

Proposed routes for Pre-Welcome Academic Skills unit.

Plan Name	Plan 1 (Structured Orientation)	Plan 2 (Narrative Journey)	Plan 3 (Combination skills/narrative)
Section 1 Name	Welcome	Before the First Assignment	Welcome to Academic Learning
			
Section 2 Name	Getting Set	Finding Information	How University Learning Works
			
Section 3 Name	Building Confidence	Using Other People's Ideas	Finding and Using Academic Knowledge
			
Section 4 Name	A Supportive Space	Getting Feedback	Referencing and Academic Integrity
			
Section 5 Name	Building Community	Belonging at University	Your Support Network
			
			Becoming Part of the Community

Plan 1 (Structured Orientation)

Section	Time duration	Purpose	Content	Active Learning Activity	Support Signposting	Gamification
Welcome	10 – 15 mins	Reduce anxiety, set expectations, and normalise that learning academic skills is a process.	Short welcome video (2–3 minutes) Description of what academic skills are and why universities expect them Introduction to UWTSD support ecosystem	Quick poll / Moodle choice activity Prompt: “Which of these worries you most about starting university?” Options: • Academic writing • Referencing • Reading academic texts • Confidence in seminars	Introduce: • Academic Tutors • Academic Liaison Librarians • Learning Support • Student Engagement Framed as normal parts of university life, not “remedial”.	Students unlock their first “Getting Started” badge.

				Finding help Immediate feedback explains that these concerns are normal and introduces InfoSkills and support services.		
Getting Set	25-30mins	Introduce the academic skills ecosystem at UWTSD and the idea of the hidden curriculum.	SCORM interactive module explaining hidden curriculum, social capital and university learning norms; short explainer video (2 mins)	Scenario activity exploring academic expectations	Academic tutors, library support	Progress badge
Building Confidence	35 – 40 mins	Introduce referencing and intellectual property	Interactive SCORM tutorial on referencing; short video (2–3 mins) explaining IP and Harvard referencing;	Referencing detective activity; matching citation task	Academic liaison librarians; InfoSkills referencing guides	“Referencing Detective” challenge

			sample paragraph examples			
A Supportive Space	20-25mins	Normalise help-seeking	Short video (2 mins) introducing support services; Moodle page summaries of services	Scenario activity: "Where would you go for help?"	Academic tutors; Learning support; Student engagement	Progress badge
Building Community	15-20mins	Encourage belonging and engagement	Video introduction (2 mins) about university learning community; short text overview of Student Union	Reflection prompt or discussion board	Student Union; Student engagement	Completion badge

Plan 2 – Narrative Approach

Section	Time duration	Purpose	Content	Active Learning Activity	Support Signposting	Gamification
Before the First Assignment	20 mins	Introduce expectations through assignment context	Narrative video (2–3 mins) introducing fictional student; example assignment brief	Students identify academic expectations within assignment brief	Academic tutors	Starter badge
Finding Information	25 mins	Introduce academic research	Library introduction video (2 mins); embedded InfoSkills guide	Interactive decision activity helping student locate sources	Academic liaison librarians; InfoSkills	“Source Explorer” badge
Using Other People’s Ideas	35 mins	Teach referencing and academic integrity	Video (2–3 mins) explaining referencing; sample paragraphs showing citation; Harvard referencing guide	Spot plagiarism activity; referencing correction exercise	Library referencing support; InfoSkills	“Academic Integrity” badge

Getting Feedback	20 mins	Promote constructive feedback use	Short video (2 mins) explaining feedback; sample feedback comments	Scenario selecting best response to feedback	Academic tutors; Learning support	Progress badge
Belonging at University	20 mins	Promote academic community identity	Student Union welcome video (2 mins); short page about peer learning	Reflection activity on belonging	Student Union; Student engagement	Completion badge

Plan 3 – Starting Your Academic Journey (Combined Model)

Section	Time duration	Purpose	Content	Active Learning Activity	Support Signposting	Gamification
Welcome to Academic Learning	10 mins	Introduce academic culture and reassure students	Welcome video (2–3 mins); short text overview of academic skills	Confidence poll on academic concerns	Academic tutors; Learning support	“Starting the Journey” badge
How University Learning Works	25 mins	Explain hidden curriculum and independent learning	SCORM scenario module explaining hidden curriculum; short video (2 mins)	Scenario helping a new student navigate expectations	Academic tutors; Learning support	Progress badge
Finding and Using Academic Knowledge	35 mins	Introduce academic sources and library research	Library introduction video (2 mins); InfoSkills guide; example academic sources	Source identification activity; library discovery challenge	Academic liaison librarians; InfoSkills	“Source Explorer” badge

Referencing and Academic Integrity	30 mins	Introduce IP and Harvard referencing	Short video (2–3 mins) on IP and referencing; SCORM referencing tutorial; sample reference examples	Matching referencing activity; referencing detective task	Academic liaison librarians; InfoSkills	“Referencing Detective” badge
Your Academic Support Network	15 mins	Ensure students know where to get help	Short video (2 mins) introducing services; Moodle page summaries	“Who can help?” quiz	Academic tutors; Learning support; Student engagement	Progress badge
Becoming Part of the Community	10mins	Encourage belonging and confidence	Student Union welcome video (2 mins); short reflection page	Reflection activity on academic goals	Student Union; Student engagement	Final completion badge

Detailed version of each plan.

Pre-Welcome Plan 1 - Structured

The focus is on explicit teaching of academic expectations, while gradually introducing students to support services.

Section 1 – Welcome Duration: 10–15 minutes

Purpose

The opening section helps reduce anxiety about starting university and introduces the concept that academic skills are learned rather than assumed.

Many students arrive believing that academic writing and referencing are skills they should already possess. This section challenges that belief and frames academic skills as something that develops over time.

Content

- Welcome video (2–3 minutes) from academic staff
- Overview page explaining academic skills
- Brief introduction to Level 4 expectations

The video emphasises that:

- students come from many educational backgrounds
- university learning may feel unfamiliar
- support is available throughout the degree

Student Activities

Students complete a confidence poll identifying which academic skill they feel least confident about.

Options may include:

- referencing
- academic writing
- reading academic texts
- understanding assignments
- finding academic sources

The poll serves two purposes:

1. it engages students immediately
2. it normalises uncertainty about academic skills

Support Signposting

Students are introduced briefly to:

- Academic tutors
- Learning support
- Student engagement services

Gamification

Students unlock the “Getting Started” badge, signalling the start of their academic journey.

Section 2 – Getting Set Duration: 25–30 minutes

This section introduces the hidden curriculum of higher education.

Many students struggle because expectations are not explicitly explained. This section clarifies those expectations.

Content

Students engage with an interactive SCORM module exploring:

- independent learning
- academic expectations
- the hidden curriculum
- social capital in higher education

A short explainer video (2 minutes) describes how university learning differs from school or college.

Key themes include:

- managing your own learning
- asking questions
- academic discussion
- reading beyond lectures

Student Activities

Students work through scenario-based learning.

Example scenario:

A new student receives an assignment brief but does not understand the expectations.

Students choose possible actions:

- ask the lecturer

- check module guidance
- ignore the confusion
- discuss with peers

The activity helps students recognise that asking for clarification is normal academic practice.

Support Signposting

Students are directed to:

- Academic tutors
- Academic liaison librarians

Section 3 – Building Confidence Duration: 35–40 minutes

This is the core academic skills section, focusing on referencing, intellectual property, and academic integrity.

Content

Students complete an interactive referencing tutorial including:

- a short video explaining intellectual property in UK higher education
- explanation of Harvard referencing
- examples of citations and references

Students are introduced to the idea that referencing is not just about avoiding plagiarism but about participating in academic conversations.

Student Activities

Activities include:

Referencing detective

Students identify problems in a paragraph where references are missing or incorrect.

“Select All That Require Referencing” Quiz

Students identify which statements require citations.

Example

Which of the following require referencing?

- A statistic about student engagement
- A paraphrased idea from a journal article
- Your personal opinion
- A theory discussed in a textbook

Students match citations to statements that require referencing.

Spot the plagiarism exercise

Students compare:

- paraphrasing
- quotation
- copying

Support Signposting

Students are directed to:

- UWTSD InfoSkills referencing guides
- Academic liaison librarians

Gamification

Students earn the “Referencing Detective” badge.

Section 4 – A Supportive Space **Duration:** 20–25 minutes

This section focuses on help-seeking behaviour, which is essential for student success.

Many students delay seeking help due to embarrassment or uncertainty.

Content

A short video introduces the university support ecosystem.

Students learn about:

- Academic tutors
- Learning support
- Student engagement teams
- Academic liaison librarians

Student Activities

Students complete a scenario activity.

Example:

A student receives feedback saying their referencing needs improvement.

Students choose where the student should go for help.

Correct responses highlight appropriate support pathways.

Support Signposting

Students are guided toward:

- Learning support
- Academic tutors
- Library support

Section 5 – Building Community **Duration:** 15–20 minutes

This section emphasises belonging and academic community.

Content

Students watch a short Student Union welcome video.

They are introduced to:

- peer learning
- student societies
- collaborative learning

Student Activities

Students complete a reflection activity.

Prompt:

What does being part of a university learning community mean to you?

Support Signposting

Students are introduced to:

- Student Union
- Student engagement teams

Gamification

Students receive a course completion badge.

Pre-Welcome Plan 2 - Student Journey Narrative

Students follow a fictional first-year student navigating academic challenges.

This approach increases engagement and helps students recognise themselves in the story.

Chapter 1 – Before the First Assignment **Duration:** 20 minutes

Students meet a fictional student preparing their first assignment.

Content includes:

- assignment brief
- academic expectations
- reading lists

Students analyse the assessment specification to identify key expectations.

This allows students to explore:

- assignment instructions
- academic expectations
- independent learning

Content

- Short introductory video (2–3 minutes)
- Example assessment specification
- Explanation of Level 4 expectations

Student Activities

Students analyse the assessment specification and answer questions such as:

- Which part of the assessment requires academic sources?
- Which section suggests independent reading?
- Students complete a multiple-choice quiz identifying academic expectations within the brief.

Key Learning Points

Students begin to understand that academic work requires:

- engaging with sources
- structured arguments
- critical reading

Support Signposting

Students are introduced to:

- Academic tutors
- UWTSD InfoSkills and library resources

Chapter 2 – Finding Information **Duration:** 25 minutes

Students help the fictional student locate academic sources. To introduce students to academic research and information literacy.

Content includes:

- library databases
- academic books
- journals

Activities include a decision-based activity selecting appropriate sources.

Students follow the fictional student as they attempt to find sources for their assessment.

Content

- Short library introduction video (2 minutes)
- Overview of academic sources
- Introduction to InfoSkills materials

Students learn the difference between:

- journal articles
- books
- websites
- blogs

Student Activities

Students help the fictional student decide where to search for sources.

Example question:

Where should the student look for peer-reviewed research?

Options may include:

- Google
- Library database
- Wikipedia

Correct answer: Library databases.

Key Learning Points

Students learn that academic knowledge is typically found through library resources rather than general web searches.

Support Signposting

Students are introduced to:

- Academic liaison librarians
- Library research support

Chapter 3 – Using Other People's Idea **Duration:** 35 minutes

To introduce academic integrity, referencing and intellectual property.

Students see the fictional student drafting their assessment and attempting to use information from sources.

Content

- Short video explaining intellectual property in UK higher education
- Explanation of Harvard referencing
- Examples of paraphrasing and quotation

Student Activities

Students complete activities such as:

Spot the plagiarism

- Students compare three passages:
 - copied text
 - paraphrased text
 - correctly cited quotation
- Students identify which examples demonstrate good academic practice.

Citation decision quiz

- Students decide whether a statement requires referencing.

Key Learning Points

Students understand that referencing:

- acknowledges intellectual property
- demonstrates engagement with academic research
- supports arguments

Support Signposting

Students are directed to:

- InfoSkills referencing guides
- Academic liaison librarians

Chapter 4 – Getting Feedback **Duration:** 20 minutes

Students explore how to interpret feedback.

To introduce the idea that feedback is part of academic development. Students see the fictional student receiving feedback on their assignment.

Content

- Sample feedback comments
- Explanation of formative feedback
- Tips on responding to feedback

Student Activities

Students review the feedback and choose appropriate responses.

Example scenario:

Feedback says:

"Referencing needs improvement."

Students choose:

- ignore the feedback
- contact academic tutor
- check library referencing guides

Correct response includes seeking support and reviewing guidance.

Support Signposting

Students are directed to:

- Academic tutors
- Learning support

Chapter 5 – Belonging at University **Duration:** 20 minutes

Students reflect on academic identity and community. Activities include reflection and peer-learning scenarios.

To build a sense of academic belonging and community participation.

Content

- Student Union introduction video
- Overview of peer learning and academic collaboration

Students learn that university learning involves:

- discussions
- group work
- collaborative study

Student Activities

Students complete a *reflection activity*:

What would help you feel part of the university learning community?

Support Signposting

Students are introduced to:

- Student Union
- Student engagement teams

Pre-Welcome Plan 3 Starting Your Academic Journey

Plan 3 combines parts of plan 1 and 2.

Section 1 – Welcome to Academic Learning **Duration: 10 minutes**

Students are introduced to academic learning culture with the concept that academic skills develop over time.

Content

- Welcome video from teaching staff (2–3 minutes)
- Overview of Level 4 learning expectations
- Explanation of academic skills

Student Activities

Confidence Poll

Students complete a confidence poll identifying which academic skill they feel least confident about.

Support Signposting

Students are introduced to:

- Academic tutors
- Learning support

Gamification

Students receive the 'Starting the Journey' badge.

Section 2 – How University Learning Works **Duration:** 25 minutes

Students explore hidden curriculum in HE concepts through interactive scenarios that highlight many students struggle because academic expectations are not always explicit.

Content

- Interactive scenario explaining hidden curriculum
- Explanation of independent learning
- Introduction to social capital in academic contexts

Student Activities

Students guide a fictional student through academic decisions.

Example scenario:

A student does not understand referencing expectations.

Students choose actions such as:

- check InfoSkills
- contact tutor
- ignore confusion

Support Signposting

Students are directed to:

- Academic tutors
- Learning support

Topics include:

- independent learning
- academic expectations
- social capital

Section 3 – Finding and Using Academic Knowledge **Duration:** 35 minutes

Introduce academic research and information literacy, students explore academic sources through activities identifying:

- academic books
- journal articles
- credible sources

Library support and InfoSkills resources are introduced.

Content

- Library introduction video (2 minutes)
- Explanation of academic sources
- InfoSkills resource overview

Students learn how academic knowledge differs from general online information.

Student Activities

Students identify which sources are academic.

Example activity:

Which of these is a scholarly source?

- Blog
- Journal article
- News website

Support Signposting

Students are introduced to:

- Academic liaison librarians
- InfoSkills resources

Gamification

Students unlock the 'Source Explorer' badge.

Section 4 – Referencing and Academic Integrity **Duration: 30 minutes**

Introduce referencing and intellectual property. Students complete referencing activities and learn about intellectual property.

Activities include citation building and plagiarism detection.

Content

- Video explaining intellectual property in UK higher education
- Harvard referencing examples
- Sample reference list

Student Activities

Students complete:

- *citation decision quizzes*
- *plagiarism identification exercises*
- *reference building activities*

Support Signposting

Students are directed to:

- Library referencing guides
- InfoSkills support

Gamification

Students earn the 'Referencing Detective' badge.

Section 5 – Your Academic Support Network Duration: 15 minutes

Aim of section is ensure students know where to seek help. Students explore support services and complete a support navigation quiz.

Content

Overview of:

- Academic tutors
- Learning support

- Academic liaison librarians
- Student engagement teams

Student Activities

Students complete a support *navigation quiz* matching problems with services.

Section 6 – Becoming Part of the Community Duration: 10 minutes

Aiming to build confidence and belonging. Students reflect on academic goals and their role in the learning community.

Content

Students learn about:

- peer learning
- academic discussion
- university community

Student Activities

Reflection prompt:

What is one academic skill you would like to improve during your first semester?

Gamification

Students receive the 'Academic Skills Ready' badge.