

Online Peer Mentoring discussion group – ‘a practical solution’

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The Online Peer Mentoring discussion group (OPM) at UniSA, is a practical solution used to achieve interaction between international and local students. The OPM is run by current UniSA students from different backgrounds along with the International Student Advisor acting as a moderator. The OPM has been attracting interest from international students, agents, international visitors and other universities around Australia for the last 3 years.

Through the OPM, new students have the opportunity to ask questions about the University, about Adelaide, about accommodation facilities, enrolment, and most importantly, they have the opportunity to make new lasting friendships. The feeling of knowing somebody before setting foot in Adelaide makes the transition for the new students easier and more enjoyable. The OPM has helped many students familiarise themselves with the university and staff before they even get here.

The students also use the OPM and the connections they have made to organise and attend outings and events while they are here which gives them a taste of the Australian culture and its people.

The OPM has been so successful that it is now being adopted by other university groups. UniSA students preparing to go on overseas exchanges, for example, will be using OPM to facilitate their transition process before they go on exchange. The UniSA disability services is also adopting this scheme by allowing students to communicate and interact with other students, share information and provide peer support in a fun and informative fashion.