

# **Interventions to enhance the student experience of a first year law degree: what they really wanted**

Susan Armstrong, School of Law, University of Western Sydney  
Marnie Campbell, Student Equity and Welfare Services, University of Western Sydney  
Michael Brogan, School of Law, University of Western Sydney

*This paper reports on a comprehensive ‘transition’ program for new first year law students which aimed to enhance students’ social connections with peers and teachers. Students reported that whilst helpful, these interventions were not what they really wanted or needed to assist their transition to first year law. They would have preferred more assistance from their teachers about how to be a law student. This outcome confirms the centrality of the academic experience and the role of teachers in facilitating a successful transition to first year university. It also highlights the need for a framework to assist students to become independent learners in their own disciplinary context by scaffolding the scholarly processes, communication practices and orientations to knowledge valued by the discipline.*

## **Introduction**

This paper reports on the evaluation of a ‘transition’ program for new first year law students. The project aimed to establish a personalised pastoral connection between students and academics outside the formal teacher-student relationship and to enhance new students’ sense of social connection to their peers in the law school. The evaluation of the program found that the strategies of the transition program helped some students adjust to university or resolve the challenges they experienced in the first semester of their law degree. However, most students reported that strategies did not make a big difference. They indicated that what they really wanted was for their teachers to be more approachable and to provide more academic support so they could understand how to be a successful law student. The evaluation also identified a much higher level of anxiety, uncertainty and disengagement among students than reported in national surveys of the first year experience (Krause et al 2005, McInnes et al 2000, Asmar et al, 2000), particularly surprising because law students are expected to be among the most able and confident. Teacher perceptions of the success of the transition program were mixed, but they generally underestimated first year students’ anxiety and sometimes misread their resultant disengagement.

The significance of these findings, although tempered because of the small sample, is threefold. It affirms the value of getting to know our students better to ensure that any program developed to assist first year students is firmly grounded on what students at that institution and in that field of education say they need. More importantly, the student voice fixes the centrality of the academic experience and the role of teachers in facilitating a

successful transition to first year university (Peel, 1998; Krause, 2005). Lastly it points to the need for a framework to assist students to become independent learners in their own disciplinary context by scaffolding the scholarly processes, communication practices and orientations to knowledge valued by the discipline (Wingate, 2007; Parker, 2008).

The paper first discusses the elements of the transition program and students' and teachers' perceptions of it. It then considers these findings in the context of the literature on facilitating first year transition and makes (tentative) recommendations for future programs to support new university students and their teachers.

## **Background**

This study took place in a 'new' multi campus university with a highly diverse student population in terms of entry qualifications, backgrounds and learning experiences. The students at this university represent a higher proportion of non-traditional students or those in equity categories (NESB, disability, low socio economic status) than the rest of the university sector, although these categories do not neatly align with greater risk of withdrawal (Campbell, 2007a). More than half of all students at this university are the first in their family to attend university and the proportion of students working more than 20 hours per week is higher than the sector average. For some students this means less preparedness for university and a greater number of personal stressors affecting their university experience. An exit survey conducted by this university in 2007 indicated that among the top ten reasons for leaving the university was isolation (3), inadequate staff feedback and help (5) and lack of staff availability (9) (OPQ, 2007). Whilst retention of all commencing law year students (82%) was slightly above the sector standard (77%), the law school initiated a project primarily designed to enhance the experience of first year law students, and ultimately to increase retention. It was thought that whilst the patterns of factors influencing early withdrawal are complex, they may have at their core some simple dynamics which relate to student-staff relationships and students' feelings of isolation (Campbell, 2008).

The scholarly literature and research in this field demonstrates that student learning outcomes and students' likelihood to stay at university are strongly influenced by the level of academic and social integration achieved particularly early in the student learning cycle (Tinto 1993; Kuh 2007). It is also widely agreed that academic staff play a key role in assisting first year students' engage with their study (Krause, 2005; Peel 2000). It is the quality of staff and student interactions which makes a difference to students. Indeed Peel found that advice from academic staff and academic mentoring by a lecturer were seen by students as the most valuable direct human contacts in their first year at university (Peel, 2000). Findings from the 2007 'Students at Risk' project at this university suggest that first year students want staff to convey a preparedness to discuss questions, no matter how insignificant, and to send a message that they valued the student as an individual. Students also indicated that they lacked confidence to approach academic staff and that they would benefit from group or individual sessions where they could raise issues and discuss them with faculty staff (Campbell, 2007b).

## **The transition program**

This literature and data informed the focus of the School of Law (SOL) transition pilot for first year students. A range of initiatives was introduced to promote students' early academic and social integration. This included a refined orientation program which emphasised group

activities, an optional overnight orientation camp, social activities for staff and students like school barbeques and a dedicated website to encourage students to communicate with staff and their peers. The main intervention was the creation of several 'first year advisor' (FYA) roles filled by first year teachers who then conducted informal meetings with most of the first year cohort in small groups in the first four weeks of semester one (n = 356 of 429 law commencing students). The FYA were meant to provide a personalised pastoral connection with students outside the formal teacher-student relationship and be a point of further reference for the student. In the meeting the FYA asked how students had settled in their first few weeks, inquired about their biggest challenges and referred student to resources and support services or invited them to come back for a more personal discussion if they wished. The FYA meetings were intended to not only connect students with a friendly academic face whom they could consult again if required, but to provide a strategy to assist students to evaluate their progress, compare this with other students, ventilate and respond to any questions and connect with other students in the interview group.

### **The evaluation**

We used 'triangulation' or a mixed methods approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004) that combined interviews with first year teachers and administration of an online self-report survey completed by first year students.

#### *First year teacher interviews*

Email invitations were sent to twelve staff members, including five who had been FYA, who had taught first year law students in first semester inviting them to participate in an hour long interview to discuss the first year transition project. Six staff, including three FYA agreed to be interviewed. The interviews were conducted towards the end of second semester. The interviews were digitally recorded and the recordings transcribed. All three researchers independently analysed the transcripts to determine common categories. Once the transcripts had been analysed the researchers discussed their findings to reduce categories and generate themes for comparison. Shared themes were confirmed and discrepancies debated to find common ground.

#### *Student survey*

Survey items were developed to capture student participation in and perceptions of the transition program and to identify important features of their first year experience. The survey consisted of 35 items. Five questions captured demographic data, 12 questions asked students to indicate their agreement with statements about their first semester experience on a 5-point Likert scale anchored 'Strongly agree', 'Agree', 'Neutral', 'Disagree' and 'Strongly disagree' and 15 questions asked students to rate the value of elements of the transition project on the same scale. The survey included three open-ended questions about the factors that most helped them to adjust to the expectations of first year law and what else the law school could do to help first year students.

An email, and follow up reminders, were sent in mid to late second semester to the 377 students who were still enrolled in the compulsory first year law unit at the end of semester one, inviting them to complete an online survey about their experiences as a law student during first semester. A total of 50 students completed the survey, which is a return rate of

13%. This is lower than desirable, and lower than sector wide responses to surveys of the first year experience. While the participants are representative of the first year law cohort at this university, and their responses are consistent with a number of trends reported in the literature on first year experience, the findings of the study should be treated cautiously because of the small sample.

### **The results: Student Survey**

Of the students responding to the survey, most had participated in at least one of the transition project initiatives, as the table below indicates.

1. Orientation morning on their home campus	63% (29)
2. Orientation camp	15% (7)
3. Interview with FYA	59% (27)
4. Website for first year law	44% (20)
5. Social activities like the 'we made it bbq'	19% (9)

The evaluation suggests that whilst students appreciated the opportunity to speak with a FYA, and that it made them feel welcomed and valued, they would have preferred more purposeful academic assistance about assessment and more specific guidance from their teachers about how to be a law student. One fifth of respondents listed the first year transition activities as having made the biggest difference in assisting them to adjust to first year university. 40% agreed that the general orientation session helped them to adjust to university or resolve the challenges they experienced in the first semester of their law. Only 15% of respondents attended the orientation camp and, of these, half agreed that this experience helped them better adjust to first semester law study. 40% of those who attended an interview with a first year advisor agreed that the interview helped them adjust, although nearly as many (30%) disagreed. Half of interviewees said the interview helped them feel part of the Law School and that the first year advisor had a genuine interest in them as an individual. They were evenly split about whether they preferred to be interviewed alone or with others. Two thirds of interviewees and half of all respondents agreed that it was important to have the opportunity to have an interview with a first year advisor. Students identified the factors that most assisted them to adjust in first semester at university as being friendly, approachable and available staff (40%), their peers (30%) or personal effort and persistence (20%).

Whilst half of respondents report that they settled well into university life in the first semester of their law degree and had made friends, and the majority enjoyed studying law, most also experienced significant challenges in the first semester of their law degree. Two thirds experienced personal stress or difficulties and the same number found it hard to juggle commitments and manage their time and workload. Two thirds did not know how to approach the study of law and found studying law difficult. Three quarters did not know how to do law assessments. Half did not know where to get help. Nearly one half of students thought seriously about discontinuing or deferring in the first semester. As one student remarked, 'We were so lost.' These figures are alarming because they are much higher than reported for other first year students both across the sector and at this university, and because law students are expected to be successful, confident learners. These were bright students, with half recording a university admission score of more than 80, and one quarter achieving more than 90.

Students found some value in the activities designed to assist their transition and promote social interaction between students with their peers and staff, but most students reported that they did not make a big difference. When asked what more the law school could do to help first year students adjust, nearly 60% of student comments indicated that they what they really wanted was more help about *how* to be a law student. Nearly one half of student comments concerned their need for more specific in-class academic guidance about how to study law and prepare for class and how to complete assessment tasks. One commented

Perhaps hold a seminar or two on how to approach assessments, what's expected in answering law based questions and in general how to structure study materials.

Another highlighted the need for assistance about the particular skills necessary for studying the discipline of law:

Law units are hard and different to Business, Communications etc. Teachers need to teach students on HOW to answer assessment questions and how to study properly... Provide SOME guidance at least. Don't just assume that students know what they are doing.

When these comments are combined with requests for greater teacher responsiveness, nearly two thirds of comments concern the need for more academic support. Whilst 40% found friendly, approachable and available staff as the most important factors in their adjustment to university demands, students wanted more teachers to be more approachable as 'it is really difficult to ask them for help'. Students also favoured structured opportunities to speak with staff 'so that if we did want to approach them we would not feel as though we were intruding.' This is consistent with findings from university research which suggests that a staff open door policy is not enough and that teachers need to create opportunities where students and staff can interact and students can ask 'dumb' questions (Campbell, 2007a).

### **The results: Interviews with First Year Teachers**

A number of themes were identified in the staff interview responses. These include mixed views about the value of the transition project interventions, surprise at the level of insecurity felt by new students and uncertainty about who had responsibility for learning in a difficult law degree: students or teachers. These are discussed below.

*'You're not just teaching a number' - Value of the transition project*

Teachers had mixed views about the value of the transition project in assisting students to adjust to the first year at university. There was a view among teachers who had been FYAs that the interviews were really valuable to staff because they fostered greater understanding of the 'personal situation people were coming from' reminded staff that 'you're not just teaching a number.' This 'woke me up a bit to the sensitising process, to how I needed to be a bit gentler with first year.' Others believed that administratively the interviews prevented

a lot of problems, so students know how to pre-empt difficulties by knowing what to do, who to go to, where to look, and what to think about. And so there's no rush at the end when it's almost too late, or it is too late, to fix it.

The first year advisors reported that the interviews were also a useful strategy to identify and redirect and counsel those students at risk. However, other first year teachers thought that

they were of limited value 'without follow up' interviews or phone calls later in the semester to see if problems persisted and to provide support to at risk students.

The orientation camp was generally perceived by teachers to be of significant value to the students who attended it, as it developed an 'esprit de corps' and 'those students who attended the camp came back very bonded and confident.' This and the social activities assisted to build a 'culture of community. [This university] lacks that tremendously.'

### *The Imposter Syndrome: Surprise at student insecurity*

Several teachers were surprised at the depth of the students' lack of confidence and insecurity demonstrated in the interviews with first year advisors. As one remarked,

There was a much higher degree of anxiety than I was expecting. ... I had a lot of students, I didn't realise, [who] were very insecure about whether or not they deserved to be here.

Another commented that a

surprisingly large number of them have very low self-confidence in their ability, or freedom to approach a person who appears to be in authority and actually talk to them. So I think they're really frightened [to ask for help].

Insecurity was evident among both high school entrants and also among graduate or mature entry students. One first year advisor remarked

... A lot of mature age mums, and to a lesser extent, dads, [were thinking] that impostor kind of thing of 'I'm not a law student; I don't really think I belong here.' And ... acute anxiety about coping with juggling work for a lot of them, so ... the lack of confidence was a surprise.'

One teacher confirmed the view that

the Imposter Syndrome is huge. I say to my students, 'Who's scared to be here?' A couple of people put up their hand. I say, 'OK, who's too scared you can't even put up your hand?' And they all sort of laugh at that!

The tracking of student concerns in the first year advisor interviews suggests that student anxiety was high in the first few weeks, but by week four students teachers believed that were more settled. However, student survey comments and responses suggest that their uncertainty and self doubt continued during the semester, particularly in relation to assessment and understanding how to master legal knowledge.

### *'It's a really tough degree' – Who has responsibility for learning?*

First year teachers recognised that students' insecurity was not just about grappling with the demands of independent study as a new university student, but were linked to the difficulty of the law degree. The effect of the challenging nature of the law degree on student engagement was identified by one teacher, who stated

it's a profession. It's a really tough degree. It's a commitment. It's not something they can do in their spare time. It has to be a priority in their lives. It's something *they* have to take really, really seriously ... And if *they're* not going to realize the amount of effort *they* have to put into it at the

beginning, I think a lot of people that we lose is because *they're* slow to realize that, or *they* refuse to realize it. (Emphasis added)

As the emphasis here indicates, this remark also highlights another important theme in the staff perceptions: that the cause of disengagement is located *within* the student (Haggis, 2007) and that the responsibility for mastering the discipline belonged to students. Student assumption of responsibility for learning was perceived as part of the necessary transition from school to university as the following remark suggests:

The school leaver in general might be more used to the high school experience and the university experience where they're actually now free radicals and their responsibility is for themselves. Their teacher's not responsible for their learning anymore. They are.

There was a view expressed that those who did not take responsibility for their learning formed a significant proportion of students who are disengaged even early in the semester. According to this view, these students are

so lazy and switched-off that they really can't be bothered. You can see that, because in the early part of the semester they would not even be bothered to bring the textbook along with them. They would not be bothered to bring the legislation along with them.

This teacher assumed that disengaged students were 'just really lazy and can't be bothered, and just want to be told some easy, simple thing' because if they were

struggling and saying, 'Look, I really don't understand this, I'm really worried about it' – they're going to be there, and to a degree they're going to be chasing you up.

The view that students did not work hard enough was echoed by other teachers, one of whom commented that

there's a culture that you don't have to work as hard, that you can get special consideration. I think we need to acculturate the students that this [law degree] is a big commitment, you're going to have to work hard. It can be enjoyable, but you're going to have to commit everything to it.

There was general agreement among teachers that many students were overwhelmed and insecure and found the law degree difficult, and that some were disengaged, but there was no shared view about the reasons for this. Some questioned 'the appropriate approach for our particular first year cohort.' The reference to 'our particular cohort' was an acknowledgement of the 'outside pressures' some students faced and the less well developed academic skills that many brought to university. One teacher indicated this by implication by comparing these students with others the teacher had taught in another university who

were all competent at reading, at writing, at understanding, at communicating, at doing their work. They all came from professional families. None of them worked full-time. If they did, it was to save up money for their ski trip rather than to pay the electricity. No-one had kids. You know. They were straight out of the private schools.

A number of staff expressed the tension they felt in responding to the particular circumstances of their students by acknowledging there was pressure to 'simply lower their standards'. Others conceived this differently observing that because these students 'need a lot more guidance', it was necessary to reduce the coverage of content and also to develop students'

academic study skills 'in the context of law'. For others it was important to 'just adjust expectations', and also to provide

reassurance. My first class is: 'You're all here because we think you can be here. You've all got the ability to do it. You've just got to work at it, and it's hard, and don't think that Law is not hard, and if you're finding it hard, that means that you're doing it properly. If you're finding it easy, it probably means you're *not* doing it properly!'

Responding appropriately was made difficult because of the time consuming nature and special demands of teaching first year students, and the lack of peer and institutional recognition of this. Not only were teachers uncertain about how best to help their first year students, their motivation was eroded by a perception that 'professionally it's not doing me any favours.'

## **Discussion**

These findings present a picture of new law students who want to study their chosen discipline but are very anxious and confused about how to do this successfully. However, while the perceptions of first year teachers are consistent with the experience described by these law students, teachers often underestimated the degree students' uncertainty and insecurity and sometimes misinterpreted its effect on student engagement. As observed earlier, the value of these findings, although tentative, is threefold. Firstly staff surprise at the degree of student anxiety, together with lack of student enthusiasm for a project designed specifically to assist their transition, points to the value of teachers getting to know their students better than they currently do. This will enhance their awareness of and sensitivity to students' real concerns and ensure that any interventions are grounded in cohort specific knowledge and needs. Secondly, student survey responses and comments affirm that 'students must be engaged primarily as learners if they are to have a successful university experience' (Kift & Nelson, 2005) and that supportive, approachable teachers play a critical role in facilitating that learning. Thirdly, student comments suggest that contemporary university students, particularly those from non-traditional backgrounds, may struggle to understand the specific disciplinary conventions of constructing knowledge. Teachers (and universities) cannot be absolved from the responsibility of enhancing their students' learning, especially in first year (Wingate, 2004).

The level of anxiety these students experienced in their first semester is about twice the rate reported in sector wide studies, or experienced by students in other fields of education in this university (Long et al, 2001; Krause et al, 2005; Krause 2005; OPQ, 2007). To recap, two thirds of students in this study experienced personal stress and the two thirds found it hard to juggle their personal commitments with university, the same number did not know how to approach the study of law, more were confused about how to do assessment and half thought seriously about dropping out. Staff reported significant levels of lack of confidence among students. The small scale of this study requires further research to confirm these findings, but it does present a picture of a highly stressed and confused, yet willing, group of students. These students have persisted, but seem to be the ones who find university 'a battle of endurance' and who have not made 'a smooth adjustment to university, have difficulty understanding course material [and] feel overwhelmed by all they have to do at university' (Krause, 2005, p. 59). Although they have stayed, these students are still at risk of failure, poor progress or poor performance.



It is important that strategies are put in place to capture this sort of data about students, so that teachers ‘understand the unique needs of students new to university study’ (Krause, 2005, p. 83) and can respond sensitively to their experience, and that systemic responses are appropriately targeted. The perceptions of first year teachers reflecting on this experience, contrasted with student responses, suggests that teachers didn’t really know their first year students very well, and that they didn’t quite know how to best help them. The data suggest that there is still an important place for the sort of transition strategies introduced by the law school to get to know their students better, to promote student sense of belonging and to facilitate social integration with peers and teachers as part of the overall academic experience.

Student responses reaffirm the findings of scholarly and institutional research which highlight the importance to students of their class teachers being approachable and responsive in a broader academic context (Krause, 2005; OPQ, 2007; Campbell, 2007a). Faculty members are the closest to students on a regular basis. They are, therefore, key to building relationships which help students feel less isolated, more engaged and satisfied with the overall academic experience. This requires developing ‘a culture of valuing the student voice’ and providing structured and predictable opportunities inside and outside class which value and respond to student questions and comments (Kantanis, 2002; Campbell, 2007b). This places added responsibility on already overworked first year teaching staff. In turn it requires professional development for first year teachers and institutional acknowledgment of excellence in this field. The resource implications of facilitating the successful transition of first year students to university, of supporting their teachers and providing structures to facilitate success must also be recognised.

Findings that students were highly anxious about, and wanted more guidance about how to learn in their chosen discipline point to the fundamental importance of ensuring a satisfactory academic experience in first year. As Krause (2006) observed ‘the first year curriculum should be planned in such a way so that students not only learn content knowledge, but also have opportunities to learn how to learn as part of their transition to university.’ Placing primary emphasis on facilitating the academic experience of students may require a ‘shift in perspective’ which recognises that whilst learning at university is still the responsibility of the student, teachers (and institutions) are responsible for making explicit to students in a staged and coherent way the disciplinary conventions of knowing, thinking and communicating (Haggis, 2006; Wingate 2007). In the legal education context this might mean leading students in a comparative case analysis to deconstruct component parts of a case, teasing out the meanings of dense legal prose and analysing strands of legal reasoning (Harris, 1997). It may also mean providing students with opportunities to develop, critique and refine particular genres of legal writing (Bruce, 2002). Classroom teachers need to articulate and provide experiences of the requirements of academic process and discourse of their discipline in such a way that students, especially new students, can incrementally acquire an understanding of and facility in it. It is equally important that educational institutions recognise their responsibility is supporting and resourcing teachers to provide context specific opportunities to first year students to acquire academic literacy in their chosen discipline (Wingate, 2007).

## **Conclusion**

Three messages may be gleaned from this research. (1) Get to know your students, and provide structures to facilitate this process. Foster a culture of student support, promote the

quality of relationships between staff and students so that there is a better appreciation on both sides of experiences, expectations and responsibilities, and ensure that support programs are targeted appropriately. (2) Build the capacity of teaching staff to respond to commencing year students. This includes raising awareness among academic staff working with first year students so they understand the importance of being approachable and who can fulfil their responsibilities to facilitate first year learning in their discipline. (3) Ensure the academic experience provides first year students with opportunities to learn how to be successful students in their own disciplinary context. The scholarly processes and academic discourses valued by the discipline must be made explicit and staged learning opportunities provided so students can develop understanding of and proficiency in them. As Haggis (2007) has observed, the goals of learning at university have always been the same, contemporary first year students may just need more help in reaching them.

## References

- Asmar, C., Brew, A., McCulloch M., Peseta T., Barrie, S., (2000). *The First Year Experience Project Report*. University of Sydney, Sydney.
- Bruce, N., (2002). Dovetailing language and content: teaching balanced argument in legal problem answer writing. *English for Specific Purposes*, 21, 321-345.
- Campbell, M., (2007a). *Scoping the Students at Risk 2007 Project*. University of Western Sydney, Sydney.
- Campbell, M., (2007b). *Targeting Ways To Improve Social and Academic Integration of First or Commencing Year Students: The Importance Of The Student Academic Experience*. University of Western Sydney, Sydney.
- Haggis, T., (2006). Pedagogies for diversity: retaining critical challenge amidst fears of ‘dumbing down’ *Studies in Higher Education*, 31, 521-535.
- Harris, S., (1997) Procedural vocabulary in law case reports. *English for Specific Purposes*, 27, 289-308.
- Johnson, R. B., & Onwuegbuzie, A. J. 2004. Mixed methods research: A research paradigm whose time has come. *Educational Researcher* 33, 7, 14-26.
- Kantanis, T., (2000). *The role of social transition in students’ adjustment to the first-year of university*, Monash University, Melbourne.
- Kift, S., & Nelson, K., (2005). Beyond curriculum reform: Embedding the transition experience *HERDSA 2005 Conference Proceedings*.
- Krause, K., (2006). *On Being Strategic About the First Year*, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne, Melbourne.
- Krause, K., Hartley, R., James, R., McInnis, C. (2005). *The First Year Experience in Australian Universities: Findings from a Decade of National Studies*, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne.
- Krause, K., (2005) Serious thoughts about dropping out in first year: Trends, patterns and implications for higher education studies in *Learning, Evaluation Innovation and Development* 2(3), pp. 55–68. (Retrieved: <9 December 2007>) <http://sleid.cqu.edu.au>.
- Kuh, G., (2007). Sharing Responsibility for Engaging First Year Students, Centre for Post Graduate Research, Indiana University, Bloomington, USA. Key note address at the 10<sup>th</sup> Pacific Rim Conference: Regenerate, Engage, Experiment, July 2007, Brisbane, Australia.
- Long, M., Ferrier, F., Heagney, M., (2006). *Stay, Play or Give it away?* Australian Centre for Educational Research (ACER), Monash University, Melbourne.
- McInnes, C., James, R., & Hartley R., (2000). *Trends in the First Year Experience in Australian Universities*, Centre for the Study of Higher Education, University of Melbourne.
- Office of Planning & Quality (OPQ), University of Western Sydney (2007). *University of Western Sydney Student Exit Survey 2007*.
- Parker, P., (2008) *Learning Guides: What are they? What can they do? What do they look like?* University of Western Sydney, School of Law, Teaching & Learning Symposium, 15 December 2008.
- Peel, M. 2000. ‘Nobody cares’: the challenge of isolation in school to university. *Australian Association for Institutional Research*, Vol 9, No1. NSW, Australia.
- Tinto, V., 1993. *Leaving College: Rethinking the Causes and Cures of Student Attrition*, Chicago University Press, USA.
- Wingate, U., (2007). A Framework for Transition: Supporting ‘Learning to Learn’ in Higher Education. *Higher Education Quarterly*, 61(3), pp 391–405.