

“HNC to Engineering Degree”

Transition from College to University an Engineering Evolution: Are the students equipped with the correct tools for the job.

Are engineering students coming from a college HNC course equipped with the correct skills and tools to transition smoothly into second year of university? This question and any solutions are what the Engineering Academy at The University of Strathclyde are trying to find out. The Engineering Academy set up to help improve upon the shortage of students from a “Widening Access” background, takes students whom might of otherwise been unable to gain entry into 1st year of an Engineering program (either due to insufficient grades, time spent in employment or a number of other routes) a chance to gain direct entry into second year at University without having to repeat any level of study, thus saving time and money. By putting the students through an enhanced HNC at a partner college while registering the student at the University, it give the student a chance to gain this qualification and opportunities to interact with the University, while hopefully gaining the skills and tools to transition into University without any issues. The paper will aim to highlight the highs and lows of this experience and offer suggestions to improve upon current procedures. Research has shown that the current literature can provide useful information but falls short in terms of its link with direct entry students from an Engineering or even a broader STEM background. Methods used in other transitions literature provide insight into helping with social and academic changes from courses such as, business and social sciences, but don’t provide solutions with regards to the issues, that arise for engineering students when transitioning. By using the first cohort of Engineering Academy students (who have not completed 2nd year) as a starting point, the paper follows the fate of these students as they reflect on the transition through their first real hurdle of starting university as a direct entry 2nd year student. This information will help to provide the future groups of EA a better chance of success by highlighting the weaknesses and providing solutions that will equip the future students with the correct tools to tackle the challenge of University.

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1 Introduction

The beginning of August saw the start of this year's Engineering Academy transition evaluation project. The project that was completed over the months of August and September was an accumulation of research of what was found in 2014/2015 from students entering Engineering at Strathclyde in 2nd Year, coming from a background of college at HNC, and the research of effective techniques used in multiple Colleges to University transition periods. For all students entering University from further education it can be difficult to engage the transition and manage adapting to different teaching techniques, study skills, organisation and the increase in personal work load. Making the transition for those students entering from an HNC into the 2nd year of an Engineering degree at Strathclyde more manageable, will therefore help students to engage with the staff and create a more accessible transition.

The Engineering Academy was a pioneering programme created to improve the level of students from "Widening Access" backgrounds that find a path into University. With an enhanced HNC and an extra practical skills unit, ideally the student gains the missing links gained in 1st Year University. As a new programme the engineering academy concentrates on adapting students from HNC and preparing them to advance straight into (Higher Education) HE, and dealing with both the social and mental expectations of obtaining a degree.

The summer internship consists of **Paul Kirkland**, a 4th year student (Electrical and Mechanical Engineering) (who transitioned from college into 1st year) and **Charlotte S.Moran** (Electrical and Electronic Engineering) an Engineering Academy student after completing 2nd year. Bringing together both personal experiences and research of student transitions from FE to HE. Together having the experience of transitioning to University with and without 1st year, gives a unique perspective into what experience might have been missed from 1st year. The information gathered will help to gain a better outlook on the programme and its development.

The challenge given to both students was to deliver solutions to problems that arose with the first year of the Engineering Academy (EA) and to ensure a smoother transition next year. What both students grew to understand was the large gap in workload and time-management that created a void between College and University. Phrases such as workload and time management can be easily misconstrued, to deliver more precise issues, thoughts from individual students from 2014/15 EA were collected to help pinpoint specific issues and highlight feasible solutions.

Interviews were held with the academic staff members involved with the EA, to see if they had any issues they wanted to highlight. From the discussions it was clear that some of the issues matched those of the students, these were then set as a priority to resolve.

This report will help to illustrate the information gathered through literature reviews and analysis of other Universities transition programmes, especially those involving college students. This forms the foundation of our recommendations and the suggested deliverables. Which come in the form of a longitudinal transition checklist, this loose fit model aims to help better manage the expectations of the prospective students, hopefully resulting in a smoother transition for the students.

2 Methodology

2.1 Starting Point

Having a small group of Engineering Academy students who have already went through the transitioning to University experience, made the process of gathering information all the easier. Rather than trying to seek out the individuals, who have completed their own individual journey to higher education, by completing an HNC/D, then entering University at either first or second year. The Engineering Academy has given us a diverse group of individual who all went on the same journey, replacing first year of university with an enhanced HNC at a partner college. This gives the unique opportunity to compare this more direct and assisted path of the Engineering Academy student versus both the traditional school leaver and college leaver who both have went through first year.

2.2 Data Collection

A two tier approach was used to capture the student opinion: A Qualtrics Survey and Informal Interviews. The Qualtrics survey was used as the main data collection tool, this would provide us with useful quantitative data. This data alone only tells half a story, so is combined with the qualitative data collected from informal chats with the students, to clarify how the students felt, rather than having to infer from the numbers, a recognised and effect method of gather this type of information (Neuman, 2000). The survey was also used to collect descriptive answers from students about an issues they felt needing to be expanded on. These answers are combined with the results of the informal chats to identify clear issues within the EA. The results from this data collection influence the suggestions made to try and make the EA a more successful and enjoyable experience for all involved.

Interviews were also held with staff members of the EA to gauge the opinion from the teaching perspective of what was going well and not so well. This could then be used to see if any issues correlate with what the students had said, thus pointing to important issues.

2.3 Suggestions

From both the data collected and detailed case studies into other universities procedures of student transitions, a list of suggestion will be made to help correct any of the issue that arise from the research. These suggestions will form the final part of this report and will provide a number of solutions to the problems to give a varied approach to what the university feel they could provide and what would work best. This should help both with the students joining the university, in assuring they have all the help they need., and with the ones joining college in helping to manage their expectations of the what is ahead of them.

3 What's Already Happened

3.1 Working through an HNC

When arriving at their HNC the students are already part of the Engineering Academy. Throughout this first year the students of 2014 sat extra classes depending on their HNC and their degree stream. As well as the extra curriculum there was an Engineering Academy Induction. 90% of those involved in the EA survey (2015) went to this induction. Through this survey the students found it most helpful in Finding out about their course. This was followed closely with a good guide in learning about Virtual Learning Environment (Myplace, Pegasus, and the student emails) and a good introduction to the University itself. The students however did feel that the University could have had more contact with them during their college year;

The students stated that there should have been, "more checking up on students throughout the college year", "more contact/contact meetings while still at college". Also requested from multiple students was the use of first year coursework and tutorials to help them grasp the amount of work which was needed in University to bridge the gap in transition.

Evidence in the students finding the transition difficult can be seen within this survey. 50% of students struggled with study techniques; the mathematics was selected by 50% of the students also as something that caused the issues, while 35% struggled also with university teaching styles.

3.2 Social & Academic Integration

Integrating into university is, and has been a continuous concern for students. According to a Survey released in 2013 making friends was the main concern for 32% of students (Student Induction Survey, 2013). In the Survey released this year to students involved in the Engineering Academy the results were very similar to that of students transcending from other routes to university. The second largest concern for those students arriving in the year 2014 was in fact Making friends. To help overcome this as a main issue for new students the University already run multiple services such as Freshers' Week and Open Days which go hand in hand with the social life that is integrated with University life. All years can take part in the open days and Freshers' Fayre; however it is mainly a 1st year predominant event. Other integrated work/ events such as the VIP projects help with introducing students from all over different faculties to work together on a cooperative project combining all subjects involved.

Freshers', being aimed mainly at first year students can create a negative concept for mature students, and that for students wishing to socialize with their peers from 2nd year. From the students involved with the 2014/2015 entry to second year 55% took part in the survey and 75% of those students did not attend any open day events. A student who never went to the Open events stated; "If I went I would have met lecturers and other classmates". Other results are shown in Figure A.

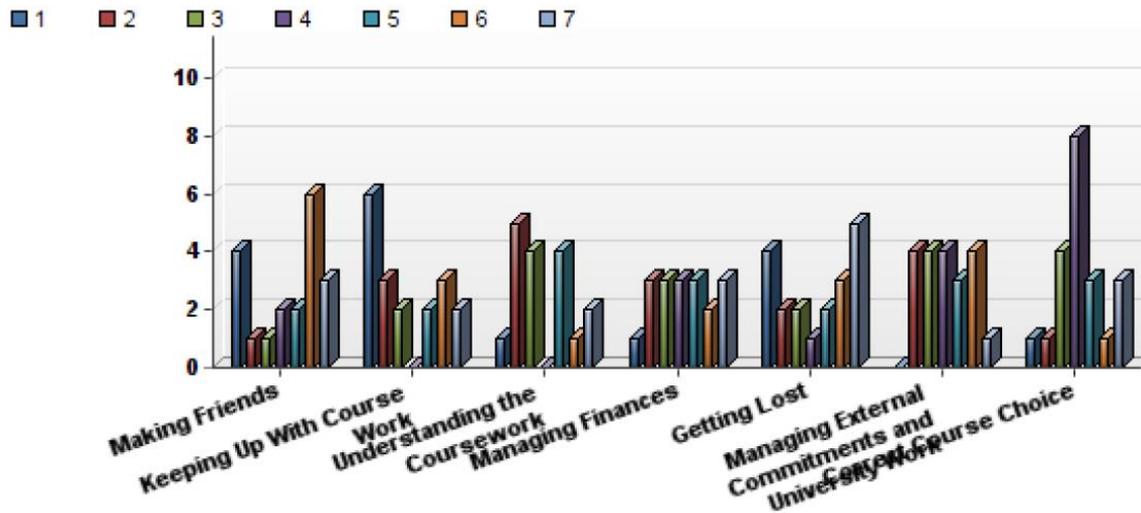


Figure A – EA Student main concerns (Rating their concerns from biggest to least 1-7)

3.3 CV & Employer Engagement

For this year (2015/2016) all the EA students were invited to attend CV and employer engagement sessions. This will help students to grasp an understanding of the full potential a degree can bring, and the many career prospects that will be available for them. Thus, help the students to realize expectations of the level of attainment and work involved in an Engineering degree and the benefits involved in obtaining an Engineering degree.

There were two separate events held with Alan Robertson, a Careers Advisor (University of Strathclyde Careers Service) to all students, undergraduate and postgraduate who study in the Engineering faculty.

During these events held, there were 18 various employers from various engineering disciplines who made committed to over 30 sponsorships and 6 work placements. Many of these employers hosted presentations within the University. Over and above these opportunities 3 of the employers made available 5 different industrial engagement projects for Strathclyde Internships.

According to Stewart McKinlay (Associate Director - Engineering Academy), as the events were not obligatory there was a disappointingly poor turn out. However those who actually did make it along the sessions gave positive feedback and said they felt it was of good value to them.

3.4 Each Department

So far there is unfortunately no form of checklist or guideline to what each department must do for the induction for those students arriving through the Engineering Academy. Making improvements for the Engineering Academy must consist of comparing that of what has already is in place in different departments. This information is hard to come by when each department has its own

organisation and no corresponding guideline. Emails were issued out but the response from departments was non-existent.

3.5 Summer Schools

Summer schools were created in the session 2014/2015. These unfortunately were deemed to be unsuccessful with some of the EA students. When discussing with those students, in an informal interview the complaints arisen that the work was not familiar enough with the work done when 2nd year started, and they felt it a struggle, more than expected when the course began, especially the practical work;

“...but also some practical with the boards and digital equipment because the first lab I did I was clueless”

Others felt it was so different and unimportant to the course sat that they felt they could have spent their time in a more productive way;

“Bit of a waste when you could be working”

However this negative feedback looks, summer schools can have a great success rate. According to ‘Summer SucceSS – Harvard Family research Project’ (2006), a meta-analysis which assessed 93 summer school programmes (2000) saw the increase of knowledge, skills and understanding for the specialised subjects of those involved.

With the entry students of the session beginning 2015-2016 the Summer school was no longer in session.

3.6 Student Union Groups and Societies

For all students entering University can be daunting if they don’t feel a successful social integration. It is important for students to feel a social focus on campus. Student Unions are important to help students who may feel concern in a way a course is being taught and to compare concerns with fellow students.

For students entering at the 2nd level of University, without having a buffering year to engage in social affiliation as those who have entered the traditional route do, it can be difficult to feel welcomed into the university. With union groups and societies it gives the chance for the later students to meet those who have similar interests, same goals that perhaps they would never have met otherwise.

Strathclyde University has over 130 clubs and groups ranging from political groups, to gaming groups to sports clubs. There are 47 sports clubs at the moment at the university, and within these clubs consist of even more specialized events.

In the EA survey(2015) one students explained;

“The Strathclyde Union held several events”, and continued to say, “so it was easy to mix with the other students”.

However, according to the 2014 Strathclyde case study ‘Student Transition Intern report’ unfortunately only a small selection will participate per hand full of students. Many who take part in a group or union have positive feedback, however many will not seek to join any.

3.7 Library and Online Services

Engineering students are most likely not to use the library due to the vast amount of material that can be accessed online. However the library believes that the majority of students will go to the library to study in groups instead of studying alone.

The library has always many members of staff to help guide students to the most possible solution when a problem occurs. There is no official referral procedure but the helpful staff will always be there to help.

When students are inducted at the beginning of the Engineering Academy there is a tour of the library. This introduces the students to the features of the library building, such as study areas and PC suites. During the tour the staff explains how to find, borrow and then return any books from the library. For students new to the University this gives them an idea of the ways

in which the information services are capable of helping them during their studies at Strathclyde. Although 15% of students who underwent the survey of 2015 stated that they had issues with IT, although none stated that they had any issues at all with the library.

Online services from the university have been part of a student’s life line. On them the students are told what dates exams, deadlines and quizzes are and work submission now is done almost entirely through it. For more account and registration information and help there is Pegasus, which is where students can select various optional classes and update personal information. Then there is Myplace which is a lot more commonly used for subject assignments and updates.

A group brought in this year, with another internship based in the Mechanical Engineering department, worked solely on developing the Myplace page for the department. They discovered very similar results to this project that the Engineering Academy students found it very difficult to keep up to date with all information available. Myplace is very adaptable and therefore there is not much of a common pattern on individual pages. Staff can put up whatever they believe best and sometimes some members of staff will put up very little while others will put up lots of helpful information. What the interns worked on was creating a guideline for the MAE department to follow to help create a constant feel of similarity between all of the departments’ subjects online.

3.8 Social Media

Social media is incredibly useful for online checks between students and social groups. The problem is however, from discussing with Engineering Academy peers there is a certain uncomfortable feel for those to allow lecturers and the faculty into their own private social groups. From interacting with students also involved in a similar internship and speaking with those out with is a steady understanding that even if it was updated the idea would interfere with their personal space.

Each department of Engineering have in their own time created private Facebook groups between the students, where older students are able to give advice and there is a place away from the University to ask questions that aren't normally confidently asked to the lecturers, PDA and other members of staff.

4 What should happen?

The students taking part in the Engineering Academy are members of Strathclyde University and therefore are already part of Higher Education (HE). Although this is the case, the transition period for these students is just as important as the transition for 1st year entry students.

The purpose of this section of the report is to analyse what is currently happening within the engineering department and then contrast this with what could be happening to improve the success of progression from HNC to the 2nd year of an Engineering degree, using evidence based practise, opinions of the students and staff.

From Joshua Whittaker's case study (2008), he defines the main key elements to a smooth and successful transition, which are as follows;

Coordinated Institutional Strategic Approach

Pre-Entry Support – informed choice, preparation and expectations

Long-term approach to induction

Timely provisional of information and avoidance of information overload

Social Integration and peer support networks

Proactive student support

Developing a sense of belonging

These seven points are all described further in this section tackling what has successfully worked and what can be done to improve. The work created in this report will form the basis for future recommendations, development and outcome.

4.1 Working through HNC

When being part of the University but also studying from a college, it can be hard to understand the comparison between both forms of education. Students can be stressed throughout the HNC not

knowing of they will make it to become a full member of the university depending on their award for their HNC. While this stress acts as a form of uncertainty it can be hard for students to prepare themselves for the following year especially without the buffer of a 1st Year place. According to the Gamache report of 2002 lack of organisation and preparation are key factors in an unsuccessful transition. Without an effective induction to the course students may find themselves with vague assumptions of the University years ahead of them and this is another very large factor to a foiled transition (James' case study 2011).

Inductions involving those who are in their FE year of the EA are currently in action at Strathclyde. These 'pre-inductions' are used in multiple transition periods and are seen as effective as providing additional support and building relationships with lecturers and students (Wingate 2007).

When the 2015 EA survey was issued students responded to the question of if there was anything at this point of the course the EA could have done to help them with the transition;

Students stated, "more contact with us throughout the first year whilst in college", and more checking up with the students throughout the year".

Another stated that the university could have "made sure our knowledge was up to scratch".

Multiple students referred to the lack of University based tutorials/teaching styles/classes and assignments given to them at college. They felt that there wasn't enough coursework and interaction with the university.

4.2 Engineering Induction

The induction is the key factor in welcoming the students to the Strathclyde Faculty of Engineering. Through this the students are made aware of the excellent opportunities involved and realise what they can achieve if the hard work is put in. Also the induction gives each department the chance to show the students what the course for that year will entail. The question which is being asked in this section is what would benefit the Engineering Academy to lessen the transition between College and University and creating a clear concise induction is important in enticing more students to stay and complete the degree.

4.2.1 CV & Employment Engagement

For those students who did attend these sessions, according to Stewart McKinley, had only positive feedback about the events. The unfortunate news from these events was the turnout was very small. Perhaps then, if these events made mandatory those students who would benefit but would not go could in fact see full potential in it become part of the course, such as the Summer School was on 2014.

4.2.2 Preparing Students: Enrolment & Preparation

To contest with specific course information and personal expectations, there are challenges to a University enrolment that affect across all faculties, regarding general information such as acceptance, registration, timetables etc. This is general information that every student will need access to, yet there are huge variances regarding the distribution of this information.

Within each department within the Engineering faculty, the curriculum changes, if there is a familiar route for every department to take in distributing the information to the students, the students can all have the same amount of information distributed to them laying an equal ground for those entering from EA and those taking a direct route through first Year University.

4.2.2.1 Case Study: Staged Emails

Within the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, it is recognised that there is a need to improve the flow of information to incoming students. The idea of 'staged emails' has been suggested, which would include information regarding the use of email, contacting services, and key contacts for the students. Communication would begin once students confirm their offers. The rationale of the staged emails is that it would manage expectations in the form of a timeline, and would stop the repetitive questions asked by students. Communication would be from the same contact, per faculty, so that when students attend induction, they will be able to visibly recognise and feel a sense of familiarity to the person who has been in contact with them since their acceptance. The idea that emails are staged suggests a relatively time-effective approach for staff, and reassures students that information will be given by a certain date and time.

Current students from the focus group agree that there is a need to provide information in advance to students to allow them time to prepare, *"Most info was released a week or so before, which for me was too late. Most first years' timetables don't change much, so it wouldn't be that hard to give us this info in advance,"* and that the existing practice is not satisfactory, *"I received conflicting info at different times. There is a huge problem in communication"*. Some departments have already begun to change the way they communicate with pre-entry students, *"We were provided with a step-by-step email, but no one really read it,"* but perhaps through the wrong methods.

4.2.2.2 Case Studies: Video Tutorials

University of Strathclyde - The Department of Education at Strathclyde invited new students in over the summer to ask what kinds of information they would like to know before starting University. They then created a video, acknowledging and answering students concerns, which was advertised on the Department Twitter page and sent out to all students. Feedback suggests students were satisfied and felt more confident about attending now that small pieces of information that had caused them concern, had been answered. Furthermore, the Strathclyde Widening Access Team have created videos, advertised on the 'Start@Strath' page, which discuss living away from home and challenges faced by international students, from current students on Campus.

University of Sheffield – Video tutorials producing a step by step guide relating to VISA applications for students, inside and outside the UK, are present on the University website. The tutorials provide guides that visibly take students through the process of filling out applications that can be somewhat confusing. Providing these tutorials may counteract the volume of emails departments receive from students who do not understand the process.

University of Bristol – The University have dedicated a section of their website to video tutorials, extending beyond basic tasks and producing a host of tutorials relating to information literacy. These tutorials relate to use of the library (taking out books, reserving books, searching the library catalogue etc.), using database searches (finding legal cases, using MetaLib, using databases away from home), and referencing.

Interested in whether relaying the same information about registration and tutorials to Strathclyde in a different format would change student feedback, the Student Transitions Team created a video

prototype displaying how students could select and save their timetables, which was shown to the student focus group.

There were some initial concerns as the majority of students indicated they thought the material would be effective, but that students wouldn't make use of it, *"If people don't watch it, there's no point in providing such material"*. However, after watching the tutorial, feedback was mainly positive. Students were not aware of how to save their timetable, *"Yeah, this would definitely be useful. I didn't know how to do this,"* but believed this could reach the majority of students, *"I think it might be used by one person in a social group, who would then show their friends. But it sounds very useful."*

4.3 Managing Expectation & Informing Choices

As seen from opinions from the students, there is a severe lack of confidence throughout them relating to the transition into university. With more influence and contact from the Strathclyde, students will hopefully have a firmer idea on what is expected of them when working through a degree. According to the case study from Yorke & Longden (2008) a lack of knowledge makes the students at a more greater danger of leaving the course than those who have become aware by familiarising themselves with the course and adapting to the university.

When arriving at university it's key for students to have an understanding of what is expected. When arriving in 2nd year a massive 81% of students who took part in the EA survey never even used their career services and 21% hadn't ever used their Academic Advisor. Even though all students involved in the survey thought it was relatively simple to use the resources not everybody took advantage of what was there. When at college the students knew they were continuing (if grades were sufficient) into Strathclyde, however the fourth biggest concern for the EA students of 2014 was if they had entered the right course for them. Students also stated that they hoped during college there was more input from the university. One student stated that to help at college, "more contact/progress meetings" would be effective, perhaps offering, "some more beneficial tutorials or first year course work to bridge the gap" of understanding and expectations.

In regards to online help, as previously mentioned in the report EA students ranked the induction to university helpful as an introduction to the Virtual Learning Environment (VLE). They found this way helpful in familiarizing themselves with the course at hand. However while during HNC the VLE was empty and had no information to connect the college students to the university. During the HNC it would be more effective for the students who are member of Strathclyde to have further information to help on the online resources. Information such as; course work that first years are supplied, and perhaps the college students have not looked at or even looked at in a different style of working. Keeping the students at college up to date with the knowledge given to the first year students is important in assuring the college students are part of the Strathclyde University and part of the Engineering faculty as well as delivering the data needed to give them clear examples of what is expected of them and the amount and the quality of work expected from them.

4.3.1.1 Case Study: Napier University, Getting the Message

Created by Julia Fotheringham and Emily Alder this case study analyses and assesses the benefits of online, mobile devices in accessing student resources. Students familiarising themselves with a new faculty or building, be it into year 1, year 2 or year 3 they all struggle with students who have already been studying together previous years and the change in how the coursework is delivered.

Fotheringham and Alder found that members of the Academic staff played a key part in the transition period, and that staff development was important in helping a smooth transition. With sources of information such as SMS messages and online support help to inform those of all the varied transitional journeys. Further, the students agreed that a huge part of their transition required staff development in applying information with such techniques that would reach all students.

4.3.1.2 Case Study: University of Bournemouth, Stepping Stones 2HE

Developed by the School of Design, Engineering, and Computing, the University of Bournemouth has created a web based resource that is made available to students as soon as they receive an unconditional offer, typically on results day. The aim of the programme is to develop student commitment by engaging students early. This relieves anxiety, provides a mechanism for giving information to students, and allows an opportunity for students to develop a relationship with the course and institution. Furthermore, the University is able to provide information, academic and otherwise, without reaching 'information overload' to help students prepare for University:

Students are made aware of learning requirements of their course and given the opportunity to work through activities and relevant case studies.

Awareness of what the University expects of students is also expressed as students complete a 'self-profiling questionnaire', to recognize their learning habits, strengths, and weaknesses

Students are introduced to the services available to them, such as library based information skills, and study support materials

A sense of belonging to the University is promoted as students can read about major headlining research, becoming instantaneously part of the University 'Community' on acceptance.

Student feedback indicates that students value the opportunity to work through and assimilate material independently pre-induction. Despite concerns that students would not engage with the resource over the summer, feedback suggests that a significant majority of students actively participate. (Keenan, 2005).

4.3.1.3 Case Study: Nottingham Trent University, Pre-Arrival Activities

As well as a clear 'course induction' mechanism on the University website, every Undergraduate course has a separate tab labelled 'Pre-arrival activities'. These activities are annually updated, by Department, and link in with meaningful activities in the induction week. Activities are grouped under four objectives: research activities, engaging with the literature, social networking, and key questions about the discipline. This allows students a deeper understanding of their course content, and provides them a tangible and direct opportunity to better prepare themselves for University.

4.3.1.4 Case Study: University of Sheffield, Post Offer Open Days

The University of Sheffield runs a separate Open Day for incoming students who have now received offers for the University, describing these as 'crucial' to determining the uptake of offers. The day comprises of three main activities:

Standard information sessions whereby current students assist offer holders in their decision making

Student ambassadors providing tours of the campus

Academic staff host an information sessions, in parallel to campus tours, specifically for parents, guardians, carers, and partners, to answer questions and provide further information

Although most students reported having a family member attend University before them, 21% of our new students and 44% of current students were the first in their family to attend. 82% of new students reported encouragement from their family to go to University, and from the teams observations there were many parents and guardians who attended the Open Day with their children. Despite concerns that students from widening access backgrounds may have less familial support than others, it appears that families are actively supporting students in regards to their journey into Higher Education. One of the student interns attend the 'parents and carers' session at the University Open Day to discover that this talk relates to students who are themselves parents and carers. Although useful, it is not unreasonable to assume that there is also a need to provide parents and carers the opportunity to find out information that will help them best support our students and their children. There is also a need for the University to manage the expectations of parents and carers, as well as students, and provide them with the knowledge and resources to help their children if they feel they need support.

4.4 Social & Academic Integration

To allow a seamless integration for HNC to second year for the EA students, the experience has to be a longitudinal one. As the transition into second year even for the non EA students is sometimes a difficult process, (Fragmented transitions: moving to the 2nd year – Scott and Cashmore – 2012) with having such a long break a reintroduction into university is usually required. This helps the students to readjust and catch up with their peers, it also allows the university to get across that more will be asked of them this year. It is this point that the EA students entry not having experienced University, they will find themselves most vulnerable. Research has shown that direct entry students usually struggle with the transition, difference in all academic respects; studying level/amount, procedures and teaching styles. Couple this with the challenge of integrating with already established peer groups, it is little wonder that this can have a negative affect all aspect of the student's life not just academic. (Fotheringham and Alder, 2012). This shows that the integration process must start as early as possible to allow an easier transition. This would also fall in line with the EA desire to make their students feel like University students at College, rather than College students who are going to go to University. Introduction of programmes like 'PALS' at Plymouth University (Vince 2014) try to deal with the issues of direct entry into a degree stream, by giving the college based student a link to the university. This is broken down further in the PALS case study, but the main idea is run 8 peer led support sessions divided over two years before and after transition. The peers involved are at the same level as the college students, so will be in the same year at university. This helps to establish peer networks prior to university which can alleviate much of the stress of the transition. (Husband and Jacobs, 2009). Further Academic integration could also be achieved with University projects or Reports been given to the EA students, this would give an opportunity to first hand see the difference in academic standards. Pike and Harrison (2011) gave the conclusion for students that moved from degree to honours level between a FE and HE establishment that the academic difference were apparent. This lead students to be anxious and feel ill-equipped to deal with the university standard of work, but this could be minimalized with closer link between the FE and HE course. This goes some way to show that the only way to experience the University academic style and level of work is to do the University work itself.

Case Study

The University of Plymouth partnered with the City College Plymouth, South Devon College and Truro College to offer an extensive, longitudinal induction to the direct entry students. All 3rd year direct entry students (this would be the equivalent to 2nd year in Scotland) were offered a programme involving 8 peer-led support sessions. Four of these sessions took place during the final year at college, whilst the remaining four occurred during the students first year at university. The sessions, each lasting 1 hour, were tailored to each course and led by current students within each department. The sessions involved discussions relating to any academic or social issues, and the transition process the students were facing at the time. The university attempts to make the students as comfortable as possible. As such, these sessions take place within a confidential and relaxed atmosphere.

Research by the university highlighted a struggle for students in the transition from Further Education College and University. This was due to differences in the level of study, unfamiliar academic procedures and difficulties socially integrating into a pre-existing group of friends. The University of Plymouth targeted Accounting and Finance as well as Law; two courses with large numbers of direct entry students joining from their partnered college.

The inductions sessions involved groups of 30 students. Each group had 2 leaders (both current students). The initial sessions were held in the PC suite, with the remaining sessions held on campus, allowing students to familiarise themselves with the University environment. Although the sessions were informal, topics were brought up during meetings including:

Expectations of university study

Module Choices

Electives

Coursework

Assessment examples

Societies and social activities

Feedback from the sessions have been positive. A questionnaire was given out to 32 students who participated in the survey with the following data recorded:

- 87% of attending students enjoyed the sessions
- 100% of students found the sessions to be a safe and secure environment to ask questions
- 96% found the leaders to be friendly and approachable
- 94% found it helpful to learn about leaders' experiences and programme expectations
- 87% of students found the sessions to be relaxed enough to share experiences
- 75% of students felt the sessions helped to build their communication skills
- 69% of students felt the sessions helped to build their self confidence

An open ended question, “What did you enjoy most about your peer assisted learning sessions?” was also asked with the following responses:

- “The honesty and openness of the questions answered”.
- “The opportunity to meet other students who come from other Partner Colleges and those who come from Plymouth”.
- “Being able to have my questions answered by people my age who understand”.
- “Learning new things which will help with bridging modules”.
- “The leaders were super friendly and lovely”.
- “These sessions were fun and helpful and it's nice to speak to people who are going through the process and have the insider point of view”.

Overall, the project has shown that there is a lot than can be done to improve inductions for direct entry students within Strathclyde. In this case the students came directly from college, however, information from several reports recognise that direct entry students face the same issues during the transition period.

4.5 Students & Mentors

In terms of incoming student concerns, the joint second highest concern was ‘making friends’, with ‘keeping up with coursework’ being number one (EA Survey, 2015). This helps to highlight the important role peers and lecturers can have on individual students. With coursework being the biggest concern prior to university, the survey shows that ‘Study Skills (i.e how to study)’ was the joint highest concern along with ‘Maths Skills’. ‘Course Content’ and ‘Teaching Style’ were 3rd and 4th respectively in terms of university concerns, but compared to how the students felt during their HNC there is a large increase in the number of students with concerns in these areas. Thought with the survey showing that almost ¾ of the students surveyed said they skipped tutorials either Occasionally or Frequently, this could go some way in suggesting why the academic integration is more of a challenge.

Wilcox et al. (2005) claim that making compatible friends is essential to student retention, and there is much research to suggest that social support is best given through other students themselves. Students interviewed noted that they would have liked the opportunity to speak with students in the later years of their study, “[I would have liked a more in depth discussion of the course with current students or students that progressed on from the year I was about to begin]”. This suggestion could offer up potential ideas for solutions between the social and academic integration problems.

4.6 Peer Mentoring

In terms of students supporting students, the peer support programme was piloted across the University during the 2014/2015 academic year. The programme has been well received by the University, and produces a formal network of student support available for all students. However, there are certain elements of the service, and methods of implementation that can be introduced to

fully utilise and extend this resource. From this the EA could pilot its own unique version of the programme aimed at helping the more specific Engineering and EA problems that occur.

The following two case studies suggest methods established by other universities regarding peer mentoring / support.

4.6.1.1 Case Study: University of Aston, Transition Mentoring

The University developed the peer support programme following criteria and recommendations from the 'What Works' (2012) report.

Transition + Peer Mentoring - a model has been recommended to address transition and retention together. The approach encompasses all new students on an opt-out University-wide basis. At the moment, and due to the relatively recent implementation of the programme at Strathclyde, our service is predominantly 'opt-in'. Though it could be suggested an 'opt-out' approach could work for a separate EA programme. Peer mentoring can enrich the student experience across the life cycle and with a small cohort can be easier to manage. This type of transition mentoring would specifically capture incoming second year students, who would benefit the greatest from this.

4.6.1.2 Case Study: University of Aston, E-mentoring

The aim of this service is to provide new students to reap the benefits of being in touch with a mentor before setting foot on campus. This begins once acceptance has been confirmed. The student will be contacted by a member of staff who is able to put the student in touch with a current student to communicate with during the month before starting term, if they wish.

There is also the possibility of matching peers, for example pairing an international student with a current student from their home country. Although it has not been noted, it would be interesting to see if this 'mentor-match' process could be done for direct entry, widening access, and mature students. This type of system could be utilised for the students studying their HNC at partner colleges given the students a further link with the University.

4.7 Student Events

Student events are a good way for students to interact. However from the case study, Student Transitions, Strathclyde (2014) many members of the academic staff did not include social integration into department inductions and introductions, even though it then refers to 89% of those who were given this opportunity found it beneficial. From the 'Direct Effect' hypothesis (Mackie, 1998), the perception that others will help to increase your self-esteem and help to feel more in control of stressful situations is valuable.

For those students heading directly to 2nd year, it's difficult to excite them to go to student events. The 2015 survey shows that 76% of the students did not take part in the Fresher's.

Although the turnout was low there was a level of engagement from the survey responses regarding social activities within University;

"I already had a close group of friends attending the same course as me."

"Didn't find it difficult to make friends" when the course began.

“The Strathclyde Union held several events which everyone attended, so it was easy to mix with other students.”

4.7.1.1 Case Study: University of Aberystwyth, Department of Software Engineering

There is an ‘op-out’ induction activity for all new students on their courses. Staff and students participate in a trip away from the University and take part in adventurous, team-building activities. Feedback from the Department is very positive. Motivation appears to have improved, class participation is higher, and their retention rates are among the highest in the UK. One staff member commented on how this changed the dynamic of the class, with quieter students able to participate without prompts, and louder students accepting their points of views instead of being, unintentionally, dismissive.

It is evident that there are lots of evidence of current good practice within the University and outside, as mentioned here and previously. Furthermore, it should be noted that staff who do not implement such practices would be willing to do so. One staff member, when asked what their department could do better, explained that although the department currently has no departmental induction, they can see great merit in this. If given the opportunity, they would like to organise a field trip for students to go away for the day, perhaps to the Ross Priory, to converse with students on their course, staff, and also with students in later years, particularly those who have studied abroad and have just returned, in order to rationalise and normalise student concerns regarding this issue.

Furthermore, other Universities are continuing to implement additional interventions in halls of residence. Living arrangements of students is a significant factor in terms of social integration. Research suggests students who live with their parents and mature students, for different reasons as they live some distance from the campus, encounter difficulties having a social life at University.

4.8 Summer Schools

A summer school programme was issued at the end of Summer 2014 for the first selection of EA students. From this year it was deemed unsuccessful due to a generalist style take on each subject. The staff and students alike did not see any benefits from the Summer school. Therefore, the summer school was scrapped for the following year. The following year consisted of more information apparently throughout the year but no preparation as sorts in the form of a summer week programme.

Summer schools are known to be highly successful and can help students to really begin a year on top of their game. Food for thought on the ideas as university summer schools are the key of working close with each individual department and create a more excluded summer school helping the students to prepare by subject what is expected of them at University. Several number of students during an informal interview stated that they would have been more prepared for university if they had the chance to work more with their chosen subject throughout the summer programme.

5 Recommendations

The Engineering Academy is very effective if helping reach engineering students in need for a different path into university. It has worked out as a very effective programme that can help many people. There is ways to improve the transition from HNC into second year university and this can be done using the following recommendations included in this section.

These recommendations are based on a solid platform of evidence based practice. They consider good practice from within the university, from external sources, and from the results gathered by extensive qualitative and quantitative research. For ease of reading, recommendations are matched with 'Working though HNC', 'Arriving at University' and 'Getting Started'.

5.1 Working through an HNC

An effective coordinated institutional strategic approach to inform the students while their HNC

For the students working through their HNC there must be for them a clear understanding of what their aims are and what is expected of them. It is important for students to feel a part of Strathclyde to reduce anxiety and to reduce misinformation. One of the largest contributing factors for an unsuccessful transition relates to the lack of preparation for and understanding of what University involves (Gamache, 2002), and ill-informed preconceptions about what they will encounter (James, 2011). To avoid this issue the University must ensure students receive the same basic information and at the same time, requiring a coordinated approach across the Engineering Academy.

HNC staged emails

There are certain tasks that all the EA students must complete before they can successfully be enrolled into 2nd Years Engineering. Every student has to register online, collect their student cards, attend their induction day, and receive their timetables. Students do expect information immediately, especially through any online methods of enquiry. Even though it is impossible for the departments to answer every question straight away, the use of such staged emails is to cancel down the amount of confusion and uncertainty through their HNC.

Video Tutorials

Emails sent from the moment of being accepted into the EA programme, providing video guides that students can follow, useful for areas such as the VLE, registration and timetable.

Pre-determined email criteria

The dates for distribution should be agreed beforehand and emails should make reference to which stage in the process this email relates to, what the students have to do, how they will do it, who they can ask if they have any problems.

Department Induction

A department induction is crucial for the students arriving to have a full understanding and outline of the upcoming deadlines and years ahead of them. It should outline the departments' course structure, opportunities of switching from BEng to MEng to allow students a good grasp of what is available to them. Also the induction should include careers prospects and graduate career information and a further look at any available scholarship information.

Tour of Faculty

There should be a tour showing the HNC students where they will be when arriving at University, laboratories, PC laboratories, workshops, research laboratories. The tour should also include the McCance building for student resources and finance. This will help create a better picture to the students of what they will be coming to after their HNC. It will create a better relationship with students and staff as they will be able to ask questions with a member of their department issuing the tour

HNC-Engineering Academy Activities

According to the case study of Wingate (2007) inductions before entry can be an innovative way to provide additional support and build good relationships. Relating to Whittaker's focus on pre-entry support, the gaps in transition can be better utilised to provide clarity of expectations, build confidence and motivation and allow students to integrate. This process is most effective if it starts before proceeding into university (Thomas et al, 2005) such as HNC student entering a whole new environment for them in 2nd Year University.

Providing the students tasks to do before entering 2nd year can benefit both students and staff. The students sitting HNC are studying towards a HE in engineering and are nervous of what is awaiting them at University. Providing students with tasks not only allows the students to familiarise themselves with their department and university but also relieves any pressure for the students who aren't entirely sure what to expect and the level of jump between HNC and 2nd Year University.

The tasks also allow an element of academic integration for the EA students. Although the tasks are basic they are for encouraging the students for independent study, with a different level of expectation being asked of them (see case study: Nottingham Trent University). This can also help staff to see where the students are in their HNC and what students could be at risk of falling behind and the level in which the HNC students are being taught, if what they are being taught is useful for the future course at Strathclyde.

As well as selected activities, an introduction to Myplace with the use of Quiz days and how to upload assessments will be created. These online activities help the students to use Myplace and have a better understanding how VLE works at an earlier stage.

EA Mentoring

While being at college the students will be linked with an EA buddy/mentor - an EA student from University. This would work better with a 3rd or 4th year EA student who is more settled down in class

and able to give sound advice and help. Ensuring the EA mentors have went through the Universities class rep training would be a useful addition, as this would give the EA mentor a good understanding of the support services across the university.

Peer matching (Aston University) could provide a better peer link for the mentoring programme, e.g. matching a mature student studying on the HNC with a mature student at University, this could help regarding communications and empathy, ensuring a better link between the peers. This would also include comparing each student from diverse backgrounds with a buddy with a similar path. This would help encourage students showing that those from similar backgrounds are able to proceed with University.

One final addition to the idea of peer mentoring, is to run group sessions of HNC students with 1st year university students (A 3rd-4th year mentor would run session) based on PAL (from Plymouth's case study), which would include a number of sessions from HNC right through to university to create a steady transition and familiar faces for the students to interact with. The current students will teach those arriving from HNC what they should expect when arriving and how to work with class choices, coursework, assignments, societies and events. This creates a social and academic link for the students beginning the EA programme, while alleviating the issue preformed peer groups come second year.

University Class at College

It will be effective for students to experience classes and lectures that they will experience at University. From evidence received from informal interviews and from the 2015 EA survey many students found Maths incredibly difficult due to a large gap in academic difference from college to University. Academic and practical sessions will aid to fill this gap and create more focus amongst the students involved, as they will know what to expect the following year. From an email that recently arrived from the EEE department this is something that they have started to organise within their own department due to similar views as those in this report.

Along with the idea of a class, an introduction into formal report writing could resolve the issue report writing doesn't seem to feature as heavily in college. The omission of this skills then hinders the progress of the EA student, as was brought up during the interviews, the realisation that getting higher marks within their reports and assignments, from just an understanding into how to correctly format, layout and reference. Developing this skill to a high level during the HNC will be a vital tool for the EA students as these progress through University. It also covers the issues regarding self-studying which is another area where an HNC and 1st year differ. Giving the EA students a self-learning case study could be an effective way to improves skills in these two main areas.

5.2 Arriving at University

The Induction Checklist

Students who have completed their HNC and have succeeded to the 2nd Year of the EA will join the rest of Strathclyde in their chosen degree. Remembering that the rest of the students have

successfully had a 1st Year buffer in the academic and social transition, the students may struggle in adjusting to university. Remaining aware of the students' needs, alongside the resources of departments and staff, it is recognised that the induction for the EA students is very much departmentalised and within the Department's discretion. As such, it is impossible to recommend a strict, one-size-for-all model. Therefore we recommend the creation of the induction checklist, separate for students and staff, that would highlight certain activities and messages that students should partake in and be aware of. The induction checklist will be included in the Appendix and it covers the following themes:

- **Student lack of preparation and skills**-Comparing with previous recommendations the EA students will have already completed certain tasks and levels of registration. Students are obligated to continue addressing any more inductions, pre arrival activity be it open days or Summer School programmes.
- **Academic Integration**- Personal Development Advisers (PDAs) should be knowledgeable and actively involved in the EA students' courses. Attendance should be monitored to assure EA students receive the best integration as possible into the course.
- **Social Integration**-Students should be included in peer support programme on an 'opt-out' basis.
- **Communication of services available**-Students should be made to attend library induction and any campus orienteering which is happening to help them better understand the layout of the university. The inclusion of Fresher's events can prove as a good standing of both social integration but communication of services. As shown in EA survey (2015) around ¾ of the students that didn't attend Fresher's events said they now think it could have helped socially.

There must be a clear understanding of the academic difference in teaching styles, studying amounts and the expectation of self-study from College to University.

5.3 Getting Started

All students should be given a package explaining all of the support services (The new Student Experience Service booklet would be appropriate)

Staff should be made aware of the support services in order to best direct students and be made aware of the students who are entering from the EA

Visual hook for all support services – whether in the form of a logo, or some other kind of visual aid

Creation of a University wide social media policy which allows the University to communicate with students through informal social networking methods such as Facebook, but with the aid of previous EA students not the staff, as students would feel more comfortable i.e. Using EA class reps to filter down messages from the academic staff.

Staff should be made aware of the positive aspects of social networking, and how it can be implanted and used in a professional environment. The team suggests a seminar (does not have to be more than an hour) to give staff a brief introduction. This is key to understanding student demands, needs and requirements, and would allow students and staff to develop a better understanding of what the other party expects

Students should be made to reflect both personally and academically on their performance. This is particularly important after receiving feedback from a project/ assignment/ exam

Students should have catch-up meetings with their PDA to discuss overall progress and how they are doing. Feedback workshops should be offered which would give students the opportunity to understand how to understand their feedback, and the next steps for improvement

Support Services should be labelled clearly, detailing exactly what they do and who to talk to about certain issues. There is an unnecessary level of bureaucracy within the University that both students and staff struggle to navigate. People need to know who to talk to, but nobody ever knows, was the general impression given to the team.

6 Final Thoughts

Due to the length and depth of research in the report the main messages of the recommendations can be lost. Due to this a separate report shall aimed to be produced with only the recommendations and Checklists to help with the influencing and production of longitudinal induction plans for all the EA students

7 Appendix

7.1 Induction Checklists

Department's Checklist

- Email Students With Induction information, Communications and Checklist
- Update staff knowledge on Support services
- Introduce students to IT facilities/ services – Myplace.
- Ensure PDAs engage with students.
- Introduce Students to Support Services.
- Host a Campus tour
- Host Library tour
- Discuss aims and objectives of programme to study.
- Host social integration Events for Students/Staff.
- Host group activities for Students. Set Up Engaging And Useful Induction Task For Students.
- Promote Current Excellence Or Achievement In Department, Aspirational Achievements.
- Stage Daily Emails in Week 1 to Stress Importance of Checking Email.
- Introduce PDP Development And Interaction.
- Create Achievable Task To Complete For Week 1 And Upload To Myplace.
- Promotion of Careers and End of University Opportunities.
- Advice on Volunteering and Placements, Plus Any Scholarship Available.

- Encouragement to ask for help in Tutorials. Ensure students know to ask for help.
- Discuss with students referencing and plagiarism.
- Discuss advice on Study Skills.
- Discuss Health & Safety regulations- Laboratory/studio-based.
- Notify students of Network Log-in code.

Students' Checklist

- Ensure registration Complete.
- Collect Your Student Card.
- Access Your University Email.
- Complete enrolment.
- Access Pegasus and View timetable.
- Attend Faculty and Course Induction/Tour.
- Attend Library Tour.
- Meet with PDA and arrange future meeting.
- Meet with named member of staff to discuss course construction/programme.
- Read Academic Obligations.
- Complete Campus Tour.
- Attend Ice-breaker activities/ Fresher's Fayre/ Union.
- Complete Induction Task.
- Visit the Support Services.
- Introduction to PDP.
- Know the Health & Safety Regulations
- Know/ identify (where appropriate) referral to Disability Services.
- Know/ identify (where appropriate) English language requirements.
- Understand expectations of Higher Education.
- Introduction to Careers Advice

Initial Report

Last Modified: 09/15/2015

1. To ensure we can capture all of the Engineering Academy Students could you please fill in your name. As previously mentioned this is not linked with your results.

Text Response
Alexander Small
Allan Thomson
Andrew Maclellan
Charlotte
Elizabeth Collins
Euan Hamilton
Gary Siu
Grant Pearce
Haris Ahmed
Humza Saleem
Jennifer
Laura Hendricks
Lee Dickson
Michael Hamilton
Michael Smith
Robert Fleming
Rodrigue Saiba
Rodrigue Saiba
Ross Lyon
Ruan Swart
Russell Miller
Scott Rice
Steven dunlop
Thomas McAuley

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	24

2. Do you feel Freshers Week helped you to socially integrate into the University?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
2	Disagree		0	0%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		3	60%
4	Agree		2	40%
5	Strongly Agree		0	0%
	Total		5	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	3
Max Value	4
Mean	3.40
Variance	0.30
Standard Deviation	0.55
Total Responses	5

3. Please provide further explanation if possible:

Text Response
you should never turn down a good swalley
Didn't find it difficult to make friends. The only reason I never went to freshers last year was because I was 17
If I went i would have met lecturers and other class mates
meeting other students
I already had a close group of friends that were attending the same course as me. As i met them through the first year of the Engineering Academy.
The Strathclyde Union held several events which everyone attended, so it was easy to mix with the other students.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	6

4. When you entered the Engineering Academy (1st year, HNC), did you enter as a: (tick all that apply):

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	A School Leaver		17	74%
2	A College Leaver		5	22%
3	In Full/Part time work		4	17%
4	Mature Student (21 as of September 2013)		1	4%
5	International Student		0	0%
6	Widening Access Student		0	0%
7	Other (Please Specify)		0	0%

Other (Please Specify)

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Total Responses	23

5. How and why did you apply to the Engineering Academy?

Text Response
I didn't, they got in contact with me.
I thought it would be a better way into university with good placement opportunities
Through Strathclyde uni' website, it was offering a second chance to get into uni to do the course I wanted to do.
to get into mech eng at Strathclyde, prevent going through clearing
Received an email from the university to let me know that I would be considered for a place if I applied. I emailed saying I would be interested and would like to accept the place.
Interests in engineering.
Online, recommended by a friend.
I applied throughucas, due to me not getting the grades to get into first year university.
Application forms from uni
I was asked by lecturer
As another chance to gain entry into Strathclyde after I did not meet my conditional offer.
I applied for the engineering academy as I was told by college lecturers that it was a great opportunity to get a university degree and life experiences for later on the working world of engineering.
I applied to the Engineering Academy by finding information about it on the Strathclyde website when looking for the dates of the open days at the university. The reason I applied was because it gave me a faster more direct route into Chemical Engineering by doing subjects tailored specifically for this field. And also allowed me a valuable insight into this kind of engineering making it easier for me to find out if this was what I wanted to study at university
I applied through Forth Valley College. I felt that it was an excellent opportunity to get to university, that might not have been possible before I knew of EA.
Seemed like the best available option. I applied using instructions from the uni
I applied initially for the HNC/HND Mechanical Engineering and I was made aware of the academy in my first week. I felt that it was too good of an opportunity to pass up.
The opportunity of guaranteed industry experience, and the well know strong industry link strathclyde hold
I applied to the Engineering Academy because it was the first program I ever came across that allowed students to do one year at college and then proceed to 2nd year, while this was the case my initial thoughts were it would be a smooth transition to 2nd year rather than going straight to 1st year from finishing high school.
It was a great window into university and gave the support needed to move into universe from what results were required by the engineering academy.
Applied while studying the HNC. It offered a route straight into my ideal course at Strathclyde and good opportunities to work in industry
Through Forth valley college website.
I had started my 6th Year at High School when I found the Engineering Academy online. I was very interested in the work placements and that there would be more support as we moved from School to College to Uni.

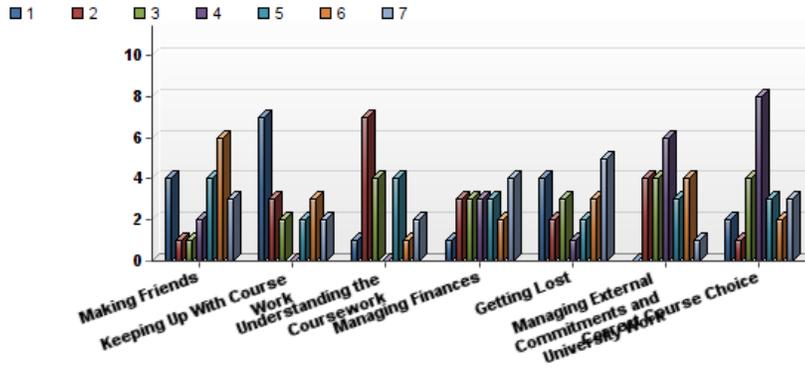
Statistic	Value
Total Responses	22

6. Are you the first in your family to attend University?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		12	52%
2	No		11	48%
	Total		23	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.48
Variance	0.26
Standard Deviation	0.51
Total Responses	23

7. Biggest concern before joining university (Rank the following 1 - 7: 1 - Biggest Concern, 7 - Least Concerned)



#	Answer	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	Total Responses
1	Making Friends	4	1	1	2	4	6	3	21
2	Keeping Up With Course Work	7	3	2	0	2	3	2	19
3	Understanding the Coursework	1	7	4	0	4	1	2	19
4	Managing Finances	1	3	3	3	3	2	4	19
5	Getting Lost	4	2	3	1	2	3	5	20
6	Managing External Commitments and University Work	0	4	4	6	3	4	1	22
7	Correct Course Choice	2	1	4	8	3	2	3	23
	Total	19	21	21	20	21	21	20	-

Statistic	Making Friends	Keeping Up With Course Work	Understanding the Coursework	Managing Finances	Getting Lost	Managing External Commitments and University Work	Correct Course Choice
Min Value	1	1	1	1	1	2	1
Max Value	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Mean	4.48	3.21	3.53	4.37	4.20	4.09	4.17
Variance	4.56	5.40	3.49	3.80	5.54	2.28	2.88
Standard Deviation	2.14	2.32	1.87	1.95	2.35	1.51	1.70
Total Responses	21	19	19	19	20	22	23

8. Is there anything you feel the university could have done to help you at this point?

Text Response

Have more contact with us throughout the year whilst in college.

Not much more

a walkthrough of the online system and show you how to pick the extra subjects that you need to take. this would have been great since I spent around 6 weeks not attending the classes....

Made sure our knowledge from the college course was up to scratch. Especially in the three main areas, Heat & Flow, Mechanics & Maths

N/A

Included more university standard work rather than pointless team building exercises.

The university could have organised a meeting with the departmental head of the discipline that the student was studying. As this only happened after the first semester exams.

I feel that all the resources are there to help me if I need them such as notes, staff emails and support services.

More checking up on students throughout the college year

More contact / progress meetings whilst still at college. Maybe offer some more beneficial tutorials or first year coursework to help bridge the gap

After attending the summer school I did not receive any information regarding the Engineering Academy Induction, which may have helped me with the above list.

More arranged revision classes or tutorials leading up to exams.

More preparation for the coursework. Our maths ability was assessed and it was quite clear that we were far behind - but little was done to try to fix this. A summer maths course could have filled in the gaps in our knowledge - there was a big jump between the HNC maths course and 2nd year uni that probably could have been identified at the very beginning. Possibly more emphasis put on the amount of work/time we would need to spend to catch up and keep on top of the coursework.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	13

9. How were you welcomed into the University at the start of HNC? (tick as many as apply):

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	University Welcome Email		4	17%
2	Department Welcome Email		4	17%
3	University Interview		1	4%
4	Introductory Taster Session		3	13%
5	Welcome Meeting		8	35%
6	None		0	0%
7	University Induction		3	13%
8	College Induction		12	52%
9	Other (please specify)		1	4%

Other (please specify)

dinny remember to be honest

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	9
Total Responses	23

10. How were you welcomed into the University at the start of 2nd year? (tick as many as apply):

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	University Welcome Email		10	43%
2	Department Welcome Email		4	17%
3	University Interview		0	0%
4	Introductory Taster Session		6	26%
5	Welcome Meeting		5	22%
6	None		1	4%
7	University Induction		14	61%
8	Other (please specify)		2	9%

Other (please specify)

Before receiving my induction I attended Summer School

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	8
Total Responses	23

11. If you had (or have) any University issues who would you most likely talk to ?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Student Mentor		3	14%
2	Lecturer		10	45%
3	PDA		4	18%
4	Friends		17	77%
5	Family		6	27%
6	Year Advisor		7	32%
7	Support Services		3	14%
8	Student Union Advice Hub		1	5%
9	Student Wellbeing		0	0%
10	Nobody		2	9%
11	Other (please specify)		0	0%

Other (please specify)

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	10
Total Responses	22

12. Have you attend the Strathclyde Fresher Fair?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		5	22%
2	No		18	78%
	Total		23	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.78
Variance	0.18
Standard Deviation	0.42
Total Responses	23

13. Do you feel Freshers Week may have helped you to socially integrate into the University?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Strongly Disagree		0	0%
2	Disagree		2	11%
3	Neither Agree nor Disagree		7	39%
4	Agree		8	44%
5	Strongly Agree		1	6%
	Total		18	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	2
Max Value	5
Mean	3.44
Variance	0.61
Standard Deviation	0.78
Total Responses	18

14. Did you attend the University Engineering Academy Induction?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		21	91%
2	No		2	9%
	Total		23	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.09
Variance	0.08
Standard Deviation	0.29
Total Responses	23

15. Did you have the same feelings at college?

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Yes		11	52%
2	No		10	48%
	Total		21	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	2
Mean	1.48
Variance	0.26
Standard Deviation	0.51
Total Responses	21

16. How useful did you find this event in terms of?



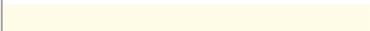
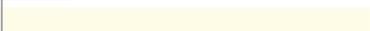
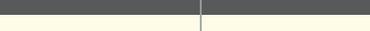
#	Answer	Min Value	Max Value	Average Value	Standard Deviation	Responses
1	Helping to Socialise	1.00	5.00	2.62	0.86	21
2	An introduction to the university	1.00	5.00	3.43	1.21	21
3	Finding out about the course	2.00	5.00	3.86	1.06	21
4	Finding out about opportunities available to you (scholarships and awards)	1.00	5.00	3.38	1.28	21
5	Finding out about Support Services	1.00	5.00	3.33	1.24	21
6	Getting to meet your Personal Development Adviser (PDA)	1.00	5.00	3.00	1.41	21
7	An introduction to the Virtual Learning Environment (Myplace, Pegasus, Email)	1.00	5.00	3.24	1.30	21

17. During your HNC college year, did you ever had any issues with the following (please tick all that apply):

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Course Content		1	8%
2	Language used on the course		0	0%
3	Mathematics		3	23%
4	Teaching Styles		7	54%
5	Studying techniques (e.g. how to study)		6	46%
6	Finance		1	8%
7	Language Skills (including English)		0	0%
8	IT Skills		1	8%
9	Time Management		1	8%
10	Plagiarism/Referencing		0	0%
11	Physical/Mental Health		1	8%
12	Employ-ability (e.g. Careers Prospects)		1	8%
13	Using the library (e.g. printing, taking out books)		3	23%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	13
Total Responses	13

18. During the University 2nd year, did you ever had any issues with the following (please tick all that apply):

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Course Content		8	38%
2	Language used on the course		3	14%
3	Mathematics		10	48%
4	Teaching Styles		7	33%
5	Studying techniques (e.g. how to study)		10	48%
6	Finance		3	14%
7	Language Skills (including English)		0	0%
8	IT Skills		3	14%
9	Time Management		6	29%
10	Plagiarism/Referencing		4	19%
11	Physical/Mental Health		2	10%
12	Employ-ability (e.g. Careers Prospects)		4	19%
13	Using the library (e.g. printing, taking out books)		0	0%

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	12
Total Responses	21

20. How easy did you find the service(s) you used

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Very Difficult		0	0%
2	Difficult		0	0%
3	Somewhat Difficult		0	0%
4	Neutral		3	14%
5	Somewhat Easy		6	27%
6	Easy		7	32%
7	Very Easy		6	27%
	Total		22	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	4
Max Value	7
Mean	5.73
Variance	1.06
Standard Deviation	1.03
Total Responses	22

21. How would you rate the service(s)

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	1		0	0%
2	2		0	0%
3	3		0	0%
4	4		12	60%
5	5		8	40%
	Total		20	

Statistic	Value
Min Value	4
Max Value	5
Mean	4.40
Variance	0.25
Standard Deviation	0.50
Total Responses	20

22. Since starting University, have you ever felt any of the following: (tick all that apply)

#	Answer	Bar	Response	%
1	Isolation from campus life/activities		3	16%
2	Difficulty meeting/making new friends		3	16%
3	Confident in your abilities		11	58%
4	Difficulty getting along with room mates		0	0%
5	Unsafe on campus		0	0%
6	Confident to attend social events alone		5	26%
7	Interference from study due to job commitments		8	42%
8	Interference from study due to family commitments		1	5%
9	Difficulty balancing University life with other commitments		8	42%
10	Disconnected from friends/family not on your course		5	26%
11	Homesick		1	5%
12	Culture Shock		2	11%
13	Alone with your problems		3	16%
14	Other		1	5%

Other

i missed my pet piggy mark so much... it got really hard at times to leave for uni knowing he would be playing about in the mud all by himself. it wanst fair on him!

Statistic	Value
Min Value	1
Max Value	14
Total Responses	19

25. What has been the most enjoyable part of University so far?

Text Response
more independence
Higher standard of learning about my field of study
getting exam results showing I passed.
Student night life
Social aspects
Increasing my knowledge of certain aspects of my degree as well as the social life.
Meeting many new people. The course work. Freedom to study however you wish
Realising I was actually ok at the work!!!
The freedom and flexibility to control your own studies.
socialising with members of the engineering academy.
Learning more about the discipline you want to study and pursue in future. Meeting people on the same course that you had lots in common with and being able to integrate into the year group very easily because of this.
For me, I really like the learning environment at Strathclyde. I feel the lecturers are always happy to help with any queries you have. Also the social aspect is something I've never encountered at college or school.
The university student lifestyle
Making my parents proud
Not being able to get in to original course choice even after doing extra college units, poor communication during college year
Being able to get a Summer Internship
I have actually really enjoyed the majority of my course material, finding it very interesting.
I do enjoy the course and some of the lecturers were brilliant

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	18

26. Is there anything you think that could have improved the induction and whole induction process

Text Response

More people

Not that I can think of.

showed us the computing services better.

Going over the work that the university students done in their first year to make sure we knew it. I don't feel that between leaving school and leaving college I had gained any knowledge making second year a massive leap.

No, not really.

A some up of what projects we will be doing.

a uni like project at college

Less team building and more first year class reviews.

I don't think that anything can properly prepare you for the jump from college to university. However, the induction gave a great idea of the content, opportunities and the support services that you will encounter.

Being made more aware of help you can get if you need it or personal circumstance or councillors

During Summer School I would have liked to be able to have the classes that were relevant to the course I choose, therefore it would have given me an initial thought as to what is in the course content. Also changing the time period from 2 weeks to 4 weeks for summer school. While my first year at college it would have been better if I was in 4-5 days in college rather than 2 and a half days therefore having extra classes that would be relevant to course I would have chosen at university. Also having help with tutors or the teaching staff with course content. Attending university at the same time while being in college.

Catching us up to the level needed to start second year. Giving us more information on time management and planning our study.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	12

27. If you could go back and relive 2nd year is there anything you would do differently? and why?

Text Response

Manage my time better, checking my student email more frequently, not leaving assignments to last minute, try make more friends, ask more questions at tutorials

Study a bit earlier, I got the results I needed but I could've got even better

hit freshers week harder.

I'd try to study more during time off. Try to move to Glasgow rather than have an hours commute every day as I always felt tired. Study more. Ask more questions when I feel I don't really understand a particular question.

No

Focus on understanding the theory from each subject

Go to the open day

Use more support services for studying and classes.

concentrate more with tutorials and spend more time studying.

Study more for my exams in January and not work as hard in my part time job. And these both linked to each other as I worked in a hotel during the Christmas month so when I finally had time to study I was burned out, unfocused and demotivated. And this Caused me to have bad results from these exams. Which hindered me in getting into the masters course of Chemical Engineering as I did not meet the average cut off grade.

I would definitely attend every lecture and tutorial session because that is the best way to learn. The tutorials themselves are close to exam standard, so I feel y that I would be best prepared making sure that I complete it on time so if I have any questions I can contact the lecturer.

Seek more help when I needed it both academically and emotionally

I would possibly cut back my work commitments and get help with the classes I was struggling with.

Contact more lecturers because I when found myself stuck or not understanding something I would just waste a lot of time finding it myself.

Start off with better study habits and attend more tutorials. Was playing catch up with the jump between HNC and uni, so fell behind with the 2nd year coursework. This made me reluctant to attend tutorials as I was never on top of the current coursework. Maybe if I invested more time at the beginning I would have been able to catch up quicker.

no

There was some miscommunication in my part and I never realised how close an exam was, which resulted in studying at the last minute. I still passed the exam however I could have done better if I was more careful with my dates.

Statistic	Value
Total Responses	17