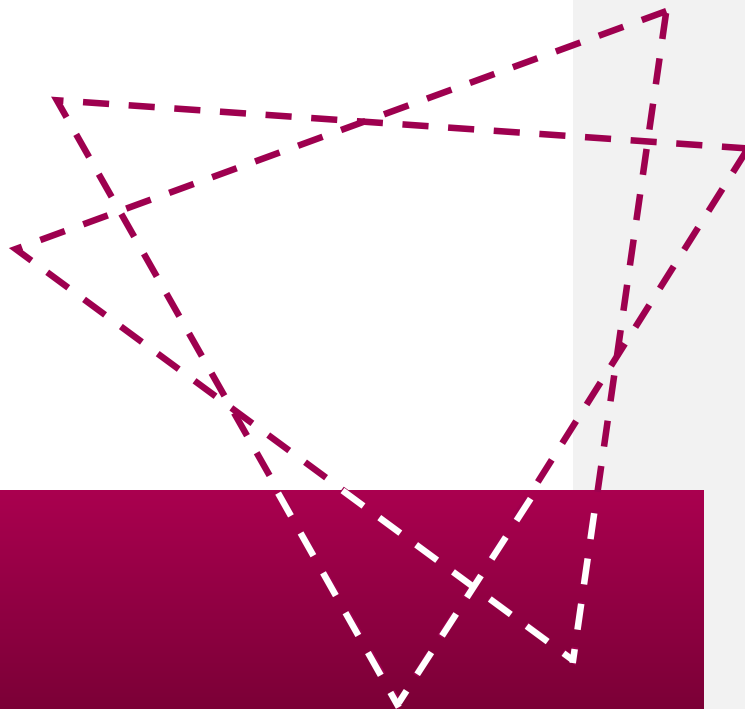


PARALLEL SESSION 4

WEDNESDAY 28TH JUNE 2023



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Parallel 4.1 (Show and Tell), Room 3011

HACKING INDUCTION WITH 'HACK PACKS'



SPEAKER

Jamie O'Hare, Abertay University, Scotland

Jamie is a Lecturer in the Division of Cybersecurity at Abertay University's School of Design and Informatics. Leading the BSc Ethical Hacking degree, Jamie's teaching is predominantly encompassing security of networked infrastructure and web applications. His research interests focus on Internet-wide scanning, bug bounties and cybersecurity pedagogy.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Induction activities can be overwhelming. For some, there might be too much information disseminated in such a short period of time. As such, adding more to an already busy schedule may contribute to disengagement. In an effort to reduce the overload, we've started to distribute information earlier through 'hack packs'.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

You never get a second chance to make a good first impression. This statement also applies to inductions. Among the necessary housekeeping and the plethora of other activities, the main message you try to get across to students can be lost. However, by providing some of this information ahead of time in the form of an offer acceptor pack could lead to some benefits at induction week and beyond. These information packets could answer Frequently Asked Questions, point towards revision materials, and allow for students to get to know staff. Furthermore, they provide an avenue to build and foster a community before they come to campus, potentially promoting a more hospitable environment come Induction Week. As we began our first rollout of these information packets, the impact thereof remains to be seen.

SOS! SUPPORTING THE FIRST-YEAR EXPERIENCE WITH THE MOOC "SELFORGANISED STUDYING"



SPEAKER

Hannes Mueller, TU Graz, Austria

Master's Degree in Sociology from University of Graz. Administrative and scientific activities during programme in the field of quality assurance and development (Teaching and Studies Services, University of Graz) and as student assistant (Department of Sociology, University of Graz). Now responsible for "Guided Start" initiatives at TU Graz (among others).



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The amount of information first-year students have to deal with at the start of their studies can be overwhelming. To provide an easy-to-consume, interactive info package with lots of guidance right from the start, we created the video-based and free available "SOS MOOC" for all TU Graz beginners.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Getting enrolled at university is only one of many steps in the "Student Journey". In most cases, an enrolment means beginners have already sighted some information about their focus area and their chosen study programme(s). However, student surveys conducted nationally and internally at TU Graz indicate that there's often a lack of information on crucial study-related topics, as there are for example:

- What's the average duration of my studies in semesters?
- How much time do I have to invest in total / per week / daily?
- Where can I turn to with certain issues?

Usually, all this information can be obtained online or in counselling. Nevertheless, universities are complex in their functioning and so is the dissemination of information on different websites or in other sources.

With the SOS MOOC (Massive Open Online Course "SelfOrganised Studying", <https://imoox.at/course/SOS>) we aimed to establish a "single point of contact" to give first-year students structured, video-based information before and right at the beginning of their studies about essentials. The duration of the vividly animated videos with staff and students of TU Graz lasts from 6-10 easy consumable minutes. Videos are designed in a manner to explain everything a beginner at university needs to know within the video itself, without further sources needed.

In designing the course, it was fundamental to integrate all TU Graz members: teaching/administrative staff as well as students/student unions. The final product after several workshops and feedback rounds consists of six modules:

- (1) University 101 (services, contact points, rights and obligations)
- (2) Feel good @ TU Graz (inclusiveness, studying abroad)

- (3) Networking (getting to know fellow students, student union)
- (4) Time management and coping with stress (setting goals and priorities)
- (5) Learning and motivational strategies (improving personal learning experiences)
- (6) Dos and Don'ts at university (library research, good scientific practice)

In additional quizzes as well as reflective questions viewers have the option to internalise what has been seen.

More than 400 people registered for the first course launch in autumn 2022. Usage numbers show that approximately half of the participants get through at least one video and that a neglectable percentage uses additional content (e.g., related brochures). That is, half of the participants enrol for the course but do not use any content.

The mandatory feedback of participants who concluded the whole course (n=33) or who responded to an optional questionnaire in March 2023 on the (non-)usage of the course (n=9) indicates high usability and usefulness with creative, informative, and not too long videos. Quizzes and reflection questions served their purpose for internalising contents. However, some topics could be treated more in detail. Moreover, the start less than two weeks before the semester beginning seemed too short for some participants to engage more with it than just enrolling.

In this context, some questions arise: In how far, if at all, can the usage of (new) technologies facilitate the onboarding of new students? To which extent do first-year students accept/prefer these forms compared to classic formats like welcome events?

THE SOURCE OF HAPPINESS – A GAME TO IMMERSE STUDENTS IN THE INDUCTION EXPERIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF SZEGED



SPEAKERS

Lilla Kocsis, University of Szeged, Hungary

Lilla Kocsis holds her master's degree in Hungarian and German language and literature in 2000 from the University of Szeged. She is active in education as a lecturer and has experience in administrative processes. She works at the Department for Academic Affairs of the University of Szeged since 2019.

Anna Kovács, University of Szeged, Hungary

Anna Kovács is based in Szeged, Hungary. She is a twenty-one-year-old economics student and marketing intern at the University of Szeged. Her studies are focused on Business and Management and she is writing her thesis on marketing communications concerning improving student engagement.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

How to catch happiness? Have visions, realize your dreams, be professional and explore the world. And enjoy the game when you get to know higher education. SZTE+ is a game to find your way in your new student life.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Student success is a key point at the University of Szeged (USZ). To help students integrate into the study environment and university community, the USZ developed a complex system where this program has a great impact. The drop out of the applicants is ca. 10% in Hungary because students start to work instead of learning, go abroad, or are lost in the administration and integration - the latter is unacceptable. There is a gap between high school and university life. Students need to manage their studies independently and master the dictionary and processes of the HE. The use of online study systems is strange for freshmen however, it is an inescapable part of study administration.

The USZ+ game is an implementation of the Graduate+ program at Birmingham City University – with local aspects, new challenges, and many happy moments to help the integration of first-year students in higher education. The badge-collecting game offers challenges in four topics. The students can be Visionary, Realizers, Professionals and Explorers to get to know the services of the university and the city. The students can find the challenges in the study system so during the game they use the most important functions of it. The challenges cover a wide range of university services. For instance, the students visit the library, the Career Office, and the website of the Foreign Language Centre and choose a favorite canteen. They develop their digital skills, risk management, self-awareness, and active problem solving – and get information on university life. Having a bronze medal, they need to meet 12 challenges. For a silver medal 4 challenges and for the gold one 4 challenges again – silver and bronze require more effort, for example, volunteer activities or participation in competitions.

Having a bronze medal, students can join social activities organized by students: board game nights with more hundred participants are the most popular.

The USZ+ issues a magazine every semester edited by students to disseminate the challenges and collect feedback. By the autumn of 2022, students met more than 10 thousand challenges of bronze levels. The most prevalent challenges are related to the study systems and the Foreign Language Centre. Students can meet the program representatives on the Open Days, in the sports events, and in the enrolment days. The students' favorite game is 4 years old and helped more thousand of students to find the source of happiness. Student's testimonies help us to see how students feel the USZ+ game supported them in their studies.

How can we make university services available for all the students? How can we influence student's success from the very first minutes?

How can be the must-have administration tasks attractive?

ENHANCING STUDENT EXPERIENCE DURING THE INTRODUCTORY PHASE



SPEAKER

Markus Orthaber, Montanuniversitaet Leoben, Austria

Markus Orthaber is a Senior Lecturer in Engineering Mechanics at Montanuniversitaet Leoben in Austria. He has been exploring blended learning since 2013, with a focus on incorporating real-world engineering problems into both formative and summative assessments. Recently, Markus has been working on streamlining the first-year experience for students through special projects, such as STEM Livestreams and introductory modules.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The Bachelor program at Montanuniversitaet Leoben, Austria has been revised to enhance students' experience and reduce dropout rates through the implementation of a STEM Introductory module. It consists of lectures, exercises, soft-skill courses, and a final project. This contribution focuses on the engineering mechanics part and how it supports students.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The bachelor program at Montanuniversitaet Leoben in Austria has been revised to enhance students' experience and reduce dropout rates. The study entry phase is a major focus, and a 6-week STEM Introductory module has been established to introduce students to basic subjects such as mathematics, physics, chemistry, and mechanics. The module includes introductory lectures, exercise courses, soft-skill courses as well as a final project. To promote collaborative learning, students are encouraged to work in groups and use the skills gained from the soft-skill courses in their final projects. A buddy system is also in place, where senior students act as mentors for first-year students. This should help in connecting first-year students with their peers, colleagues and thus the university itself.

This contribution focuses on the engineering mechanics part of the STEM module. It is organized in a blended learning scenario, using Moodle as the learning management system. The online tasks are integrated with in-class work, video lectures, and formative assessments to support students' individually. This approach helps students become familiar with self-paced and self-regulated learning, which is important in higher education and reduces the likelihood of dropouts. The contribution will also present the students' perspectives on their experience with the introductory module and discuss future adaptations as well as compare this approach to the study of (Larsen et al., 2021).



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Parallel 4.2 (Demonstration), Room 3508

GETTING TO KNOW ABOUT STUDENTS' DISPOSITIONS: LOW LEVEL SUPPORT IN THE TRANSITION PHASE



SPEAKER

Silke Preymann, University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, Austria

Dr Silke Preymann is a researcher in the department of Higher Education Research and Development at the University of Applied Sciences Upper Austria, Austria. Much of her research concentrates on organizational learning. She has worked on several international projects focusing on student diversity and student engagement. She completed her doctoral studies in Organization Science at the University of Linz.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Students' mindfulness of their own needs, self-compassion, and a low propensity to procrastinate have a strong impact on academic performance, student well-being, and student satisfaction. At UAS Upper Austria a specifically developed disposition survey supports students to reflect upon their strengths and challenges; on the basis of individual survey results, personalized and anonymously available support measures help students to enhance academic as well as life skills which form the basis for student success.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Research indicates that students' mindfulness of their needs, self-compassion, and resilience may form an alliance to support student well-being. Thus, reducing and overcoming barriers of self-criticism, social comparison and procrastination create a powerful opportunity to enhance academic performance, student well-being, and student satisfaction (Mantzios et al. 2020).

Yet, from an individual angle, students themselves do not only need to know about their own dispositions. They also need to be supported in reflecting upon their own strengths and challenges at the beginning of their studies to improve their academic and life skills. This, in turn, impacts student's individual transition into higher education as well as their academic success.

Hence, a student disposition questionnaire measuring attitudinal and personality constructs such as mindfulness, self-compassion, resiliency, procrastination and belongingness was developed within the Erasmus+ funded ENTRANTS project. The questionnaire is partly based on a survey by Egan et al. (2022) but was transferred into the German speaking context.

At UAS Upper Austria, the survey is currently promoted amongst beginner students via an interactive student app. It is easily and anonymously accessible to ensure high participation rates and to avoid stigmatization. After filling in the questionnaire students receive automatically generated feedback providing information on their results as well as

information about easily accessible and anonymously available support offers tailored to their respective results.

If students, for instance, score below average on the procrastination scale they will be offered a range of support measures like a link to podcasts or articles providing information about procrastination in general as well as useful tips and exercises to improve the situation; student testimonials show that procrastination is a quite common phenomenon nobody needs to be ashamed of; further, links to guided support groups and finally contact information for student counselling and psychological support are made available.

In addition, all offers are accessible via <https://kompass.fh-ooe.at/>. The website caters to the needs of beginner students and provides information about student life in general. It is divided into three areas: Life (how to find like-minded people and how to spend your time at the campus), study (how to deal with the academic workload) and orientation (how to find your way around campus).



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TEACHING STUDENTS SAFETY THROUGH GAMIFICATION



SPEAKER

Christine Holm Berntzen, OsloMet / sikresiden.no, Norway

Christine is a senior advisor at OsloMet, working with the safety portal sikresiden.no. She has a masters degree in political science from the Norwegian university of science and technology, and has previously worked as project leader for a national project concerning students and substance abuse.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

“Safe student” is a module-based game, where students can learn about different topics (e.g. Structure your day, Handle stress, Loneliness, First aid) through interactive learning. The game teaches students basic knowledge about the different themes and gives them helpful pointers on how to have a better student life.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Sikresiden.no is a collaboration between thirty-three Norwegian universities, colleges, and research institutions. It is a web-based portal where students and employees learn about safety, security and what to do in a crisis situation.

In addition to the web-based portal we have developed several gamified apps, where students can learn about how to better master student life and take care of their mental health.

One of these apps is “Safe student” – a module-based game, where students can learn about different topics (e.g. Structure your day, Handle stress, Loneliness, First aid). Each module consists of ten to fifteen questions, structured as different kinds of interactive minigames (e.g. connect, choice chain, swipe and bubbles). Seventeen universities and colleges have signed up to use this resource in 2023 per. 28.03.23.

The game teaches students basic knowledge about the different themes and gives them helpful pointers on how to have a better student life. It is not a replacement for therapy or counselling, but rather acts a supplement as a low-threshold resource they can use when they have the time or motivation.

It is also a resource given to all first-year students to help them get off on the right foot with their life as a student.

The game is made in collaboration with student welfare organisations, mental health professionals and with input and feedback from students.

In this show and tell, I will share how this learning resource was made, what it consists of, and get the participants involved by playing it themselves.

HOW NEW STUDENTS AND PEER TUTORS GET TO KNOW THE CAMPUS FACILITIES AND SERVICES WITH THE HELP OF A GAME APPLICATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF EASTERN FINLAND



SPEAKERS

Niina Rissanen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Niina Rissanen (Master of Arts) is working as a coordinator at the University of Eastern Finland Student and Learning Services. Our team provides services for new students, especially orientation and tutoring. Niina Rissanen focuses mainly on peer tutoring and study skills issues.

Outi Tikkanen, University of Eastern Finland, Finland

Outi Tikkanen (Master of Education) is working as a coordinator at the University of Eastern Finland Student and Learning Services. Our team provides services for new students, especially orientation and tutoring. Outi Tikkanen focuses mainly on orientation and online materials for new students.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The presentation describes how peer tutors and new students can get acquainted with the services of the university campuses using a game application. By gamifying the introduction to campus services, it has been possible to create a motivating and group-building way to get to know the university campuses and their services.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The presentation describes how both the peer tutors and new students can get acquainted with the services of the university's campuses using a game application. Development work in Student and Learning Services began when, due to the pandemic, there was an urgent need for students to explore the university's campuses independently. Getting to know campuses and their services was gamified. As the pandemic has eased, the use of game applications has been continued, as they seem to provide students with a motivating and group-building way to explore campuses.

Gamification has promoted the familiarisation with the university's campuses and their services. The games have been developed by UEF students along with service providers and staff at Student and Learning Services. In this way, the game applications hold a student perspective and create meaningful assignments and exercises that support students' familiarization.

In cooperation with staff at various campus services, peer tutors have created their own Campus Service Game, which they play as part of tutor training to get acquainted with the services intended for students. With the help of the game and by going through the information and task checkpoints, they update their knowledge of the university's services and thus have the latest information and skills to pass them on to new students. The Campus Service Game is part of the tutor training. All peer tutors go through the game tracks together, competing playfully through the checkpoints. The answers to the

assignments are scored and the best experts are rewarded at the end of the day. The assignments also include elements to promote grouping among the peer tutors themselves.

Campus orienteering, on the other hand, is aimed at new students starting their studies at the University of Eastern Finland. In the game, new students can freely explore campuses and their services at a time of their choice, for example, with their own peer tutor group or another student group. They can also get acquainted with the services independently, and it is possible to do so even before the actual studies begin. Some of the new students' campus orienteering checkpoints include small voluntary assignments that support student grouping. In addition, the game allows new students to find the services they are looking for in real buildings. Assignments are not scored and the game does not include competition, one of the aims is to gently facilitate their social integration into the community.

Both games are implemented on a commercial Seppo.io gaming platform. The Seppo gaming platform and its opportunities for learning and cooperation are available on the Seppo website at (<https://seppo.io/pedagogy>):

"Seppo is an ideal tool for game-based learning. You can easily create lessons that combine creativity, collaboration and use of skills and knowledge."

"Collaboration is a crucial part of Seppo games. When learners solve tasks as a team, they can utilise the knowledge and strengths of individual team members and come up with solutions together. Achieving a common goal fosters team spirit, which continues to live on even after the game has finished."

EDGE: DEVELOPING A GRADUATE DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK TO INCENTIVISE AND RECOGNISE STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT AND SUCCESS ALONGSIDE THE CURRICULUM



SPEAKER

Angela McGlynn, Munster Technological University, Ireland

Angela McGlynn has been working as Project Officer for the EDGE Graduate Development Programme at MTU since 2020. Angela has a background in science outreach having completed her PhD in Biological Sciences and worked in academia, research as well as science education in the private sector.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

The EDGE framework is designed to recognise, incentivise, and reward student engagement. This poster, and demonstration of the bespoke digital platform, will show how students discover ways to get involved in university life, and reflect on their activities, that evidence their experiences in a personal and meaningful way.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The EDGE framework encourages first year students to engage with intra- and extra-curricular activities, on- and off-campus, to achieve bronze, silver, and gold awards. Students can collate their activities, as they learn to articulate and evidence their personal skills, that will enhance their university experience and their graduateness.

Parallel 4.3 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 3511

WELLBEING TUTORING – REDUCING LONELINESS AND IMPROVING STUDENTS WELLBEING



SPEAKER

Timi Kärki, Student Union of University of Oulu (OYY), Finland

Project coordinator at OYY. BA, history. Will graduate as MA, history at spring 2023.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

You will be introduced to Wellbeing tutoring in which students can find something meaningful to their life. In the presentation you will be introduced how we have created a functional and successful peer to peer project which has reduced loneliness among university students in Oulu.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

The presentation will be about the wellbeing project of the student union of university of Oulu. Its goal is to reduce loneliness among students, and to lower the threshold about meeting new people and finding meaningful pastime to every student's life. First you will be introduced about what is wellbeing tutoring in action - peer to peer work in which the wellbeing tutors organize activities for other students. The activities have a large range, it can be sports (e.g. football, badminton, winter swimming), teaching skills or sharing knowledge (e.g. Finnish language, knitting, pottery), or cultural activities (e.g. improv, movie evenings, museum visits). Covid 19 affected the whole student community drastically. A lot of students have faced loneliness and other negative effects of the pandemic.

University of Oulu has 11 000 students and there has been over 7000 participations to the project's activities within two years with over 2000 first-time participants. In a survey about the effects of the program shows that about 80 percent of people think that the project has improved their mental health and reduced their loneliness. About 50 per cent of people feel like their physical health improved and 99 percent of people recommend wellbeing tutoring to others.

Almost every activity is free to participate, so it lowers the threshold to try out new things. We provide different equipment to the students to the activities, such as loan equipment to different sports, art supplies and board games for example. About half of the activities are close to our campuses, so it's easy to join in the activities during, or after a day of studying.

Our wellbeing project is funded by the Finnish ministry of education and culture. We started the project in the spring of 2021 and the funding will last until the end of January 2024. The overall funding is about 190 thousand euros.

One of the biggest groups attending the activities have been international students (degree and exchange students). It's an easy way for international students to meet Finnish

students. About half of the wellbeing tutors are international students. There's at least one wellbeing tutor from each faculty of our university.

The project coordinator oversees training and organization of the tutors and their activities. Project coordinator works 37,5 hours per week. The tutors get a payment of 12 euros/h for their activities. Besides the payment, the students will get work experience which they can use later in search for a job.

I will also present how to engage the tutors to the project, advertising the project, and how the local (student) culture affects the project. And what does it take to get in contact with the students and student organizations. Collaboration is key in this project. There must be an active communication channel towards the university, non-profit organizations at the university and in the city, towards the municipality and its different actors, and similar projects.

Parallel 4.4 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 3510

THE FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE OF ETHNIC MINORITY FEMALE STUDENTS AND INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT THEM WITH THEIR TRANSITION TO COLLEGE.



SPEAKERS

Jenny Petrucci, The American University of Rome, Italy

Jenny Petrucci is an Assistant Professor in First Year Studies at The American University of Rome and the Director of the First Year Experience at The American University of Rome. She holds a BA in Foreign Language and Literature an MA in Postcolonial Studies, and a Doctorate in Education.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This presentation is focused on a study that explores the transition to university and the first-year experience of Ethnic Minority Female students at a predominantly white American institution located in Italy. The presenter will highlight the results of the study and offer insight on possible low-cost measures that any institution could take to support this underrepresented student population during their first-year experience in college, including a detailed description of the First Year Seminar used at the Institution.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

This study explores the transition to university and the first-year experience of Ethnic Minority Female Students at a predominantly white American higher education institution located in Italy. The main aim of this thesis is to capture students' stories on how they navigate the academic, social and personal realms of university life and to understand how these elements impact on their personal identity formation and overall first-year experience. Since the literature reveals that discrimination is one of the challenges Ethnic Minority Students tend to face when entering college, I focused my inquiry on the issues of race and gender in particular. The study adopts a qualitative approach to the university lives of 11 Ethnic Minority Female Students. I conducted semi-structured individual interviews and two subsequent focus groups. While the interviews centered around the participants' holistic experience during their first year at university, the focus groups tended to dig deeper into the race and gender dimension of those experiences. The findings indicate that the prevailing instability in the world equipped the young women who participated in this study with new skills for coping with the unexpected and for a smoother adjustment to new situations. The data also reveal that there are gender specific challenges these participants face, such as personal safety and gender discrimination, yet, again they seem to benefit from their ability to cope with real life situations (e.g. war). Nevertheless, despite each participant providing evidence of having been the target of racial and gender discrimination, they lacked appropriate language for discussing issues of race and gender and tended to minimize discriminations occurring to them. The contributions of this study are as follows: it highlights the coping mechanisms (including 'use of humour' and 'take action') put into place by the participants in the face of such

discriminations, and demonstrates how these mechanisms not only empowered them and boosted their self-esteem, but also served as counter narratives to combat mainstream ideologies and institutional racism as well as to resist the University dominant culture. This thesis adds to the studies on predominantly white universities (especially to those located in Europe) and it shows how educational practices need to be better informed by the experiences of Ethnic Minority Students. The study offers some initiatives and activities that could better help Ethnic Minority Female Students with their transition to college. One of the most successful among the High Impact Initiatives used at The American University of Rome (AUR) to support First Time In College Students with their transition to university is a mandatory class called The First Year Seminar – Explorations in the Liberal Arts. The course is team taught and topic based and it aims at introducing students to the idea of interdisciplinarity, foster critical thinking and help them acquire academic tools to succeed at AUR. The course serves as a strong tool not only for retention, but most importantly for enhancing students' sense of belonging and social inclusion.

STUDENT 2025: UNDERSTANDING DISPARITIES IN STUDENT OUTCOMES THROUGH EXPLORING THE INDIVIDUAL STUDENT JOURNEY



SPEAKERS

Sarah Lawther, Nottingham Trent University, England

Dr Sarah Lawther is an Educational Research and Evaluation Specialist at Nottingham Trent University who has worked on a variety of projects focused on improving the student experience. Her research interests include: student transition, understanding differences in student outcomes, religion and belief in higher education, and learning analytics

Erick Morataya Gatica, Nottingham Trent University, England

Erick Morataya Gatica leads the Educational Research and Evaluation Team at Nottingham Trent University. He moved to the UK from Guatemala in 2015. His work has been closely linked to investigating structural inequalities. Currently working on the Student 2025 project exploring the student experience and disparities using a longitudinal approach.

Ria Bluck, Nottingham Trent University, England

Ria Bluck is an Educational Research and Evaluation Specialist at Nottingham Trent University with a breadth of experience exploring the disparities in student experience. Her previous work has primarily explored wellbeing and inclusion in higher education, from the perspective of the student.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This presentation shares the methodology and early findings from the first year of a unique four-year longitudinal study at a UK university. The Student 2025 project follows 100 undergraduate students from a diversity of backgrounds with the aim of enhancing institutional understanding of factors that influence disparities in student outcomes.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

This session shares the methodology and early findings from the first year of a unique four-year longitudinal study at Nottingham Trent University (NTU). NTU is a large UK university that has recently been named Modern University of the Year in The Times and Sunday Times Good University Guide 2023.

The Student 2025 project follows 100 undergraduate students from a diversity of backgrounds with the aim of enhancing institutional understanding of factors that influence disparities in student outcomes. The recruitment strategy was aimed at encouraging Black students, and those from lower socio-economic backgrounds in particular to apply, in order to capture the voices of these student groups to inform our understanding of their experiences.

The students were recruited in their first year of study in 2021/22. Each student completes a short survey and an interview with the research team three times a year (once a term), and we will continue to follow these students until the project end in 2024/25. So far, over 250 interviews and surveys have been completed by the students.

The project will enable us to explore the students' academic experience, and social experience, throughout their undergraduate student journey. It will enable us to explore changes in their student experience, such as changes in feelings of belonging to the university, and to explore in rich detail how this may be different for different groups of students as has been found for example by HEP/Advance HE Student Academic Experience 2022 (Neves and Brown 2022). It will also allow exploration of contextual factors that affect the student experience, such as the current 'cost of living' crisis in the UK (Jones 2022) and the impact of part-time working on study.

This longitudinal and mixed method approach will enable a holistic understanding of the student experience from which to inform strategic considerations and practices that can support the reduction of unexplained differences in student outcomes.

This session will include:

- An introduction to the project methodology, including lessons learnt, and how we have adapted aspects of the project in response to student feedback;
- How we communicate to the student participants about the project and the impact of their participation;
- Early findings of the project, including the first year students' experience of belonging, and how this differs between student groups.

The session will also report on the student reflections about their experience of taking part in the research, including how participation has enabled them to reflect upon, and learn from, their first year experience.



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Neves, J., and Brown, A., 2022. Student Academic Experience Survey 2022. York: HEP/AdvanceHE. Available at: <https://www.hepi.ac.uk/2022/06/09/2022-student-academic-experience-survey/>.

Parallel 4.5 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2522

GENERATING THE ACADEMIC AND SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS FOR UNDERGRADUATE STUDENT SUCCESS THROUGH ASSESSING ENGAGEMENT IN FORMATIVE TASKS



SPEAKERS

Sarah Parkes, Newman University Birmingham, England

Sarah is a 2020 National Teaching Fellow and an AdvanceHE CATE 2019 award winner. She has 15 years HE teaching experience, and currently leads the Post graduate certificate in HE practice and CPD route to HE Fellowship. She also teaches a broad social science curriculum to new foundation year undergraduates.

Helen Bardy, Newman University Birmingham, England

Helen is an AdvanceHE CATE 2019 award winner and Fellow of the Higher Education Academy. She leads post graduate programmes in Chaplaincy at Newman University and teaches on the Integrated Foundation Year. She has recently undertaken research into school chaplaincy and is involved in governance of voluntary youth service provision.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This session discusses how the Newman University Integrated Foundation Year uses student engagement in a range of formative engagement tasks as the module's summative assessment. Known as 'Assessment by Engagement', this offers a means to generate the academic and social foundations for undergraduate student success that recognises the variety of ways in which students engage in study.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Newman University is a small, young, vibrant institution on a single campus on the outskirts of Birmingham, England. The primary focus of the university is to provide a transformative experience for local students who go on to work and live regionally. The Newman student body is both diverse and also representative of the region. The majority of students here are mature, and a great many have both caring and employment responsibilities in addition to their full-time studies. Two thirds of students are female, with just under half identifying as from a Black, Asian, Mixed, or other ethnic background. Additionally, a quarter of students have declared a disability, which is higher than the national average for working adults in the United Kingdom (Department for Work and pensions, 2022). Most students commute into study and over half come from the most deprived areas of England (Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, 2019).

The rich and diverse experiences of Newman students creates layers of complexity in terms of supporting student development and success. This is clearly visible on the Newman University Integrated Foundation Year (NUIFY), which was introduced to provide an alternative route for those unable to meet the traditional entry requirements for a three-year undergraduate degree. Since inception in 2017, this year by design has resisted a

deficit discourse of undergraduate student retention and transition, being underpinned by the principles of critical pedagogy and 'transition-as-becoming' (Gale and Parker, 2012). This initial year of study embodies much of what Nelson and Kift (2005) describe as a transition's pedagogy that concomitantly embraces democratic engagement, meaningful dialogue, and co-operative working (Parke, Mathias, and Seal, 2018). This then works to foster a sense of belonging that, as Thomas (2012) and Tinto (2006) attest, are central to supporting student continuation.

In response to the COVID19 Pandemic and associated national lockdown restrictions in England, assessment design in 2020/21 for 100 of the 120 credits awarded changed to Assessment by Engagement (AbE), rather than being portfolio based. This enabled a shift that remains on the programme today. AbE embraces digital technologies to both support student success through using e-tivities (Salmon, 2004) embedded within curriculum, as well as develop digital literacies that enhance the student experience. These are set within a 'Community of Inquiry' that aims to promote effective and meaningful online educational experiences (Garrison, 2020). AbE also provides a more nuanced mechanism to recognise the variety of ways in which students engage in study and is proving helpful in maintaining continuation onto subject degree study. It thus enables personalisation of student transitions that build the academic and social foundations for student success.

This session will outline the complexities of 'becoming' with Newman students, discuss the underpinning ideas influencing NUIFY design, explain how assessment by engagement works and consider the impact of implementation. This will include student vignettes relaying their experiences of the year and specifically AbE.

TRANSITION TO REMOTE DIGITAL EXAMS: BRINGING OUR FIRST YEARS ALONG WITH US



SPEAKERS

Maggie Gibson, Birmingham City University, England

Maggie is Head of Learner Development at Birmingham City University. Leading the University's Centre for Academic Success and Digital Assessment Centre, within the Education Development Service, she has a background in maths and academic writing teaching at secondary school and University level. Her particular interests are around academic literacies development and inclusive assessment.

Tom Ashmore, Birmingham City University, England

Tom is the Digital Assessment Designer at Birmingham City University. Working closely with staff in all Faculties at the University, he manages the Digital Assessment team and the operation of the Digital Assessment Centre to ensure that exams are successfully organised and delivered. Tom has a particular interest in inclusive assessment and developing digital literacy.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

At Birmingham City University we are embracing the opportunities the pandemic generated to maintain a digital-first policy for examinations. Focusing on the experiences of our first years, we will discuss our journey and the approach we are taking to developing digital confidence and fluency around exams.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Prior to the pandemic, in Autumn 2019, Birmingham City University began to pilot a Digital Assessment Centre, offering digital exams on-campus facilitated by a dedicated team. The purpose was to provide a facility and support that enabled academics to experiment with innovative approaches to examinations, provide an inclusive space for students to undertake their exams and to utilise technology to reduce marking workload and exam administration for academics.

As a relatively small-scale pilot, we were working with a small number of interested and enthusiastic staff in the hope of increasing the uptake over the following few years. However, in spring 2020, only six months into the pilot, everything changed for HE and exams were the centre of attention.

Our first years were particularly impacted by the pandemic, and experienced many challenges around digital confidence and fluency when moving to remote digital exams. Our current focus is around taking the opportunity to welcome and prepare our first years for the digital exam experience from their first assessments with us.

This presentation will showcase our journey so far from our initial work to pioneer digital examinations in a UK institution, through the pandemic and its impact, to where we are today, with all exams principally digital and remote. Delegates will have the opportunity to hear about a possibly unfamiliar strategy and approach to examinations, the challenges

of introducing first year students to the systems and software, and our evolving approach to developing digital exam literacy and confidence in our first year cohorts and the impact of this on exam delivery.

Parallel 4.6 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2521

"LET IT BE" OR A "NEVER GONNA GIVE YOU UP"? ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDY GUIDANCE



SPEAKER

Lot Fonteyne, Ghent University, Belgium

Dr. Lot Fonteyne works as a policy advisor at the department of educational policy of Ghent University. She works on the topic of evidence-based study orientation tools and their relationship to student success.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

In organizing remedial activities, do we really reach the students who need the support most? And do students with the intention to remediate really follow through on that? And if they do, does this support their study success? We provide thought-provoking evidence from two different projects.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

It is generally assumed that in organizing remedial activities we do not reach the students that are most eligible for support. However, does the data support this? And do students with the intention to remediate really follow through on that? Moreover, if they do, does this support their study success?

We provide evidence from two different projects (N = 2681 and N = 8195) aimed at letting students reflect on their strengths and weaknesses in the transition to higher education and on guiding them towards remedial activities.

Following personalized skills and abilities tests and instruments, students received feedback on their personal competencies and the relation of their scores to the expected skills and abilities to successfully pass in their chosen study program. Following the feedback, a survey was sent to ask students about their intentions to participate in several remedial activities (such as group sessions or individual contact with a student counselor). A follow-up survey was sent after one academic year/semester to evaluate whether they followed through on their intentions and effectively undertook any action. Finally, study success indicators were retrieved from university databases to evaluate whether undertaking action was related to study success.

Evidence from both projects shows that students with a low predicted chance of success have a higher intention to remediate following feedback than students with higher predicted chances of success. And the follow-up survey indicates that they effectively do. However, one-on-one comparison shows that there is a major discrepancy between initial intention and real activation. Results also show that students who are activated have lower success rates than those who are not.

It is concluded that students who know they lack certain skills do have the intention to remediate and are effectively activated. However, their intentions and actions do not lead to the desired result of alleviating study success.

Discussion is focused on the effectiveness of student guidance activities and on specific (student, environment, counselor) conditions that render support effective.

USING THE VIRTUAL LEARNING ENVIRONMENT TO SUPPORT ACADEMIC TRANSITION AND PROVIDE A PERSONALISED FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE



SPEAKER

Casey Beaumont, Liverpool John Moores University, England

I have experience in academic research, teaching, and programme management (History, Education), as well as design and delivery of international foundation and access-to-university courses. I currently manage the university's learning development service, which provides induction and transition support and academic and digital literacy development.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

This presentation outlines the development of an online academic and digital literacy course which aimed to support students' transition through their first year of academic study. It was delivered via the institutional VLE and led to a significant increase in student engagement with support services, notably among APP target groups.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

In response to significant disruptions to the First Year Experience in 2021, and in recognition of reduced opportunities for students to engage with staff and peers and other contextual information, Liverpool John Moores University developed an online academic and digital literacy course which aimed to support students' transition through their first year of academic study, and to facilitate development of effective study behaviours and understanding of university systems and practices.

The course was designed in collaboration with the Teaching and Learning Academy, Academic Registry, IT Services and academic faculties, and was produced in five iterations to align with the university's academic faculties and subject areas. This aimed to develop faculty cohorts or student learning communities, and to facilitate a more personalised or relevant approach to academic literacy development.

It was hosted in, and delivered via, the university's virtual learning environment (Canvas), and all first-year students were programmatically enrolled onto their relevant faculty course. This was expressly intended as a method of embedding and normalising learning development within the academic space, as students were automatically presented with the course alongside their subject modules in the VLE. It also aimed to build knowledge and confidence in using the university's digital technologies and tools, including the VLE itself, through contextual modelling and experiential learning of the technologies required to effectively engage with the university teaching and learning experience.

The course was delivered by the university's learning development team in a range of accessible forms that encouraged engagement by diverse groups of first-year students. It provided a regular and repeated programme of academic skills webinars designed to align with transitional points of the academic cycle, online student discussions and drop-ins and one-to-one tutorials, and a range of scaffolded asynchronous learning resources that support development of academic literacy and self-efficacy. The course also acted as a

point of contact and enquiry about navigating university services and practices and as referral into substantive or specialised academic and digital literacy support.

The course resulted in a significant increase in first-year student engagement, including in faculties and student groups with previously low engagement with academic literacy support services. Some forms of delivery saw disproportionately high engagement by the university's Access and Participation Plan target student groups. This has informed ongoing development and targeting of provision, including the design and implementation of learning development courses for students of all levels of study, and, most notably in this context, the development of a pre-induction course which prepares students for university study and provides an early introduction to the digital learning environment that will be central to their First Year Experience.

Parallel 4.7 (20-Minute Presentations), Room 2517

FIRST YEAR STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF AN ONLINE ACADEMIC SKILLS INTERVENTION DESIGNED TO ASSIST TRANSITION TO UNIVERSITY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY



SPEAKERS

Laura Dee Barber, Middlesex University Dubai, UAE

Assistant Library Manager for Information Literacy at Middlesex University Dubai. Received MA Library and Information Management from Manchester Metropolitan University and PGCert in Academic Practice in Higher Education from Coventry University. Currently completing PhD thesis 'Information literacy at transition' at the University of Sheffield.

Abigail Cruz, Middlesex University Dubai, UAE

Received Master in Information Studies from Charles Sturt University and completed MA in Higher Education from Middlesex University. Working at Middlesex University Dubai since 2014, currently as the Assistant Library Manager for Public Services and Liaison Librarian for all undergraduate/postgraduate programs in Business and Law/Politics.



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Librarians at Middlesex University Dubai designed and implemented the prototype Academic Aptitude Assessment (Triple A), an online interactive resource for first year undergraduates. The intervention compares levels of confidence versus academic skills. This explorative research investigates first year students' perception of the Triple A in relation to their transition experience.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Librarians at Middlesex University Dubai (an international branch satellite campus of a British University) designed and implemented the Academic Aptitude Assessment (or Triple A), an online interactive resource to assist new student transitioning into university. The intervention has been devised to assess and compare levels of confidence versus academic skills within six areas. The first year transition is crucial to success (Gale and Parker, 2012) and it can be difficult especially for international students navigating the new diverse educational setting and culture of the host-institute (Rienties et al., 2012). Transition is exacerbated when new students have unrealistic expectations regarding student workload (Bowles et al., 2013) or misjudge the academic skills that are required within the university environment (Head, 2013). New students can overestimate their academic skills and fail to recognize how their skill level compares to others (Kruger and Dunning, 1999). Students unaware of academic skill deficits will not seek out help as they believe that they already have necessary skills (Michalak, Rysavy, & Wessel, 2017).

The Triple A consists of three parts designed to improve student reflection and metacognition: an assessment consisting of 60 questions; results with 'self-assessed' confidence and 'actual' scores to identify academic skills areas that require development;

and open-ended learning materials to improve abilities within the six areas. Self-reflection and assessment of performance are an important part of learning as this impacts how the student attempts tasks in later performances (Panadero, 2017). The development of metacognition supports students' accurate evaluation, how well they have learnt and understood, leading them to set goals and identify current capabilities compared to future needs (Dunlosky and Rawson, 2012).

This explorative research investigated first year undergraduate students' perception of the Triple A in relation to their current transition experience. Semi-structured interviews assisted evaluation of the Triple A and iterative development of the learning resources.

STUDENT CHAMPION LEARNER JOURNEY MAPS: STUDENT-LED DIALOGUE TO IMPROVE THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE



SPEAKERS

Ellie Birchall, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Ellie Birchall is a Student Champion, PAL intern, and undergraduate psychology and sociology student at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Her research interests include peer support in higher education contexts, the material culture of clothing and learning enhancement.

Christie McDove, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Christie McDove is a Student Champion, and an Undergraduate level 4 Public Sociology student at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Christie is a mature student, a direct entrant from college and a student living impacted by her mental health condition. Her research interests include the learner experience, Public Sociology, and feminist theory.

Zee Wasfy, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Zee Wasfy is a Student Champion and international student studying level 1 MSc in art Psychotherapy at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Her research interests include Sociology, Psychology, Humanities, and diversity and inclusion.

Mya Bell, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Mya Bell is a Student Champion and undergraduate nursing student at Queen Margaret University. Her research interests include person-centered practice, sexual and reproductive health, LGBTQIA+ health and wellbeing, and diversity and inclusion.

Catriona Bell, Queen Margaret University, Scotland

Prof Catriona Bell is the Director of Learning Enhancement and Academic Development at Queen Margaret University, Edinburgh. Her research interests include Students as Partners, Inclusive Curriculum, and Leadership of Learning and Teaching. She led the establishment of the Student Champions initiative at QMU, and will be contributing to questions at the end of the session (if required).



PROGRAMME SUMMARY

Student Champion is a new paid, part-time role implemented at QMU in which current students have been appointed in order to highlight a diverse range of students' experiences. This presentation explores the qualitative data collected and finalised learner journey maps, which focus on different types of students and stages of the learner journey.



PROGRAMME ABSTRACT

Student Champion is a new paid, part-time role implemented at Queen Margaret University (QMU), Edinburgh, in 2022. The aim of the students appointed as Student Champions is to embrace current students' perspectives and experiences in order to improve student life, demonstrating QMU's commitment to the 'students as partners' approach. The QMU Student Champions initiative was established in September 2022 in

order to build on existing good practice around Students as Partners approaches at our institution, and to particularly support delivery of the [QMU Student Experience Strategy](#) and Enhancement Themes project. Budget for creating these paid, part-time roles for our students was secured by the [LEAD Centre](#), and recruitment (including creating job descriptions and interviewing candidates) was undertaken in partnership with our [Students' Union](#) and Governance and Quality Enhancement (GQE) team.

QMU has a diverse student body, with many students following different paths into and within university; for example, many of the students are direct entrants, meaning, they enrol directly into second or third year after completing a relevant college course. By gaining students' perspectives and experiences, QMU has found ways in which to understand and aid this transition into university, as well as understand and overcome barriers to a fruitful student experience.

Dialogue is a core component of the Student Champion role, with our main work during the academic year 2022-2023 being the research and production of student journey learner maps. Learner journey maps were created through exploratory dialogue amongst our team in order to reflect the diversity of our Student Champion team - and the wider student body's - transitions into and journeys throughout Higher Education, mapping routes and possible barriers to the student's learning experience. The rest of the academic year brings exciting plans for the Student Champions team with student engagement drives, alongside digital Padlet-based questionnaires and in-person focus groups to explore and discover the content of a multitude of student learner journeys, including mature students, direct entrants, international students, and postgraduate students. Through gaining these different perspectives, we aim to form various pages of the learner journey maps, from the initial application stage and concerns about integration to approaching the dissertation and developing post-graduate career plans. The findings from these perspectives will be woven into various aspects of QMU, notably improvements to first-year induction for all students; therefore, the impact will be seen throughout the university. In our presentation, we aim to show the impact so far (and expected future impact) of our work as Student Champions on the Learner Experience. We will also share approaches in case they are of interest to other universities in Europe.

Staff have also incorporated our perspectives into various committees, including the Enhancement Themes Committee and the Student Experience Committee. As a result, we have extensive experience in working with the student body and staff at Queen Margaret University and ways in which we can use this data in order to improve the student experience further and amplify the student voice.

In this presentation, we will build on existing research of the students as partners approach, as well as discussing how we have implemented this at QMU through Student Champion work. We will also showcase the refined learner journey maps as well as the qualitative data gained through focus groups, the engagement drive and online software, demonstrating how the data collected is used to improve students' experience at QMU. We will also discuss how dialogue surrounding student perspectives facilitates a sense of belonging; something that has consistently proven to be essential to students' transition into, and successful completion of, Higher Education. Also, discussing the ways in which this may be applied to other universities with similar effects.

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We will also evaluate our work and share approaches in case they are of interest to suggest how the Student Champion model may be applied to other universities in Europe.

As a result of Student Champion being a new model implemented at QMU, we aim to evaluate the impact of our work and how this may be developed further.