



Student Transitions: Example of transitions practice

Title: The Lothians Equal Access Programme for Schools (LEAPS)

Transition(s) the practice supports: aims to promote social inclusion and equality of opportunity by facilitating increased participation and success in higher education of young people whose ability to choose higher education as a post-school option and/or to demonstrate or realise their potential may have been inhibited by economic, social or cultural factors.

Abstract: Edinburgh Napier University is a founding partner of LEAPS (founded in 1995) and provides funding alongside its other partners to deliver activity which provides impartial information and advice about courses and routes to higher education. The Programmes activities enhance the prospects of young people fulfilling their academic potential by promoting positive attitudes to learning and acquisition of learning skills to ensure effective transition to and success in higher education. LEAPS works with students from across 59 schools in Edinburgh, the Lothians and Borders with activity targeted at students from Widening Participation backgrounds.

Description: LEAPS delivers on behalf of its partners a range of activities from S3 onwards. There is a particular emphasis on supporting effective transitions in the senior phase of school including S5 & S6. Activities include Conferences, Parents Information Sessions, Pre and post UCAS application guidance interviews, portfolio preparation and student life/budgeting sessions. In between S6 and starting University LEAPS also deliver a 7 week Summer School for LEAPS eligible students holding one or more UCAS offers. Students undertake three courses (including Learning Skills), taught and assessed at degree-level by staff from a range of universities providing a valuable opportunity for students to have another opportunity to demonstrate their academic potential. Summer School offers young people the chance to develop skills and build self-confidence in a friendly, supportive environment.

Lessons learnt



enhancement
themes

LEAPS measures its impact based upon the rise or otherwise of rates of progression to higher education from the schools with which the programme works and undertakes evaluation on student retention and progression. The evidence produced from this evaluation work provides a strong case to suggest the LEAPS model has made a significant impact alongside a range of other interventions and strategies employed within Schools and Local Authority areas both in increased student progression and retention.

The partnership demonstrates that success can be achieved through targeted early intervention activity and building a long term partnership with schools and local authorities to produce an increase in progression to higher education. Early and intensive intervention in schools where progression to higher education has been historically low, is required to both raise aspirations of students to consider higher education as an attainable option, and complement other strategies aimed at increasing attainment. LEAPS delivers this with strong support from partners who encourage and raise the confidence of students to apply to universities through an admission strand which includes individual guidance, a pre-application enquiry service, admissions pledge and the LEAPS Summer School.

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