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1. **INTRODUCTION**

This framework is intended for all staff at the University and has been designed to provide guidance for key areas of Induction and Transition.

Please note that the current focus of the Induction team is student pre-arrival and initial induction, broadly through the end of semester one. This framework aims to outline a more comprehensive approach to student induction, some of which is out with the present scope of the team.

The rationale of this framework is to:

- Ensure that a consistent and effective approach to induction is adopted across the University and guarantee a threshold level of induction for all new students
- Seamlessly integrate School, College and Central Induction events
- Provide academic and support staff with an essential overview of the Induction process in its entirety
- Enable the University to be confident that pre-arrival and induction outcomes are delivered
- Act on staff and student feedback to enhance Pre-Arrival and Induction processes and activities
- Encourage a culture of continuous enhancement
- Achieve excellence in Induction and Transition practice

2. **SCOPE**

This framework is meant to guide Induction practices for all students at all levels and modes of study. It is acknowledged that in practice different approaches will be undertaken dependent upon the specifics of the student cohort and this document allows for this variation. The framework may be changed accordingly if programmes of study have been developed as collaborations with partner institutions.

The framework specifically outlines outcomes for each of the induction stages in order to allow Schools, Colleges, and central services to design programmes appropriate to their specific needs, while also establishing consistent standards across the University.

3. **DEFINITION OF INDUCTION**

Induction comprises a period of transition in which students increasingly develop a sense of belonging to the University community and grow as independent learners.

It is a longitudinal experience in which students will transition at their own speed and in their own ways.

For the purposes of this framework, Induction is a 4 stage process consisting of:

1. Pre-Arrival (offer holder onwards)
2. Initial Induction (Freshers’/Induction Week)
3. Ongoing Induction (longitudinal but also re-induction)
4. Transition to next stage of study/work (moving on from current programme)

The Induction Team supports Whittaker’s (2008) definition of Induction as consisting of 4 key elements of transition:

- Academic
- Personal and Social
- Geographic
- Administrative
4. **PRINCIPLES**

Effective Induction is key to ensuring that students are supported throughout their time at University. Although the University of Edinburgh does not have difficulties with retention, this period is essential to future student success and satisfaction.

Induction covers the breadth of the student experience, encompassing not only academic life but also co- and extra-curricular activities. Students experience a range of individual transitions in a variety of aspects of their lives and therefore the induction process needs to be holistic in nature.

Induction is not a one-time event but an ongoing process which engages students throughout their time at University.

The University’s Induction activities will promote and enhance the success of new students by:

- Introducing students and their families to the mission and values of the University
- Introducing students and their families to the academic expectations of the University
- Familiarising students and their families with University resources
- Creating opportunities for interaction between students, academics and support staff
- Integrating current students into induction activities to provide an element of authentic student voice and provide leadership development opportunities for continuing students
- Ensuring collaboration between EUSA, central services and Schools; intentionally developing and connecting educational events and activities that support students during their transitions

5. **INDUCTION OUTCOMES**

There are specific outcomes for each of the 4 stages of induction which will help us to meet the principles listed above:

**STAGE 1: PRE-ARRIVAL**

During the pre-arrival stage (post-offer) students will...

- have an accurate and realistic understanding of life at the University of Edinburgh
- receive timely communications from their College, School, and Programme that welcome them to the University and provide clear information about upcoming steps for their transition to university study
- be made aware of the University websites that offer pre-arrival information – College, School and the University New Students pages
- have a clear understanding of academic Programme information. This may include:
  - Handbooks
  - Reading lists
  - Outside course choice options
  - Timetable
  - Freshers’/Induction activities
- have an initial understanding of and access to key learning technologies:
  - Learn
  - MyEd
  - student email
  - Accessing online journals
- understand the essential steps for beginning their studies at Edinburgh
Checklist – provided through the New Student webpages

- know who and how to contact regarding various queries
- be offered the opportunity to engage via social media and other technologies
- be made aware of the support and opportunities available for their personal and professional development while at the University of Edinburgh
- be made aware of the University Support Services and those with additional needs will be encouraged to engage with staff to discuss their individual circumstances
- be able to gain an accurate insight into living in the city of Edinburgh
- students who will live in University Accommodation will gain an accurate insight into and life in University Accommodation
- be given the opportunity to engage in reflection about their current skills and the journey they are about to embark upon at University
  - What am I looking forward to?
  - What am I worried about?
  - What do I want to do when I graduate?

STAGE 2: INITIAL INDUCTION (INDUCTION/FRESHERS’ WEEK AND WEEK 1)

Students will participate in activities that will prepare them to become fully integrated into the University of Edinburgh community in its most holistic sense – academic and social. These activities will allow students to:

- feel welcome, valued and connected to the University
- meet fellow students and key staff members
- become familiar with campus buildings, the city and their accommodation
- easily complete the key administration tasks required of them
- be introduced to the academic and research environment of the University of Edinburgh
- understand what is expected of them academically as a student on their specific Programme including how they will be assessed and receive feedback
  - Ensure that students realise there can be differences in expectations/attitudes in UK Higher Education context i.e. emphasise the need to be proactive independent learner, collaborative experience of learning
- understand their rights and responsibilities as students
- be exposed to broader educational experiences at the University of Edinburgh (in and out of formal educational settings)
- be able to actively select those University resources and support services that will help them in their own transition and learning journeys
- become familiar with the Graduate Attributes framework, understand how their course of study relates to this and the opportunities that are available to build these attributes
- engage in genuine dialogue with academic staff regarding their pre-arrival reflection of their current skills and the journey they are about to embark upon

STAGE 3: ONGOING INDUCTION

Ongoing induction refers to the continuing transitional process that students experience throughout their studies. First year in its entirety is an extended transition for all students who encounter key stages for the first time: first lecture, lab, tutorial, presentation, essay, assignment, University exams. This cycle continues into all years of study and encompasses year to year transitions in an undergraduate degree but also includes the progression from UG to Masters and Masters to PhD.
Best practice during ongoing induction also means recognising that just because students have experienced an aspect of University (lab, lecture, essay, and exam) does not mean that they will have become proficient in this area. Ensure that students are aware of the ongoing support and tools that help them be successful. Examples of these supports may include IAD workshops and Peer Support schemes which allow students further opportunities to reflect, ask questions and develop successful strategies for learning.

Ongoing induction will enable students to transition effectively to various stages in their Programme. Ongoing induction activities will allow students to:

- Fully understand what is expected of them at each key stage
- Reflect on the skills they have already acquired and identify development goals
- Benefit from a Programme that ensures that key academic skills are developed at relevant stages to prepare students to embrace new styles of learning and teaching
- Map previous learning and achievements to the Graduate Attributes framework in preparation for the transition beyond graduation to employment, further study, or whatever their future plans may include
- Discuss ongoing career planning
- Utilise University services that help create a well-rounded, holistic experience, i.e. Careers, Volunteering, Clubs and Societies

STAGE 4: TRANSITION TO NEXT STAGE OF STUDY/WORK

The final stage of the student journey is transitioning to the next stage. This can include moving to further study or employment. Sometimes this is referred to as “Outduction” (Layer, 2005). This stage is important for students as they need to effectively prepare themselves for the world of work/future study. This stage can also significantly impact on: Graduate Destinations, Course Evaluations and ongoing alumni/University relationships. Throughout their time at University and when approaching the end of their course of study, students will be given an opportunity to:

- Continue to map previous learning and achievements to the Graduate Attributes framework in preparation for the transition to employment or further education
- Continue to engage with alumni and employers
- Utilise the Careers Service to prepare for next stages of their journey (career planning, decision making, CV writing, practice interviews, etc.)
- Be effectively informed about the next available options for continued study and what these higher Programmes require
6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

CENTRAL INDUCTION TEAM

The Induction Team is currently appointed on fixed-term contracts that end in August 2015. They are currently responsible for coordinating the enhancement and communication of student pre-arrival and induction practices across the University.

This includes ensuring that the New Student webpages are updated, relevant and user-friendly at all periods of the year. These pages will cover pre-arrival preparation, the general aspects of University Induction, link to College/School/Programme induction information, and aims to speak to students joining Programmes of study at all times of the year.

The Induction Team also design and facilitate pilots focused on new induction practice tailored to individual College/School/Programme needs.

The Induction team will also coordinate the meetings of relevant working groups: Induction Coordination Group & International Student Induction Group and the team report to the Pre-Arrival and Induction Task Group. Information about the groups’ membership can be found on the Pre-Arrival and Induction Wiki.

The Induction team are responsible for monitoring the impact and effectiveness of University induction and making recommendations to improve this aspect of the student experience. This includes facilitating the annual New Student Induction/Freshers’ Week survey in conjunction with EUSA and the Student Survey’s Unit.

For a full breakdown of the team’s remit and current work packages please see the Pre-arrival and Induction Team Strategy document.

PRE-ARRIVAL AND INDUCTION TASK GROUP

The Pre-arrival and Induction Task Group advise, input, and make connections throughout the larger University in regards to pre-arrival and induction approaches. This group act as champions for enhanced induction practice in their relevant Schools and departments.

The Pre-Arrival and Induction Task Group is responsible to the Student Experience Project Board to take the strategic lead in setting the Induction Agenda, ensuring that the direction, aims and objectives are clearly articulated and are resourced and achieved within the Project timeframe.

INDUCTION WORKING GROUPS

INDUCTION COORDINATION GROUP

The coordination group consists of staff members from services and Schools throughout the University. This group discusses the upcoming Induction period and updates regarding the “on-the-ground” planning of induction related activities. Information about the group makeup can be found on the Induction team wiki.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENT INDUCTION WORKING GROUP

This group consists of representatives from the International Office, EUSA, the Visiting Student Office in HSS and Visiting Student Officer in SCE. The main focus of this group is ensuring the planning of a well-rounded
January induction for UG Visiting Students. For September Induction this group works to plan and raise awareness of University planned events for International Students (International Day, Welcome Guides, etc.).

**COLLEGES**

Theme for discussion with Senior PT’s – some comments from Gearing Up suggested:

- Colleges do support Schools but the college doesn’t have a direct role in induction
- Various Colleges have different roles so a blanket description is difficult
- College guidance is good but a degree of autonomy is needed so that the individual needs of a school can be taken into account
- If College provided more info for induction this would be one source too many

**SCHOOLS**

School induction activities introduce students to the academic staff who will be teaching and supervising them, administrative/support staff (e.g. Student Support Officers), to fellow students, to the learning and working environment and to the resource base. Schools will also provide an opportunity for students to ask questions about their Programme and to hear about enhancements made to practices based on previous years’ feedback derived from surveys.

**STUDENT RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSIONS / COLLEGE ADMISSIONS OFFICES**

Student Recruitment and Admissions have contact with students in the applicant and pre-arrival stage. The SRA and College Admissions Offices liaise closely with the Schools and have a set communication strategy that covers initial communication with students. Specifically related to the work of Pre-arrival and Induction this includes offer letters which highlight the New Student webpages and resources. This communication strategy also outlines when applicants who become Unconditional Firm are “passed” to the Schools for pre-arrival support and Welcome/Induction information.

**INFORMATION SERVICES**

IS delivers library services, computing, learning technology, research support, library academic support, and IT help and consultancy to all University students on campus and at a distance.

IS produces and distributes University cards and introduces new students to the IT, e-learning and Library services and resources available to them including:

- How to make the most effective use of IS services
- How to access and use the available resources
- Getting help with services and resources

Examples of IS induction activities are:

- Library orientation information skills sessions
- ‘Making the most of IT’ presentations
- Getting students’ mobile devices connected to University IT services
- Representation at events such as the academic fair
- Production of online induction materials
INTERNATIONAL OFFICE

The International Office works to ensure that an induction programme is available to all new international students, including new visiting and exchange students, whether they join in September or January. The International Office is specifically tasked with leading the planning for Pre-arrival visa/immigration and practical information, Airport Welcome, International Day (September), PGT Induction Day, International Welcome Guide, and a variety of international focused events during Induction Week including those hosted by the International Student Centre. The International Office collaborates with the Induction Team, Visiting Student Offices and EUSA for January Induction planning, including liaising with exchange partners prior to arrival.

Working in collaboration with the Schools and other central services, the International Office works to ensure that a programme of welcome and induction sessions includes practical advice and guidance, information on various sources of support available from departments, colleges and specialist services and social activities. International students will be introduced to the differences between higher education in their home countries and the University of Edinburgh, and will be made aware of the norms of education in Scotland.

EUSA

The Edinburgh University Student Association provides a well-rounded “Freshers’ Week” experience that introduces students to its services and the activities hosted by EUSA not only in Freshers’ Week but throughout the year. These include but are not limited to social activities, introduction to societies, tours, peer support, and opportunities for involvement in student government and School Councils. EUSA provides this formal service for Autumn (September) and Spring (January) arrivals with activities continuing to be offered throughout a student’s time at University.

INSTITUTE FOR ACADEMIC DEVELOPMENT

The Institute for Academic Development provides University-level support for teaching, learning and researcher development. The IAD works collaboratively with Schools and Colleges to provide support at all levels and irrespective of discipline.

Undergraduate students can receive support for student learning development. Research staff and students benefit from programmes of professional and transferable skills development, and for staff the IAD provide continuing professional development and practice sharing for those in teaching, learning, curriculum design and development or supervision roles.

The IAD website outlines the range of events, courses and resources offered, which are tailored to the differing requirements of these different audiences.

ACCOMMODATION SERVICES

Accommodation Services is committed to assisting students in their transition from home to University life. Accommodation Services offer support for both new students and those returning to University accommodation for second and subsequent years.

The Allocations team participate in Open Days to inform potential students of the options available and then process applications, making offers of leases to those applicants who receive Unconditional Offers from the University of Edinburgh.

Residence Life plays a key role in providing support to students once they receive offers of accommodation, including information about what to expect via e-Inductions and social networking (i.e. House/Site Facebook
groups and UoE Living Facebook group). Once they move into University Accommodation Residence Life offers students the support and services that allow students to take advantage of cultural, educational, recreational and social opportunities. This includes hosting a variety of events to residential students as well as collaborating with other University Services, School contacts and EUSA to ensure that residents are well-supported and integrated into University life.

Residence Life and the Accommodation Services staff also provide first-line contact/assistance for pastoral care of students living in University Accommodation and work closely with the Schools and central services for those students who require further support.

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHING CENTRE**

The English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC) provides English language preparation courses for postgraduate and undergraduate international students before they begin their studies and courses to support students during their programmes.

ELTC courses are designed to provide guidance on producing academic writing and speaking, and on developing the ability to understand, both generic academic and subject specific, spoken and written academic language.

The courses also develop an understanding of the culture of academic study in the UK and help students settle into life in the UK.

The ELTC website outlines the range of courses available both online and face to face.

[http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/english-language-teaching](http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/english-language-teaching)

**STUDENT EXPERIENCE SERVICES**

Including Academic Services, Student Administration, Student Systems, Careers Service, Student Disability Services, Chaplaincy, Health Services.

These offices provide support to new students through a variety of initiatives and events during Freshers’ Week but extend their support throughout the entirety of the students’ time at University. They can collaborate with School induction initiatives as well as other central services.

**CAREERS SERVICE**

From the first year onward, the Careers Service provides support to Schools and Programmes in order to introduce students to the graduate attributes specific to their course of study, the importance of skill development and reflection on skills and abilities with the intent of introducing students to employability initiatives.

**EMPLOYABILITY CONSULTANCY**

The Employability Consultancy supports academic and non-academic units to consider how their provision can best enable the development of students’ employability and Graduate Attributes throughout all stages of the student lifecycle.

The Consultancy also oversees the Edinburgh Award on behalf of the University, accrediting new versions of the Award run by staff across the institution. [www.ed.ac.uk/EdinburghAward](http://www.ed.ac.uk/EdinburghAward)
STUDENT DISABILITY SERVICE
The Student Disability Service provides support to students and staff to ensure that students with additional needs are supported during their transition to University as well as throughout their University experience.

ACADEMIC SERVICES
Academic Services manages the University’s academic governance and quality assurance regulatory frameworks. These include the academic appeals regulations, codes of practice for postgraduate students, the code of student conduct, and other student policies (e.g. maternity and family leave and performance sport). The Department also supports broader University discussions about curriculum structure and content, and policies regarding assessment and progression, all of which link to the objective of enhancing induction.

http://www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/academic-services/home

STUDENT SYSTEMS
Student Systems provides leadership and direction to support applicants, staff and students in the use of student and academic administrative systems whilst managing and enhancing our student systems and the student record. Our website www.studentsystems.ed.ac.uk/ provides guidance on Matriculation and details our directory of services.

STUDENT ADMINISTRATION
The Student Administration team includes the Student Information Points, Timetabling and Scholarships and Student Funding.

Student Information Points offer help and advice during Induction on a wide range of topics. They can also provide documentation which new students may require including Bank Letters for international students. Student Administration also deal with UKV&I Tier 4 visa compliance.

Relevant websites:

- Student Administration: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration
- Student Information Point services: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/student-info-points
- Timetabling: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-administration/timetabling/home
- Scholarships and Student Funding: www.ed.ac.uk/schools-departments/student-funding/home

7. MONITORING AND EVALUATION
There are 4 key measures to monitor when evaluating induction and transition:

1. Attendance
2. Student Satisfaction
3. Effectiveness as measured by achievement of induction outcomes
4. Progression and completion rates

A variety of benchmarking surveys provides us with initial data on some of these measures:
The National Student Survey (NSS)
- The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES)
- The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES)
- The International Student Barometer (ISB)

There are also a number of internal surveys that provide more specific details of our institution’s specific provisions:

- The Edinburgh Student Experience Survey (ESES)
- New Student Freshers’ Week Survey (UG)
- New Student Induction Survey (PG)
- “Through Your Eyes” longitudinal study
- January New Student Induction Survey (UG Visiting Students)
- Personal Tutor system Student Survey and Focus Group sessions

In consultation with relevant groups, including the Student Surveys team, the Induction Team and Task Group will monitor the broad content and effectiveness of the induction activities to ascertain their productivity and purposefulness. The New Student Surveys (UG, PGT and PGR) will aim to monitor the level at which the pre-arrival and initial induction stage outcomes have been achieved.

Additionally, Colleges, Schools and Central Services should assess the success of their individual events and activities using these 4 key measures.

All of this information can be shared and resources can be pooled on the Induction Wiki and through events such as “Gearing Up” to allow for disseminating best practice.

The Student Experience Project Board, Pre-arrival & Induction Task Group, committees and other relevant working groups at the University will consider institutional or strategic issues raised by the findings, including recommendations for revisions to this statement or other centrally-determined induction practice.

Finally, impact assessment of the Pre-arrival and Induction Student Experience strand will also be undertaken with the assistance of the Student Experience’s Impact Evaluation officer.

8. ADDITIONAL DOCUMENTS

This framework builds on and compliments the following key policies:

- Roles and Responsibilities within the Personal Tutor System
- School Personal Tutor Statements
- Codes of Practice (specifically Supervisor & Research Students; Taught Postgraduate programmes; Online Distance Education)
- An Introduction to Graduate Attributes for tutors and tutees
- The University of Edinburgh Employability Strategy Group – Employability Implementation Plan

This framework is also based on an extensive review of the literature as well as benchmarking across the sector, including internationally. Please see the Reference List.

Additionally, we now have an internal evidence base consisting of student feedback from a variety of sources that informs this framework.
9. Reference List


QAA (2005), Quality Assurance Agency: The First Year: Engagement and Empowerment Available at: http://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/enhancement-themes/completed-enhancement-themes/first-year


University of Edinburgh Strategic Plan 2012-2016
