

A Change from Induction to Transition, Can this Affect Student Engagement and Learning?

Keywords – Transition, engagement, student focused, curriculum innovation, employability.

Name – Don Cock, Sarah Nixon, Cath Walker, Barbara Walsh

School / Department – Centre for Sport, Dance and Outdoor Education

Institution – Liverpool John Moores University

Activity – Introduction of PDP, personal tutoring, student engagement, peer interaction, employability.

Group – 105 level one BA (Hons) sport development with PE undergraduate students and the programme team responsible for supporting the course.

Aim

- To provide an enjoyable and quality first experience of university
- To increase engagement with the subject of sport and motivation to learn
- To develop a sense of belonging to tutor groups, seminar groups and the whole cohort.
- To increase the chance to interact with and get to know personal tutor and for personal tutor to get to know the students.
- To give students an experience of learning not linked to assessment.

Context / Background

The programme team of the above degree were concerned about L1 student induction and the amount of engagement and curiosity that the students were showing regarding the subject. After discussion, the decision was made to radically overhaul the previous approach and to put together a 5 week transition programme to introduce the new students to the university, each other, the staff and the subject. The curriculum was split into core themes and then a variety of activities was developed in order to both ensure subject content was covered and also to introduce the students to study skills and other learning strategies. Personal tutor groups were used as the basis of each day where the students met their tutor, collected their reading material for the day and checked in on their development.

In week 7, the students started the more formal module teaching and were given all the relevant documentation, including programme and module handbooks. The content for the 12c, semester 1 modules was integrated into the transition

programme ensuring that there was a fairly seamless link to the modules and the respective assessments.

Example

Below is an example of the first week's programme which focused on the student as an individual in relation to sport. Each week was run along similar lines and the activities changed in relation to the theme being studied. These included: sport and physical activity, sport and development, sport and physical education, and sport and community.

Week 1 – Sport and You

Monday

10.00 – 11.30	Practical small group activities – students working in tutor groups with the tutor to get to know their group
12.00- 2.00	Movie time (GOAL)
2.30 – 3.00	Tutor group reviews
3.00 – 4.30	Independent study - groups video commentary
4.30 – 5.00	Video report shown to tutor

Tuesday

8.45	Article of the day
9.00- 12.00	Carousel of activities Building the group website Using cartoons to express yourself You as a performer

Thursday

9.30 – 10.00	Tuesdays reading and discussion
10.00- 1.00	Lecture on learning and personal development
1.00- 4.00	Independent study on reading

	Website session
4.00 – 4.30	Tutor meeting

Friday

Independent study on reading for the next week and answering the question what is sport to you

Results / Feedback

In considering the overall transition period, 88.4% of students rated the experience as 'good' or 'very good'. The practicals were the most commonly cited 'favourite sessions' with 62.5% of students highlighting this aspect, whilst also suggesting the chance to experience a variety of novel activities. The quality of the various activities was perceived by 92.3% of students to be 'good' or 'very good'; "the structure was good; it gave me a great insight into sport development and the teachers involved, the videos were good as they split the day up but also had great meaning". Some students suggested the transition period went on too long, expressing a desire to have started more formal assessment-based content; although at the time of discussion, students were unaware of the extent to which module-based activities and teaching had already featured.

Staff helpfulness was also highlighted by the overwhelming majority of students with 92.3% perceiving a 'good' or 'very good' level of support. Staff helpfulness was one of the most frequently discussed topics within the focus groups eliciting comments such as "the staff have done a brilliant job, whilst being very entertaining and helpful". Staff interaction with students was one of the most frequently discussed and successful aspects of the transition process.

By the end of Week 5, 69.2% of students reported feeling a strong sense of belonging to their tutor group, although considerably fewer, (20.5% and 12.8%) offered similar feelings concerning their class group (approximately 33 people) and year group respectively. All staff considered the relationship with their tutor group had been cultivated and strengthened beyond that constructed in previous years, although also highlighted was a perception of 'blinkering'; whereby the remainder of the year group remained relatively unknown.

Other comments

This approach will be modified and delivered in a number of different courses in the next academic year.

This case study relates to two other case studies, "**Using Movies to Stimulate Learning in Sport Subjects**" and "**Changing Induction to Transition for L1 Students: A Staff Perspective**" both of which can be found on the HLST

website in the case studies areas under the themes of Groupwork and Curriculum Development, among others.

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/hlst/resources/casestudies>

Further Information – d.cock@ljmu.ac.uk, s.nixon@ljmu.ac.uk,
b.walsh@ljmu.ac.uk, c.m.walker@ljmu.ac.uk