Invitation
We would like to invite you to take part in the evaluation that we are carrying out of the Hit the Ground Running module. Please carefully read the information attached here which explains what we are doing, why and what it would mean for you. Should you have any questions please get in touch using the contact details found towards the end of this information.

We are inviting you to participate in the evaluation of Hit the Ground Running for a number of reasons. The primary reason for this evaluation is to ensure that the project is successful in its aims to support students to transition into Higher Education. We hope that the feedback gained from this evaluation will help to enable us to adapt the programme and ensure that students are given as much beneficial support as possible at this key stage of their educational journey.

What is the purpose of the study/project?
Hit the Ground Running is an online introductory module for our new undergraduate students, it is designed to support your transition to Higher Education. It does this by providing an introduction to our student intranet, ‘studentcentral’; by allowing us to introduce aspects of the University to you before you arrive and provides you with a space to meet others and some of our student ambassadors who can also answer any questions you may have about joining the University and your course.

As this is a fairly new initiative, we want to be able to understand how useful HtGR has been in helping you settle into the University, to do this we will be carrying out an evaluation which will help us understand what has worked and how we might improve it in the future, to ensure it continues to meet its aim of supporting and preparing students like you and the transition into higher education. Although there is no direct benefit to you from your participation, we hope that the information you provide will help us to develop our services for students in the future.

Why have I been invited to participate?
We are inviting all students taking part in Hit The Ground Running to participate in this evaluation so that we can really understand which parts work and which need improving to meet the needs of our diverse student community.

Do I have to take part?
Taking part in the project, and subsequent evaluation, is entirely voluntary and you are free to withdraw at any point without giving a reason. Choosing not to take part will not have any negative consequences for you. By taking part in Hit the Ground Running we will be collecting some data, as we do with all University modules, about who has participated, this is done through your student login number. Any data we collect and use in the evaluation of Hit the Ground running will be anonymised. Taking part in the evaluation through a survey of Hit the Ground running is entirely voluntary and not connected to taking part in the module/activity. Choosing not to take part in the Hit the Ground Running module will not have negative consequences, it is an option to prepare yourself for University and to meet other students and our student ambassadors on online and social media platforms. Your interaction with the module, and student record data will be used to provide further evaluation, but this will not require any action from you. All data accessed will be stored securely in accordance with our data protection guidelines and will be reported anonymously, so you will not be identifiable for any of the summary analysis reports.

What will happen to me if I take part?
Taking part in this evaluation does not require a large commitment. You will be invited to complete some survey questions as part of the New Starters survey. Additionally levels of your interaction
with the module, and student record data will be used to provide further evaluation, but this will not require any action from you. All data accessed will be stored securely in accordance with our data protection guidelines and will be reported anonymously, so you will not be identifiable for any of the summary analysis reports.

As part of HtGR you may have access to an online forum to meet your fellow students, student ambassadors and members of the academic staff. Engagement in these areas is entirely optional, however they will be monitored, by student ambassadors and staff, to ensure that all comments are appropriate and that any guidance or information is provided.

The aim of the evaluation is not to gain information about additional needs you may require or other personal or confidential issues. If you have any queries related to these matters please direct them to your SSGT, https://www.brighton.ac.uk/current-students/my-student-life/student-support-and-guidance-tutors/index.aspx, or student services in the first instance, Student Services can be contacted via studentservices@brighton.ac.uk.

Will my taking part in the study/project be kept confidential?
Your participation in the module will be shared with relevant colleagues, to ensure that the module can be run successfully. Staff will treat this like any other academic module and therefore school administrators, course leaders, academic staff and the Deputy Heads of School will enroll you onto Hit the Ground Running and will be able to see if you have accessed the module, as they can with all modules on StudentCentral.

All data reported in the evaluation of HtGR will be reported anonymously and aggregated so that you will not be able to be identified. Your data will be stored securely by the Evaluation and Policy Department at the University in accordance with Data Protection guidelines. Your information may be combined with data already held about you by the University of Brighton for further evaluation of the project, for example, your age, sex, country of domicile, etc. This analysis will be conducted in an anonymised form and any sharing of the outcomes of the evaluation will be aggregated so that it is not possible to identify any individuals. This data will be stored indefinitely by the University for use in producing statistical analysis and insight.

What will happen if I don’t want to carry on with the study?
You may withdraw from your involvement in HtGR at any time as participation is voluntary. We would like to be able to use the data we have collected from you up until this point to further inform evaluation and project development.

However, if at a later stage, you wish to withdraw your consent, you can do so at any time by contacting studentsurveys@brighton.ac.uk. We will remove your data from the data set, and it will not appear in future reports, however your data (in an anonymised form) may still be included in reports that have been written prior to the deletion of your data.

If you have any concerns about the use of data for these purposes, would like to access data held about you or would like to exercise your rights under the data protection legislation, please contact dataprotection@brighton.ac.uk. If we are not able to resolve the issue to your satisfaction, you have the right to apply to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO). They can be contacted at https://ico.org.uk/.

Contact details
University of Brighton, Evaluation and Policy Department, Cockcroft Building, Lewes Road, Brighton BN2 4GJ
What will happen to the results of the project?
The outcomes of the evaluation will primarily be used for internal enhancement purposes. Reports with aggregated and anonymised results will be prepared for colleagues to review the impact of HtGR and plan changes which will be beneficial to future students taking part. Additionally results of the evaluation may be used in external publications or reports, for example submissions as part of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF). Additionally the results may be shared at internal or external conferences/seminars to support the sharing of good practice.

Who is organising and funding the research?
This evaluation is being organised and funded by the University.

What if there is a problem?
If you have any concerns or complaints about HtGR or its evaluation please address them to the contact below and your concerns will be addressed.

Contact details
Below you will find the contact details for the project lead, please contact this person in the first instance if you have any questions or would like to raise a concern or complaint if you have any concerns regarding use of your data in the project.

Project contact – (Jo MacDonnell, J.Macdonnell@brighton.ac.uk)