University of Edinburgh
Student Experience Project: Pre-arrival & Induction

Description of unit
The purpose of Induction is to have students identify as a member of the University of Edinburgh community and understand expectations related to community membership. This induction programme should be designed to provide opportunities to enhance student success, increase student satisfaction and retention and improve graduation rates.

The objective of Induction is to assist students in navigating their transition to university as a member of the University community, while enhancing their opportunities for personal development and academic success.

In its initial phase, the Induction team project is concerned with scoping current Induction practices at the University. Concurrently we are developing the principles that will underpin, and make recommendations for, the on-going management and development of the University of Edinburgh’s Induction Programme.

Aims
The aim of this project is to develop enhanced pre-arrival and induction support, enabling our diverse student population to successfully transition to university life and study. To reach this goal the induction team will be working closely with EUSA, support services and the Schools and Colleges that make up this devolved University.

Examples of activity
- Gearing Up for Induction 2013 Event
- Centralised Induction Timetable
- Academic Fair Enhancements
- Academic Induction on-going initiatives
  - Pre-arrival ‘academic skills’ website development
  - Collaboration with interested Schools on activity based inductions and case studies of current practice
  - In depth rich data longitudinal study of student and staff interaction and perspectives during first year

Contacts & Further Information
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- Further Information and the resulting documents mentioned in the case studies of examples of activity can be found on the Pre-arrival & Induction Wiki
**Title:** Gearing Up for Induction 2013  
**Date:** 9th April 2013, 09:00-14:00

**What was done:**
A half-day event to bring together key university staff involved with planning and delivering new student inductions. The purpose was to provide staff the opportunity to network and share good practice. It also was the introduction to the newly formed Pre-arrival & Induction team and provided an important opportunity to update attendees on the work of the new team and to discuss how we might collaborate in the future.

The day consisted of a Keynote address, “Supporting Student Transitions: Pre-arrival, Arrival, and Orientation and Induction” led by Michelle Morgan, Learning and Teaching Coordinator at Kingston University.

There were a variety of interactive sessions focusing on identifying 4 Principle Aspects of Transition, Challenges and Barrier to enhancing Induction, and show and tell sessions hosted by various areas of the university: Online Distance Learning, Law School, Residence Life, International Buddies, Community Education, and the Vet School.

**Goals for Attendees**
- To gain an understanding of what is happening around the university in regards to Induction 2013
- Network with academic and support staff also tasked with delivering and enhancing induction events
- Share good practice
- Learn about the new Pre arrival and Induction strand of the Student Experience Project and meet project staff & task group members
- Take part in consultation with the Induction team and know how to get involved as we move forward with Induction 2013
- Be able to understand “University Induction” in a broader UK context

**Lessons Learnt:**
- Key themes emerged from discussions held around the tables at the “Gearing Up for Induction 2013” day. These included centralised planning, issues of timetabling, Communications – both those to students as well as ensuring staff have an understanding of what is happening and the role they play, Staff training, use of Technology, costs, and student knowledge pre-arrival of course programmes.
- Staff from all areas of the university are interested in coming together to hear what is happening in other areas and how that may be implemented in their own respective areas. There is a keen desire to continue to have this type of event in future years.

**Resulting Documents:**
- “You Said, We Are”
- Challenges & Barriers to Enhancing Induction – attendees thoughts
- Good Practice in 4 Areas of Transition: Academic, Administrative, Geographic & Social

**Going Forward:**
- It is the goal of the Induction team to make this an annual event
- Expand to allow more participants
- As we continue to construct the Pre-arrival and Induction Strategy it is the Induction Team’s aim to ensure that the relevant key points are areas for continued focus. This strategy will inform our work over the next 2 years of the project.
### Title: Central Induction Timetable

**Date:** Updated version emailed to staff (in colleges and support services) once a month

**What was done:**
- Based on previous work of Induction / New Student Working Groups at the university a Centralised Timetable of events being hosted during Induction Week has been distributed. It allows Schools and central services to see the variety of events being hosted throughout the university during September Induction Week (7-15 September 2013).
- Additional information provided this year include each of the Schools’ Initial UG Welcome Meetings as well as PG welcome events.

**Motivation & Aims:**
Raise awareness amongst staff throughout the university as to the full Induction Programme offered for students. Allows schools and central services to plan their Induction Programmes around the key central university events thus avoiding clashing timetables.

**Successes & Lessons Learnt:**
- This is the first year the School Welcome Talks / Introduction Sessions have been included.
  Initial feedback from staff indicates it has been much appreciated and useful to see when the Schools are planning their sessions
- The first email this year with this draft timetable was sent in April. In future years the aim will be to send it much earlier in Spring Semester to allow all relevant areas to begin to plan in plenty of time (avoiding the stressful periods of Spring Break, Exams, and Grading)

**Resulting Documents:**
- Central Induction Timetable

**Going Forward:**
- Will continue to be sent in future years, taking into account need for initial draft to be circulated much earlier in Spring Semester
- Possibility of a January Centralised Induction timetable

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### Title: Academic Fair

**Date:** Tuesday, 10th September 2013. 12:00-16:00. Appleton Tower

**What was done:**
- Enhancements for 2013:
  - Being jointly hosted by Induction Team & EUSA
  - Utilising more space within Appleton Tower (to ease congestion)
  - Offering Schools the opportunity to deliver short presentations/Q&A type sessions in the Appleton lecture theatres.
    - We are suggesting 30 minute or 45 minute slots where the academic staff member from the table delivers/hosts an introduction to the subject/Q&A session or presents a mini lecture/taster session followed by a chance for questions at the end.
    - This will enable School staff to engage with groups of interested students and to reduce congestion and the need for repetition of key information and may be of particular interest to those who are in very high demand or those wishing to encourage a broader range of students to consider their subject.
- Working with Schools to ensure that we have participation from all who offer outside courses (to ensure that all students interested in finding out more about outside courses are able to speak directly to relevant staff members).
- Adjusting the time to end at 16:00 rather than 17:00 in response to previous year feedback that the last hour was unproductive and had staffing conflicts.
- “Supporting undergraduate students to choose outside courses – the Academic Fair and the broader context” paper presented to PAITG & L&T Committee.
Motivation & Aims:
Its primary aim is to allow those UG students who have an element of choice within their degree course the opportunity to ask academic staff questions about the wide array of courses available on an ‘outside course’ basis. Enhancements have been made to address previous year feedback from staff and students.

Resulting Documents:
• “Supporting undergraduate students to choose outside courses – the Academic Fair and the broader context”

Going Forward:
• Feedback and assessment of 2013 Academic Fair
• Continue to work to progress points raised in the paper
• Collaborate with Programme & Course Information Management (PCIM) project as the work with DRPS corresponds to how we provide information to new students about outside courses prior to their arrival.

Academic Induction Coordination – activities currently being developed

Title: Pre-arrival ‘academic skills’ website development

What is being done:
• Currently working with Website Development team to create new content for the New Students section [www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/new-students](http://www.ed.ac.uk/staff-students/students/new-students) focusing on helping new students understand what study skills they’ll need to succeed academically at the University.
• Working to include Pebblepad as a key reflective tool in the pre-arrival stages.

Motivation & Aims:
Enhanced and more prominent pre-arrival ‘study skills’/academic excellence pages with more activity based/self-reflection items that actively involve students in managing an effective transition to HE. School specific pre-arrival pages and activities/interactive e-checklists

Title: Collaboration with interested Schools on activity based inductions and case studies of current practice

What is being done:
• Consultations underway with the following schools
  o School of Divinity
  o School of Social & Political Science
• Still working to identify any other schools that would like to participate in enhancements or serve as a case study for current practices.

Motivation & Aims:
Longer and thinner inductions at key stages of student transitional journey.
• School of Divinity
  o Student generated Induction Session with student panel (tentatively schedule Week 1)
• School of Social & Political Science
  o Academic Induction Coordinator working with staff to help address the need of students to become/feel a part of the research community
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<tr>
<th><strong>Title:</strong> In depth rich data longitudinal study of student and staff interaction and perspectives during first year</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>What is being done:</strong> Working with interested schools to develop research tools and identify potential student participants.</td>
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<td><strong>Motivation &amp; Aims:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>• To understand first year students’ learning journey through the lenses of both students and staff</td>
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<td>• To generate rich data on both the cognitive and affective aspects of students’ encounters with the first year academic community/learning tasks from the students’ own perspectives</td>
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<td>• To promote/encourage critical reflection in students by providing a space for them to become ‘co-researchers’ into their own learning journey</td>
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<td>• To be able to ‘join up’ staff and students’ perspective on the journey and promote critical reflection from both ‘travellers.’</td>
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