Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

Title: Square One, Pre-entry engagement with University

Transition(s) the practice supports: This was a project aimed at new students prior to them starting their studies at University. It is a pre-entry project aimed at all disciplines and levels.
The aim was to provide additional information to students who had accepted their offer and to engage them in some activities and with some key University systems, in particular Moodle but also with an open source learning resource called SMILE.
Through this engagement with Moodle we have been able to track who interacted with which resources from their student email to their ePortfolio; from SMILE to the student record and from IT Services to Careers information. We will also be able to map early engagement to attainment as module results become available.

Abstract: Early engagement is a key aspect in student success, so what do prospective students want to engage with and what might the impacts be on attainment?

Description: All new UWS students for 201516 we added to a Moodle site, Square One. The site contained links to:

SMILE – An online study skills tool
Mahara – our ePortfolio tool
University email Account
Moodle – A video on using Moodle

Your student record
Welcome to Student Services Video
A series of videos on Advice for New Students

The site was also used to host a series of live online events where students took part in online treasure hunts.

Moodle allows us to gather analytics from engagement with the site so we can tell very quickly that new students seem more interested in their email account than the study skills or that very few students showed an interest in their student record.

Understanding these behaviours is very important in planning how we engage we students in different aspects of the University.

We are also able to match these Moodle behaviours with attainment and progression and retention data. We believe that this information can help to build our understanding of patterns of behaviours and on how these behaviours impact on the student experience.

New entrants were able to engage with the site from 2 weeks before induction week.

Perceived benefits to students include :

Better prepared on arrival
Familiar with University systems on arrival
Better able to focus o the core elements of induction
A vehicle for induction and welcome for online students

We plan to use the system again during the run up to academic year 2016/17. Some details of findings and impact will be available in the near future.

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