

# ISEP International Student Experience Programme

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# International Student Experience Programme



**ISEP** is a pilot project to support the **BSc Clinical Pharmacy** students' transitions and learning experiences.



The programme was a student **peer-mentoring** scheme assisted by staff to support international students.



- Funded by the **Institute of Teaching and Learning Fellowship to Li-Chia Chen**
- To enhance student engagement and inclusivity of curriculum



# Dual-degree articulated BSc Clinical Pharmacy Programme



**Enter China Pharmaceutical University (CPU)** for BSc Clinical Pharmacy (CPU) via the National College Entrance Examination (NCEE; aka GaoKao).

01

02

03



BSc CP



Pharmacist

Graduate with **two BSc degrees**, one from CPU and one from UoM.



Year 5

**Internship year at CPU**



Year 3-4



**Study at UoM** with  
MPharm Year 2-3 students



Year 1-2

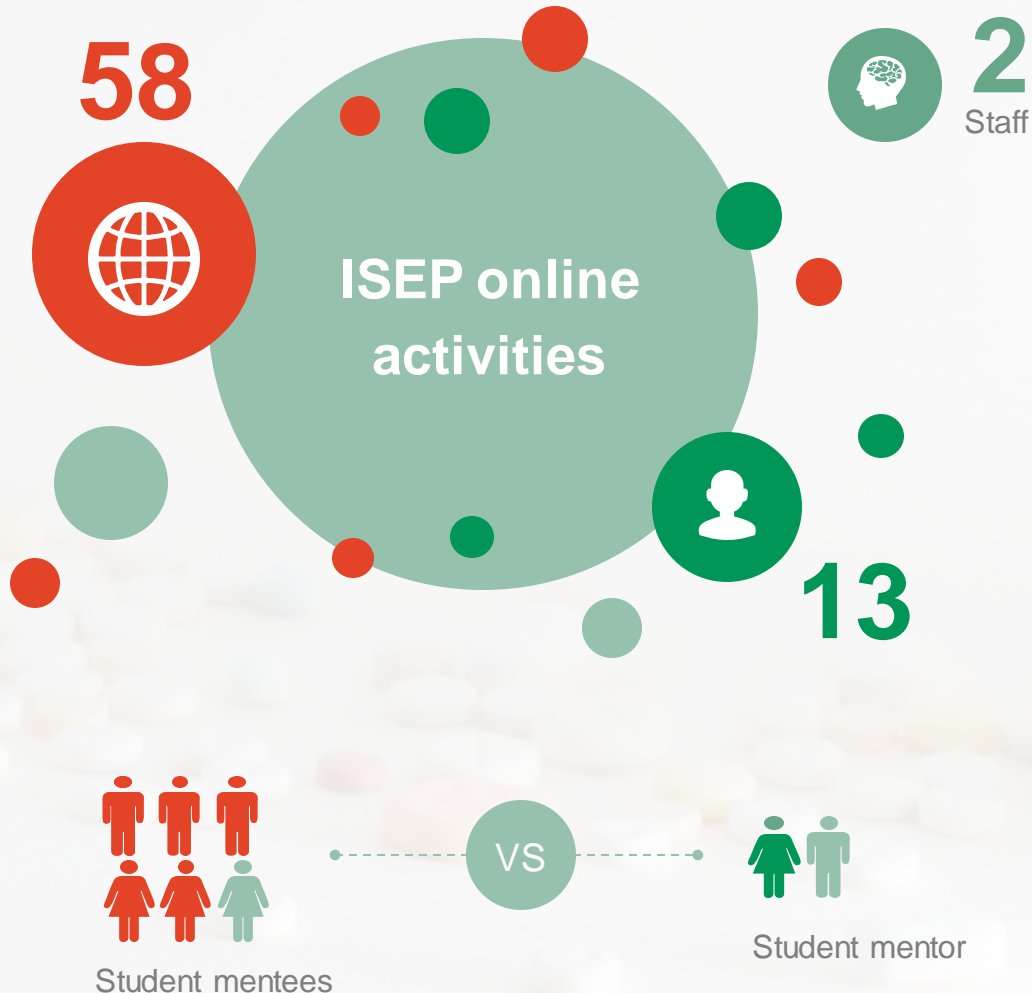


**Study at CPU**

with units delivered by University of Manchester (UoM) staff

- A large cohort of international students
- A homogenous cultural, language and educational background
- Difficult to form peer groups with on-campus students
- Encounter three major transitions

# Staff assisted peer-mentoring scheme



- Initiate the activity planning
- Co-design the activities with students mentors
- Organise groups, timetable and online meetings
- Prepare mentor and mentee guide
- Give briefing to mentors
- Monitor the meetings
- Provide feedback to mentors and mentees
- Check and chase up post-meeting
- Evaluate the programme

- Receive online materials and in person training
- Co-design the activities with staff
- Attend briefings
- Deliver the peer-mentoring meeting
- Provide reflections
- Contact mentees
- Join evaluations

# The unique natures of ISEP



## Early engagement



This peer-mentoring scheme supports international students from the early stage of an articulated programme.

## Online peer-mentoring



The peer-mentoring activities happen online, so the design to support the engagement and learning differ from the conventional peer-mentoring schemes.



## Student led and staff assisted

By engaging students with student mentors who are more approachable, they are more relaxed and open to learning (a sense of belonging).



## Include essential learning skills

A variety of academic orientation and study skills also included in the scheme, so that the peer-mentoring is purposeful.

# Activity outline

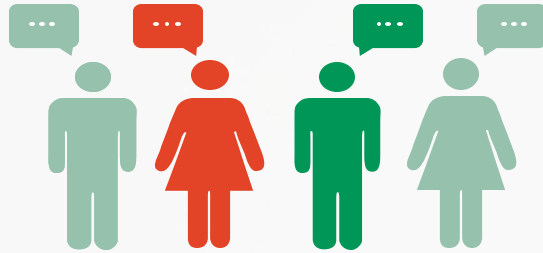


Peer-mentoring  
meetings

Webinars



# Outcomes of this peer-mentoring scheme



Mentees

Significant progression and improvement during ISEP and within the meeting.

Connection and friendship

VS



Mentors

Improving confidence and communication and leadership skills.

## Collection

- Reflective writing for each meeting (group work)
- **Dear mentors' letters** (group work)
- Student mentees' evaluation presentation (individual)

## Evaluation

- Welcome event – Mentimeter survey on concerns and questions
- Interim evaluation – Qualtrics survey on **transition, ISEP** and sense of belonging
- Final evaluation – Qualtrics survey on **ISEP**

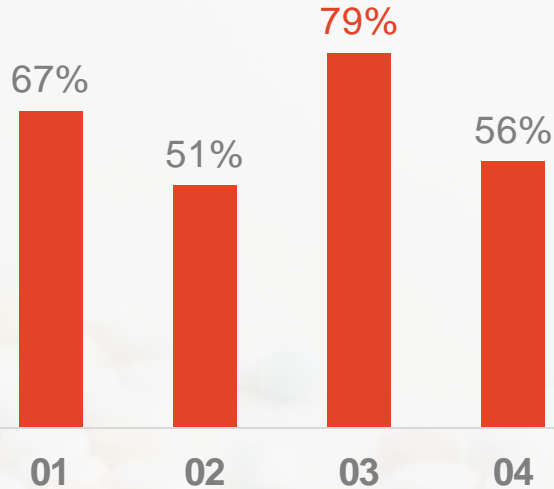
- Mentors' reflection after each meeting - Padlet
- Mentors' reflection after each meeting - Padlet
- Mentors' **focus group** (interim review)
- Mentors' **evaluation** - Qualtrics survey

# Challenges in transition to university life

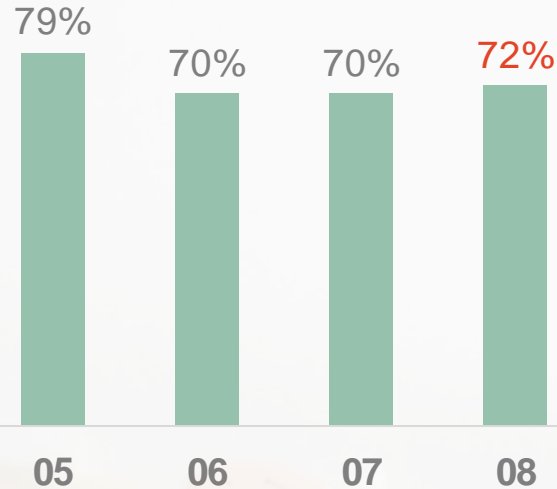


## Proportion of strongly agree and agree

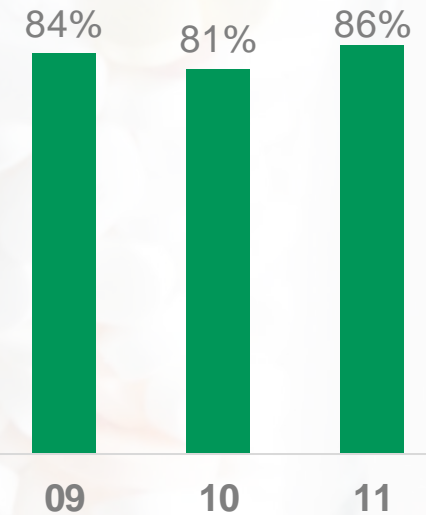
Expectation



Academic progress



University life



- 01 Programme meets expectations
- 02 Level of difficulty as expected
- 03 A big jump in the academic volume
- 04 Have learned to study in English

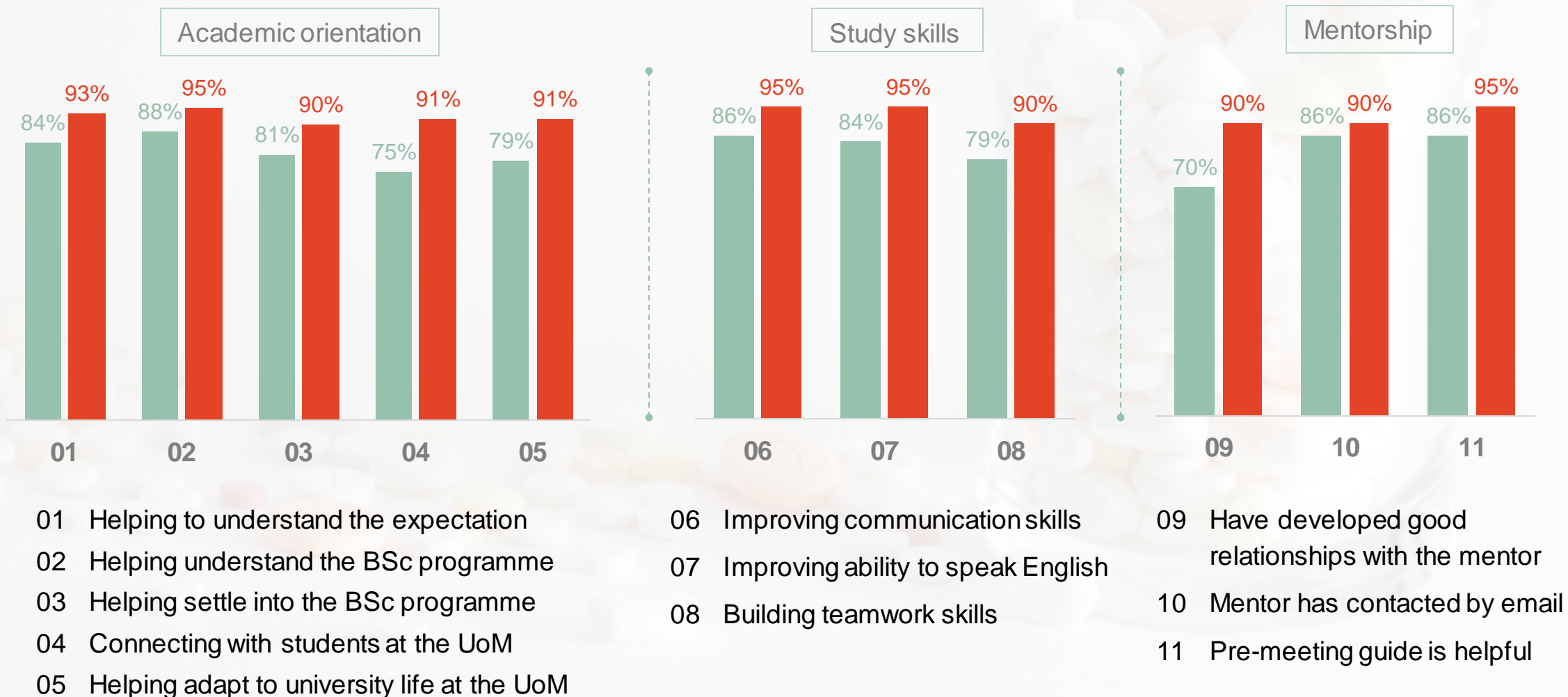
- 05 Attendance more than 80%
- 06 Spending significant self-study time
- 07 Making satisfactory progress
- 08 Needing additional academic support

- 09 Have made friends
- 10 Balancing studies and other commitments
- 11 Understanding finance management

# Student mentees' views about the ISEP



- Proportion of strongly agree and agree comparing the interim and the end of programme review



# Learning trajectory



## Significance And Future



## My feelings

### What i enjoyed the most

The answer, of course, is teamwork.  
Whether it's writing emails or preparing questions about clinical pharmacists, everyone did their part responsibly.



Xinyi Ren

### What i did not enjoy as much

I don't like to take the initiative. It makes me feel a little embarrassed. And volunteering is also a challenge for me. However, overcoming these things I don't like has also taught me a lot.

## ability enhancement

### speaking

do some presentations,  
speak up in class,  
ask clinical pharmacist questions



### listening

listen to the teacher,  
listen to the pharmacist,  
listen to members of group



### writing

write a thank-you note,  
write my thoughts in class,  
write an e-mail for help



Xinyi Ren

## REFLECTIONS

Jiayi Yang

### Bravery in speaking in English:

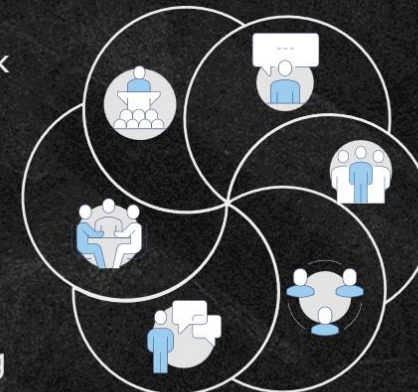
Being afraid to speak



Starting to share my thoughts



Actively participating in discussions



### Feelings about contents of this programme:

A meaningful process:  
Something with long-term value

A challenge:  
Communicate and collaborate in a non-native language

# The impacts of ISEP



In the first meeting, I'm a little afraid of talking and show myself in front of the total nine people. As my speaking English is quite terrible. Moreover, I am a little shy. Of course, both my pronunciation and fluency are not that good. However, after attending the meeting many times, I feel much more confident in talking in the meeting or having a presentation facing every one of us. Moreover, I can feel that I can focus on the meeting more carefully. **Jingxuan Ni**

## What do I get from the programme?

- ◆ Learn more basic information about the work of pharmacists
- ◆ Improved our English
- ◆ Help build my confidence in communicating with others
- ◆ Know more about the tradition and culture of the UK

Xiaoyue Zhang

## What the programme means to me

- 1 Learning methods in the UK
- 2 Knowing British culture background
- 3 Opportunity to practice English

## Then what

Thanks for ISEP, we have a better grasp of studying and life in the future in Manchester.

From now on we will spend more efforts on learning knowledge acquired by clinical pharmacist, to shoulder our responsibilities.

And finally, thanks for our teachers and mentees for their help and company in these months!

Zhezhou Wang

# Connection with student mentors



Since last semester, we started this activity. For me, it is extremely challenging because my English level is very weak. At first, I was worried that I would be unable to understand the contents of the meeting because of my weak English, but fortunately, the mentors I met were very good both last semester and this semester. They patiently slowed down so that I could understand and encouraged me to open my mouth and try boldly. She gave me confidence to join the meeting group.

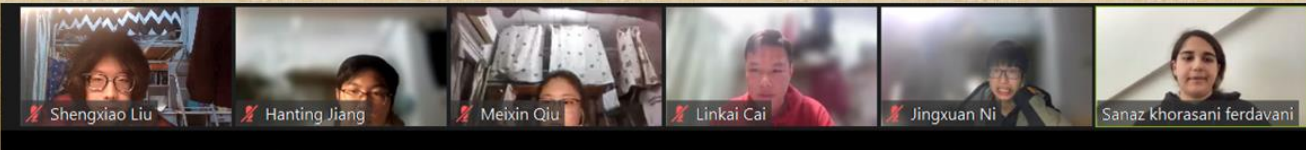
Keixn Zhang

## Thanks to Eghe

- I would like to express my heartfelt thanks to my mentor, Eghe. She was patient and very good at leading the conversation. At the same time, I am very grateful to her for taking time out of her busy schedule to answer our questions and emails.

Zhiyuan Ma

I still remember the first time we got together for this meeting.



Well, honestly speaking, we knew very little about all this process and are not confident enough to chat with each other in the online meeting room.

It' s our mentor who encouraged us to show our ideas and get to know each other.

## Something I want to say to my mentor

- ❖ You are a very energetic and outstanding man. Faced with our poor speaking and understanding skills, you will slow down your speech and explain it to us many times.
- ❖ You will also tell us jokes to enliven the atmosphere when the atmosphere is a little awkward and quiet.  
You are also a serious and responsible student mentor, through this several meetings with you, we learned a lot of knowledge, including how to conduct an interview, how to improve our English, how to adjust our emotions in for eign countries, as well as many professional knowledge such as the differenc e of health system between China and Britain.
- ❖ And I hope we can become good friends.

Xiaoyue Zhang

# Acknowledgement of staff's inputs



## My feelings...

- ◇ Sincerely appreciate what our mentors prepared in the program each time, especially for our project managers – Mrs. Selina Tai and Dr. Li-Chia Chen.
- ◇ I think our program went so smooth and it provided such a good opportunity for us to share our opinions and insights towards our major.
- ◇ I hope we can have more meetings in our year 2.

**Ruilin Zhou**

## Interview of the pharmacist in UK

We finished the interview in that meeting with the help of teacher (Dr Chen). She helped us modify the interview questions, assign questions and write templates, and the interview went smoothly.



Very interesting classes!  
very meaningful content!  
very kind teachers!

JIALE GU



- 

- Help mentees to integrate
  - Being compassionate
    - Making friendship
  - Support from staff.



- Not prepared for the level of language comprehension
- Lack of feedback from student-mentees
- Managing the workload

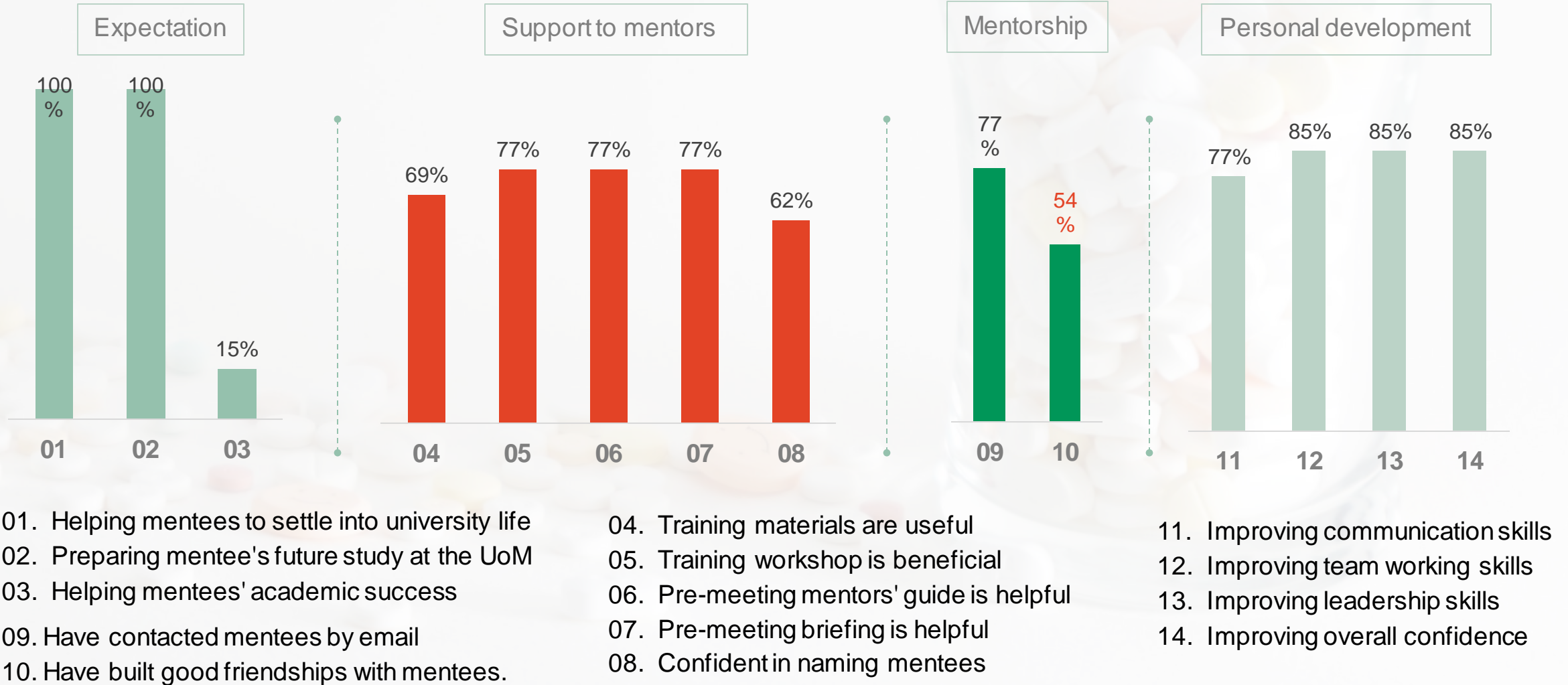
"I feel like it's very satisfying. Um, just to, you know, clear someone's mind and any concerns was kind of relieving, it was a good platform where they have a mostly, uh, to be sure, yeah, I feel generally a good experience and it seems more like it's like an international student, like you consider and yes during that time, before the going to be a participant, it's like just knowing your standpoint, it's more like an introduction because we're all like going to do just something to merge ourselves, I mean, I am with me - for me and new, it's a little bit, some in the second year, it's like for someone to say that to you is just more than a, like a big change for them." [Participant 2]

enough". [Participant 1]

# Student mentors' perspectives



## Proportion of strongly agree and agree



# What would you say in the recruiting poster for future student mentors?



## Sense of belonging

- Listening carefully!
- Amazing opportunity!
- An exciting opportunity to learn and have fun!
- Welcome to join us. More surprises are waiting for you to discover!

## Altruism

- Preparing for university is hard, but now you know what to do. So would you like to mentor a fellow pharmacy student in China and prepare them for university life in the UK?

## Environment

- Help create a supportive environment for new students and bridge cultures
- Building new relationships and friendships and helping international students adjust to university life!

## Personal development

- It helps build your communication and confidence skills
- If you want to improve your time management and communication skills, become a student mentor today!



# Key learning points



## Cultural awareness

- Learn about **equality, inclusiveness** and cultural **diversity**
- Respect and appreciate different cultures



## Student experience

- **Co-designed: Influencing through mirroring the student experiences** - what is it like as a Pharmacy student at Manchester?
- **Adopting difference learning styles** - Skills and knowledge of what to expect to study in an English country



## Sense of belonging to UoM

- **Building the community sense** – friendship and support
- Breaking the isolation



## Student voices

- Building up conversations
- Listening to students' voices
- Reflecting on programme design and adjust **student support** provision

# Moving forward



## Engagement

- **Student mentees' engagement** - the challenge with emails resolved by Blackboard, the habit of using emails (boundary of using WeChat) still need to be established.
- **Student mentors' engagement** – not reply email / WhatsApp, final minute cancelation.



## Sustainability

- **Existing mentorship** - sustain the connection and relationship?
- **Student mentors** - continuous leadership development? Alumni network?
- **Staff's roles** – additional support?
- Facilitated with some online resources?
- Timetabling / credit-bearing (e.g., resilience, academic orientation and study skills, etc.)



## Extend the support

- **BScCP students in Year 2** - join the tutorial groups or joint projects between students.
- **MPharm international students** – establish support (slightly controversial).



## Evaluation

- How to evaluate the success of peer-mentoring?
- **Sense of belonging** – need to establish valid culturally sensitive measures.

# Outputs of ISEPs

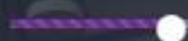


## BSc Clinical Pharmacy - Student perspectives



这里有很多发展机会。

and it has a lot of opportunities here.



-1:25

1x



# Thank you for listening!



Li-Chia Chen

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