Workshop:
Supporting mental health during educational transitions

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Outline

- What does transition mean to you?
- University transition
  - General support needs and mechanisms
  - Mental health conditions and support processes
- Group discussions: case studies
- Final thoughts
- Useful resources and references details
What are your first thoughts when you hear ‘transition’?

Write down 1 or 2 words on the post-its

Get into a group and share your post-its
- Are there any common themes?

Why might mental health support be needed during transitions?
University transition: general support needs and mechanisms

Support needs

- Loss of support network
- New academic expectations
  - New organisational hierarchies
  - Diverse new peer groups
  - New physical environment
- Expectations of HE
  - Academic integration
  - Social integration and goals
  - Who you live with
- Background/identity
- Influences on retention
- Pressures
Support mechanisms before university

- Talking to existing students is valued by, and can better prepare, entry students
- Peer support schemes often recommended to support transition (see e.g. James, 2014; Briggs et al., 2012; Wilcox et al., 2005)

Universities
- Mentoring schemes
- Open days
- Taster courses
- Residentials

External
- Brilliant Club
- Nuffield Research Placements
- Higher Education Opportunity Network

Support mechanisms at university

Department
- Induction (all years)
- Office Staff
- Personal Tutoring
- Support/Disability Co-ordinator
- Peer Tutoring

Campus life
- Resident Assistants
- Peer Support Schemes
- Wellbeing Advisors
- Health Centre
- Counselling
- Chaplaincy

External
- University Nightline
- Student Minds
- Students Against Depression
University transition: mental health conditions and support processes

Current climate for young people

The number of 0-17 year olds admitted to A+E with a diagnosed psychiatric condition has more than doubled between 2010/11 - 2014/15 (Burt 2016).
6,950-14,917.

9.6% of 5-16 year olds in 2011 had a clinically diagnosable condition (Layard, 2011).
7.7% 5-10 year olds, 11.5% 11-16 year olds.

In 2014 (Tagart et al., 2014) Head teachers in secondary schools reported:
88% Self harm as an issue (increase of 57% since 2010).
87% Depression as an issue.
85% Eating disorders as an issue.
The number of students with declared mental health conditions (diagnosed) has increased every year since 2008/9 in higher education.

This does not account for perceived need, i.e. reported/felt mental ill health or distress.

The number of students who drop out of University and are reporting mental health problems has trebled from 2009/10 to 2014/15 (HESA report).

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Transition to HE with a mental health condition

Declare mental health condition (declare disability section) on UCAS form

vs

No declaration
Group discussions: primary and secondary transitions

Group Discussions: Case studies

Pick one of the case studies and discuss:

1. In what key way(s) might transition be difficult for the young person?
2. How could their current school potentially prepare the young person?
3. How could the new secondary school/ university potentially support the young person with the transition?

**School: Harinder**
- **Age:** 11
- **Gender:** Male
- **Transition:** Local primary school to grammar school about 20 mins away by bus
- **Concerns:** Harinder got very worried about doing well in the SATs. His best friend is going to a different secondary school. Only a few pupils in his class will be going to the same school.
- **Current support:** No formal support

**University: Sarah**
- **Age:** 19
- **Gender:** Female
- **Transition:** From secondary school in Surrey to a university in London
- **Concerns:** Registered with CAMHS, diagnosed with anxiety. SpLD: Dyslexia
- **Current support:** Learning support assistant in classes where Sarah struggles with her dyslexia. Enrichment group for students with anxiety
Useful Resources – before university

- Higher Education Outreach Network (HEON) - resources for pupils and staff about university support and preparation: [heon.org.uk/resources/home](heon.org.uk/resources/home)
- Nuffield Foundation – research placements for sixth-formers, including in university departments: [www.nuffieldfoundation.org/Nuffield-research-placement](www.nuffieldfoundation.org/Nuffield-research-placement)
- Brilliant Club – charity which links PhD students with state schools: [www.thebrilliantclub.org/](www.thebrilliantclub.org/)
- University of London Taster Courses – short subject-specific courses, usually incl. chance to meet current students: [https://tasters.gradsintocareers.co.uk/](https://tasters.gradsintocareers.co.uk/)
- Hackney University extension programme – taster courses for pupils at partner schools in Hackney: [www.bsix.ac.uk/college/partners/universities.htm](www.bsix.ac.uk/college/partners/universities.htm)

Useful Resources – university transition

- Student support at Royal Holloway – general information: [www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studentlife/supportthehealthandwelfare/home.aspx](www.royalholloway.ac.uk/studentlife/supportthehealthandwelfare/home.aspx)
- Students Against Depression – evidence-based information and resources: [studentsagainstdepression.org](studentsagainstdepression.org)
- Nightline Association – network of confidential listening and support services by students for students: [www.nightline.ac.uk](www.nightline.ac.uk)
- Student Minds – UK student mental health charity, runs student support groups: [www.studentminds.org.uk](www.studentminds.org.uk)
- Charlie Waller Memorial Trust - resources for school and university staff: [www.cwmt.org.uk/training](www.cwmt.org.uk/training)
- Disabled Students’ Allowances – government information: [www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview](www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview)
- Recovery College – NHS educational support workshops for carers, friends, and individuals with mental health difficulties: [http://www.sabp.nhs.uk/recovery/recovery-sabp/recovery-college](http://www.sabp.nhs.uk/recovery/recovery-sabp/recovery-college)
References


Final thoughts?

Any final practices points, ideas, or resources to share?

Any thoughts you are taking away from the workshop?
Thank you for participating!

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