



Awards 2025

Outstanding Support for Students

Institution Name	University of Warwick
Submission title or project name	Warwick Mediation: fostering a mediation-friendly community for supporting students at the University of Warwick
Nominee / key personnel	James Donovan (lead mediator, Warwick Mediation, Registrar's Business Group)
URL	
Submission	Warwick Mediation is a multi-award-winning, sector-leading peer mediation service that supports student well-being through informal conflict resolution. Established by Jane Bryan, the service offers free, confidential and impartial support to students and provides accredited mediation training recognised by the Civil Mediation Council. Students gain valuable skills in empathy, conflict management and problem-solving, enhancing both personal growth and employability. The project includes a "Mediation Representative" training pathway and a free online Introduction to Mediation course, also open to students beyond Warwick. In collaboration with Warwick's Doctoral College, the service developed tailored resources for postgraduate researchers and supervisors, promoting stronger academic relationships. Warwick Mediation is shaping sector practice. Professor Bryan chairs the academic forum of the Civil Mediation Council and shares insights at national and international conferences. This innovative initiative builds a more connected and resilient student community while equipping students with life-changing skills for study, work and beyond.



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Institution Name	University of South Wales
Submission title or project name	No student left behind: a holistic transformation of the foundation year
Nominee / key personnel	Hannah Seale (faculty foundation coordinator in the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Science); Darryl Morgan (head of learning, teaching and student experience (HoLTSE) in the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Science)
URL	
Submission	In 2023-24, the foundation year for STEM in the Faculty of Computing, Engineering and Science (FCES) was reimagined to embed equity, belonging and student-centred support. Each student was assigned a dedicated personal tutor, and a series of themed engagement weeks provided academic, pastoral and well-being interventions throughout the year. Support activities were designed to be inclusive, proactive and accessible – bringing key services together in informal, welcoming environments that encouraged engagement and reduced stigma. These events enabled students to access practical advice, build peer connections and re-engage with their learning. Attendance at these sessions was high, particularly among those who had disengaged or missed key assessments. Overall pass rates rose from 51 per cent to 59 per cent; in engineering and built environment, where the intervention was concentrated, the pass rate increased by 23 per cent. Discontinuations fell, and retention increased. This initiative demonstrates how thoughtful, embedded support transforms outcomes.



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Institution Name	Manchester Metropolitan University
Submission title or project name	Empowering students, saving lives: Manchester Met's mental health and suicide prevention training in partnership with St John Ambulance
Nominee / key personnel	Science and Engineering Faculty; St John Ambulance
URL	
Submission	Student mental health and suicide prevention are critical issues in UK higher education, with almost 30,000 students reporting mental health problems in 2023. In response, Manchester Metropolitan University partnered with St John Ambulance to launch a sector-first, peer-to-peer training initiative focused on proactive support. Three certified courses are offered through the award-winning Rise programme: a student well-being course for new students, a mental health training certificate for advanced students, and a suicide prevention training course. The training is freely available and designed to be inclusive and accessible. In the pilot year, 700 students received accreditation, with a further 884 trained the following year. The programme now includes academic departments and professional services. By 2025-26, all student-facing peer support roles will receive suicide prevention training. This initiative reflects Manchester Met's commitment to ensuring that no student feels alone, and that we all have a role in supporting one another.



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Institution Name	University of Salford
Submission title or project name	Tahmina Hussain
Nominee / key personnel	Tahmina Hussain
URL	
Submission	Tahmina Hussain has hugely improved student outcomes for employability since she arrived at the University of Salford by developing a programme of support that has become a model for widening placement access. To support student employability and respond to national workforce shortages, she launched several innovative initiatives to better prepare biomedical science students for clinical placements and for Health and Care Professions Council registration. A significant barrier identified through research and employer collaboration was the mismatch between academic preparation and NHS laboratory expectations. In response, Ms Hussain developed the Portfolio Club, an extracurricular programme that introduces students to the IBMS Registration Training Portfolio early, equipping them with placement-relevant knowledge and skills. This initiative directly enhanced employability as 100 per cent of students in the 2022-24 cohorts secured NHS placements, with a 250 per cent increase in participation by 2024-25 and a 91 per cent success rate in securing future placements.



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Institution Name	De Montfort University
Submission title or project name	Outstanding Support for Students – DMU autism team
Nominee / key personnel	De Montfort University's autism team: Clare Squires (autism officer); Adam Davison (lead autism mentor); Lee Atkinson (specialist autism mentor); Tabitha Biller (specialist autism mentor)
URL	https://www.dmu.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/wellbeing-disability/disability-advice-support/autism-support.aspx
Submission	Autistic students are more likely to drop out of university than any other group. To help combat this, the autism team at De Montfort University has introduced new initiatives to help support autistic students through their studies and build their social skills. The introduction of a therapy dog, Cara, who was used in more than 60 sessions in the academic year, has been particularly popular in helping students calm down when they're anxious. Tailored student support starts before term begins as the team hosts "New to DMU", a two-day residential that gives autistic students a taste of university life in a safe and supported environment. That support was extended to include all-day drop-in sessions for the first two weeks of term to help students settle into their new surroundings. With the support of the autism team, the dropout rate in 2023-24 for autistic students was just 6 per cent.



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Institution Name	University of Westminster
Submission title or project name	Future Ready Mentoring – group mentoring programmes
Nominee / key personnel	Developed by Zurria Qureshi (mentoring manager) and multiple academic colleagues across the university (including Naseem Joban, Huseyin Dagdeviren, Tamas Kiss and Anees Ikramullah); group mentoring programmes delivered by Mariia Kogan, Silvy Jyothi and Maria Benedetto Mozo, with support from the wider Future Ready Mentoring team
URL	https://www.westminster.ac.uk/zone29/students/get-career-ready/discovering-your-career-path/future-ready-mentoring
Submission	Future Ready Mentoring at the University of Westminster offers students and recent graduates the opportunity to learn from industry professionals and enhance their employability through long- or short-term one-to-one career mentoring. With the demand for mentoring growing extensively over the recent years, in-curriculum group mentoring was introduced as an innovative way to bring alumni into the classroom and scale to provide mentoring to hundreds more students annually. In 2023-24, a total of 2,470 mentoring relationships were supported through Future Ready Mentoring, with 1,286 students taking part in group mentoring alone – a huge increase from the 632 in 2022-23 and 433 in the pilot of 2021-22. There were 124 mentors who supported group mentoring delivery, providing 2,382 hours of mentoring to 1,213 students who benefited from mentoring for the first time. This unique form of mentoring has allowed us to successfully collaborate with academics, engage more mentors with in-person activity and support hundreds of students.