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Tertiary Transitions Education Program (TTEP)
Context: Guaranteed Entry Scheme (GES)

Inter-sectoral bridge-builder

> Automatic ‘packaged higher education offers’

Advance on Pathways direct program.

A pathway for every diploma.

> Embedded in institutional framework

Frequent concerns expressed:

TAFE students:

> are not independent learners,
> can’t write,
> can’t read,
> don’t understand research,
> are not good at time management…etc.
Statistics appeased these assumptions somewhat but...

- **Progression rates** (that is, the unit load passed expressed as a percentage of unit load attempted) have usually been a little below those of students with a year 12 basis of admission, but the difference at Swinburne is **usually only 1 – 3 percentage points**.

- **Attrition rates** have been **consistently lower** for articulants from Swinburne TAFE. The gap almost closed in 2008.

However – the majority of these TAFE students had met Pathways entry requirements of an average of 65+ in their final year. **GES students have no such requirements.**
Student surveys & focus groups

With students who had already made the transition from Diploma to Degree reported:

> Minimal engagement during Orientation week
> Lack of preparedness for different pedagogy of university study
> A more difficult and challenging experience than expected
Research based strategies implemented and evaluated:

1. Targeted orientation activities and programs.
2. Explicit scaffolding of strategies embedded in curricula of first semester units.
3. Strategic focus on staff professional development in 2011
4. Tertiary Transitions Education Diploma
5. Greater HEd/TAFE collaboration and understanding of each sector’s learning objectives and pedagogies.
6. More transition activities conducted with TAFE i.e. visits by HEd students who have articulated; TAFE student ‘on-campus’ days; E-transition with case studies.
TTEP focuses on learning gaps related to:

- **University Environment** (where to find help, different learning modes, self-directed learning skills)

- **Academic and literacy skills** (essay writing, report writing, problem solving, action research, referencing, plagiarism, library skills.

- **Assessment assistance** (continuous, group-work, presentations, goal setting, exam preparation and stress management).
TTEP “Bootcamp” Pilot 2011

Classes 9.30 – 4.30 Monday to Friday for 2 weeks

- Experiential and immersive model around a common theme of sustainability.

- Began with examination of the differences between the two learning environments, facilitators from TAFE. Some attendance by Faculty members.

- Participants were engaged in group work, team discussions, paired activities and major presentations in a lecture theatre.
Student Feedback:

Students overwhelmingly appreciated the program, and reported feeling a lot more confident e.g.

This course should become mandatory for all students.

I loved this transition program and would recommend this to all TAFE students. I am a bit sad that this program is over but I feel ready and confident to start my degree.
Recommendations for improvement:

I’ll suggest to have the course every other day to give the students enough time to practise the learned subjects more.

Maybe conduct more in a lecture environment rather than a classroom. Maybe note taking could be expanded.

The FICT students remarked that it would be much better for them to have their own examples (they were only 1/3rd of the group, with the majority being Business students).
Way forward:

1. TAFE and FICT program managers meet in June 2011 with purpose of:
   - Aligning learning objectives
   - Demystifying assumptions

2. Tracking progress of first intake of students

3. Next intake:
   - Student advisor to follow up with weekly catch up and email alerts, particularly over first 6 weeks of semester.
   - Strongly encourage ‘buddy’ system.
TTEP accredited as a Diploma

Offered to all TAFE students considering transition to degree.

Considering three modes of delivery:
- Intensive 2 week block winter term
- Evening, one night a week for 18 weeks starting July 2011
- Parallel workshops and lectures delivered throughout second semester 2011
- Greater input from FICT academics
Concluding remarks

“Swinburne TAFE articulants out-perform students with a different basis of admission on employment outcomes post-graduation.” Strategic Planning and Quality Report 2009, p.18

- The GES is expands existing practices.
- TTEP and Faculty based transition strategies implemented will strengthen retention and progression for all students.
Thank-you

Questions?