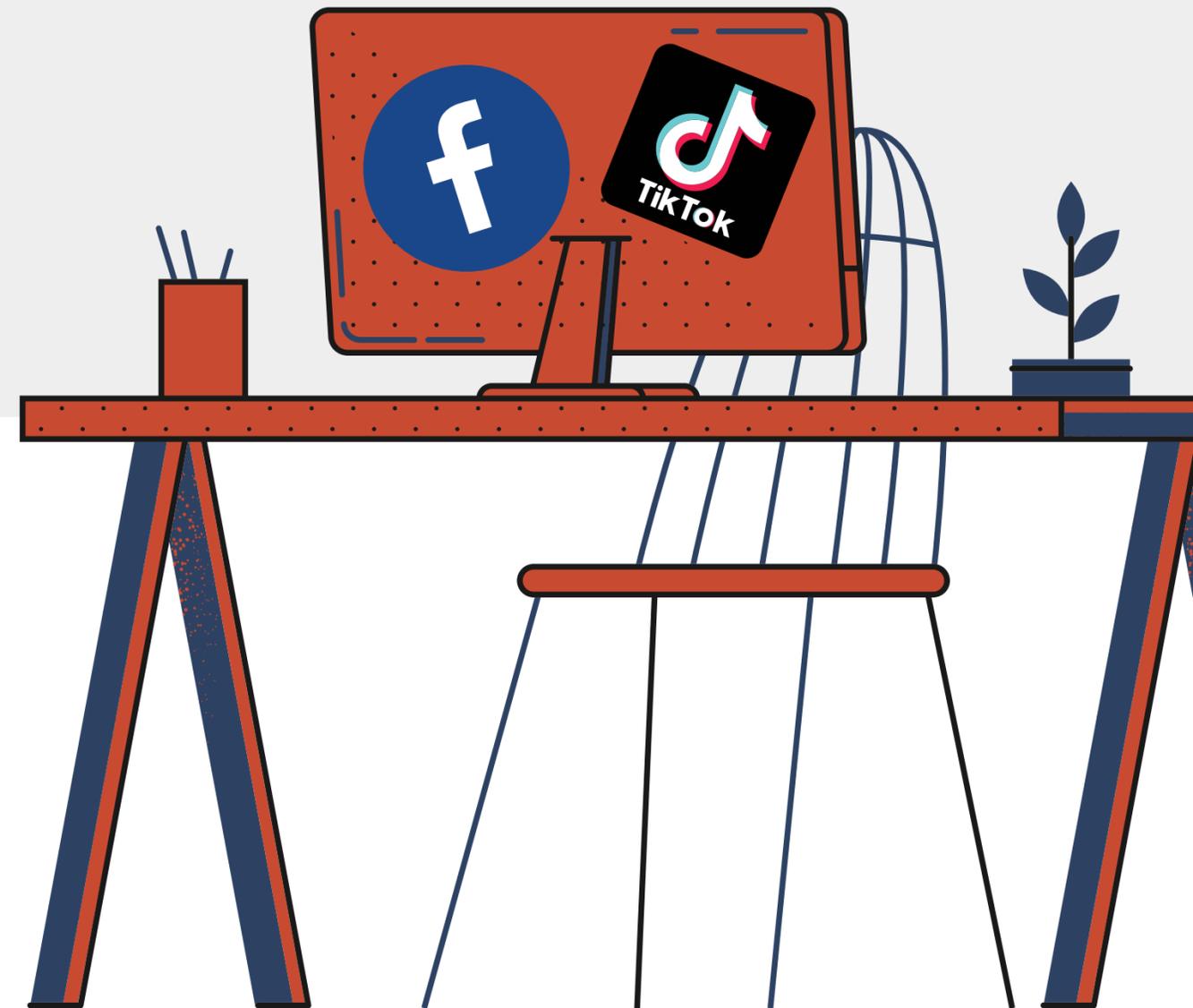


Online communities led by students: Learning Development in an online world

Sam Thomas, Learning Development Tutor
Rebecca Daly, Learning Development Mentor
Paige Skevington, Learning Development Mentor



**Learning
Development**

UoN University of
Northampton

Learning Development: Some context

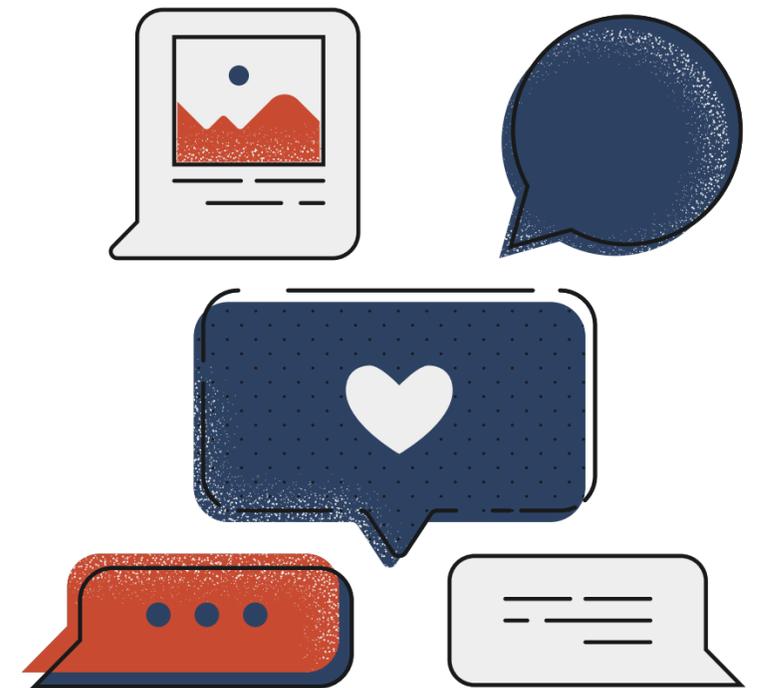


- Team of academics supporting students at all levels across the University
- Workshops, tutorials and drop-ins
- Online resources
- Faculty links

The peer connection

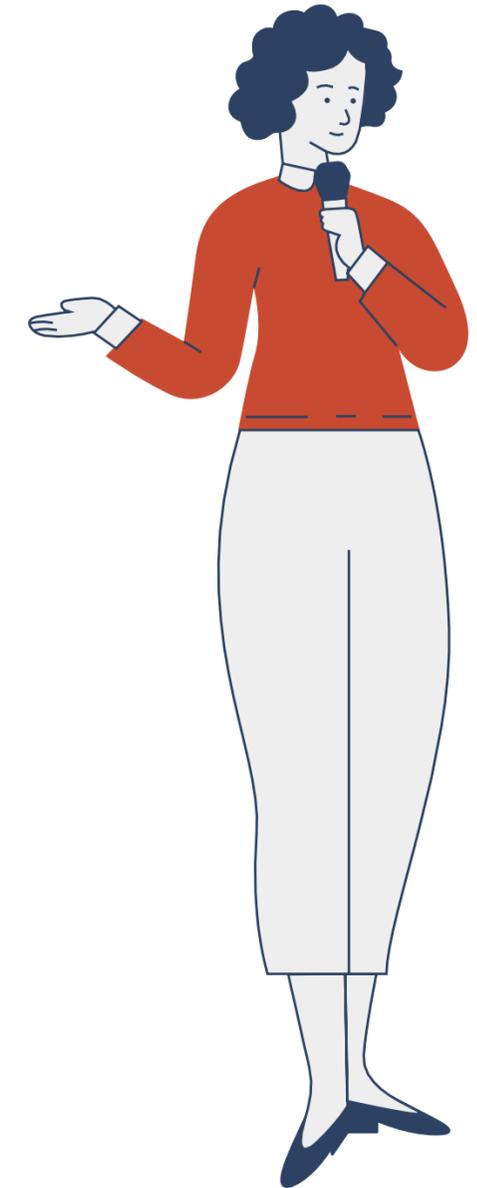
Benefits of student peer mentors:

- Improve student confidence and motivation (McKellar and Kempster, 2017)
- Grade improvement (Dos Reis and Yu, 2018; Maharaj et al., 2021)
- Student retention (Flores and Estudillo, 2018)
- Development of mentor (Beltman and Schaeben, 2012; Dos Reis and Yu, 2018)



About the project

- Previous projects with student input e.g. student videos
- Funding for part-time, fixed term student mentors
- 4 hours per week each
- 8 students recruited in summer, ready to start at the beginning of term

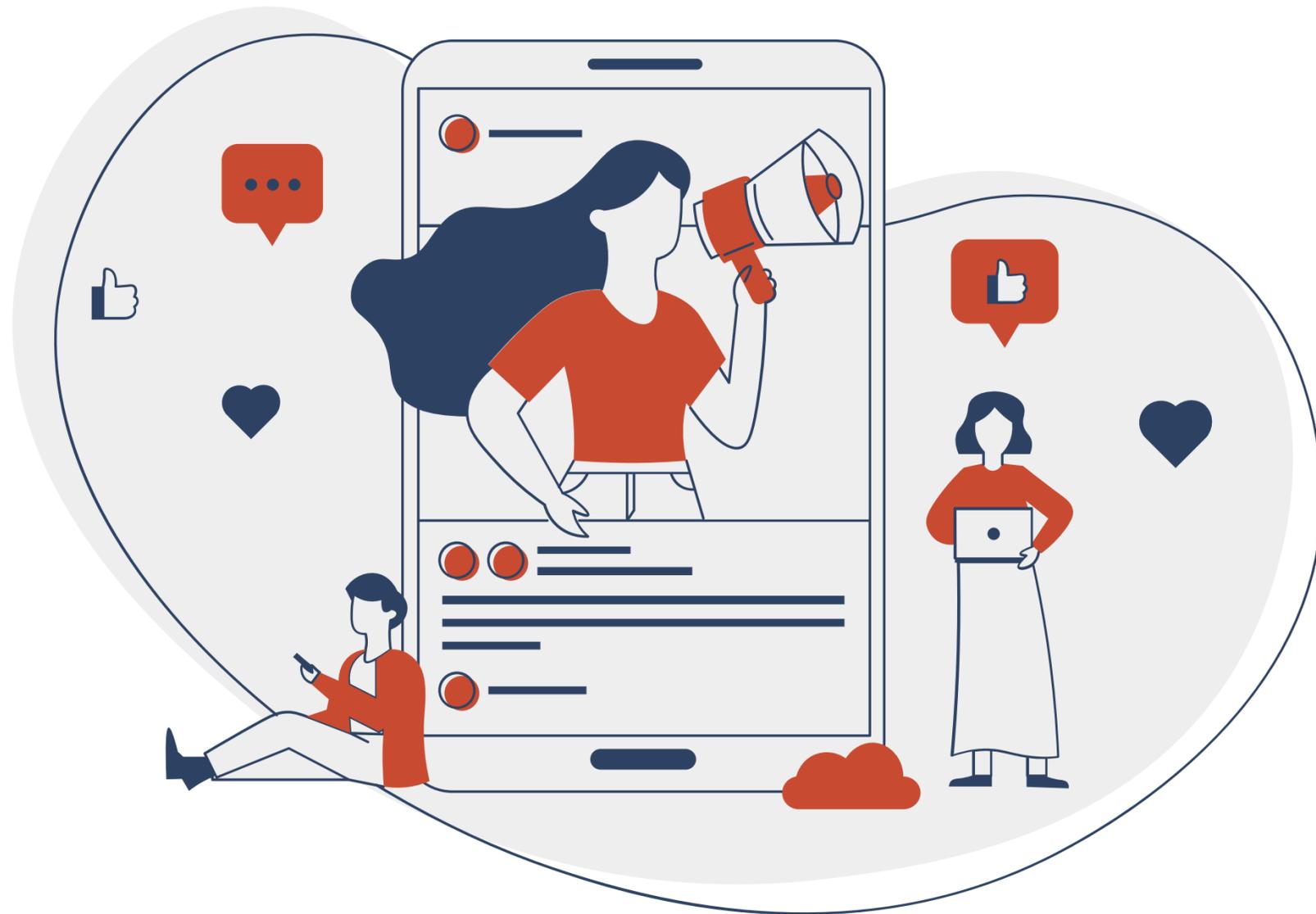


Getting started



- Initial ideas for projects
- What will improve the impact of Learning Development?
 - visibility
 - accessibility
 - new services

Project development



Social media and online communication:

Facebook

Instagram

TikTok (Escamilla-Fajardo *et al.*, 2021)

Discord (Mock, 2019; Arifianto and Izzudin, 2021; Bills, 2021)

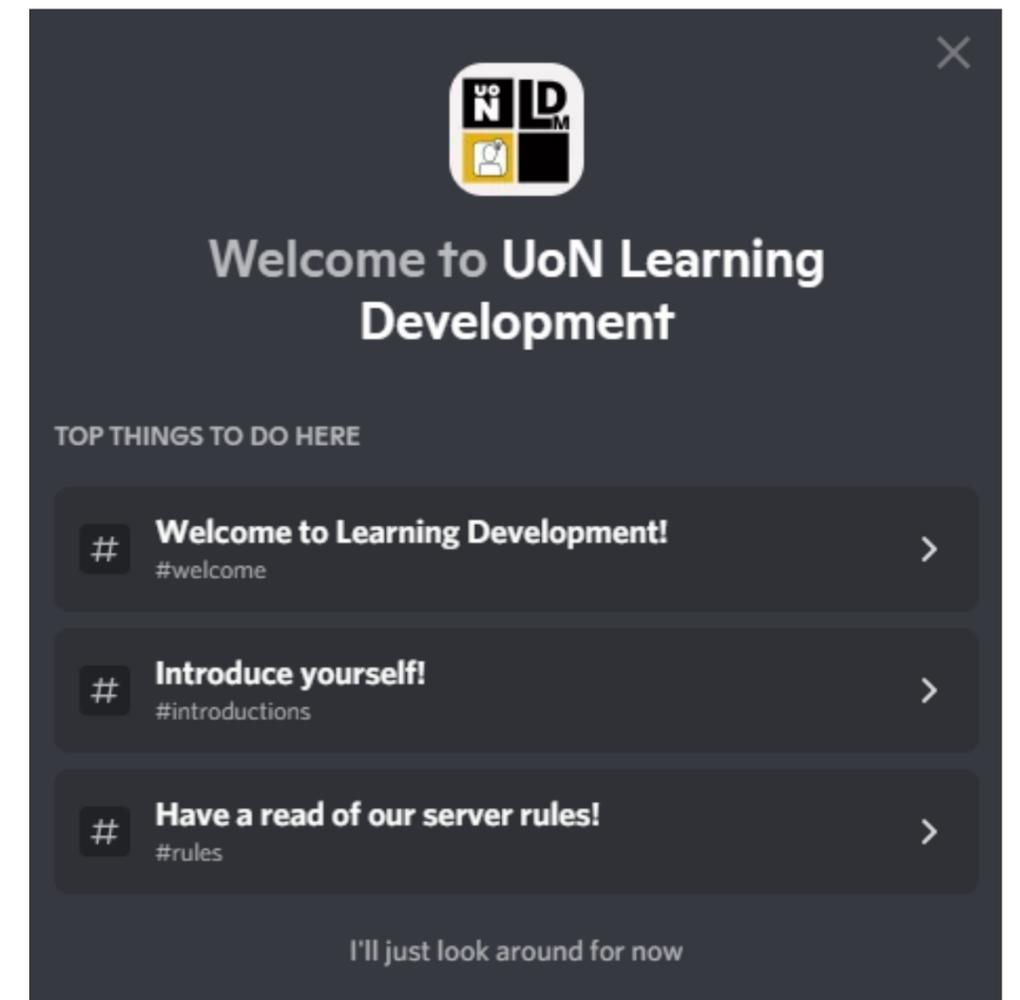
Communication plan developed

The platforms

TikTok is a short-video focused social media platform, with videos often varying between 15 seconds to 3 minutes. These videos vary in content and enable individuals to express themselves via dancing, comedy, tutorials and much more.



Discord is a free voice, video, and text chat app that's used by millions of people to talk and hang out with their communities and friends. People use Discord daily to talk about many things, ranging from art projects and family trips to homework and mental health support.



Developing content

TikTok

- Collective meeting to establish what platforms would be created, this included TikTok.
- Initial ideas within these meetings, brainstorming ideas for content.
- Often filmed whilst at Waterside.

Meet the Mentors -

https://www.tiktok.com/@uon_learningdev/video/7035953393659170053?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id7075303313365321222

Referencing (APA) -

https://www.tiktok.com/@uon_learningdev/video/7067494651149765894?is_from_webapp=1&sender_device=pc&web_id7075303313365321222

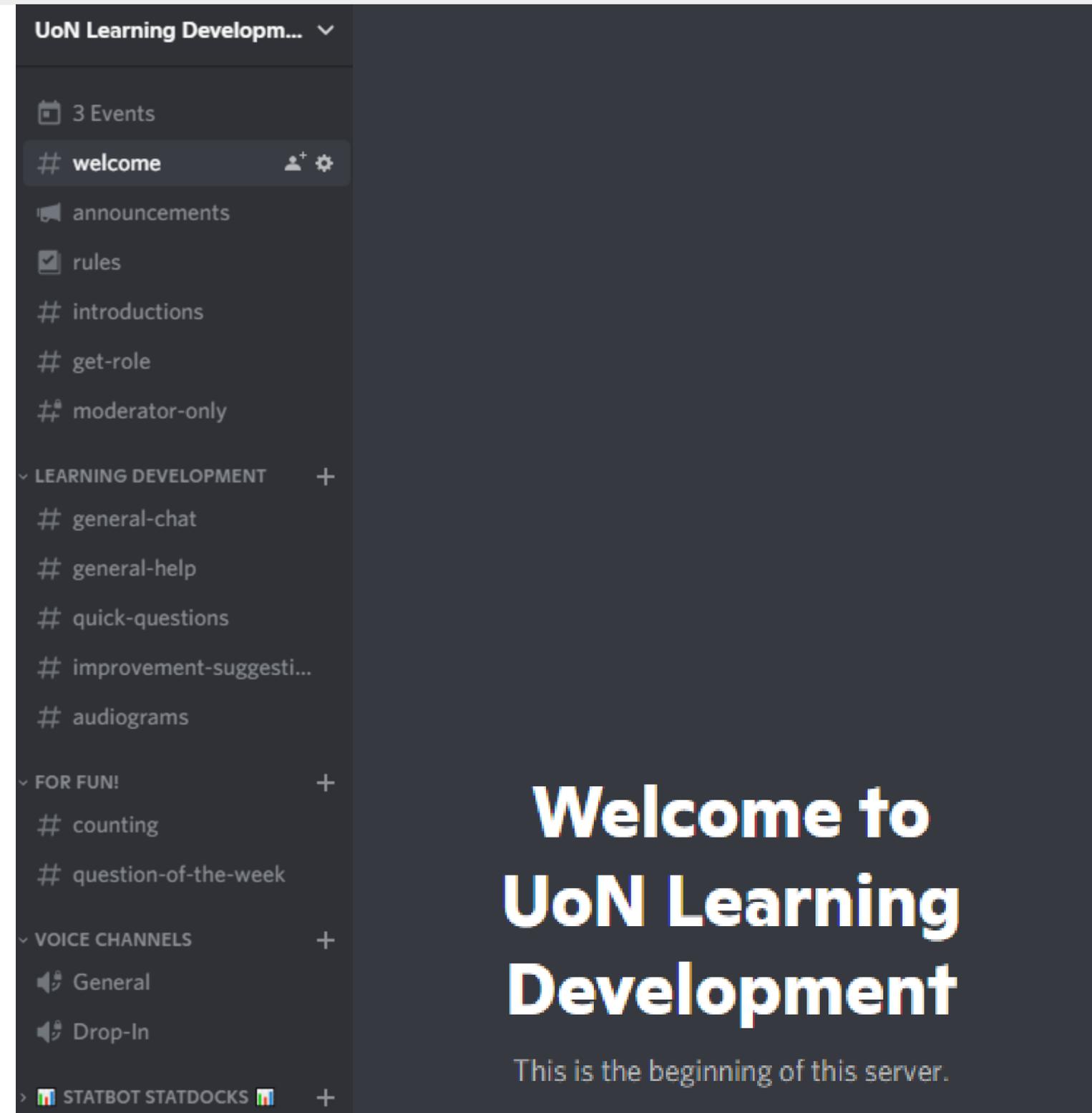


Developing content

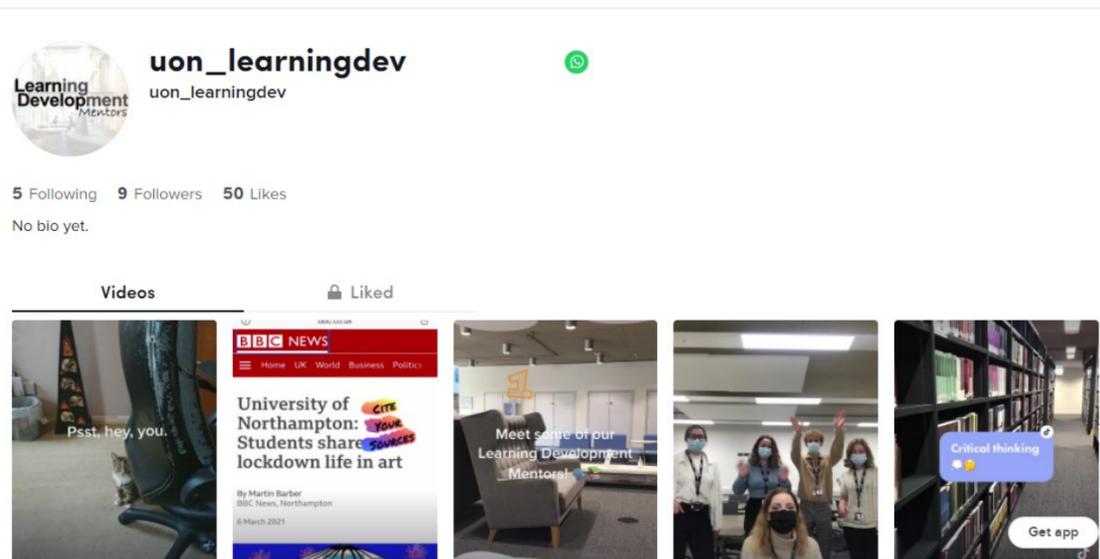
Discord

How we use Discord

- Developed a server to create a community-based system to aid students.
- Created a fun environment for students to access assistance in their studies.
- Constructed a laid back and friendly environment for students to access advice in a familiar place.
- Implemented bots to improve usability.
- Made use of polls to get students suggestions.
- Beginning a 'for fun' section to increase engagement.



What we found...



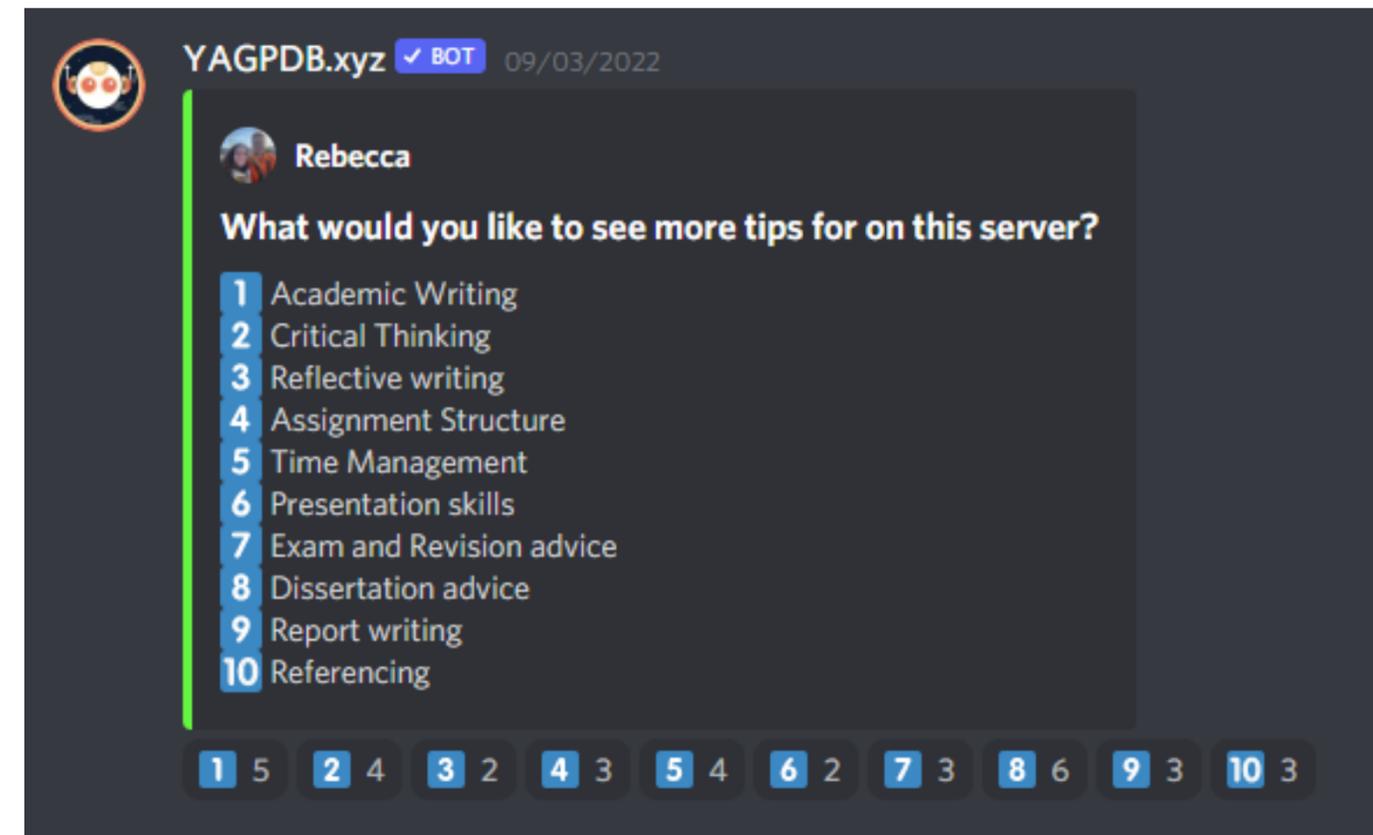
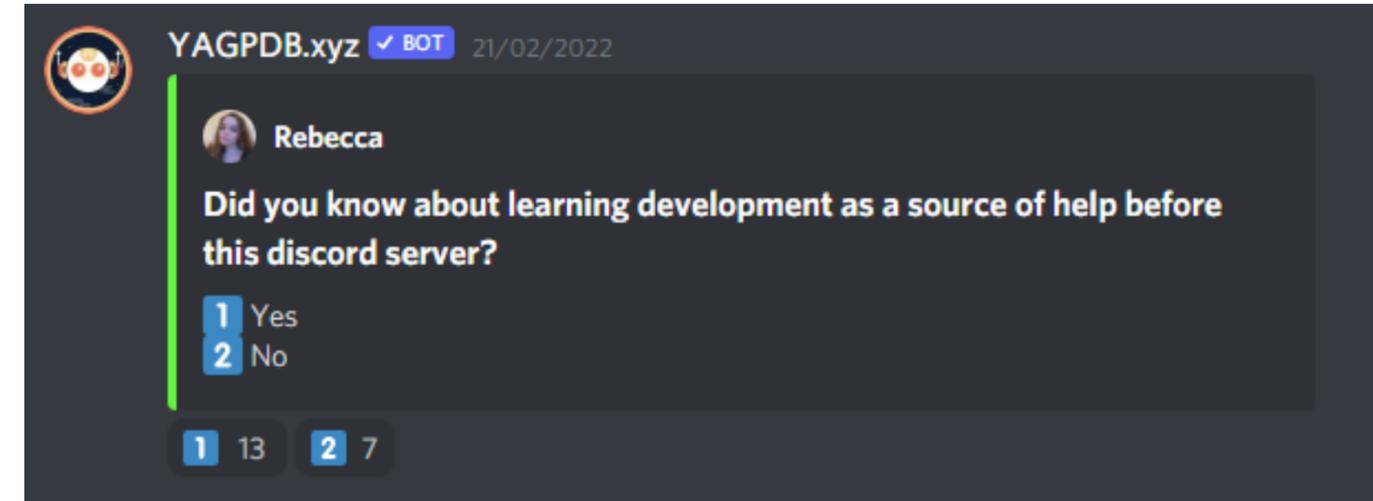
TikTok

Whilst we can see how many views each video gets; it is difficult to receive feedback. This is because we took the decision to turn off comments to the public.

Discord Feedback

35% of students who joined the server had not previously heard of the Learning Development Team.

Students would prefer to have more help aimed towards presentation skills and time management advice.



Going forward

- Continue to develop a range of digital assets
- Evidence for continuing project
- Learning points for next year
- More collaborative amongst the mentors for the social media platforms.



**Thank you
for listening**

Any questions?



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