Queensland University of Technology

AUSTRALIAN LEARNING & TEACHING COUNCIL

A Transition Pedagogy:
Third Generation First Year Experience

Professor Sally Kift
ALTC Senior Fellow; ALTC Discipline Scholar: Law
Queensland University of Technology, Australia

23rd International Conference on the First Year Experience
Maui, Hawaii
9 June 2010

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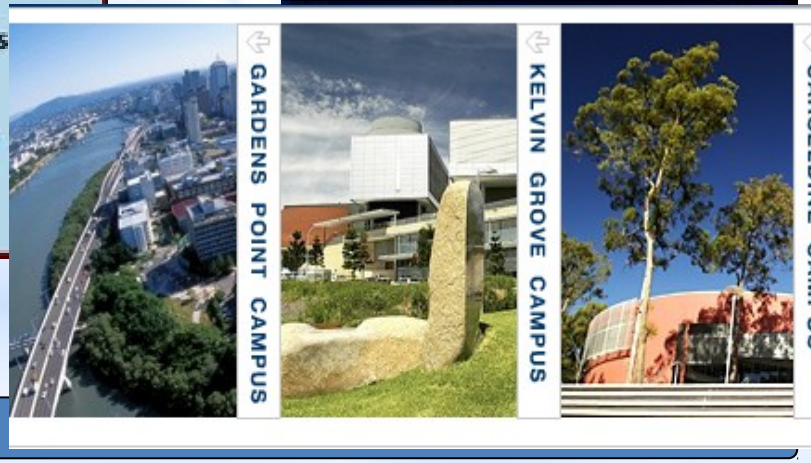
Queensland University of Technology, Brisbane, Queensland, Australia

Brisbane



http://www.lonelyplanet.com/worldguide/australia/

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QUT

- *40,000 students*
- *7 Faculties*
- *3 campuses*
  - In 2010: 11,000 commencing students
  - 10 year history of attention to the FYE
  - Noticeable drops in FY attrition over last 2 years
    - From ~18.6-19% (2006-2008) to 17.4% (2009) to 16.2% (2010)

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Overview

- Approaches to the first year experience (FYE)
  - Some snapshots of the international research and evidence base
- Embedded, contextualised support for **all** students
- Model for a **partnership, whole-of-institution, approach** for first year success & retention
  - A 'Transition Pedagogy' for the FYE –
    - ALTC Fellowship Research on **whole of *FY curriculum design***
      - To intentionally mediate entering diversity and support
      - To do serious transition and engagement work
- From theory to action
  - 6 First Year (Curriculum) Principles
  - Some practical examples

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http://www.freewebs.com/horseloversveen/the-far-side-comic.jpg

Student success is largely determined by student experiences during the first year.

Upcraft, M. L., Gardner, J. N., & Barefoot, B. O. (Eds.). (2005). *Challenging and supporting the first-year student*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p 1.

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Taking student retention seriously… From theory to practice

Student retention is one of the most widely studied areas in higher education…The result has been an ever more sophisticated understanding of the complex web of events that shape student leaving and persistence… But for all that, **substantial gains in student retention have been hard to come by**… More importantly, there is **much that we have not yet done to translate our research and theory into effective practice**.

Tinto (2006-7, 1-2)

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Hallmarks of Excellence

Funded by the Lumina Foundation for Education and The Atlantic Philanthropies

Now at http://www.fyfoundations.org/4year.aspx

'Embedded institutional change takes 10 years'

Version 1.0

1. Approaches the first year in ways that are intentional, explicit, and based on clear philosophy/rationale for students' first year.

2. Seeks to engage students in the collegiate experience both in and out of class.

3. Ensures that all first-year students encounter diverse ideas, viewpoints, and people.

http://www.fyhe.com.au/past_papers/keynote2.htm

4. Serves all first-year students, including various segments of the first-year student population, according to their needs.

5. Has organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to the first year.

6. Uses a variety of quantitative and qualitative designs and methods to examine all aspects of students' first-year experience and to evaluate and understand the impact of institutional policies, strategies, and interventions

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QUICK LINKS

Overview
Foundational Dimensions
» 4-year First-Year Focus
» 2-year First-Year Focus
» 4-year Transfer Focus
» 2-year Transfer Focus
FoE in the First College Year
FoE Transfer Focus
FoE Winter Meeting
2010 Launch Meetings
Application
Costs
Impact
Accreditation Option
Terms & Conditions
Project Origins
Participating Institutions
What Participants Say
Step-by-Step Summary
Multimedia Center
Gardner Institute Staff

Project Origins for Foundations of Excellence®

Over the past 20 years, the attention that colleges and universities have paid to the first year has grown exponentially. The reasons for this phenomenon are multiple and include changes in demographic characteristics of the students themselves, concerns about the high rate of dropout that peaks between the first and second year, and recognition that the first year presents a unique opportunity to engage students in the habits of learning. The vast majority of American postsecondary institutions are currently offering one or more special initiatives focused on helping first-year students make a successful transition to higher education. And higher education literature abounds with what are described as "best practices" in a variety of first-year programs. But heretofore, campuses have lacked any systematic, valid definition of, or standards for, first-year excellence that go beyond a single "best practice" program to a broader characterization of a campus's total approach to the first year. While colleges and universities are often hesitant to embrace "standards" or to measure themselves against external benchmarks, they nevertheless are hungry for models of excellence, for approaches that work to produce higher levels of student learning and retention.

In early 2002, the Policy Center on the First Year of College (now John N. Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education) launched a project to identify and honor "Institutions of Excellence" in the first college year (drawn from all sectors of American higher education). From a national pool of 130 nominees, 13 campuses were selected because of their high achievement of five broad criteria developed by the Policy Center. These institutions were featured in a 2005 Jossey-Bass book, *Achieving and Sustaining Institutional Excellence for the First Year of College*. The Foundations of Excellence project builds upon this effort through intentional collaboration of researchers and campus-based practitioners to develop and vet mutually agreed-on standards for the first-year--standards that could be used as both an aspirational model and a means of measuring a campus's level of first-year excellence.

The *Policy Centre on the First Year of College* is now the *John Gardner Institute for Excellence in Undergraduate Education*

Project Specifics

http://www.fyfoundations.org/projectOrigins.aspx

The Four-Year Institution Pilot

The Foundations of Excellence project began in February 2003 with an open invitation to over 900 four-year campus chief academic officers at member institutions of the American Association of State Colleges and Universities (AASCU) and the Council of Independent Colleges (CIC). These campuses were invited to participate with the Policy Center in the development of standards for the first year, which we termed "Foundational Dimensions® " or "Dimensions" for short. Over 200 member institutions of both organizations agreed to participate in the project and to establish campus-wide "Foundations Task Forces" to consider an initial short list of six Dimensions developed by Policy Center staff members, John N. Gardner, Betsy O. Barefoot, Randy L. Swing, Stephen W. Schwartz, and Michael J. Siegel, our

Foundational Dimensions® (Four-Year College Version) http://www.fyfoundations.org/4year.aspx

Foundations Institutions create organizational structures and policies that provide a comprehensive, integrated, and coordinated approach to the first year. These structures and policies provide oversight and alignment of all first-year efforts. A coherent first-year experience is realized and maintained through **effective partnerships** among academic affairs, student affairs, and other administrative units and is enhanced by ongoing faculty and staff development activities and appropriate budgetary arrangements. (*Organization*)

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‘Institutional and cultural transformation’

‘That many first-year seminars have been **add-ons and loosely coupled to the curriculum** also contributes to the fact that many seminars do not survive (Barefoot, 2000)…**in a perfect world** where all first-year instruction included special attention to the individual needs of students, there would be no need for first-year seminars. However, **in the absence of institutional and cultural transformation, campuses are likely to continue embracing first-year seminars for years to come**.’

Stuart Hunter and Carrie Linder ‘First-Year Seminars’ in Upcraft, Gardner & Barefoot,2005, at 288-9

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What Matters to Student Success in the First Year of University?

George D. Kuh

INDIANA UNIVERSITY
Center for Postsecondary Research

Pacific Rim First Year in Higher Education Conference
QUT Gardens Point, Brisbane

July 5, 2007

AUSTRALIAN LEARNING & TEACHING COUNCIL

George Kuh (2007) Keynote at *Pacific Rim FYHE Conference*

http://www.fyhe.com.au/past_papers/papers07/fullprogram2.html

Student engagement varies more *within* than between institutions.

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FYE approaches (Kift, Nelson & Clarke, 2010; Kift, 2009; Wilson, 2009)

- **1st generation FYE**
  - Essentially co-curricular – professionals on curriculum's periphery
- **2nd generation FYE**
  - Curriculum focus – recognises entering diversity and supports student learning experience via pedagogy, curriculum design, & L&T practice – requires faculty & professional **partnerships**
- **3rd generation FYE**
  - 1st ***and*** 2nd generation FYE quality assured and seamless across institution, across all its disciplines, programs & services ***via*** faculty & professional partnerships

= **Transition pedagogy –**

a guiding philosophy for intentional first year curriculum design and support that carefully scaffolds and mediates the first year learning experience for contemporary heterogeneous cohorts.

Kift & Nelson (2005)
http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2005/pdf/refereed/paper_294.pdf

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What this means for colleges & universities…

- 'Joined-up' coordinated ***institutional approaches*** = partnerships.
  - General & specialist services and support
  - Academic and non-academic interventions
  - Curricular and co-curricular engagement

- Once 1st semester starts, harness ***the curriculum*** as the 'glue' and the academic and social 'organising device' (McInnis, 2001) to do serious transition and retention work
  - Both in and outside (physical and virtual) classroom – eg
    - By inclusive teaching, learning & assessment (for L'ing) practices
    - Being explicit about what's required for success (HE & discipline)
    - Attending to sense of belonging through curriculum strategies
    - Through pathways & interactions facilitated

(Kift, 2008)

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QUT

QUT sites & tools | Join the community | Send feedback | a university for the real world

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Link to student blog on uni life

start here

- Find a course or career
- Get to know QUT
- Hear from real students
- How to apply to QUT

- Video FAQs — Get some help from current stud
- Email a student — Ask a current student directly.
- Real experiences — Find out about work experience
- Meet real graduates — Real grads. Real world.

Video FAQs - Get some help from current students.

http://starthere.qut.edu.au/

Make this site as personal as you are

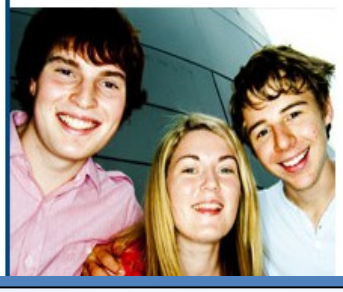
Sign in with Facebook

No need to create a new account - simply sign in with your Facebook login!

Once logged in you can see a shortlist of courses and other information under the 'my dashboard' section.

Ask a student a question

See all events and key dates



ideo FAQs

you have questions about studying at uni? Watch videos of students to find the answers you ed. For more info on life at uni check out the **student blog.**

http://starthere.qut.edu.au/realstudents/videofaqs

Advice for making it at uni?

Advice for making it at uni?

Previous video | Next video

Questions gallery

First impressions of QUT?

What do you think of Brisbane?

What's orientation week like?

Why did you choose QUT?

What's it like on your first day?

Advice for making it at uni?

First day advice?

Transcript

QUT Student Blog

http://studentblog.qut.edu.au/

Home About QUT About this blog Meet the blogge

Snooze!

MAY 24, 2010

by Michael

The early mornings are taking their tolls, that's probably the only certainty in this week... WEEK 13!

My biological clock - that thing inside of you that knows that its dinner time, knows when your favourite show is coming on tv, and even reminds you that it is time to go to sleep. I'm just wondering, has anyone seen mine?

Read more...

2 COMMENTS

from → Adjusting to Uni, Miscellaneous, Not-so-good times, Stress, Study

so no one told you life was gonna be this way...da da da da da *dancing to the theme song from Friends*

MAY 24, 2010

by Helen

i have had an insane week! i've spent pretty much the past four days straight in my mum's office writing a business plan for *Entrepreneurship and Innovation* (i have to go to my mum's office

RECENT POSTS

- Snooze!
- so no one told you life was gonna be this way...da da da da da *dancing to the them song from Friends*
- My two greatest loves...at the same time!!!
- I think I'll go out tonight... LOL jk, I'm studying Architecture
- The wonderful world of living arrangements

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- Adjusting to Uni
- Assessment

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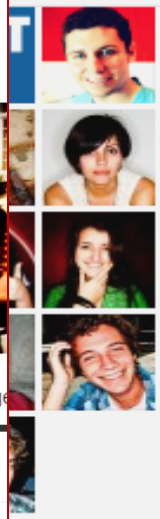

CATEGORIES

- Adjusting to Uni
- Assessment
- Campuses
- Courses and study
- Food
- Friends
- Good times
- Miscellaneous
- Money
- Not-so-good times
- Public transport
- Random
- Scholarships
- Share housing
- Social
- Stress
- Study
- Travel

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"A real account of student life". Posts are not edited. Only moderate content to ensure it doesn't breach QUT's Student Charter.

QUT's bloggers were selected by a panel based on their first blog titled, 'My top tips for surviving the first year of university'. The students aren't paid for their blogs, but have received a netbook as a prize to help them post their updates during the year

Claire's Little Secrets to Surviving University

…your very first day..is going to be both exciting and horrifying. I remember stepping into a room of over 500 students, totally overwhelmed.. [Then]… my lecturer said: "The class may seem crowded at the moment, but at least 50 students will leave after a month, and only half of you will graduate after four years."…

So to get you started, I ..share.. tips (I wish someone had told me!) on how to survive your first year at university.

1. Sit next to the best looking person in the room.

What matters to retention

- **Preparedness**
- **Finances**
- **Peers**: learning 'profoundly a social experience';
- **Expectations:** mismatch; 'how things work around here';
- **3rd Gen Student support:** coordinated and 'just-in-time' & 'just-for-me';

- **Program choice/** certainty
- **Staff**: contact with staff & teaching quality
- **Course design**: Clear, coherent, responsive, flexible, relevant, engaging, achievable, & motivating;
- **Assessment for learning**: relevant, consistent & integrated;
- **Feedback**: early, prompt & constructive.

(Eg: Scott, 2006; Yorke & Longden, 2008; Kift, 2009; James et al, 2010)

(Eg: FCYS, 2009; NSSE, 2009)

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Support is very important

- 2009 *Australasian Survey of Student Engagement* (*AUSSE*)
  http://ausse.acer.edu.au/index.php?option=com_content&view=category&layout=blog&id=3&Itemid=4
  - Based on US *National Survey of Student Engagement* (NSSE)
  - What engages students in productive learning
- One (of six) scales reported that:
  - **71%** of students felt institutions provide academic support 'quite a bit' or 'very much'

BUT

  - Only **23%** said got non-academic support ((**36%** very little; **41%** some support);
  - Only **32%** said supported to socialise (**25%** very little; **43%** some support).

NSSE data, while not quite as stark shows similar patterns with FYs faring better than Seniors. (NSSE, 2009, 42)

AUSSE Australasian survey of student engagement

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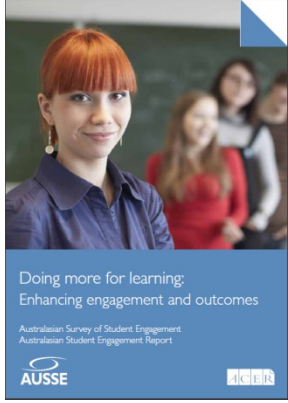
2009 *Australasian Survey of Student Engagement* (AUSSE – our NSSE)



http://ausse.acer.edu.au/images/docs/AUSSE_2009_Student_Engagement_Report.pdf

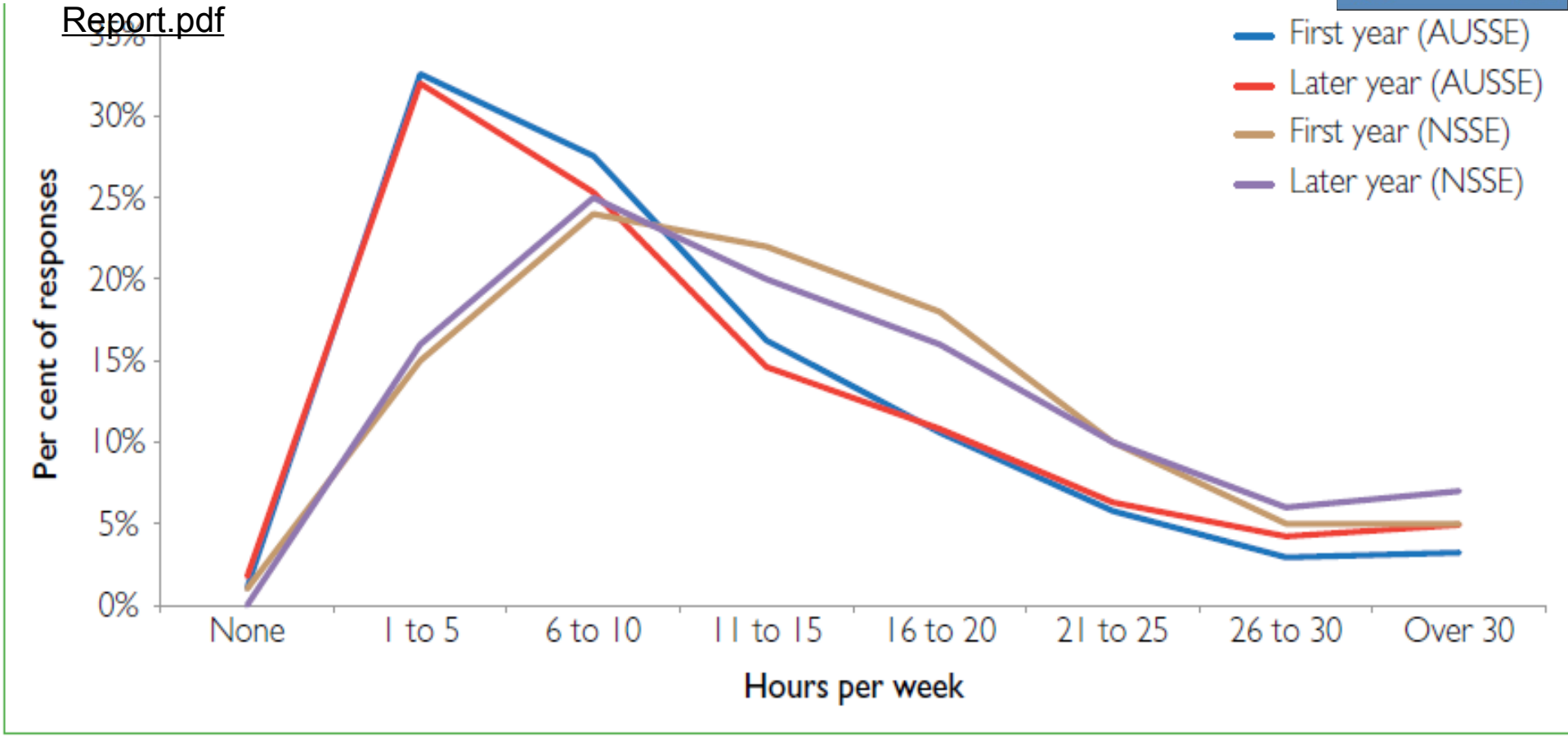


Figure 2 Hours spent preparing for class in a typical seven-day week – USA and Australasian comparison

Common FY Curriculum Complaints (Kift, 2009)

- Lack of clarity and consistency regarding expectations
- Lack of coherence, achievability and relevance
- **Assessment for learning** and **feedback**
  - UK Yorke & Longden (2008): 29% said feedback not prompt
  - (Aust) James *et al* (CSHE, 2010): only 35% found feedback helpful
  - AUSSE (2009,76): only 40% FYs often/ very often received prompt feedback (cf 80.4% of staff thought feedback often/ very often prompt)
  - UK NSS (2008): satisfaction with assessment & feedback lowest
  - US NSSE (2009,38): 42% FYs sometimes/never receive prompt f'back
- **Lack of preparedness** re tertiary literacies: e.g academic; information; IT; numeracy; visual; statistical; professional practices; cultural; + + + ???
- **Group work** – esp group processes
- **Staff interest** – only 26% FYs believe staff are interested in their progress (CSHE, 2010).

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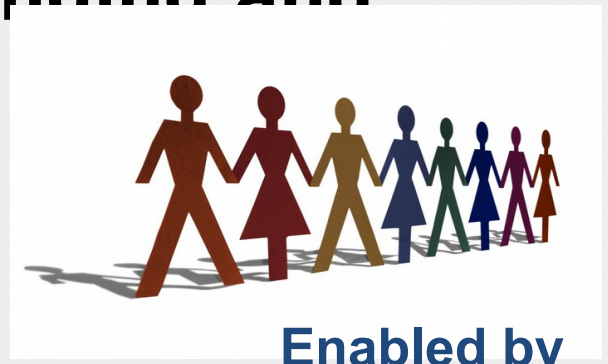
Institutional approaches...

- **Comprehensive, integrated and coordinated**
- **For sense of belonging and engagement**



Enabled by faculty and professional partnerships informed by research and evidence.

QUT Model, 2002–

What institutional approaches?

Recently, Yorke & Longden (2008) identified a number of broad areas of **institutional activity**:

- Institutional commitment to student learning & engagement;
- Proactive management of student transition;
- Attention to **curriculum**
  - For both academic & social engagement;
  - To increase chances of student success;
- Place emphasis & resourcing on the FYE;
- Systematic monitoring & evaluation of student achievement, and acting on the evidence thereby collected;
- Academic (Faculty) leadership.

http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/resources/publications/FYEFinalReport.pdf

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Institutional commitment to FYE

As faculty and staff at UW–Madison, it is our responsibility to guide students toward meeting certain goals during their first year. The Orientation & New Student Programs Advisory Committee has created the following first-year goals and welcomes your participation in using the goals to enhance your work with new students. No one person, class, or organization can help a student meet all of these goals, but if all UW–Madison community members use the goals as a basis for interactions with first-year students, each student will be able to create a meaningful, productive first-year experience for themselves.

Gaining confidence and competence as a college-level student

If you are meeting this goal you are:

- Gaining competence in reading, writing, oral communication, time management, and research at the college level.

*'…**if all UW–Madison community members** use the goals as a basis for interactions with first-year students, each student will be able to create a meaningful, productive first-year experience for themselves.'*

http://www.newstudent.wisc.edu/publications/firstYrGoals.pdf

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Institutional commitment to FYE

High level policy commitment – FYE vision

Queensland University of Technology
Brisbane Australia

a university for the real world
Manual of Policies and Procedures

QUT Home | Contact us | Search

MOPP Home | Protocol for MOPP Policy | Recent Updates

C/6.2 The First Year Experience

http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/C/C_06_02.jsp

[Print-friendly version]

Chapters
- A - Governance/Organisation
- B - Human Resources
- C - Learning/Teaching
- D - Research/Development
- E - Student Administration
- F - Information Management
- G - Financial Management
- H - Physical Facilities
- I - International/Community
- MOPP Appendices

- MOPP Protocol
- MOPP Updates

Contact Officer	Director, First Year Experience, Office of Teaching Quality
Approval Date	14/11/2008
Approval Authority	University Academic Board
Date of Next Review	01/01/2012

6.2.1 Policy principles
6.2.2 Orientation and transition
Related documents
Modification History

6.2.1 Policy principles

In line with QUT's vision and goals (see A/2.1), a key aim is to support all commencing students to adjust successfully to study at QUT by providing a strong transition experience -academically, socially and administratively - according to their varied needs.

QUT is aware of the significant transitional challenges facing first year students and acknowledges the diversity and changing social and educational needs and aspirations of its entering cohorts. QUT believes that a positive and involving First Year Experience (FYE), which connects new learners with their teachers and peers in a community committed to learning, provides the critical foundation for transition to later years' learning success and career attainment and enhances student satisfaction, course experience and retention.

At QUT, the FYE and successful transition of our students is everybody's responsibility. QUT focuses on providing the best possible experience for new students in an environment where they are supported to take responsibility for their own learning, and to embrace an active role in succeeding to their full potential (academically and personally) as new learners in our University.

Therefore QUT will deliver a comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach to the FYE that:

- is mediated through intentionally designed curricula and co-curricula
- is facilitated by a quality learning environment and good teaching and support
- is promoted and supported by all academic and professional staff interactions with students, where staff are developed, valued and rewarded for their FYE-focused perspective and partnerships
- fosters easy access to services and programs that aid academic and social orientation, integration, and support
- is appropriate to QUT's culture and creates a sense of belonging
- is scholarly, evidence-based and enhanced by regular evaluation, and
- is given a high priority by the University to ensure that the conditions that promote successful student transitions are appropriately resourced and are sustainable over time.

Proactive management of student transition

My DRURY | WEBMAIL | BROWSE A-Z | Search Drury

DRURY UNIVERSITY

FUTURE STUDENTS | CURRENT STUDENTS | ALUMNI | VISITORS & COMMUNITY

HOME | ACADEMICS & RESEARCH | FACULTY & STAFF | CULTURAL EVENTS | ATHLETICS

First-Year Experience

Overview
Introduction
Student Life
Student Affairs
New Students
International Student Life
Leadership Drury
International Students
Greek Life
Convocation 2008-2009
Clubs & Organizations
Academics

Student Services
Academic Planning
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Counseling Services
Computer Services
Food Services
Health Services
Records & Registration
Safety & Security
Residence Life

Student Logins
DU Webmail
MyDrury

Related Links
DU Parents
Speaker's Corner
Student Affairs
DU Calendar

Contact:
Emily Givens
Director of Transitional Programs
Office:
(417) 873-6894
givens@drury.edu

What is Drury's First-Year Experience Program?

Not just a guide for 4 years, but guiding for life!

My name is Emily Givens, and I am the Director of Transitional Programs. My main focus is to make sure all new students – freshmen, transfers and internationals – have a smooth transition into the Drury community. I coordinate the new student registration and orientation events and work with faculty to select themes for Drury's Living-Learning Communities (LLCs). If you have any questions about the information below please contact me at egivens@drury.edu, phone: 417-873-7419.

Drury's First-Year Experience program consists of many elements which are designed to help new students transition into college such as:

Alpha Seminar
All freshmen must take this year-long course which helps students develop the abilities needed for success in college and in life. These include critical thinking, reading, writing and oral communication skills. Alpha Seminar is the first course in Drury's Global Perspectives 21 curriculum which, after completing all the required courses, allows students to come away from Drury with a minor in Global Studies.

Freshman Academic Advisors
The Alpha professor is not only the instructor for the course, but is also the academic advisor for the students in his/her class.

Advising and Registration
The Office of Academic Planning builds a first-semester schedule of classes that will help students achieve educational goals, without the stress that sometimes accompanies this process. Beginning in early February, students who are admitted and have paid the tuition and housing deposits ($100 each) will receive a packet of materials about registration for the first semester of classes and information about degree requirements. Students and parents should discuss this information before replying to our request for information about academic plans and interests using an on-line questionnaire. Questionnaires completed by March 1, 2010 will receive priority registration. A team of professionals will review the information and build an appropriate schedule for each student. Students can expect to receive an email sent to their Drury email account in early June that lists their fall course schedule and an explanation of the degree requirements met by these courses. Schedule refinement will take place on or before Freshman First Day, June 25, 2010.

Freshman First Day
Friday, June 25, 2010 is Freshman First Day. In mid-May incoming freshmen will receive an invitation in the mail with the schedule for students and the schedule for parents. Throughout

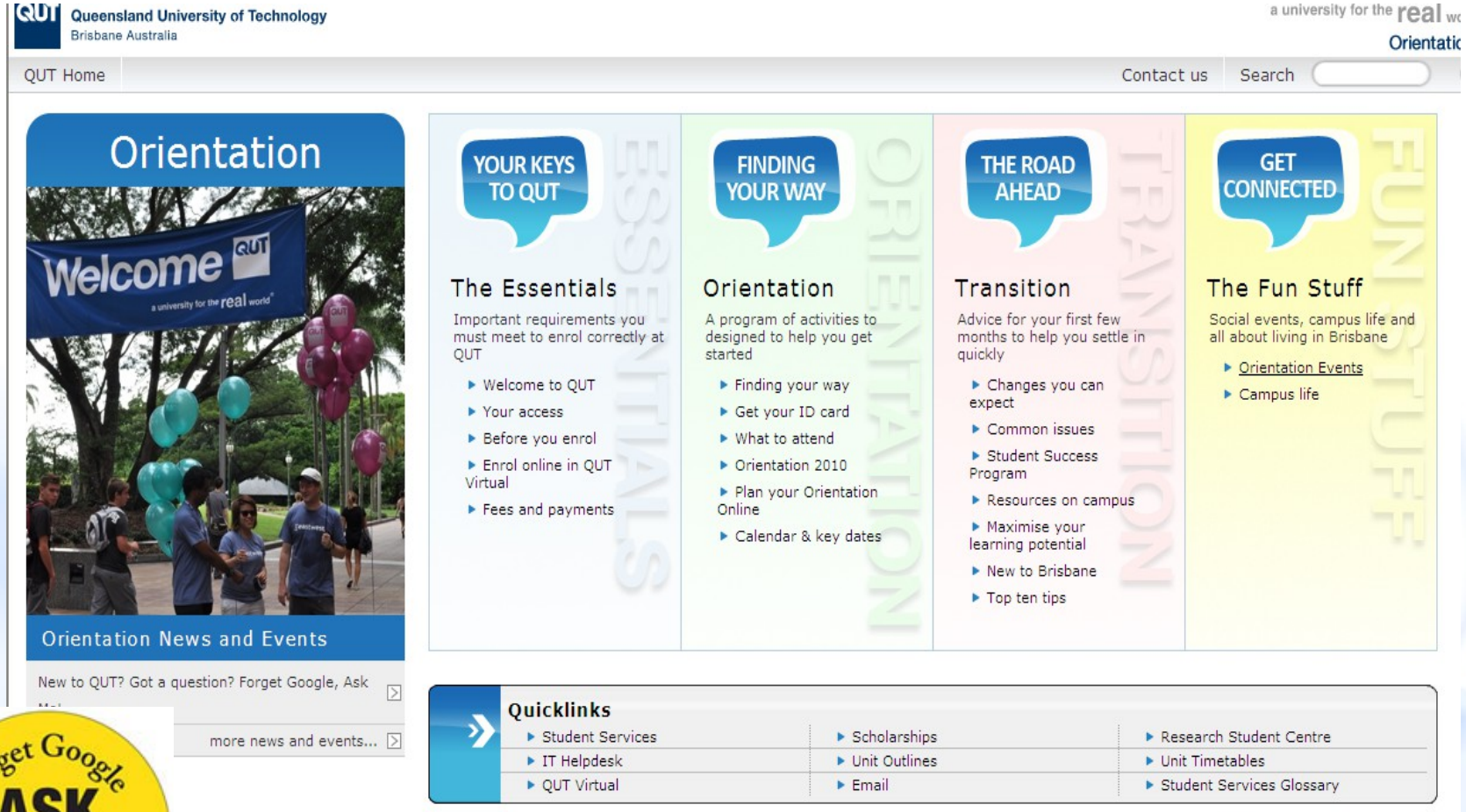
Drury's FYE program consists of **many elements** designed to help new students transition into college such as:

- Alpha Seminar
- Freshman Academic Advisors
- Advising and Registration
- Freshman First Day
- New Student Orientation
- Orientation Leaders
- Student Involvement Fair
- Office of Transitional Programs

http://www.drury.edu/multinl/story.cfm?nlid=232&id=17616

Proactive management of student transition

Orientation & Transition as a process over time.



http://www.orientation.qut.edu.au/

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Proactive management of student transition

Facilitating academic and social belonging in meaningful ways

http://life.iupui.edu/osi/first-year/downloads.html

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Whole of institution approaches

‘Getting the context right for staff to get the context right for students.’

(Hunt, 2009)

‘Of ducks and carrots’
‘Of consistency and clarity’

(Kift, 2008)

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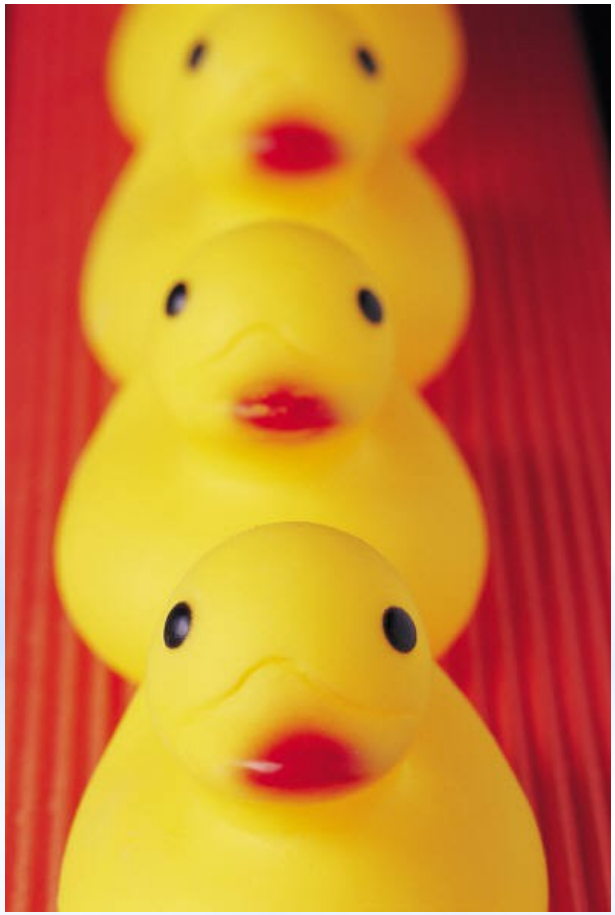
Of ducks and carrots



Action

Assessment

What is good teaching & support

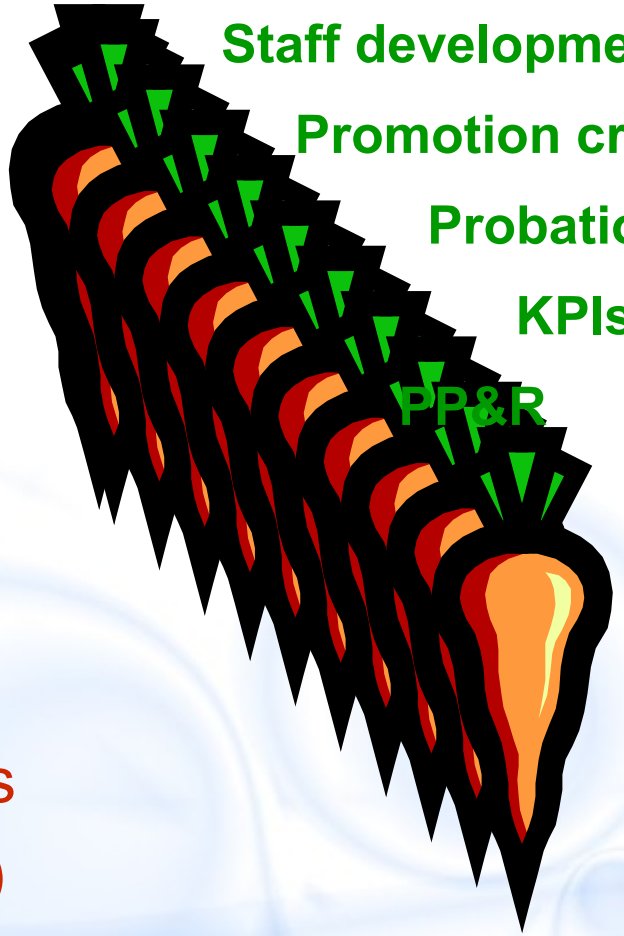
What is a good student exp

Learning leadership & governance across silos

Local area plans

Top level plan(s)

Vision



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Coherent institutional context to support FYE

- **FYE Policy** MOPP C/6.2
  - Includes Orientation and Transition
  - Supporting Guidelines
- **Institution-wide evaluation/assessment**
  - FYEQ, AUSSE, Course Exit & Orientation, LEX, Individual Program Reports & Consolidated Course Performance Reports
- **Policy statements** relating to FYE in:
  - Curriculum Design Policy MOPP C/4.2
    - Eg: role of FY curriculum in whole of program design
  - Assessment [for learning] Policy MOPP C/5.1
  - Unsatisfactory Academic Performance policy MOPP E/6.7
  - Supplementary Assessment [for learning] Policy MOPP E/6.4
- **QUT Faculty (Academic) Director, FYE**
- **University-wide FYE & Retention Committee**
- **FYE Network** – FY faculty & practitioners network
- First Year Coordinators Positions (Faculty)

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QUT's **Assessment** [for learning] **Protocols** (April 2009)

(To accompany top-level **Assessment** [for learning] **Policy**)

2.5 Designing assessment for a whole of course approach from the first year of study

Five key ideas guide the design of assessment for first year students and are also relevant to assessment across the course.

1. ***Variety*** – provide types of assessment that feature different aspects of learning relevant to the discipline to engage students, cater for diversity in learning styles and to broaden students' learning preferences.
2. ***Consistency*** – be consistent with the use of assessment terms within a unit and across the first year (e.g. descriptions, weighting and criteria) to reduce confusion for students new to university study. Provide consistency in terms of expected workload and weighting for similar assessment tasks across first year units.
3. ***Relevance*** – create relevance between the assessment task and unit activities and between the assessment task and the real world to motivate and engage students. Relevant assessment items should provide evidence of graduate capability development and should be suitable for inclusion in the students' QUT or personal portfolio.
4. ***Scaffolding*** – ensure the process skills as well as the content knowledge that students need to complete an assessment item are taught or practiced and that early feedback and extra support is provided so that students can overcome any areas of difficulty they experience. An assessment related activity should be scheduled within the first four weeks of the semester to provide students with feedback on how they are progressing in the unit. Advice should be provided to students about what to do with the feedback they are given. First year assessment should provide opportunities for peer and self-evaluation.
5. ***Monitoring*** – ensure that assessment items within a unit and across a course are designed and scheduled to facilitate the monitoring of student engagement in learning. The assessment pattern must be organised so that all first year undergraduate students encounter at least one individual item of formative or summative assessment aligned with unit learning outcomes prior to the withdrawal without financial penalty date.

The course coordinator is responsible for oversight of the curriculum architecture (see MOPP C/4.2) including assuring that the assessment patterns are mapped across the course from first year to the final year and seek to maximise the range of assessment types. This range is not only relevant for *variety*, *consistency*, *relevance*, *scaffolding* and *monitoring*, it is also an important equity principle.

Consistency in assessment to reduce FY confusion

Formative Assessment within first four weeks

Attention directed to process skills required to complete assessment

Assessment to facilitate monitoring of student engagement

http://www.otq.qut.edu.au/curriculum/protocols.jsp

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Engagement in early learning...

What would a good week 1 lecture in the First Year look like?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUzjIsP1yxc&feature=PlayList&p=F2C026529F7622DC&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=10

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Focus on

A Transition Pedagogy
and
The First Year Curriculum

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Some recent work re FY curriculum

Scottish Quality Assurance Agency FYE Enhancement Theme sub-projects
http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/documents/firstyear/Curriculum_Design_final_report.pdf

- STAR (Student Transition And Retention): Sub-project on Curriculum Development
http://www.ulster.ac.uk/star/curriculum_development/curriculum.htm

- *Harvey, Drew & Smith (2006) The first-year experience: a review of literature for the Higher Education Academy* HEA
http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/assets/York/documents/ourwork/research/FYE/web0580_the_first_year_experience_review_of_literature_for_the_higher_education_academy.pdf

- Heagney & Ferrier (2008) *Higher Education in Diverse Communities: Global Perspectives; Local Initiatives,* EAN
http://www.ean-edu.org/upload_data/EAN%20BOOK/ean%20book%20.pdf

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Why focus on curriculum…

Kift & Nelson (2005) http://conference.herdsa.org.au/2005/pdf/refereed/paper_294.pdf

- Because in all their diversity, with multiple identities and changing patterns of engagement, curriculum is
  - What students have in common
  - Within our institutional control
  - Only place we have contact with **all** students and can mediate that diversity, especially in preparedness & cultural capital
- Because otherwise our interventions are not comprehensive and their effect is left to chance
  - Will be bolt-on, piecemeal, and de-contextualised
  - May lack integration across processes & organisational areas

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A principled approach

Six First Year Curriculum Principles –

- **Generic** curriculum principles that are supportive of first year learning engagement, success and retention.
- Interconnected organising principles that –
  - Are research-based (but move *from* theory *to* action);
  - Can help guide and inform holisitc FYE practice;
  - Are supported by practical tips, checklists, examples & strategies for implementation (to move *from* principle *to* practice).
- Require cross-institutional partnerships to enact & enable.
- Have been evaluated and are **evidence-based** (>150 Fellowship presentations to approx 7000 faculty & professional staff in Australia and internationally).

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Six (6) Curriculum Principles [HE word bingo]

[Concurrent with good teaching and good support]

- Transition
- Diversity
- Design
- Engagement
- Assessment [for learning]
- Evaluation/Assessment **and** Monitoring

A curriculum that does serious transition and retention work!

http://www.fyhe.qut.edu.au/transitionpedagogy/

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EG

Key Questions for FY Curriculum Design

Design	Has the whole-of-program first year design been mapped? Are knowledge, skills, attitudes & academic literacies required for later years in program well articulated, integrated and sequenced?
Transition	Which groups entering this course may need particular attention during their orientation & transition to university life & procedures?
Diversity	Is there a strategy in place for identifying, communicating to FY teachers, and responding to diversity characteristics of this cohort?
Engagement	Are opportunities provided for students to make personal connections between their previous experiences, the program content and professional skills that are important to the discipline? Engagement with staff and peers designed in?
Evaluation/ [Assessment] Assessment for learning	Evidence-based approach to design and practice. Does the program / suite of FY units have affordances for 'monitoring engagement' and the support / resources available to make interventions where indicated?
	Which FY units have an appropriate assessment item scheduled in the first four weeks of semester? Assessment

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High Impact Educational Practices

Kuh (AAC&U, 2008)

- First-Year Seminars and Experiences
- Common Intellectual Experiences
- Learning Communities
- Writing-Intensive Courses
- Collaborative Assignments and Projects
- Undergraduate Research
- Diversity/Global Learning
- Service Learning, Community-Based Learning
- Internships
- Capstone Courses and Projects

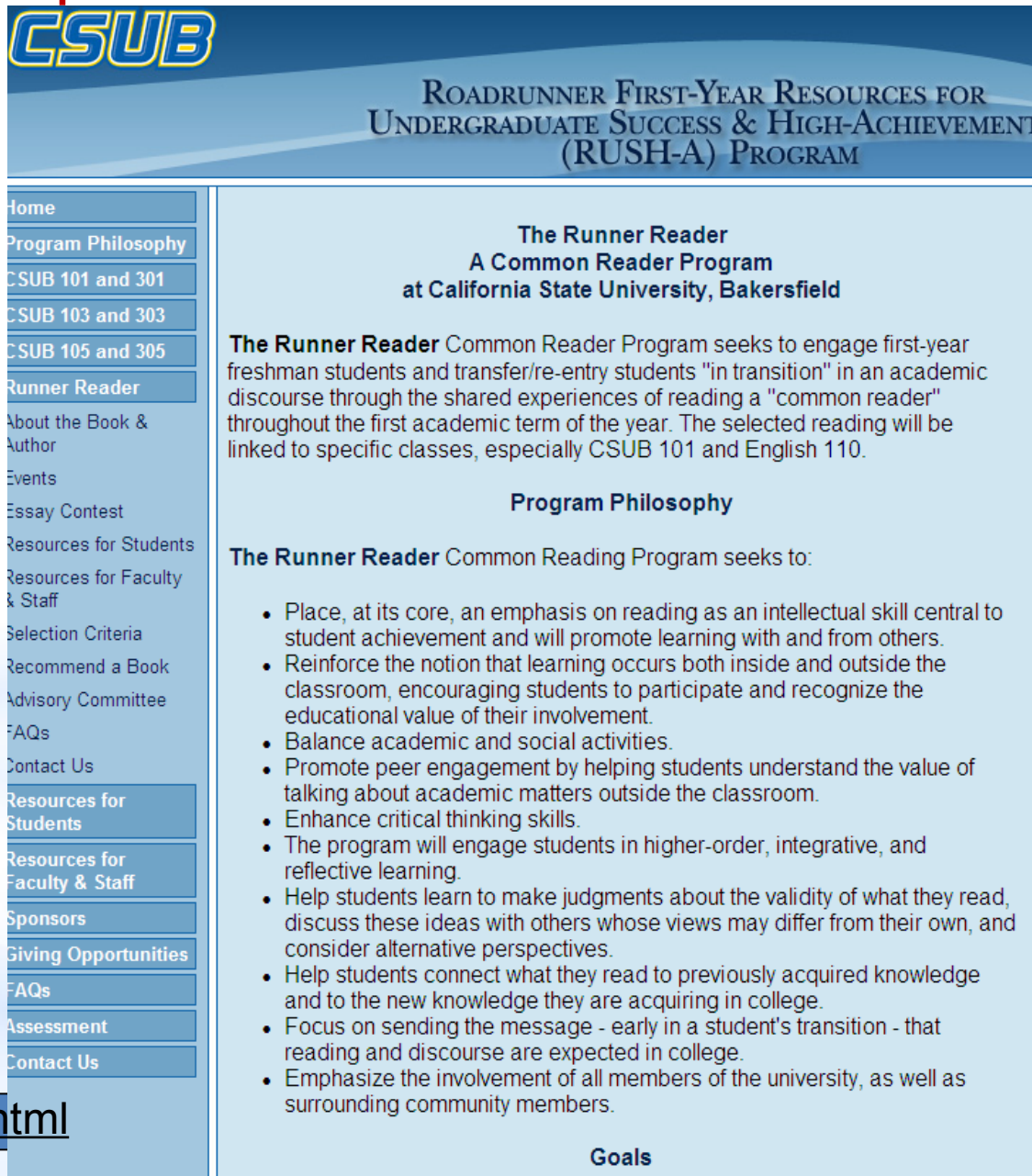
www.aacu.org

http://www.aacu.org/LEAP/hip.cfm

Common intellectual experiences

RUSH-A's PRIMARY GOALS

- Providing a common academic FYE
- Strengthening CSUB's academic atmosphere
- Connecting students to peers and teachers
- Getting students involved in campus activities
- Involving the whole campus community in a shared learning experience.



http://www.csub.edu/rush-a/reader.shtml

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Kift ALTC Senior Fellowship

FYECD Symposium 2009

http://www.fyecd2009.qut.edu.au/index.jsp

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Symposium – the Movie

An Extract

http://www.fyecd2009.qut.edu.au/resources/fyecd2009_movie.jsp

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EG, intentional **whole-of-program** design (1)

- 1st week of Sem takes up where orientation leaves off
- Opportunity to self-assess entering diversity of knowledge, skills & attitudes against discipline expectations (with development opportunities consequently provided)
- Identify first year curriculum objectives
- Make explicit to students whole-of-program roadmap
- Design-in discipline co-curricular and socialising activities (eg SI)
- Physical or virtual space available for social interaction
- Assess/ evaluate whole-of-program, including orientation, especially for patterns of attrition amongst sub-cohorts.
- Monitor for current student (dis)engagement across program and support/ intervene with identified at-risk students

CRICOS No.00213J

ePortfolio

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

University Information Technology Services

KNOWLEDGE BASE

Search: Knowledge Base IU

Search

Include archived documents 15 Search results per page

Login>>

Home Menus Glossary Help Text size: A A A

Chat with a consultant

ePortfolio: Overview

http://kb.iu.edu/data/arii.html

What it does

ePortfolio is a suite of tools available through Oncourse CL that allows faculty and administrators to guide students thro
learning, assessment, and presentation portfolios.

Key concepts

Access: ePortfolio provides students with tools to create an online archive of their work, which can be accessed from an
Instructors can access ePortfolio to provide feedback and assess a student's progress.

Learning tool: By helping students to recognize connections between assignments, and the knowledge and skills nee
assignments, ePortfolio encourages learning habits that can be applied to other aspects of life.

Curricular framework: In many cases, ePortfolios are aligned with course or program objectives and/or institutional st

Help documentation

Preparing Items for ePortfolio, For Students

How to prepare, organize, and store items that will be used in ePortfolio

What kinds of items can I use in ePortfolio?

You may include all types of work in your ePortfolio. While some of your class work will consist of word processing documents, it is also possible to upload other digitized materials, such as videos, sound files, and graphics. The important thing to remember is that all work must eventually be in a digital format. Thus, you can paint a picture, but you must scan it or take a digital photograph of the picture before you can upload it to an ePortfolio tool in Oncourse.

Where should I store items that I plan to upload?

It is a good idea to place a copy of every piece of completed work into your Resources folder in the My Workspace section of Oncourse CL. That way, all of your work is saved, is accessible from any networked location, and may be used in the future.

To upload files to your Resources folder, follow these steps:

1. **Log in to Oncourse CL**
2. **Click the My Workspace tab at the top of the page**
3. **Click Resources** in the menubar on the left side of the screen
   A list of the files in your Resources folder will appear.
4. **Find the folder called My Workspace** at the top of the list
5. **Click the drop-down arrow next to the Add field -> Click Upload Files**
   The upload files screen appears.
6. **Click Browse**
   The *Choose file dialog box* opens.
7. **Select the file you want to upload -> Click Open**
8. To upload multiple files at the same time, **Click the Add Another File link -> Repeat steps 6 and 7**
9. **Repeat step 8 until all the files that you want to upload are listed in the File fields**
10. **Click Upload Files Now**

http://www.indiana.edu/~ittrain/oncourse/eportfolio/ePortfolio_preparing_items.pdf

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Peer-to-peer interactions

http://www.umkc.edu/cad/si/

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EG, intentional **whole-of-program** design (2)

Intentional mapping & coherence across FY subjects: eg

- As much as possible, whole FY program is coherent & integrated
- Make links/connections between subjects explicit
- Diversity in T, L & A approaches across subjects
- Assessment for learning strategy coherent, integrated & manageable across subjects for students ***and*** staff
- Make no assumptions about entering knowledge, skills & attitudes
  - map subject responsibility for academic literacy development to assist transition to tertiary study, scaffold learning, and make explicit what is required for success (eg re academic writing, referencing, teamwork, *etc*).
- Consistency in communications of expectations/ responsibilities

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EG, intentional subject design (1)

- Attend to program-choice uncertainty by embedding career modules/planning and/or investigating what it is to be a XYZ professional (IT Case Study, Nelson 2008)
- Scaffold academic skills & learning processes (e.g., scaffold reading through workbooks; discipline writing workshops in class time: Law Case Study, Westcott 2008)
- Communicated Feedback Strategy (e.g., as at http://www.ljmu.ac.uk/lid/ltweb/84079.htm)
- "Correct" a piece of writing in large class using track changes function for immediate feedback (Education Case Study, Healy 2008)

CRICOS No.00213J

Career Advising

University of South Carolina's
Four Year Student Plan:

- Progression
and
- Coherence

University of South Carolina

CAREER CENTER

South Carolina's Flagship University

STUDENTS | ALUMNI | EMPLOYERS | FACULTY/STAFF | PARENTS

XPLORE MAJORS/CAREERS
ESUME/LETTER WRITING
OB SEARCH
N-CAMPUS RECRUITING
NTERVIEW PREPARATION
IP SHEETS & VIDEOS
RADUATE SCHOOL
ALENDAR
NTERNSHIPS & CO-OPS
EB RESOURCES
BOUT US
SK AN EXPERT
AQ

Four-Year Student Plan

First year:

- Attend the Student Organization Fair (See "How do I start?" section) and get involved on campus. Employers seek students who are active on campus and in the community.
- If you're not taking University 101, stop by the Career Center to explore your major/career. Individual staff will introduce you to our Web Resources and Discovery Tools. Reviewing the Undergraduate Studies Bulletin, Undergraduate Degree List, and the Minors Bulletin can also help you explore possible majors.
- Develop good study habits and earn good grades since your g.p.a may be a key factor in securing internships and full-time jobs.
- Get to know your professors and academic advisor who may eventually serve as employment references.
- If you are considering medical school, law school or other pre-health professions, be sure to connect with the Office of Pre-Professional Advising.
- Develop a resume and cover letter using Optimal Resume. (We can give you feedback.)
- Investigate part-time and/or summer jobs using JobMate.
- Job fairs are also a good place to make contacts.

Second year:

- Explore your career interests through information interviewing, job shadowing, part-time jobs, or volunteer work.
- Discover career options in the Career Library or through Web Resources.
- Continue to stay involved on campus through campus activities.
- Identify volunteer opportunities through the Office of Community Service Programs to increase your skills and gain experience.
- Continue forming positive relationships with professors and advisors.
- If graduate school is in your future, explore initial research opportunities through the Office of Undergraduate Research.
- Talk with a staff member about updating your resume and cover letter. Consider using Optimal Resume.
- Use JobMate to investigate opportunities for internships or co-ops in your field that test out your major/career choice.
- Make contacts at job fairs.
- Obtain a summer job in your field.

Third year:

- Maintain a strong GPA in your major coursework.
- Pursue leadership roles in campus activities to enhance your "marketability" to employers.
- Identify volunteer opportunities through the Office of Community Service Programs to increase your skills and gain experience.
- Talk with a staff member about updating your resume and cover letter. Consider using Optimal Resume.
- Sharpen your interviewing skills through a practice interview.
- Attend fall and spring job fairs and begin networking for your senior year job search.

http://www.sc.edu/career/studentplan.html

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Six Career Development Modules at QUT

- Developed to underpin current curriculum and assist students to:
  - make sound course and career choices;
  - make successful transitions to life as a student; life at University; and post University
  - make connections between their course of study and where that might lead; and
  - further develop career pathways.

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QUT Career Development Modules

University Preparation

(for students prior to QUT)

- Defining Myself (Self Understanding 1)
- Course Exploration & Decision Making
- Awareness of Influences
- Assessing Readiness for Study
- Introducing the Student ePortfolio

Career Preparation

(for first year students)

- Defining Myself (Self Understanding 1)
- Thriving at University
- Choosing Majors/Electives
- Defining My Opportunities (Career Research & World of Work)
- Using the Student ePortfolio

(McAlpine et al, 2009: At pp 95-98 of http://www.fyecd2009.qut.edu.au/resources/FYE_ShowcaseAbstracts_4Feb09_FIN_SJ.pdf)

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EG, intentional subject design (2)

- All Biology students attend two *Science101* workshops & study groups (Weeks 2-3), collaboratively convened by faculty, & professional (with University transition staff). Includes student-staff panel to which FY students can address questions. Specific encouragement of help-seeking behaviour. (Biology Case Study, Gleeson, 2008)

- Multimedia subject presents as virtual town to achieve learning objectives in persuasive writing and career-related writing tasks (eg, media releases, job applications, reports, proposals, newspaper feature articles). Links to support material, guidelines, models etc. (Writing and Communications Case Study, Radbourne & LeRossignol, 2008)

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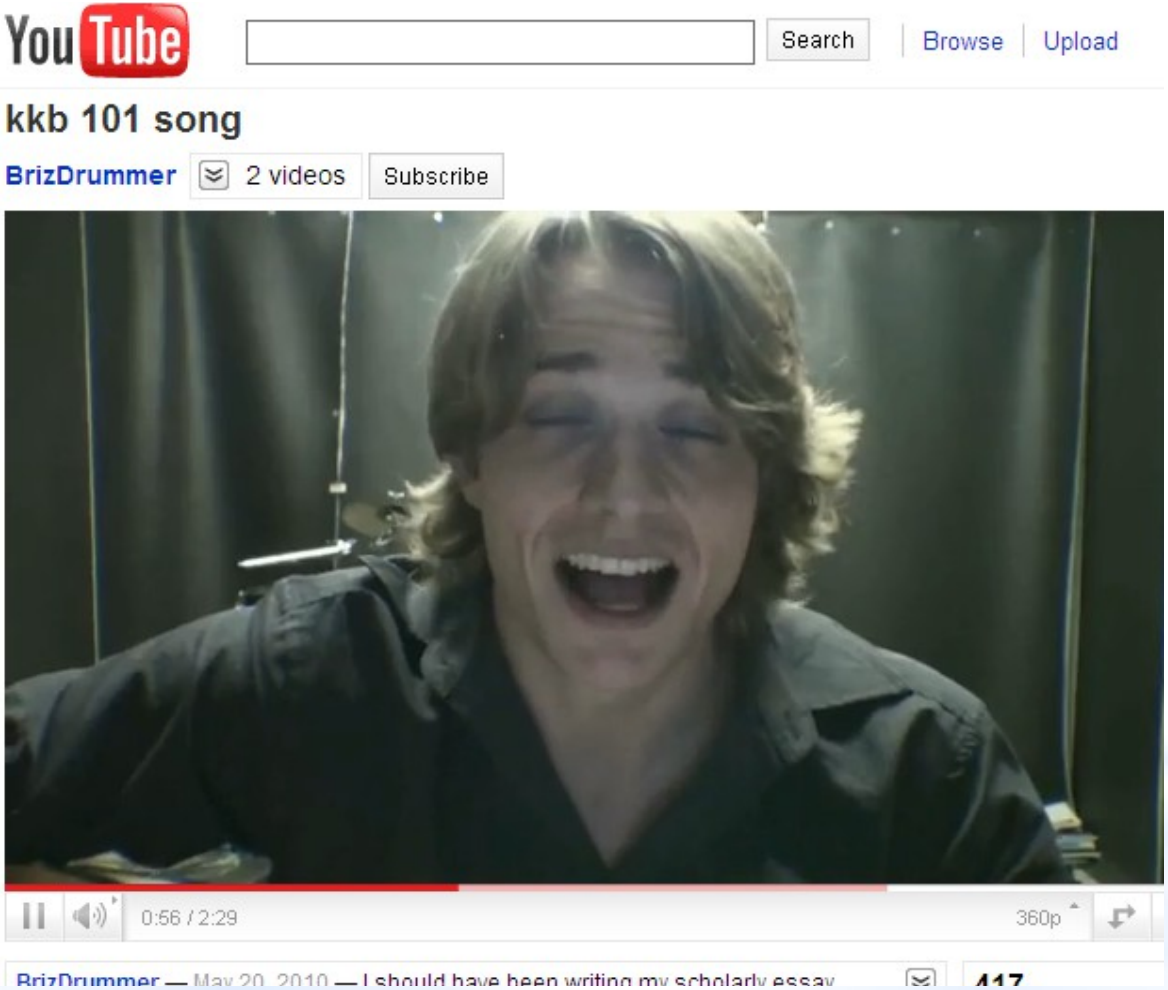

First year student who would rather write a song than do his KKB101 essay.

So he did!

I don't know if he passed or not. ;-)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccOoIdztCss

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Early tertiary assessment literacies: e.g.

- Explanation and consistent use of assessment verbs; consistent naming of assessment tasks;
- Explicit clarification of assessment expectations: eg, how to write, research, orally present in different discipline genres;
- Explicit & consistent advice & assistance with referencing & paraphrasing expectations;
- Instruction & proactive support re group/team work;
- Assist students to make use of examples & model answers;
- Well written criterion referenced assessment (CRA) sheets **AND** 'dialogue' about way criteria and standards will be applied (ASKe, 2008: http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/ASKe%20Intervention.pdf);
- Assistance with 'what feedback is' & how to make the best use of it (Race, 2009: http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/Feedback_Booklet_Phil_Race.pdf).

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Understanding academic languages & conventions

Example: *A Psychology degree program uses the **same assessment [for learning] definitions and criteria** throughout the entire program. A written assessment guide formally articulates these to students and staff (Gibbs, 2009)*

Example: *In a FY Education subject, small student groups are given a copy of the same written excerpt and each group is asked to respond in a specific way: reflectively, analytically, critically, etc. Responses are shared with the class to highlight the differences between cognitive levels (Healy, 2008)*

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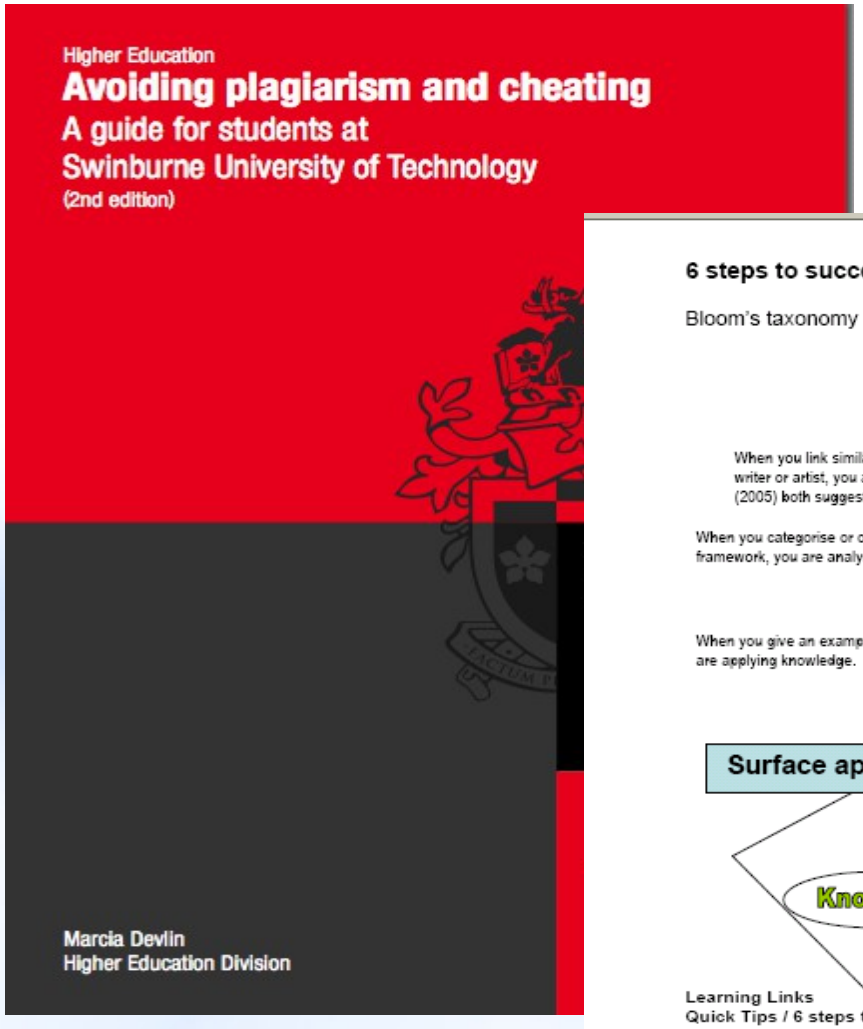
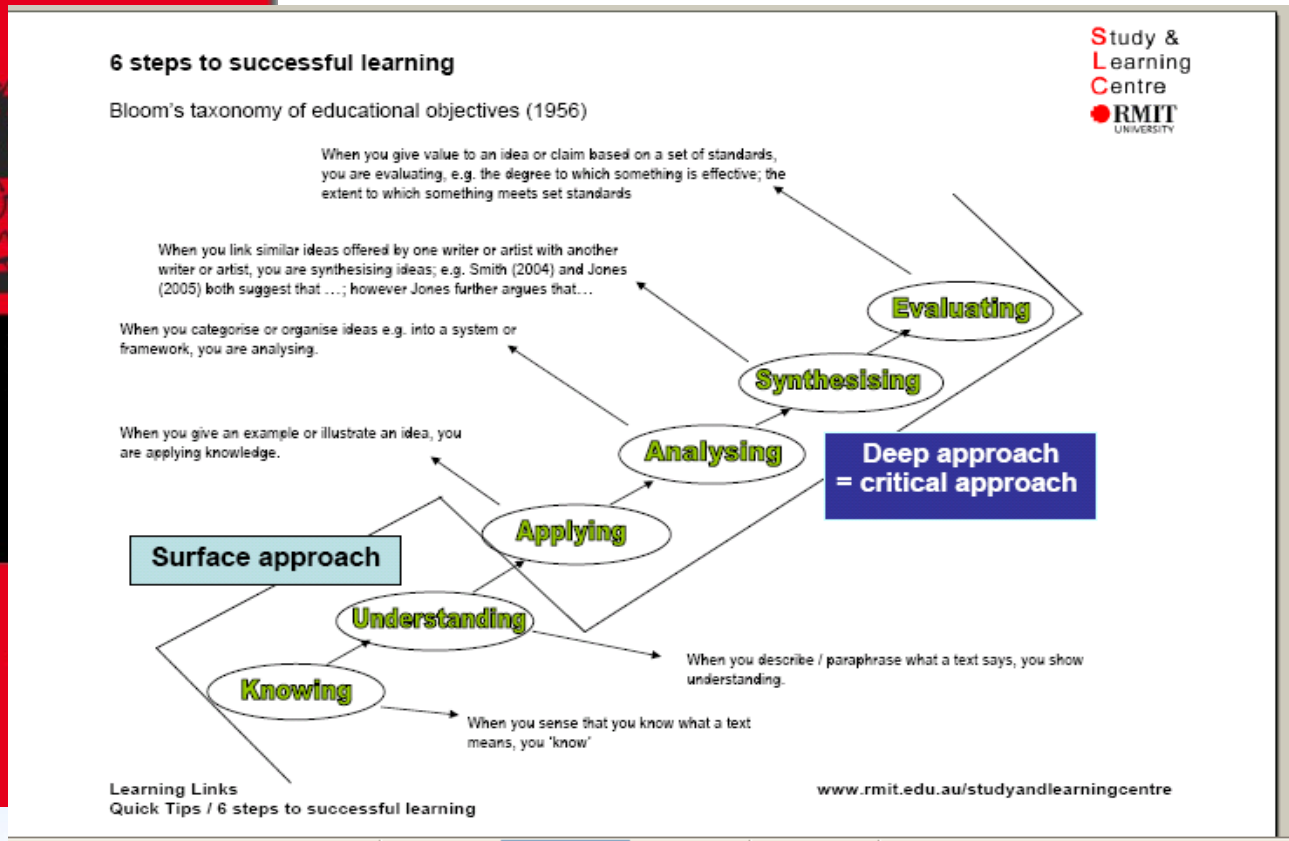
Assessment for learning expectations…



http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/1_StudySkills/study_pdf/Blooms%20taxonomy.pdf



http://www.swinburne.edu.au/ltas/plagiarism/guide.html

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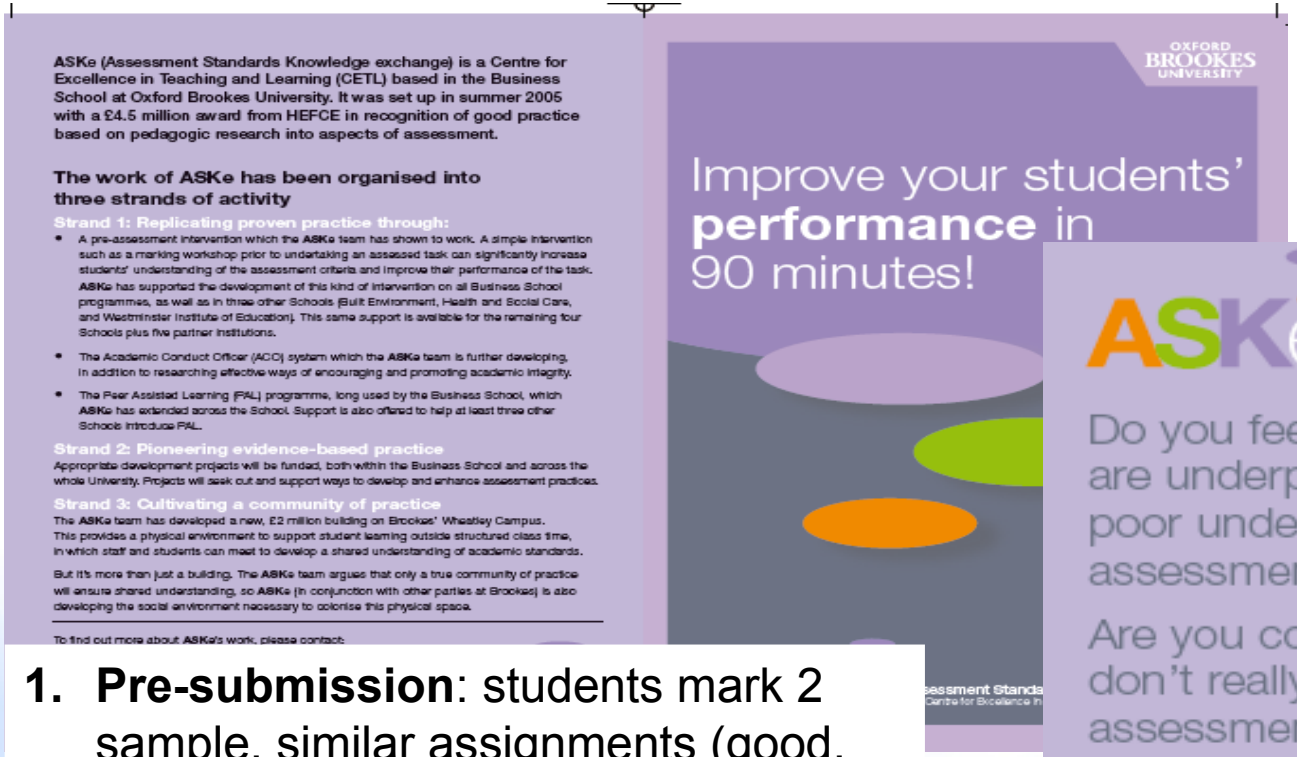
Help student understanding of criteria

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/ASKe%20Intervention.pdf



ASKe (Assessment Standards Knowledge exchange) is a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) based in the Business School at Oxford Brookes University. It was set up in summer 2005 with a £4.5 million award from HEFCE in recognition of good practice based on pedagogic research into aspects of assessment.

The work of ASKe has been organised into three strands of activity

Strand 1: Replicating proven practice through:

- A pre-assessment intervention which the **ASKe** team has shown to work. A simple intervention such as a marking workshop prior to undertaking an assessed task can significantly increase students' understanding of the assessment criteria and improve their performance of the task. **ASKe** has supported the development of this kind of intervention on all Business School programmes, as well as in three other Schools (Built Environment, Health and Social Care, and Westminster Institute of Education). This same support is available for the remaining four Schools plus five partner institutions.
- The Academic Conduct Officer (ACO) system which the **ASKe** team is further developing, in addition to researching effective ways of encouraging and promoting academic integrity.
- The Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) programme, long used by the Business School, which **ASKe** has extended across the School. Support is also offered to help at least three other Schools introduce PAL.

Strand 2: Pioneering evidence-based practice

Appropriate development projects will be funded, both within the Business School and across the whole University. Projects will seek out and support ways to develop and enhance assessment practices.

Strand 3: Cultivating a community of practice

The **ASKe** team has developed a new, £2 million building on Brookes' Wheatley Campus. This provides a physical environment to support student learning outside structured class time, in which staff and students can meet to develop a shared understanding of academic standards.

But it's more than just a building. The **ASKe** team argues that only a true community of practice will ensure shared understanding, so **ASKe** (in conjunction with other parties at Brookes) is also developing the social environment necessary to colonise this physical space.

To find out more about **ASKe**'s work, please contact:

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

Improve your students' **performance** in 90 minutes!

ASKe

Do you feel that your students are underperforming due to their poor understanding of your assessment standards?

Are you concerned that they don't really understand your assessment criteria?

Have you ever experienced blank looks when students read your feedback comments on their work?

If so, why don't you try our pre-assessment intervention?

It takes just 90 minutes of your time, and it works*...

*Business School students at Oxford Brookes University who completed the intervention showed significant improvements in performance, with improvements sustained at a similar level one year later (Rust et al., 2003).

1. **Pre-submission**: students mark 2 sample, similar assignments (good, average) using CRA sheet
2. **Attend 90 min workshop**: re-mark in groups; discussion & tutor feedback; review marks; get annotated versions of sample assignments
3. **Submit work + student self-assessment** on CRA sheet

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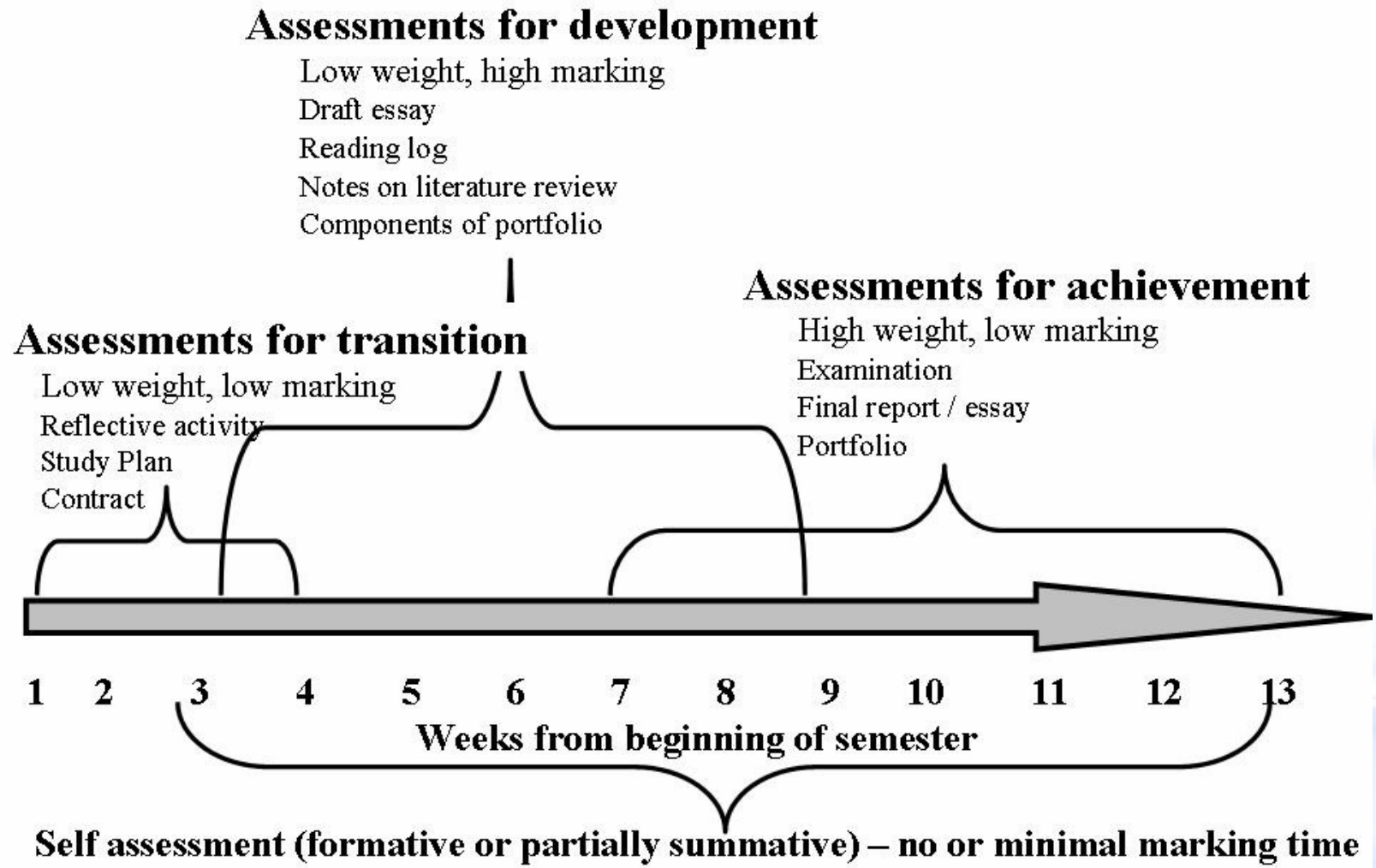
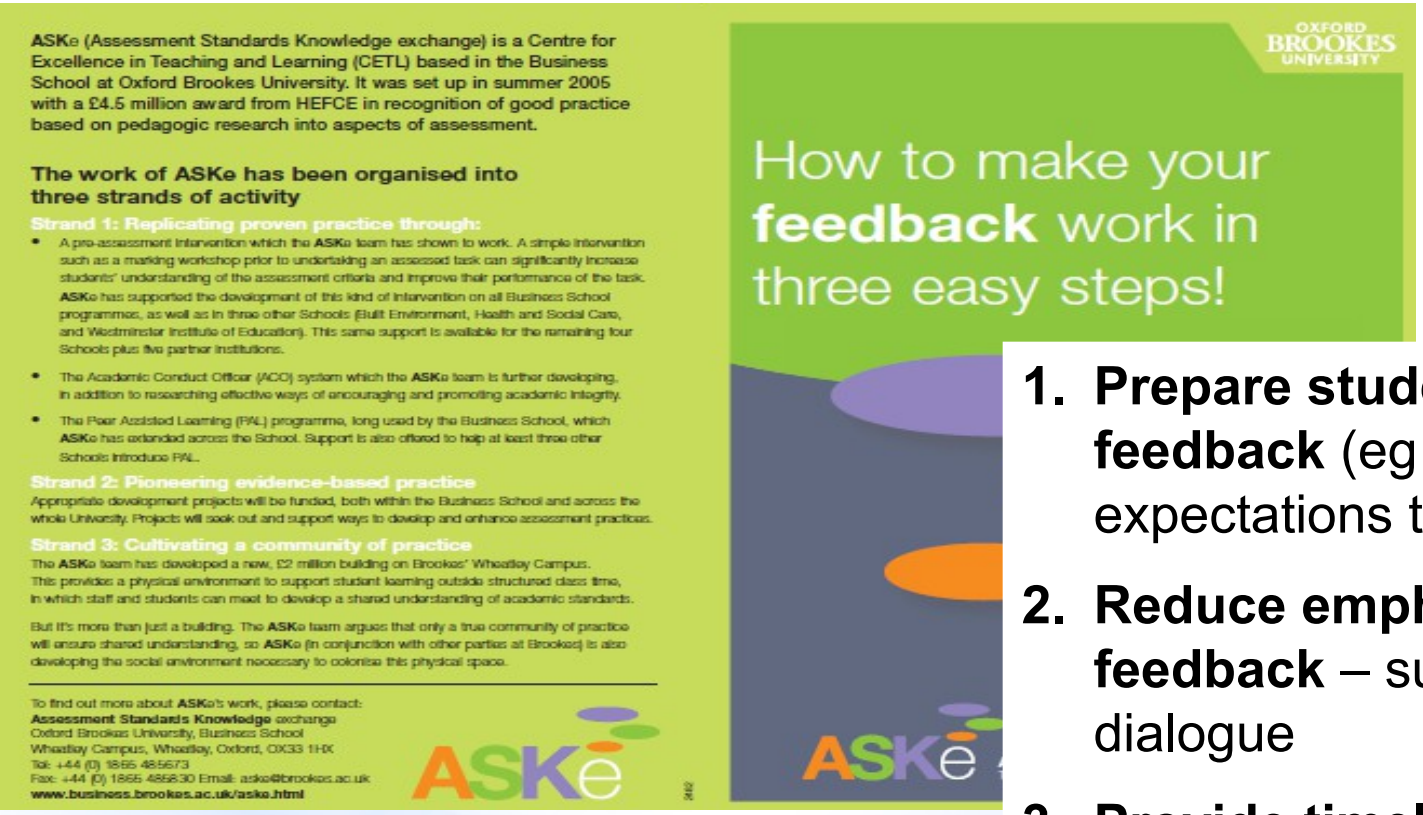
Taylor (2008, 23) Strategies for assessment

http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=jutlp



CRICOS No.00213J

Helping students to make use of feedback



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To find out more about **ASK**e's work, please contact:
Assessment Standards Knowledge exchange
Oxford Brookes University, Business School
Wheatley Campus, Wheatley, Oxford, OX33 1HX
Tel: +44 (0) 1865 485673
Fax: +44 (0) 1865 485830 Email: aske@brookes.ac.uk
www.business.brookes.ac.uk/aske.html

ASKe

OXFORD BROOKES UNIVERSITY

How to make your **feedback** work in three easy steps!

ASKe

1. **Prepare students to receive feedback** (eg align staff & student expectations to agree purpose)
2. **Reduce emphasis on written feedback** – supplement with dialogue
3. **Provide timely feedback** (eg generic feedback ASAP)

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/Make%20FeedbackWork.pdf

CRICOS No.00213J

The Student Success Program

Partnerships to Monitor Student Engagement

- An 'organisational (infra)structure' consisting of people, protocols & processes, information, and institution-wide partnerships.

- Four campaigns
  - Follow up of non-acceptances of offer
  - Welcome calls – cohort & discipline
  - In-curriculum monitoring
  - Unsatisfactory academic performance processes

Nelson, Duncan & Clarke, 2009 http://sleid.cqu.edu.au/viewissue.php?id=19;
Nelson, Duncan, Marrington & Clarke, 2009 http://eprints.qut.edu.au/28331/

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A QUT professional & faculty partnership

Student Success Project Overview

1. Identify target subjects and relevant at-risk indicators
2. Collect descriptive and academic performance data
3. Create call / contact lists of at-risk students
4. Contact students on list by phone (email back-up)
5. Possible 'warm hand-off' or referral to existing services
6. Email all students attempted to contact with plan
7. Follow up after 2 weeks
8. Evaluate outcomes: student persistence & success

Over 2008-2009: >11000 FY students monitored;

2543 determined at-risk; 2400 contacted/supported

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“At-risk” Indicators – Examples

Descriptive

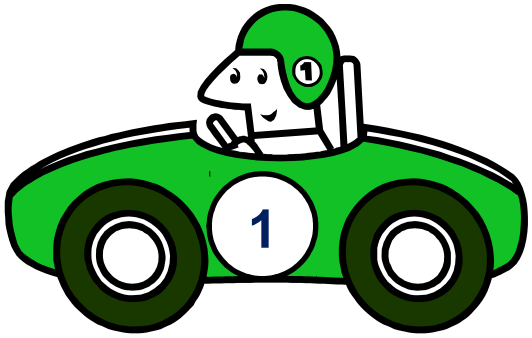
- Member of a known at-risk cohort
- Failure or ‘at-risk’ in previous semester
- Did not attend faculty orientation event
- Low entry score
- Repeating unit

Academic Performance

- Non-participation in course (tutorials)
- Not participating in teamwork activities
- Not submitting / failure of 1st early course assessment
- Non-submission or failure of subsequent assessments
- On-line quizzes & results

CRICOS No.00213J

Student Success Program (SSP)



Commencing Student Information

Indicators of student academic performance

Descriptive Information

Academic Activity

SSP Advisors

General & Discipline Advice

"Warm Hand-Off"

Specialist Support

FYE Consultant
- Life Support

Academic Skills Advisors
- Learning Support

Referral to Existing Services

Support Services

QUTSpecialist Service Providers:
- Counselling, Disability, Equity
- Careers and Employment
- International Students Services

Skills Development Workshops
- Following early diagnostics

QUT Learning Support:
- Kick Start/Study Smart,
- Library Help Desks,
- Scheduled Workshops,
- Academic Skills Advisors

Faculty Learning Support:
- School / Discipline Support,
- Unit specific support,
- FY/Academic Advisors
- Peer Learning Advisors, Duty Tutors, SI schemes,

QUT Student Guild

SSP Team Leaders

Target cohort details

"Outreach"

Weekly "students at risk" reports

Contact Information

Limited information

SSP Outcomes: persistence

FACULTY	PERSISTENCE %	
Sem 1 2009	"At-Risk" Contacted	"At-Risk" Not Contacted
Faculty 1	88	60
Faculty 2	97	65
Faculty 3	90	67
Faculty 4	95	72
Faculty 5	96	85
Faculty 6	84	60
Faculty 7	98	90

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Evidence – Impact on Effectiveness

Longer Term Effect: SSP interventions have had a positive and sustained influence on the progression of "at-risk" students who were contacted and provided with academic, personal and social support.

ENROLMENT STATUS AT END OF 1/09	AT RISK CATEGORY AT END OF 1/08		STATISTICS		
	AR-C	AR-NC	Chi Square	*df*	*P*
Enrolled	157	41	7.0	1	<.01
Not Enrolled	30	19			
Totals	187	60			

2008-09
AUD$3.675M

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Some ideas in closing …

Much of what we know and practice for improving the experience of first year students is immediately transferable to later years and contexts.

Real impact requires institutional level commitment and institution-wide faculty and professional partnerships.

Good practice in the classroom will enhance the learning experience of all students.

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For You: The Principles & Three checklists

ALTC Kift Senior Fellowship — Articulating a Transition Pedagogy
First year curriculum principles: First year teacher making a difference

First year curriculum principles: First year teacher

Low risk, 'do-able' actions that would make a difference …

First year curriculum principle	Actions that would make a difference …
1. Transition The curriculum and its delivery should be designed to be consistent and explicit in assisting students' transition from their previous educational experience to the nature of learning in higher education and learning in their discipline as part of their lifelong learning. The first year curriculum should be designed to mediate and support transition as a process that occurs over time. In this way, the first year curriculum will enable successful student transition into first year, through first year, into later years and ultimately out into the world of work, professional practice and career attainment.	1. Use curriculum time to discuss expectations and responsibilities of learning in higher education and in the discipline (e.g. identify and explain key university processes and procedures — participation in tutorials, attendance at lectures, out-of-class preparation, academic reading, specif consideration, grading; draw up student/staff contract on responsibilities; agree statement on what is an 'independen learner'). 2. Be consistent in all student communications (e.g. in presentation of program material; program language; use o assessment criteria and standards; communicating sense o program progression). 3. Use a series of email or LMS communications to deliver just-in-time transition information over the course of the firs semester.
2. Diversity The first year curriculum should be attuned to student diversity and must be accessible by, and inclusive of, all students. First year curriculum design should recognise that students have special learning needs by reason of their social, cultural and academic transition. Diversity is often a factor that further exacerbates transition difficulties. The first year curriculum should take into account students' backgrounds, needs, experiences and patterns of study and few if any assumptions should be made about existing skills and knowledge. 'Diversity' here can include: • membership of at-risk or equity groups • widening participation (e.g. non-traditional cohorts) • students' existing skills and knowledge • patterns and timing of engagement with the first year curriculum (e.g. mid-year entry).	1. Be aware of the diversity characteristics of your incoming cohort. 2. Make no assumptions about students' entry level knowledg skills and attitudes. Especially, be cognisant of the disparity academic preparedness and allocate class time to attending to the unevenness of entering academic skills (e.g., examin a piece of text from different perspectives on the cognitive hierarchy; embed scaffolded reading and writing tasks in cl materials and curriculum time; discuss planning and self management skills (including time and stress management 3. At critical times during semester, assist students to make li to relevant university services (e.g. course and administrati advising; pastoral care/ counselling; academic support services; financial support; peer mentoring opportunities; etc.).

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ALTC Kift Senior Fellowship — Articulating a Transition Pedagogy
First year curriculum principles: Program coordinator checklist

First year curriculum principles: Program coordinator checklist

First year curriculum principle	Checklist questions
1. Transition The curriculum and its delivery should be designed to be consistent and explicit in assisting students' transition from their previous educational experience to the nature of learning in higher education and learning in their discipline as part of their lifelong learning. The first year curriculum should be designed to mediate and support transition as a process that occurs over time. In this way, the first year curriculum will enable successful student transition into first year, through first year, into later years and ultimately out into the world of work, professional practice and career attainment.	• How are your cohort's orientation and transition needs coherently and relevantly mapped to crucial time periods (such as: immediately after the main offer round; during O Week; over the first weeks of semester; pre-census; over the course of first year)? • What information is provided to your students during their program orientation? For coordination and consistency, is the extent and nature of this information communicated to first year subject coordinators? • Are there any subject coordinators or other teachers in the first year this semester who are new to first year teaching? How are they to be supported? • Are students provided with the opportunity to self-assess their entry knowledge, skills and attitudes against discipline expectations (e.g. via ePortfolio)? • Is there clear and consistent communication to commencing students regarding expectations and responsibilities, including advice on 'how things work around here'? • Is the information provision about programs, processes and procedures pre-enrolment clear, accurate, consistent, and sufficiently detailed for informed choice and effective action?
2. Diversity The first year curriculum should be attuned to student diversity and must be accessible by, and inclusive of, all students. First year curriculum design should recognise that students have special learning needs by reason of their social, cultural and academic transition. Diversity is often a factor that further exacerbates transition difficulties. The first year curriculum should take into account students' backgrounds, needs, experiences and patterns of study and few if any assumptions should be made about existing skills and knowledge. 'Diversity' in this context includes, for example: • membership of at-risk or equity groups • widening participation (e.g. non-traditional cohorts) • students' existing skills and knowledge • patterns and timing of engagement with the first year curriculum (e.g. mid-year entry).	• What are the diversity characteristics of the entering cohort? Are there any noticeable attrition patterns amongst particular cohorts? Has this information been communicated to first year coordinators and teachers? • Are students clear about where to go to access academic and other support assistance (physically and/or virtually)? Are support pathways clearly and consistently communicated, preferably in a 'just-in-time' and 'just-for-me' way? • Are students provided with the opportunity to self assess and reflect on the diversity of (for example) their learning preference (e.g. VARK)/ personality type (e.g. Myers-Briggs)/ preferred team role (e.g. Belbin)/own cultural 'grab bag' (e.g. cultural competence self assessment)? • Are program documentation and other student communications written in plain English and without the inclusion of administrative and/or discipline jargon (unless just-in-time and explained)? • Is flexibility built in across the curriculum design to ensure greater accessibility by diverse cohorts? • Are new learners exposed to a variety of learning, teaching and assessment methods across the first year curriculum?

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ALTC Kift Senior Fellowship — Articulating a Transition Pedagogy
First year curriculum principles: Briefing for institutional L&T leaders

First year curriculum principles: Briefing for institutional learning and teaching leaders

First year curriculum principle	What the principle entails …
1. Transition The curriculum should support academic and social transition from a student's previous educational experience to the nature of learning in higher education and the new discipline as part of lifelong learning.	The first year curriculum should support transition by: • incorporating a range of strategies that orient students and aid transition both prior to and during their first year, to provide the foundation for positive transitions to later years' learning success, career attainment, and lifelong learning • facilitating a sense of academic and social belonging • providing clear pathways and timely access to support services • consistently communicating realistic and explicit expectations.
2. Diversity The curriculum should acknowledge the diversity and reality of students' backgrounds, previous experiences, and preparedness for higher education because diversity may exacerbate transition issues and few assumptions can be made about students' entering knowledge, skills, and attitudes.	The first year curriculum should embrace diversity by: • valuing and respecting diversity and ensuring this has high visibility with student cohorts • devoting curriculum time to the learning and teaching of academic skills required for learning success in higher education and the discipline • scaffolding learning • providing flexibility in terms of allowing students some critical choices in order that the curriculum better meets their individual needs and circumstances.
3. Design The curriculum design should be student focused, explicit and relevant and provide foundation and scaffolding for first year learning success.	The first year curriculum should structure design by: • ensuring that it is at a foundational level in aid of future learning • explicitly identifying end of first year objectives and organising the first year curriculum as a coherent, integrated whole • establishing relevance and alignment to students' vocational aspirations and course choice by incorporating career planning and development components • allocating curriculum time to the special transition needs of first year students.
4. Engagement The curriculum should enact engaging and involving pedagogies.	The first year curriculum should foster engagement by: • taking a student-centred approach to facilitating learning • providing opportunities for peer-to-peer and staff-to-students interactions and collaborative learning • providing ongoing support and guidance when, where and how it is most needed • incorporating, whenever possible, co-curricular activities that support aspects of the formal curriculum.

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