes on co-ordinator's working programme as aide memoir for planning next year's/semester's event

Stage 5
- Analyse evaluation forms/web survey results
- Thank speakers and inform them of evaluations
- Budgeting
- Pay expenses
- Debrief with staff, service providers (eg caterers)
- Write report for senior colleagues/co-ordinating committee
- Skeleton plan for next year!

Appendix 9   Evaluation

Evaluation and feedback are important in the development of any orientation programme. Evaluation allows participants to play an active role in providing feedback. This feedback can then be used to improve the content, structure and focus of future programmes. It is important that the purpose of the evaluation form is always fully explained and discussed.

Survey Monkey, a tool for creating web surveys, is being used increasingly for evaluations. For more information, refer to the website:‹www.surveymonkey.com›.

The example below shows two evaluation forms which can be adapted freely to suit the needs of individual institutions or sessions.

Some researchers suggest that you can get more meaningful responses if you offer a range of answers from 1 to 4, rather than to 5. The 3 is a safe and courteous response to give and doesn't provide helpful data.

To maximise returns, you could enter completed forms into a prize draw with three or four prizes offered.

Evaluation form A
Country of origin:

Course:

An evaluation should be made of each event or workshop.

Listed below are several statements followed by pairs of opposite words on a 5 point scale. Place a circle around the number that best reflects your thinking/feeling towards the given statement.

1	The workshop should be offered at	an earlier date	1 2 3 4 5	later date
2	The time allocated for discussion was	sufficient	1 2 3 4 5	insufficient
3	Length of workshop should be extended	agree	1 2 3 4 5	disagree
4	Workshop should be more practical	agree	1 2 3 4 5	disagree
5	The theoretical background was	informative	1 2 3 4 5	wasteful
6	The group activities were	stimulating	1 2 3 4 5	boring
7	The group activities were	informative	1 2 3 4 5	wasteful
8	Group discussions were generally	relevant	1 2 3 4 5	irrelevant
9	The information in the workshop was	clear	1 2 3 4 5	unclear
10	Did the workshop achieve its aim?	yes	1 2 3 4 5	no
11	Of the problems in the UK, I learned	very much	1 2 3 4 5	very little
12	The general effect of the workshop was	beneficial	1 2 3 4 5	had no impact

Please complete the following:
1. Which workshop activity was most beneficial/most enjoyed? Why?
2. Which workshop activity did you feel was least beneficial/did not enjoy? Why?
3. Do you feel you met people and made any contacts through the workshop?
4. What would you include in the workshop to improve its usefulness?
5. Do you feel the workshop was well presented? Did it run smoothly?
6. Do you have any other comments? What other suggestions do you have for improvement?
7. Please comment on the overall usefulness of the workshop.

Thank you for completing this questionnaire

Evaluation form B

The aim of today's induction is to provide you with information to assist you with studying and living in the UK. Your views on today are important to us and we would be grateful if you could answer the questions below. Your feedback will enable us to evaluate the success of today and help us make any improvements for the future.

Please circle

1. Did the International Team introduce themselves?   Yes   No   Some did

2. Did you find the speakers easy to follow and understand? Yes   No   Most of them
    Please comment

3. Did you find the day useful?   Yes   No   Most of it   Some of it
    Please comment

4. Were you given the opportunity to ask questions?   Always   Sometimes

5. What was your opinion of the buffet?   Poor   OK   Excellent

6. Were there any areas that were not covered today but you feel should have been included as they are important to International Students?
    Please comment   Yes   No

7. Were you invited to see a member of the International Team to discuss any concerns you may have?   Yes   No

Thank you for completing this sheet.

If you want us to reply to you, please give us:

Your name: _____

Email address: _____

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