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UNIVERSITY OF
TECHNOLOGY

Tertiary Transitions Education Program (TTEP)

Context: Guaranteed Entry Scheme (GES)

Inter-sectoral bridge-builder

- > Automatic 'packaged higher education offers'

Advance on Pathways direct program.

A pathway for every diploma.

- > Embedded in institutional framework

- www.future.swinburne.edu.au/pathways/ges/

Frequent concerns expressed:

TAFE students:

- > are not independent learners,
- > can't write,
- > can't read,
- > don't understand research,
- > are not good at time management...*etc.*

Statistics appeased these assumptions somewhat but...

- **Progression rates** (that is, the unit load passed expressed as a percentage of unit load attempted) have usually been a little below those of students with a year 12 basis of admission, but the difference at Swinburne is usually only 1 – 3 percentage points.

- **Attrition rates** have been **consistently lower** for articulants from Swinburne TAFE. The gap almost closed in 2008.

However – the majority of these TAFE students had met Pathways entry requirements of an average of 65+ in their final year.

GES students have no such requirements.

Student surveys & focus groups

With students who had already made the transition from Diploma to Degree reported:

- > Minimal engagement during Orientation week
- > Lack of preparedness for different pedagogy of university study
- > A more difficult and challenging experience than expected

Research based strategies implemented and evaluated:

1. Targeted orientation activities and programs.
2. Explicit scaffolding of strategies embedded in curricula of first semester units.
3. *Strategic focus on staff professional development in 2011*
4. Tertiary Transitions Education Diploma
5. Greater HEd/TAFE collaboration and understanding of each sector's learning objectives and pedagogies.
6. More transition activities conducted with TAFE i.e. visits by HEd students who have articulated; TAFE student 'on-campus' days; E-transition with case studies.

TTEP focuses on learning gaps related to:

- **University Environment** (where to find help, different learning modes, self-directed learning skills)
- **Academic and literacy skills** (essay writing, report writing, problem solving, action research, referencing, plagiarism, library skills).
- **Assessment assistance** (continuous, group-work, presentations, goal setting, exam preparation and stress management).

TTEP “Bootcamp” Pilot 2011

Classes 9.30 – 4.30 Monday to Friday for 2 weeks

- Experiential and immersive model around a common theme of sustainability.
- Began with examination of the differences between the two learning environments, facilitators from TAFE. Some attendance by Faculty members.
- Participants were engaged in group work, team discussions, paired activities and major presentations in a lecture theatre.

Student Feedback:

Students overwhelmingly appreciated the program, and reported feeling a lot more confident e.g.

This course should become mandatory for all students..

I loved this transition program and would recommend this to all TAFE students. I am a bit sad that this program is over but I feel ready and confident to start my degree.

Recommendations for improvement:

I'll suggest to have the course every other day to give the students enough time to practise the learned subjects more.

Maybe conduct more in a lecture environment rather than a classroom. Maybe note taking could be expanded.

The FICT students remarked that it would be much better for them to have their own examples (they were only 1/3rd of the group, with the majority being Business students).

Way forward:

1. TAFE and FICT program managers meet in June 2011 with purpose of:
 - Aligning learning objectives
 - Demystifying assumptions
2. Tracking progress of first intake of students
3. Next intake:
 - Student advisor to follow up with weekly catch up and email alerts, particularly over first 6 weeks of semester.
 - Strongly encourage 'buddy' system.

TTEP accredited as a Diploma

Offered to all TAFE students considering transition to degree.

Considering three modes of delivery:

- Intensive 2 week block winter term
- Evening, one night a week for 18 weeks starting July 2011
- Parallel workshops and lectures delivered throughout second semester 2011
- Greater input from FICT academics

Concluding remarks

“Swinburne TAFE articulants **out-perform** students with a different basis of admission on **employment outcomes post-graduation.**” Strategic Planning and Quality Report 2009, p.18

- > The GES is expands existing practices.
- > TTEP and Faculty based transition strategies implemented will strengthen retention and progression for all students.

Thank-you

Questions?

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