

Hack 2040:

An ideathon event to engage students in university strategy whilst developing their enterprise skills

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Background

The inaugural 'Hack 2040' Summer Ideathon ran during one week in August 2020 and allowed students to participate in a challenge-led 'hackathon'-style event aiming to identify ideas and creative thoughts linked to the Aberdeen 2040 strategic plan.

Aberdeen 2040 was chosen as the focus for this event as this is an institutional priority for the University and our students are motivated and passionate about a wide variety of causes, many of which appear in the twenty commitments that form the 2040 Strategic Plan. Using an event in this way has benefits for both the students involved and the institution – there is potential for students to benefit from the skills they develop and it will allow them to also to work as partners to develop and deliver the Aberdeen 2040 strategy moving forward.

The overall objective of 'Hack 2040' was to:

- Promote the [Aberdeen 2040 Strategic Plan](#) amongst the student population.
- Develop solutions to some of the [twenty commitments](#) that support *inclusivity, interdisciplinarity, internationalisation and sustainability*.
- Promote and develop key employability and entrepreneurship skills such as creativity, imagination, teamwork, communication and the ability to innovate.
- Develop a stronger and more resilient community through networking opportunities for students, staff and external organisations.

Hack 2040 Overview

- The competition was open to all current students
- Students had to choose one of the Aberdeen 2040 Commitments to work on and could apply as a team or apply individually (then be assigned to a team)
- Each team was assigned a member of staff to act as a Mentor to support them



Competition rules were:

- Teams of 2-4 students + mentor
- Ideas had to be submitted as a five-minute video pitch that was pre-recorded and viewable online.
- Ideas had to be original and directly link to the chosen objective



All five-minute pitches submitted were judged on the following three criteria:

- Uniqueness
- Impact
- Relevance



The event was delivered using MS Teams to aid group work collaborations, linking with external stakeholders, judging deliberations and prize giving



The top three teams were presented with a prize kindly sponsored by the [University Development Trust](#) (1st Prize) and [AR Consulting Ltd.](#) (2nd / 3rd Prizes)



Click on the prize certificates to see the top three winning pitches!

...or scan the Zappar code below!



Evaluation

- **36 students** took part across 14 teams
- **12 mentors** were involved supporting the student teams
- **5 judges** were involved with two from external organisations
- Engagement statistics for the event were taken from MS Teams Analytics from the first three days:

172

Posts

108

Replies

52

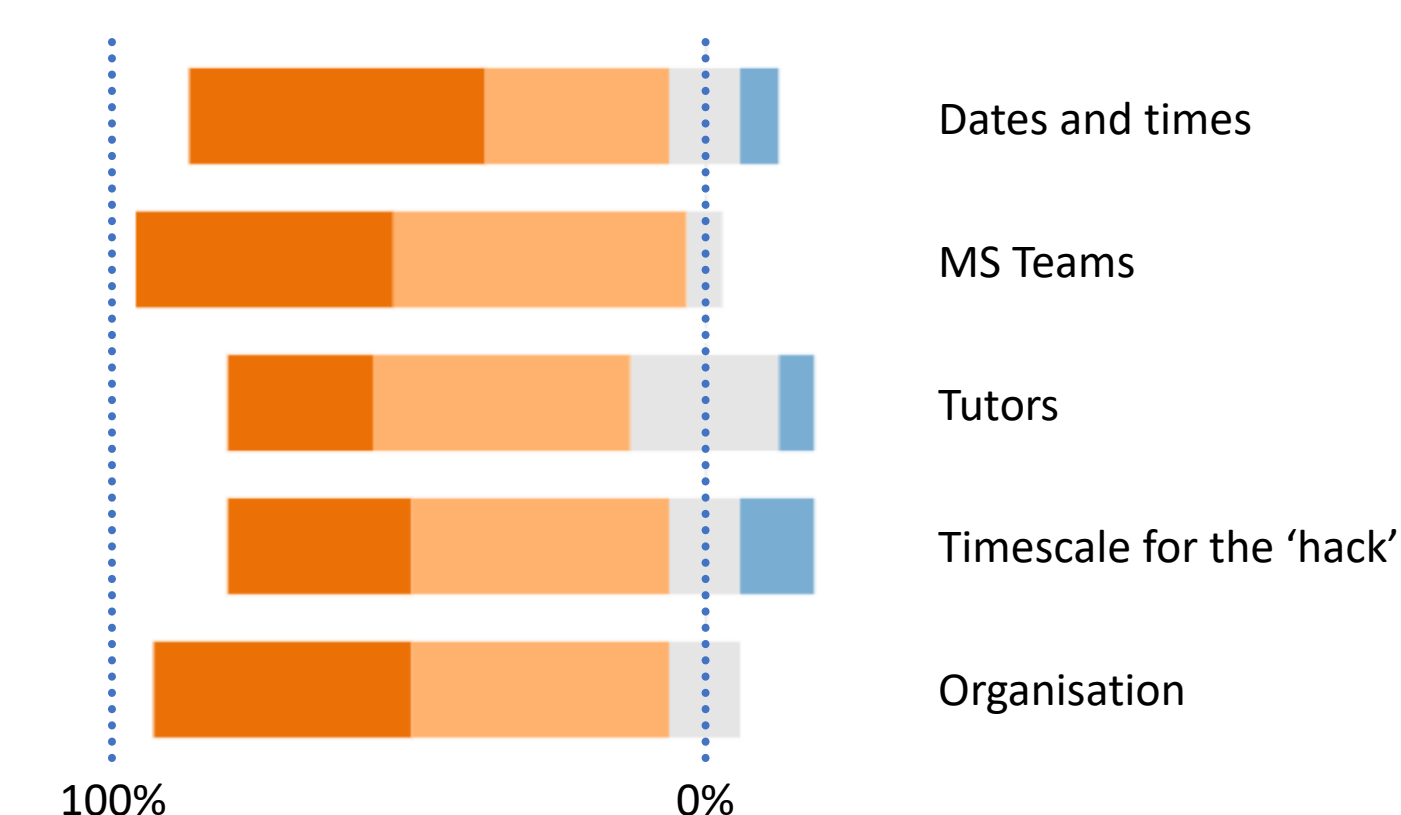
Reactions

32

Mentions

- A feedback survey (53% response rate – 28/53 participants) was conducted following the event. Survey highlights are shown below with quantitative responses and qualitative comments

Extremely satisfied Very satisfied Somewhat satisfied Dissatisfied Very dissatisfied



Quantitative student feedback on various aspects of Hack 2040

Student

"...student voices were being used to devise ideas for improving our University"

Tutor

"Being able to experience first-hand the creativity of our students outside their purely academic duties"

Judge

"The creativity of the students and the conscientious and professional approach they took to their proposals"