

Title: **A research based induction to aid transition**

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Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Reconsider the appropriateness of their induction programmes in light of the aims of induction.
- Recognise the challenges faced within induction programmes and their impact upon learners.
- Evaluate the implementation of an innovative induction programme and create ideas for enhancement.
- Identify and plan areas of enhancement within own induction practices.

Session Outline

Transition to higher education (HE) is a relatively complex affair that involves induction to the institution, the subject discipline, course structure and content, and also an array of new contacts; both staff and student. The provision of effective induction is therefore extremely challenging (Murtagh et al 2017) but it is crucial as evidence exists that a positive experience at this stage can impact upon student retention and academic achievement (Hassanien and Barber 2008).

Based upon concepts from Healey, Jenkins, and Lea (2014) the research based induction requires students to undertake discipline-based research projects during their induction period. This involves them working in small groups to collect, analyse and present information to tutors and receive formative feedback. By engaging support staff e.g. library, ICT, Learning coaches etc. in the process students complete required induction activities whilst also completing a more engaging and useful induction activity.

This approach ties into much of the existing literature with Whittaker (2008) calling for induction activities that are linked to the discipline, and Wingate (2007) suggesting a holistic, subject specific approach to support new students in learning to learn in HE. The second of these points is significant in that it recognises the major differences in teaching and learning that are evident in HE study when compared to school / further education. Learners not being ready for this difference alongside a lack of academic preparedness has been identified by Quinn et al (2005) as being one of the most common reasons for early withdrawal. The research based induction therefore creates an opportunity to

sample the type of learning that will be encountered from week one of the programme onwards and serves as an introduction to, and method of supporting learners with, the type of learning complexity that is required within HE (Healey, Jenkins and Lea 2014).

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

The outline of the workshop is as follows;

Starter (5 mins) – Participants to create a definition / description of the purposes of induction.

Presentation (10 mins) – An overview of the research based induction trial that was carried out including methodology and underpinning literature that guided its creation.

Activity (10 mins) – A discussion of participants' thoughts and experiences of student induction e.g. good practice, challenges, concerns etc.

Presentation (10 mins) – Evaluation of evidence collated during the research based induction trial and discussion of resulting recommendations, limitations and areas for enhancement.

Activity (10 mins) – Participants to identify perceived benefits to the new programme within the context of their own institutions for various groups including students, academic staff and support staff. Consideration also to be given to the institutional barriers and challenges that might be experienced.

References

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- Quinn, J., Thomas, L., Slack, K., Casey, L., Thexton, W. and Noble, J. (2005) From Life Crisis to Lifelong Learning: Rethinking Working-class 'Drop-out' from Higher Education. York: Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
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