



## Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

**Title:** Study Skills for New Students, School of Divinity, University of Edinburgh

**Transition(s) the practice supports:** In

**Abstract:** A series of study skills sessions, starting in Induction Week, which supports students as they embark on the new challenges of studying at university. These include interactive sessions on tutorial participation, critical reading and note-taking, essay writing and avoiding plagiarism. They were filmed and made available to all students in the School via a Study Skills site on Learn.

**Description:** Following implementation of the Personal Tutor system, the School reflected on the provision of academic support and it was felt by the then Director of Undergraduate Studies that students needed more academic support to manage the transition between school and first year at university. A series of six study skills sessions was offered, to give these students guidance, advice and an opportunity to share their experiences in informal and practical meetings.

This year (2014/15), for the first time, the series began with a session in Induction Week, when Abby Shovlin (Student Experience Project's Academic Induction Coordinator) came with a group of experienced students to introduce the tutorial system to our first years with a mock discussion in groups followed by pizza for all. For the following five weeks, sessions were offered at lunchtime and repeated at the end of the following day, with the themes of *Taking Effective Notes*; *Using the Library*; *Presenting Rival Arguments*; *How to write an Effective Essay*; and *Formatting Essays and Avoiding Plagiarism*. They were led by academics in the School, and aimed to be directed at School-specific concerns.

Some sessions were more popular than others, but each was filmed and then posted on a Study Skills website, which was available to all students in the School. In a questionnaire sent to all students who had used the site, all commented on the usefulness of the availability and the sessions themselves.

**Contact details:** Dr Alison Jack, Director of Undergraduate Studies, School of Divinity, [a.jack@ed.ac.uk](mailto:a.jack@ed.ac.uk)



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