Enhancing the First Year Student Experience

Future Challenges

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The changing face of HE

- **Massification**
  - Global
    - 30 years ago 1 in 2 studied in North America/Europe
    - Today, it is 1 in 4
  - UK
    - 1960 = 7% went to university (Pugsley, 2004)
    - 2010 = 45% of 18–30 year olds went to university (DBIS, 2010)
The changing face of HE

- Widefication

‘students from different ethnic groups and non–English speaking backgrounds, international, lower socio–economic backgrounds, mature aged students, students with disabilities, as well those for whom higher education is the first family experience’

The changing face of HE

- Change in study patterns
  - Direct entry
  - Transfer
  - Part-time, work-based and distance learners

- Entry qualifications

- Student mobility

- Feminisation

- Standards of entry qualifications and university degrees

- The student body
Your concerns

What is your biggest frustration/barrier that you experience when trying to improve the student experience?

- Effort of students
- Student understanding to engage
- Lack of staff engagement
- Lack of institutional consistency
- Lack of academic, welfare and support cohesion
- Diverse practice
- Problems that should have been addressed earlier
Your concerns

What is your greatest concern for the future of Higher Education within the UK?

- Increased fees
- Expectations/commitment/engagement
- Reduction in widening participation
- Return to an elite structure based on ability to pay
- More for less
- Reduction in staff and increase in students
- Cuts
Challenges facing the sector

- Embedding the concept of the student experience
- Choosing a direction in a changed landscape
- Repositioning of the undergraduate degree
- Sustaining our future
Challenges facing the Practitioner

- Funding for higher education
- Student expectations
- Changes in teaching, learning and assessment environments
- Changes in the delivery of services
- Staffing issues
- Internationalisation and globalisation
Managing the student experience

- The Student Experience Practitioner Model

- Interlinks academic, welfare and support activities at faculty /department/school/course and university level

- Supports these activities across all levels of study
The traditional student lifecycle

1. Employment
2. Raising aspirations
3. Pre-entry activities
4. Admission
5. First term / semester
6. Moving through the course

Source: HECFE 2002
The Student Experience Practitioner Model

Source: M Morgan (2011) Improving the Student Experience- the practical guide for universities and colleges, Oxon:Routledge.
Themes

Source: M Morgan (2011)
Improving the Student Experience- the practical guide for universities and colleges, Oxon:Routledge.
Good practice

‘This is me!’ – Exploring a more confident approach to the transition process for disabled applicants by Jackie Reaney and Helen Smith, Leeds Metropolitan and Aimhigher

- Multi– unit and organisation approach
- Aims to increase diversity and enable inclusion
- Links academic, welfare and support needs
- One size does not fit all approach
Mature but experienced? By Richard Yates, Dr Maxwell Stevenson and Katie Rakow, University of Essex

- Based on student feedback and recommendations
- Staff buy in and staff led
- Multi-unit approach
  - Staff from WP
  - Student support
  - L&T
Good practice

- Week Five health checks by Angela Annesley, Hilary Watters, Steph Cosgrove, Debs Price, University College Falmouth
  - Well timed research at a critical time when students withdraw
  - Looks at student feelings and perceptions
  - Provided course teams and wider university support units with critical information
  - Informing strategy on L&T, transition initiatives and retention–based research
Thank you for listening

Any questions?

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