Induction toolkit

A toolkit of effective practice for programme teams

Contents

- Introduction

- Developing an effective induction programme

- The first few weeks

- Extended induction

- Further information

Student Engagement and Transition Team

Introduction

- This toolkit is aimed at programme teams, and provides practical guidance on how you can implement effective support for students during their first few weeks at University and beyond

- The toolkit is structured as follows;
  - Designing an effective induction programme
  - The first few weeks
  - Extended induction

Developing an effective induction programme

"When you feel lost and bewildered, the last thing you want is long lectures"

(Edward, 2001: 438)

How effective is your induction programme?

Does your induction programme;

✓ Take place in the academic sphere with other students from the same programme?

✓ Provide students with opportunities to get to know one another and staff in small groups/informal settings?

✓ Engage students in developing an understanding of academic expectations and procedures?

✓ Provide readily accessible information online?

✓ Take place over an extended time period?

(Thomas, 2012)

The first few weeks...

"The single most important feature (of induction) was that students wanted the opportunity to make friends."

(Foster et al., 2012: 27)

Practical information and support

A common complaint about induction is 'information overload'

Students need;

• A map of the campus and support to orientate themselves

• A clear timetable (with room abbreviations explained)

• The location and contact details of their Student Hub

• The name, location and contact details of their Academic Support Tutor

• Additional information such as reading lists or programme handbooks should be online and easy to access

Signposting/promotion of other services

For queries that do not sit within the academic sphere, it is important to signpost to the relevant services:

- Finance

- Accommodation

- Disability

- Scholarships and Bursaries

- Visa Support

Emotional and social support

Effective practice:

Provide opportunities for students to;

- Participate in lots of icebreakers and small group work

- Voice concerns and questions (student-generated induction)

- Meet with their Academic Support Tutor

- Take part in HUU events such as society and volunteering fairs

Enhanced practice:

- Organise a social event or field trip which relates to the programme area
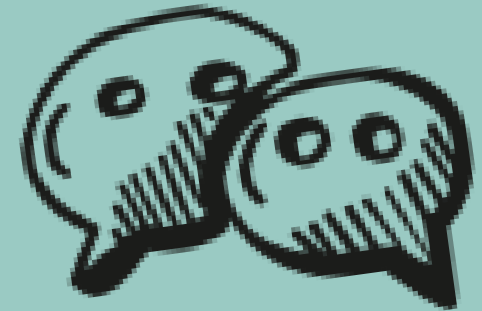
Examples in practice

At UoH:

- The student-run Geography Society have a buddy system for new students

- The School of Sports, Health and Exercise Science hold 'SHES Fest', an afternoon of social activities linked to their programme

- The BA Social Work programme use 'speed-dating' style ice-breakers to get students talking to each other

Preparing to study in HE

Effective practice:

- Support students to access online resources such as Canvas for the first time

- Help students to prepare for their first lecture and/or seminar

- Encourage and support students to participate in a tour of the library

- Explain commonly used terms

Enhanced practice

- Get students to carry out a skills audit and create a plan of action for skills development

Examples in practice

At UoH:

- Several Schools run 'refresher' weeks in Week 3, to enable students to ask any questions they have about academic processes

- Computer Science students complete a self-efficacy survey to help them assess areas for development

- Nursing students have timetabled library induction sessions, resulting in a high level of engagement with library services from the start of the programme

Elsewhere:

- Chester Law School address the 'expectation-reality' gap by engaging in explicit discussions about learning in HE, including how much contact time to expect, during Welcome Week (Andrews et al., 2012)

Practical information and support

Students need:

- Clear guidelines on who to contact about issues or concerns

- "Just in time" information and support, for example how to submit an assessments and how to avoid plagiarism

- Friendly and approachable staff who know where to refer students to for further guidance (see slide on signposting/promotion of other services)

Emotional and social support

Effective practice:

- Provide opportunities for students in larger cohorts to work in smaller groups or teams

- Be clear about how/who/when students can contact staff for support and encourage students to be pro-active in asking for support

- Contact students who are absent or who miss their first submission to check if they have any questions or concerns

Enhanced practice:

- Develop a peer-mentoring or buddy scheme (see the Peer Mentoring toolkit for further support with this)

Examples in practice

At UoH:

- The Faculty of Education run workshops to help students to manage stress and enhance their well-being

- Students from all years of the BA Youth Work and Community Development programme organise an annual fundraiser for a local charity

- The Science Foundation Year programme embeds knowledge about support services (e.g. Careers) into a Year 1 module

Elsewhere:

- Psychology students at the University of Sunderland have access to a dedicated social/study area within their department

Studying in HE

Effective practice:

- Explicitly explore and explain expectations around assessments; show students examples
- Provide lots of opportunities for formative feedback & hold feedback surgeries
- Embed online resources such as Skills4StudyCampus into your tutorials
- Promote sources of support such as Skills Team workshops

Enhanced practice:

- Consider incorporating Peer Assisted Study Skills into a first year module (contact the Skills Team for more details)

Examples in practice

At UoH:

- HUBS run a peer-mentoring scheme for direct entry international students. Mentors help new students to understand how HE works in the UK

- Computer Science students complete a self-efficacy survey and staff then use the results to identify 'at risk' students and provide pro-active support and guidance

- HUBS run a field trip for Foundation Year students prior to transitioning into the Year 1, designed to consolidate understanding of key concepts

Elsewhere:

- 2nd and 3rd Year Geography students at Newcastle University co-deliver a first year module with staff. The module is run in small tutor groups with an emphasis on developing academic writing skills, culminating in a field trip

Further information

References

Edward, N.S. (2001) Evaluation of a constructivist approach to student induction in relation to students' learning styles. *European Journal of Engineering Education* (online) Available: http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/03043790127518 Accessed 15 July 2016

Foster, E., Lawther, S., Keenan, C., Bates, N., Currant, B. and Lefever, R. (2012) *The HERE Project Toolkit: A resource for programme teams interested in improving student engagement and retention.* Available: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/here_project_toolkit.pdf Accessed 1 July 2016

Thomas, L. (2012) *Building student engagement and belonging in higher education at a time of change: final report from the What Works? Student Retention and Success programme.* Available: https://www.heacademy.ac.uk/sites/default/files/what_works_final_report.pdf Accessed 1 July 2016

Other toolkits

The Student Engagement and Transition Team has created a series of toolkits to share best practice from around the university and the rest of the sector. The team are happy to discuss the content of the toolkits and advise on implementation.

Other toolkits available in the series are:

• Assessment support

• Pre-arrival

• Peer Mentoring

• Social Media

Contact details

01482 462020

SEO@hull.ac.uk

UNIVERSITY OF **Hull**

Student
services
Realising **your** potential