



Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

Title: Extended January Welcome for Visiting Students at the University of Edinburgh

Transition(s) the practice supports: In

Abstract: Following student feedback from previous January Induction periods, the Pre-Arrival and Induction Team worked with colleagues across the University and Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) to extend the induction period for January arrivals. The aim of extending the induction was to allow students more time to settle into their accommodation, attend compulsory induction sessions and complete the administration tasks required to begin at the University. Extending the induction was successful with 92% of students saying 'I am confident about my transition into the University of Edinburgh Community' and 99% found the extended time frame useful.

Description: In January 2014, 92% of visiting students who started in January stated that they would have preferred a longer induction period before they started their classes. The January induction schedule, at that time, encouraged student to arrive on the Saturday prior to classes starting and offered events for them to attend on the Saturday evening and Sunday day and night. Students said that trying to orientate themselves with the city and their accommodation, and planning for their academic work to begin on Monday all while jetlagged was quite a lot to take in.

Following this feedback the Pre-Arrival and Induction Team worked with colleagues in the Visiting Student Offices, International Office, Accommodation Services and Edinburgh University Students' Association (EUSA) to extend the induction period to begin on Wednesday 7th January 2015. This would allow students more time to settle into their accommodation, attend compulsory induction sessions and complete the administration tasks required to begin at the University. It also means students could have meetings with their Personal Tutor before their classes started and were able to access support services, which previously have been closed during their arrival period since it was the weekend.

As with any changes there were logistics to work out, which included that the Accommodation Residents' Assistants, who during formal September Induction periods take students from their accommodation to induction events would have not returned yet. Therefore the Team employed ten student 'January Welcome helpers' who helped bring students to the events – ensuring students could navigate around the city, helped at the events and also gave a current student's



perspective. They also created a video with their personal top tips for the new visiting students: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j-BVsOaeOII>.

The extended induction was very successful, with just under 400 students attending the welcome dinner on the Wednesday evening and over 500 for the welcome talks and Student Services Fair on the Thursday. There were also a large number of students attending non-compulsory events. A January welcome app was available to students, to allow them to view all the events, maps and shopping locations. 92% of students found the app extremely/quite useful. Student were also given time to settle into their accommodation and meet with their Personal Tutor and undertake their administrative tasks.

The Team surveyed the students and 92% said 'I am confident about my transition into the University of Edinburgh Community'. 90% of students said they felt adequately prepared. 99% of students stated that extended time frame was useful. The Team are pleased with the outcome and are planning to have a similar timeframe for January visiting students next year.

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