

2148 Transition at UEA

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Union Notes

1. In SU research carried out in March 2017 on the topic of extra opportunities for students, including Do Something different and a "week 0", 50% said that they would prefer a non-academic timetabled first week in order for them to settling in and orientate themselves both to campus and to student life.
2. Research conducted by Higher Education Policy Institute (HEPI) on student perceptions had a section on social integration, where nearly 50% of respondents said they felt completely or somewhat unprepared to live with people they had never met before
3. Part of HEPI's report focussed on mental health of new students in the first 4 weeks of study . The results indicated strongly that over 90% of students are likely to feel tired, lacking in energy, or under strain in these first weeks.

Union Believes

1. There is a desire among students for a period of time at the beginning of semester to explore UEA in their own time, rather than lectures and academic teaching starting too soon.
2. Many students will have not even have moved into their new accommodation before having to navigate campus for the start of the academic year.
3. Part of the anxieties associated with meeting new people could lie around not having time to get to know flatmates properly, something closely linked with going straight into academic study after moving in. Having clear and structured time to get know flatmates could offset this.
4. A transition period is also important for the non-traditional first year students; those such as mature or commuting students who may not be living on campus.
5. Having a week 0 without teaching would allow students the flexibility of making their first week as a student what they want it to be within their own interests and capabilities.
6. It would be beneficial for UEA to explore the possibility of a consistent, institution-wide approach to transitioning new students into University life- an example of this is the 'I love HUM' initiative. Although this includes elements of academic study and timetabled events, uea(su) is really impressed with the balance of more social and orientation-based events with lectures and seminars.
7. Another element of transitions for students is those going from UG to PG study at UEA. uea(su) has noticed several examples of issues within this transition period, including students' UG emails being turned off once they finish, even if they are carrying on to PG study.
8. This can create many problems for students, including missing valuable information and causing inconsistency in their student experience. UEA's advertisements for PG study use the phrase "stay where you are", but it is very difficult for students to feel part of a smooth and well-managed transition if the simplest of things, such as a continued email and IT account, cannot be provided.

9. All students should be offered training on independent directed learning; financial literacy and budgeting; dealing with emergency household situations; resilience skills; sexual harassment/discrimination

Union Resolves

1. To mandate the FTOs to lobby the Student Experience Committee on transitions.
 2. To call on all faculties to run "I love HUM" style programmes with central coordination for University wide activities and initiatives.
 3. To work with UEA to undertake a university-wide review of school-based support for students' transition to postgraduate taught and research level study, in partnership with students, the PGR Service, professional services.
 4. To ensure the review considers the needs of particular groups who are more likely to find the transition challenging, such as first in- family applicants, applicants who identify as LGBT+, and applicants from particular socio-economic backgrounds
 5. To report back on progress on these issues later in the term.
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