First Year Experience and Curriculum Design: Transition Pedagogy as Third Generation FYE

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ALTC Discipline Scholar: Law
QUT

Charles Sturt University
CSU Student Engagement Forum
20 September 2010
It takes an institution to educate [and support and retain] a student.

With apologies to Hillary Clinton and African proverbs

Overview

• Context – Australian Higher Education 2010
  – A perfect storm?

• Snapshot of First Year Experience (FYE) research

• Model for a **partnership, whole-of-institution, approach** for engagement, success & retention **in FY**
  – A ‘Transition Pedagogy’ for the FYE –
    • Esp to harness first year ‘curriculum’ (broadly)
      – To mediate diversity & support intentionally
      – To do serious transition and retention work
  – Embedded, contextualised support for all
  – 6 curriculum principles
  – Some practical examples throughout

http://www.infed.org/biblio/b-curric.htm
Australian Higher Education 2010

• Overall drop out rates ~28% (Bradley, 2009)
• 10+ years chronic underfunding → dramatic increases in staff:student ratios –
• Proportion of 25-34 yr olds with degrees is 9/30 OECD
  • NB state variation (eg Victoria may easily reach 40% target)
• No growth in equity group participation since 1989 – eg
  • First Australians 1.3%(2.3%)
  • Disabled 4%(8%)
  • Low SES 15%(25%) CSU ~22.7%
  • Regional & Remote 18% (25%) CSU ~59.9%

Attrition Rate for **domestic** commencing bachelor students by State & HE Provider, 2001-2007 (NSW)  
(DEEWR, 2009)

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### Attrition Rate for overseas commencing bachelor students by State & HE Provider, 2001-2007 (NSW)

(DEEWR, 2009)

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Learning & Teaching 2010: A perfect storm


Current Australian Higher Education Context

• Transforming Australia’s HE System (2009)
  – Implementing the Bradley Review of Australian HE
  – Widening participation and diversity targets
  – ‘AUQA plus’ – new Tertiary Education Quality & Standards Agency (TEQSA)
  – Globalisation of higher education; ‘Brand Australia’
  – Indicator Framework for HE Performance Funding
    • 2009-10 Federal Budget: performance funding for ‘institutions [to maintain] attention on the quality of teaching and learning and student outcomes’
    • Proposed ‘University Experience Survey’
  – Mission-based Compacts for Universities: to set performance targets for ‘improvement and reform’ including ‘quality, attainment and participation by students from low SES backgrounds’.
A perfect storm: focussing attention on…

- Quality of teaching and learning
- Student experience and student engagement
- Attainment and participation
- ‘Academic standards’
- First Year Experience esp: eg –
  - Proposed ‘University Experience Survey’ – tenders closed 18/06/10
    ‘This project will develop a University Experience Survey that will focus on quality and student experience aspects of Higher Education students. The survey will be designed to provide specific information required to inform the Government’s new performance funding arrangements.’
    [Link](https://www.tenders.gov.au/?event=public.atm.showClosed&ATMUUID=B2C5792C-9566-7994-641F76A3015543DC)
  - ‘Quality, attainment and participation’

CSU Pathway Program

CSU's Pathway Program is a partnership between CSU and Wodonga Institute of TAFE to provide you with guaranteed entry into a CSU degree. The program offers a pathway to University for those students who wish to study at CSU but do not meet the entry criteria or require further preparation.

Thinking about Uni?

The program provides supported learning for recent school leavers. On successful completion of the program, you will attain:

- a University Certificate in General Studies from CSU
- a Certificate IV in Further Education from TAFE
- guaranteed entry into CSU degrees (does not apply to degrees with enrolment quotas such as Dentistry)
- credit for up to 4 CSU subjects in some cases.

During the duration of the program, you will be considered an enrolled CSU student, so you will have full access to both CSU and TAFE services and support, including computer labs, libraries and other on campus facilities.

What are the benefits?

Course information

The University Certificate in General Studies is a combination of eight subjects studied over two 17-week sessions. Four subjects are drawn from TAFE Certificate IV in Further Education and four from CSU's bachelor level subjects.

The subjects will provide a solid preparation for your University studies and an alerting outlook from the disciplines.


http://www.csu.edu.au/study/pathways/
Widening participation agenda

Once students from disadvantaged backgrounds have entered university the likelihood of them completing their course of study is broadly similar to that of the general higher education population. Often, however, they require **higher levels of support to succeed**, including financial assistance and greater academic support, mentoring and counselling services.


Tinto (2009) offered words of advice...

“stop tinkering at the margins of institutional academic life and make enhancing student success the linchpin about which [universities] organize their activities ... [E]stablish those educational conditions on campus that promote the retention of students, in particular those of low-income backgrounds”.

FYE approaches (Kift, Nelson & Clarke, 2010; Kift, 2009; Wilson, 2009)

• 1\textsuperscript{st} generation FYE
  – Essentially co-curricula – professionals on curriculum’s periphery

• 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation FYE
  – Curriculum focus – support, engage, and build capability through the student learning experience via pedagogy, curriculum design & L&T practices

• 3\textsuperscript{rd} generation FYE
  – 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} generation – integrated, embedded, quality assured and seamless across institution and its disciplines, programs & services via academic & professional partnerships

= Transition pedagogy –

\textit{a guiding philosophy for intentional first year curriculum design and support that carefully scaffolds and mediates the first year learning experience for contemporary heterogeneous cohorts.}

Kift & Nelson (2005)

Student success is largely determined by student experiences during the first year.


http://www.freewebs.com/horseloversveen/the-far-side-comic.jpg
What matters to retention and progression

The total experience of university

- Preparedness
- Finances
- Peers: learning ‘profoundly a social experience’;
- Expectations: mismatch; ‘how things work around here’;
- 3rd Gen Student support: coordinated and ‘just-in-time’ & ‘just-for-me’;

- Program choice/ certainty
- Staff: contact with staff & teaching quality
- Course design: Clear, coherent, responsive, flexible, relevant, engaging, achievable, & motivating;
- Assessment for learning: relevant, consistent & integrated;
- Feedback: early, prompt & constructive.

(Eg: Scott, 2006; Yorke & Longden, 2008; Kift, 2009; James et al, 2010)

(Eg: FCYS, 2009; NSSE, 2009)
Support is very important

  - Based on US National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE)
  - What engages students in productive learning
- One (of six) scales reported that:
  - 71% of students felt institutions provide academic support ‘quite a bit’ or ‘very much’
  - Only 23% said got non-academic support (36% very little; 41% some support);
  - Only 32% said supported to socialise (25% very little; 43% some support).
Figure 2: First-year student engagement scale scores
Common FY Curriculum Complaints (Kift, 2009)

- Lack of clarity and consistency regarding expectations
- Lack of coherence, achievability and relevance

**Assessment and feedback**
- UK Yorke & Longden (2008): 29% said feedback not prompt
- James *et al* (CSHE, 2010): only 35% found feedback helpful
- AUSSE (2009,76): only 40% FYs often/very often received prompt feedback (cf 80.4% of staff thought feedback often/very often prompt)
- UK NSS (2008): satisfaction with assessment & feedback lowest
- US NSSE (2009,38): 42% FYs sometimes/never receive prompt f’back

- **Lack of preparedness** re tertiary literacies: e.g academic; information; IT; numeracy; visual; statistical; professional practices; cultural; + + + ????

- **Group work** – esp group processes

- **Staff interest** – only 26% FYs believe staff are interested in their progress (CSHE, 2010).
What this means for us …

• ‘Joined-up’ **institutional approaches** = partnerships.
  – General and specialist services
  – Academic and non-academic support
  – Curricula and co-curricula engagement

• Once 1\textsuperscript{st} semester starts, harness **the curriculum** as academic and social ‘organising device’ to do serious transition and retention work
  – Both in and outside (physical and virtual) classroom – eg
    • By inclusive teaching, learning & assessment practices
    • Being explicit about what’s required for success (HE & discipline)
    • Attending to sense of belonging through curriculum strategies
    • Through pathways & interactions facilitated

(Kift, 2008)
What institutional approaches?

Recently, Yorke & Longden (2008) identified a number of broad areas of institutional activity:

– Institutional commitment to student learning & engagement;
– Proactive management of student transition;
– Attention to curricula (& co-curricula)
  • For both academic & social engagement;
  • To increase chances of student success;
– Place emphasis & resourcing on the FYE;
– Systematic monitoring & evaluation of student achievement, and acting on the evidence thereby collected;
– Academic leadership.

Proactive management of student transition

Mentor outreach


http://www.csu.edu.au/for/new-students/post-graduate/academic-skills
Institutional Commitment to Student Learning and Engagement

Distance education study tips

Tips for study success as a distance education student that will help you stay on track with study.

Time management

- **Don't procrastinate.** Look through your study materials as soon as you get them and plan.
- **Get Started. Today.** Now! Reading through the study guide, or re-visiting the assignment topic will be getting you somewhere. If you have any questions, contact the support staff at CSU to get some tips or guidance.
- **Get organised.** Improve your time management skills and get yourself organised. This sometimes means changing the way you have done things in the past or how you go about the task.
- **Keep your tasks bite-sized.** It is amazing how much you can achieve if you set aside one hour of time somewhere in each day. All those little bites make a meal out of study.

Link to student blog on uni life

http://starthere.qut.edu.au/realstudents/videofaqs
Snooze!

MAY 24, 2010

by Michael

The early mornings are taking their toll, that’s probably the only certainty in this week... WEEK 13!

My biological clock - that thing inside of you that knows that its dinner time, knows when your favourite show is coming on tv, and even reminds you that it is time to go to sleep. I’m just wondering, has anyone seen mine?

Read more...

2 COMMENTS

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so no one told you life was gonna be this way...da da da da da *dancing to the theme song from Friends*

MAY 24, 2010

by Helen

i have had an insane week! i’ve spent pretty much the past four days straight in my mum’s office writing a business plan for Entrepreneurship and Innovation (i have to go to my mum’s office
Claire’s Little Secrets to Surviving University

...your very first day...is going to be both exciting and horrifying. I remember stepping into a room of over 500 students, totally overwhelmed. [Then]... my lecturer said: “The class may seem crowded at the moment, but at least 50 students will leave after a month, and only half of you will graduate after four years.”... So to get you started, I...share... tips (I wish someone had told me!) on how to survive your first year at university.

1. Sit next to the best looking person in the room.
Proactive management of student transition

Orientation & Transition as a process over time.

UWA Consistency: UniSkills; UniStart; UniMentor; UniDiscovery & UniAccess


ALSO:

Attention to critical issues such as: timetabling from FY student’s perspective

http://www.transition.uwa.edu.au/welcome/info_for_staff/what_is_a_fyi/examples/timetabling
Of ducks and carrots

Action
Data analysis
What is good teaching & support
What is a good student exp
Learning leadership & governance across silos
Area plans
Top level plan(s)
Vision

Reward & recognition
Staff development
Promotion criteria
Probation
KPIs
PP&R
Charles Sturt University Orientation Guidelines

CSU Vision for Orientation

CSU orientation will facilitate a smooth and successful transition to university study for commencing students. Orientation activities and resources will be available in a timely manner and will be accessible, relevant and accurate regardless of students’ educational background, geographical location or study mode. CSU orientation will inspire students to fully engage with their learning experience and will address the mutual expectations and needs of students and the University in order for students to become successful and independent learners.

The Student Experience

CSU is committed to creating a seamless, integrated, student-centred experience by improving the quality of our students’ engagement with the University regardless of who they are, where they are, or what stage they are in their relationship with CSU. An orientation process that supports a successful transition to university study is central to a quality student experience.

Learning transitions

All students regardless of their age, educational background, location or study mode experience a period of transition or adjustment when commencing study. Transition is commonly associated with school leavers commencing university on campus. However, the transition to postgraduate study, to a new discipline, or to a new study mode is just as important. Orientation programs and activities have an important role to play in ensuring these transitions are as smooth as possible. CSU recognises that the transition process is one which is mediated over time, and planning and delivery of orientation activities and strategies reflects this. The ‘official’ orientation period extends from the time of the letter of offer through until the end of the first session of study and includes strategies embedded within and outside the curriculum.

Focus on

A Transition Pedagogy
and
The First Year Curriculum
Transition Pedagogy…

• To harness cross-institutional partnerships for a **curriculum engagement focus** because it’s within the first year curriculum that students must be engaged, supported, and realise their sense of belonging.

• QUT will deliver a ‘comprehensive, integrated and coordinated approach to the FYE…’

http://www.mopp.qut.edu.au/C/C_06_02.jsp

‘Transition pedagogy’ –

...a guiding philosophy for intentional first year curriculum design and support that carefully scaffolds and mediates the first year learning experience for contemporary heterogeneous cohorts.

Kift & Nelson (2005)

Why focus on curriculum…

- Because in all their diversity, with multiple identities and changing patterns of engagement, curriculum is
  - What students have in common
  - Within our institutional control
  - Only place we have contact with **all** students and can mediate that diversity, especially in preparedness & cultural capital

- Because otherwise our interventions are not comprehensive and their effect is left to chance
  - Will be bolt-on, piecemeal, and de-contextualised
  - May lack integration across processes & organisational areas
Uni of Newcastle Travel Diary

Kift, 2003

A principled approach—

- **Generic** ‘curriculum’ principles identified that are supportive of first year learning engagement, success and retention.

- Interconnected organising principles that –
  - Are research-based (but move *from theory to action*);
  - Help guide and inform *holistic* FYE practice;
  - Require cross-institutional *partnerships* to enact & enable;
  - Have been **rigorously evaluated** by the HE community internationally and are evidence-based (Kift, 2009);
  - Accord with theoretical and research-based frameworks for optimal FYE (e.g. *Foundational Dimensions*, 2005; US *Parsing the First Year of College Project* [http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/parsing-project](http://www.ed.psu.edu/educ/parsing-project)).
Six (6) Curriculum Principles

[HE word bingo]

[Concurrent with good teaching and good support]

• Transition
• Diversity
• Design
• Engagement
• Assessment
• Evaluation and Monitoring

A curriculum that does serious transition and retention work!

First Year Curriculum Principles

Good first year curriculum design should abide by the following interconnected organising principles to facilitate all students fully achieving desired learning outcomes.

1. Transition
   The curriculum and its delivery should be designed to be consistent and explicit in assisting students’ transition from their previous educational experiences to the nature of learning in Higher education and learning in their discipline as part of their lifelong learning. The first year curriculum should be designed to mediate and support transition as a process that occurs over time. In this way, the first year curriculum will enable successful student transition into first year, through first year, into later years and ultimately out into the world of work, professional practice and career attainment.

2. Diversity
   The first year curriculum should be attuned to student diversity and must be accessible by and inclusive of all students. First year curriculum design should recognize that students have special learning needs by reason of their social, cultural and academic transition. Diversity is often a factor that further exacerbates transition difficulties. The first year curriculum should take into account students’ backgrounds, needs, experiences and patterns of study and test if any assumptions should be made about existing skills and knowledge.
   Diversity in this context includes, for example:
   - membership of at-risk or equity groups
   - widening participation (e.g., non-traditional cohort)
   - students’ existing skills and knowledge
   - patterns and timing of engagement with the first year curriculum (e.g., mid-year entry).

3. Design
   First year curriculum design and delivery should be student-focused, explicit and relevant in providing the foundation and scaffolding necessary for first year learning success. This requires the curriculum must be designed to assist student development and to support their engagement with learning environments through the intentional integration and sequencing of knowledge, skills, and attitudes.

4. Engagement
   Learning, teaching, and assessment approaches in the first year curriculum should enable an engaging and involving curriculum pedagogy and should enable active and collaborative learning. Learning communities should be promoted through the embedding in first year curriculum of active and interactive learning opportunities and other opportunities for peer-to-peer collaboration and teacher-student interaction.

5. Assessment
   The first year curriculum should assist students to make a successful transition to assessment in Higher education, while assessment should increase in complexity from the first to later years of curriculum design. Critically, students should receive regular, formative evaluations of their work, early in their program of study to aid their learning and to provide feedback to both students and staff on student progress and achievement.

6. Evaluation and monitoring
   Good first year curriculum design is evidence-based and enhanced by regular evaluation that feeds to curriculum development and renewal designed to improve student learning. The first year curriculum should also have strategies embedded to monitor all students’ engagement in their learning and to identify and intervene in a timely way with students at risk of not succeeding or fully achieving desired learning outcomes.

For more information go to www.csu.edu.au/student/transition/index.htm

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Kift ALTC Senior Fellowship
FYECD Symposium 2009

Symposium - the Movie

An Extract

EG, intentional **whole-of-program** design (1)

- 1st week of Sem takes up where orientation leaves off
- Opportunity to self-assess entering diversity of knowledge, skills & attitudes against discipline expectations (with development opportunities consequently provided)
- Identify first year curriculum objectives
- Make explicit to students whole-of-program roadmap
- Design-in discipline co-curricula and socialising activities (eg PASS)
- Physical or virtual space available for social interaction
- Evaluate whole-of-program, including orientation, especially for patterns of attrition amongst sub-cohorts.
- Monitor for current student (dis)engagement across program and support/ intervene with identified at-risk students
For example: ePortfolio

The QUT Student ePortfolio is a university-wide, online tool designed to enhance the learning process and assist students with the transition from university to graduate employment.

http://www.studenteportfolio.qut.edu.au/

The QUT Student Success Program

• An ‘organisational (infra)structure’ consisting of people, protocols & processes, information, and institution-wide partnerships.

• Four campaigns – throughout each semester
  – Pre-semester: follow up of non or late acceptances of offer (esp. equity cohorts) & / accepted but not enrolled students.
  – Early-semester: welcome calls – by cohort & discipline
  – During-semester: learning engagement – via subjects/ programs
  – Post-semester: unsatisfactory academic performance processes

• 2008-mid 2010 > 15,000 students involved

Student Success Program (SSP)

Outreach

Descriptive Information

Commencing Student Information

Student Activities

SSP Team Leaders

SSP Advisors

General & Discipline Advice

“students at risk” reports

“Warm Hand-Off”

Existing Services

Support Services

QUT Specialist Service Providers:
- Counselling, Disability, Equity
- Careers and Employment
- International Students Services

Skills Development Workshops
- Following early diagnostics

QUT Learning Support:
- Kick Start/Study Smart,
- Library Help Desks,
- Scheduled Workshops,
- Academic Skills Advisors

Faculty Learning Support:
- School / Discipline Support,
- Unit specific support,
- FY/Academic Advisors
- Peer Learning Advisors, Duty Tutors, SI schemes,

QUT Student Guild

Limited information

Contact Information

Specialist Support

FYE Consultant
- Life Support

Academic Skills Advisors
- Learning Support
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<td>89.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>At-risk Not contacted*</td>
<td>903</td>
<td>601</td>
<td>66.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not at Risk</td>
<td>8,223</td>
<td>7,292</td>
<td>88.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10,072</td>
<td>8,736</td>
<td>86.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*All At-risk students receive an action plan via email – these students were unable to be contacted by phone.
EG, intentional **whole-of-program** design (2)

Intentional mapping & coherence across FY subjects: eg

- As much as possible, whole FY program is coherent & integrated
- Make links/connections between subjects explicit
- Diversity in T, L & A approaches across subjects
- Assessment strategy coherent, integrated & manageable across subjects for students *and* staff
- Make no assumptions about entering knowledge, skills & attitudes
  - map subject responsibility for academic literacy development to assist transition to tertiary study, scaffold learning, and make explicit what is required for success (eg re academic writing, referencing, teamwork, *etc*).
- Consistency in communications of expectations/ responsibilities
- Develop early assessment literacies
Diversity in entering preparedness

http://www.csu.edu.au/for/new-students/on-campus/academic-skills
First Year Assessment
First year student who would rather write a song than do his KKB101 essay.

So he did!

I don’t know if he passed or not. ;-)

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ccOoldztCss
Early tertiary assessment literacies: e.g.

• Explanation and consistent use of assessment verbs; consistent naming of assessment tasks;

• Explicit clarification of assessment expectations: eg, how to write, research, reference, orally present in different discipline genres;

• Explicit & consistent advice & assistance with referencing & paraphrasing expectations;

• Instruction & proactive support re group/team work;

• Assist students to make use of examples & model answers;

• Well written criterion referenced assessment (CRA) sheets **AND** ‘dialogue’ about way criteria and standards will be applied (ASKe, 2008: [http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/ASKe%20Intervention.pdf](http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/ASKe%20Intervention.pdf));

• Assistance with ‘what feedback is’ & how to make the best use of it (Race, 2009: [http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/Feedback_Booklet_Phil_Race.pdf](http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/Feedback_Booklet_Phil_Race.pdf)).
Clarity re assessment expectations

Assessment expectations...

http://www.dlsweb.rmit.edu.au/lsu/content/1_Stud ySkills/study_pdf/Blooms%20taxonomy.pdf

6 steps to successful learning
Bloom’s taxonomy of educational objectives (1956)

When you give value to an idea or claim based on a set of standards, you are evaluating, e.g. the degree to which something is effective, the extent to which something meets set standards.

When you link similar ideas offered by one writer or artist with another writer or artist, you are synthesising ideas; e.g. Smith (2004) and Jones (2005) both suggest that ... ; however Jones further argues that ...

When you categorise or organise ideas e.g. into a system or framework, you are analysing.

When you give an example or illustrate an idea, you are applying knowledge.

When you describe / paraphrase what a text says, you show understanding.

When you sense that you know what a text means, you ‘know’

Learning Links
Quick Tips / 6 steps to successful learning

www.rmit.edu.au/studyandlearningcentre
Understanding academic languages & conventions

Example: A Psychology degree program uses the same assessment definitions and criteria throughout the entire program. A written assessment guide formally articulates these to students and staff (Gibbs, 2009)

Example: In a FY Education subject, small student groups are given a copy of the same written excerpt and each group is asked to respond in a specific way: reflectively, analytically, critically, etc. Responses are shared with the class to highlight the differences between cognitive levels (Healy, 2008)
Welcome to STUDY LINK!

At CSU we recognise the importance of preparation for University study. If you haven't studied for a while or just want to brush up on your skills in a few areas, a STUDY LINK subject is perfect for you. By completing one or more STUDY LINK subjects, you will not only increase your skills, but you will develop a clearer understanding of the expectations of studying at University.

STUDY LINK has been running for more than a decade and this time has seen more than 24,000 enrolments. Our students report huge gains in confidence, skills and knowledge as a result of completing STUDY LINK subjects and we are constantly reviewing the program and seeking feedback to ensure the STUDY LINK program continues to meet student needs.

The STUDY LINK program utilises flexible, online delivery, meaning you can complete subjects from the convenience of your own home, with the full support of resources, fellow students and a qualified subject coordinator. The STUDY LINK program prides itself on high quality materials and service to students, and we're thrilled to be able to offer the Visa.

http://www.csu.edu.au/student/studylink/
Help student understanding of CRA

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/ASKe%20Intervention.pdf

ASKe (Assessment Standards Knowledge exchange) is a Centre for Excellence in Teaching and Learning (CETL) based in the Business School at Oxford Brookes University. It was set up in summer 2005 with a £4.5 million award from HEFCE in recognition of good practice based on pedagogic research into aspects of assessment.

The work of ASKe has been organised into three strands of activity:

**Strand 1: Mediating proven practice through**
- A pre-assessment intervention which the ASKe team has shown to work. A simple intervention such as a marking workshop prior to undertaking an assessed task can significantly increase students’ understanding of the assessment criteria and improve their performance of the task.
- ASKe has supported the development of this kind of intervention on all Business School programmes, as well as in three other Schools: Built Environment, Health and Social Care, and WMS (Watershed Management Studies). This support is available for the remaining four schools plus the partner institutions.
- The Academic contact (AcC) system within which the ASKe team is further developing.
- In addition to researching effective ways of encouraging and promoting academic integrity.
- The Peer Assistant Learning (PAL) programmes, long used by the Business School, which ASKe has extended across the School. Support is also offered to help at least three other Schools introduce PAL.

**Strand 2: Pioneering evidence-based practice**
Appropriate development projects will be funded, both within the Business School and across the whole University. Projects will aim to cut and support ways to develop and enhance assessment practices.

**Strand 3: Cultivating a community of practice**
This ASKe team has developed a new £5 million building for Business at Wheatley Campus.
This provides a physical environment to support student learning outside of formal class time, in which staff and students can meet to develop a shared understanding of academic standards. But it’s more than just a building. The ASKe team argue that only a true community of practice will ensure shared understanding, so ASKe (in conjunction with other parties at Oxford) is also developing the social environment necessary to realise this physical space.

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1. **Pre-submission**: students mark 2 sample, similar assignments (good, average) using CRA sheet

2. **Attend 90 min workshop**: re-mark in groups; discussion & tutor feedback; review marks; get annotated versions of sample assignments

3. **Submit work + self-assessment** on CRA sheet

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To find out more about ASKe’s work, please contact:

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Do you feel that your students are underperforming due to their poor understanding of your assessment standards?
Are you concerned that they don’t really understand your assessment criteria?
Have you ever experienced blank looks when students read your feedback comments on their work?
If so, why don’t you try our pre-assessment intervention?
It takes just 90 minutes of your time, and it works*...

*Business School students at Oxford Brookes University who completed the intervention showed significant improvements in performance, with improvements sustained at a similar level one year later (Rust et al., 2003).
Assessment building in complexity &/or cumulatively

Example: In an Arts and Education writing subject, assessment begins with familiar tasks (eg. essay writing), progressing over time to unfamiliar tasks (eg. writing media releases). Formative feedback is provided with each piece of assessment and templates and models are provided for each new assignment type (Radbourne & LeRossignol, 2008)

Example: History subject, a large essay assignment split into 3 stages: Stage 1: Students discuss the essay question in groups in the tutorial. Stage 2: Preparation of a draft essay plan and bibliography (weighted 10%). Formative feedback is provided by tutors and peers in sufficient time to incorporate into the next stage. Stage 3: Submission of final essay (weighted 35%). (McCreery, 2005)
Taylor (2008, 23) Strategies for assessment

http://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1059&context=jutlp

Assessments for development
- Low weight, high marking
- Draft essay
- Reading log
- Notes on literature review
- Components of portfolio

Assessments for transition
- Low weight, low marking
- Reflective activity
- Study Plan
- Contract

Assessments for achievement
- High weight, low marking
- Examination
- Final report / essay
- Portfolio

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13

Weeks from beginning of semester

Self assessment (formative or partially summative) – no or minimal marking time
UK First Level Assessment and Feedback Project (FLAP)

http://www.leedsmet.ac.uk/0906016-36503_Designing_1st_Assessment_LoRes.pdf

Ruth Pickford’s FYHE Keynote at

The FE FO FUN Model of First Level Assessment and Feedback Design

- Efficient marking
- Engaging and enjoyable
- Learning through experimentation
- Reflection and building on feedback
- Lifelong learning skills

First Year Assessment and Feedback

Formative Activity

Fit

Feelings
- Self-belief
- Teaching shaped by assessment
- Interaction and dialogue
- Valued diversity reflected through choice

Fun

- Friendships

The ten principles of successful first level assessment and feedback which comprise the FE FO FUN Model can be represented and remembered using a simple first level principles list. The basic premise of the First Level Assessment and Feedback Project (FLAP) is that through engaging with these ten principles in our assessment and feedback practice we can positively influence the first level learning experience. First level assessment and feedback practice should be designed to support:

F - Friendships
I - Interaction and dialogue
R - Reflection and building on feedback
S - Self-belief
T - Teaching shaped by assessment
L - Lifelong learning skills
E - Efficient, value-added marking
V - Valued diversity reflected through choice
E - Engaging and enjoyable learning experiences
L - Learning through experimentation

This booklet provides 50 suggestions for staff to consider in the design of their first level assessment and feedback.
Helping students to make use of feedback

1. Prepare students to receive feedback (eg align staff & student expectations to agree purpose; what is ‘feedback’)

2. Reduce emphasis on written feedback – supplement with dialogue

3. Provide timely feedback (eg generic feedback ASAP)

http://www.brookes.ac.uk/aske/documents/Make%20FeedbackWork.pdf
Timely provision and use of feedback

Examples: *Timely, high quality generic feedback* (Race, 2009)
- Provide online or face-to-face overview of the cohort’s performance starts to emerge;
- Issue a pre-prepared one page handout immediately post-submission identifying what was expected under each criterion, features of a good answer, and common mistakes

Examples: *Using feedback* (ASKe 2007; n.d.)
- Provide examples of how other students have used feedback to improve
- Students complete and submit template with assessment describing feedback previously received and how it has been applied to current task
- Encourage peer discussion in small groups about feedback received and how it will be used
Some ideas in closing …

• Much of what we know and practice for improving the experience of first year students is immediately transferable to later years and contexts.

• Real impact requires institutional level commitment and institution-wide academic and professional partnerships.

• Good practice in the classroom will enhance the learning experience of all students.
When we get it right...

What would a good Week 1 lecture in the First Year look like?

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PUzjIsP1yxc&feature=PlayList&p=F2C026529F7622DC&playnext_from=PL&playnext=1&index=10
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