



UCL

# Identifying the “transition phase” in the student life-cycle

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## The student *life-cycle*

- How does it help in explaining the student experience?
- Students have different **trajectories**, because they have different potential, abilities, backgrounds
- Can we conceptualise the student experience?
- In the end, we act as if it can be operationalised. In order to scaffold student engagement.



# The *transition phase*

- At UCL the Transition Programme has developed an emphasis on front-loading support in the first term
- Promoting good habits: engagement, participation, reflection, self-direction
- How? Mentoring, PAL, Information sessions, Icebreakers, Academic workshops, Online support, Transition academic diary
- Pre-enrolment activity: mostly web-based.
- Pre-enrolment activity: summer schools, “Uni-link”, international students orientation program, *bridging* courses

# Evaluating the transition phase

- Online surveys: first years -20% response rate across 55 departments. 30% response rate amongst mentors.
- Weekly feedback from mentor and PAL groups
- Progression data from 2005/06 onwards
- Focus on SEC breakdowns and *expectations vs reality*
- Interrogating the *student* identity, self-concept

# Feedback data

- Students who engaged more with the TP are more confident in key areas
- Students from less represented groups in HE report they benefit much more from TP
- Students from lower SECs report they were less prepared socially and practically, but equally prepared academically than higher SECs
- Significant gaps reported between reality and expectation of life and study in HE

# Points to take away

- Not enough engagement before registration- **but** students who did engage with TP reported strong benefits
- Is it possible/useful to make this *phase* academically operational? For practice, it helps us to focus on areas that less represented students find helpful
- Engaging students early gives them a head start in forming learner identities. Whatever their trajectory, puts them on a path to building tools for self-regulation, critical reflection, independence

# Questions and further information

- Full data from [www.ucl.ac.uk/transition](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/transition)
- Also, National Transition Conference on 7 May at UCL-all presentations to be posted on conference site after the event