



Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

Title: S6@Uni: Helping students make the transition from school to University

Transition(s) the practice supports: Transition at the start of a programme of higher education

Abstract: The S6@Uni Programme utilises lecture capture and virtual classroom technologies to convert current on-campus undergraduate courses into online courses with a campus based tutorial/practical element. These courses are ideal for S6 pupils looking for further academic challenge. They can complement existing Advanced Higher choices or, when no Advanced Higher is offered, replace this provision with study at the same SCQF level, gaining SCQF credits which are recognised by all UK Universities. By undertaking these courses, school pupils gain some experience of listening to lectures and can hone their note-taking skills. Students experience the type of self-directed study that is required at University whilst still able to get additional support from their school as well as the S6@Uni programme coordinator.

Description: The S6@Uni Programme converts current on-campus undergraduate science courses into online courses. These courses are delivered into Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Schools to complement the curriculum of pupils in the Senior Phase of their education.

The original aim of the programme was to allow students in the remote North and East of Scotland access to the teaching of the University of Aberdeen. Now established, however, the programme is proving to have multiple applications in the fields of widening access, School-University transition, and retention. The project allows pupils to experience the different teaching and assessment styles which they will encounter at University whilst still in a “safe” School and “supported” University environment.

Subjects offered currently include Archaeology, Sociology, Computing Science, English, Psychology, Geography, Geology, Business, Chemistry and Physics.

Our S6@Uni students continue to achieve grades comparable, or even higher, than our first year cohort showing the high levels of commitment of these pupils. In 2012-13, 14 pupils successfully completed the programme. Not all pupils applied to study at Aberdeen University but all pupils received an offer of University admission, 9 from the University of Aberdeen and 5 from other Scottish institutions, in the subject areas of Engineering, Geology & Medicine. Within our own institution successful completion of courses contributed to the strength of a student’s application and in some cases made the difference between an offer being given and not.

Feedback from our principle partner school report that over the past four years this strategy, in combination with others, has resulted in increased:

- S6 stay on rates (41% in 2009, 52% in 2012)
- S6 5+ Higher Grade attainment (27% in 2009, 35% in 2012)
- S6 1+ Advanced Higher Grade attainment (21% in 2009, 26% in 2012)

In addition pupils report positively on the independent learning opportunities, their personal and social development and confidence about going to University.

This scheme has previously been the subject of a feature article in the Times Education Supplement for Scotland, which can be read online at <https://www.tes.co.uk/article.aspx?storycode=6179287>

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