



First Year Enhancement Theme

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Overview of the work of the theme

- Theme commenced late 2005: appointment of chair and steering committee. Scope agreed.
- Institutional contacts and practitioner network identified.
- Projects commissioned summer 2006: sector-wide discussions and practice-focused development projects.



Overview of the work of the theme

- Events and workshops – inc international focus
- Institutional discussions encouraged.



Focus of the theme

- Emphasis on success rather than avoidance of failure.
- On engagement rather than retention.
- On empowerment rather than support.



Assumptions

- Assumption that even a slight shift in responsibility for outcomes towards the learners themselves might be transformational.



Assumptions

- No single 'first-year experience'. Context of increasing diversity – of institutions, student background, modes of delivery, disciplines.

Assumptions

- Some students need a lot more help than others to become digitally-literate autonomous learners.
- The strongest influence on most learners' approach to study is from peers.

Some critical questions

- Can we restructure provision and teaching method so that students get most attention early on?
- How is personalisation achievable in first year?
- Can we involve students more in teaching and supporting each other?
- Can we involve students in the design of their own learning experiences?
- Can we rethink induction and transition?



SFC Joint Quality Review Group key principles Sept 07

- High Quality Learning
- Student Engagement

Learners achieve their full potential....actively engaged in delivery and management of their own learning experience...students as co-creators of own learning experience...take responsibility for own learning...institutions should push students to become more active learners..



The Sector-wide Discussion Projects

1. The Nature and Purpose of the First Year (George Gordon).
2. Student Expectations, Experiences and Reflections (Rowena Kochanowska and Bill Johnston)



Practice-focused projects 3-6

3. Curriculum Design for First Year (Cathy Bovill, Kate Morss)
4. Formative and Diagnostic Assessment and Feedback (David Nicol)
5. Peer Support in First Year (Fiona Black and Jane MacKenzie)
6. Personal Development Planning in First Year (Kirsty Miller and PDP in HE Network)



Practice-focused projects 7-9

7. Personalisation of the First Year (Hazel Knox)
8. Introducing Scholarship Skills (Fran Alston)
9. Transition (Ruth Whittaker)



HE Academy Reviews on First Year Experience

Lee Harvey & Sue Drew

*The first year experience: a review of
literature*

Mantz Yorke and Bernard Longden

*The first-year experience in higher
education in the UK*



Related e-learning programmes

- SFC e-learning transformation programme (2005-07)
- Pew Grant programme (USA 1999-2003)
- HE Academy/JISC benchmarking and Pathfinder programme (2006-08)
- Experiences of e-learning SIG (ELESIG) <http://elesig.ning.com/>