Supporting Students to Build Up Positive Mental Health and Resilience

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Positive Mental Health

- Mental health, as an indivisible component of general health, is a broad concept including psychological well-being (positive mental health) as well as mental disorders and problems.
- It is principally a feature of the individual, and it is influenced by individual biological and psychological factors, social interactions, societal structures and cultural values.
Postmodern Era

- Characterised by mass media, the internet, information overload and globalization.
- Characteristics of the information society, such as virtual realities significantly influence perception of time and space.
- A change to ways of expressing identity and of working and studying (Bostock and Wood, 2014).
- Over the last 5 years, the proportion of disabled students declaring a mental health condition increased from 5.9% in 2007/08 to 9.6% in 2011/12, from 0.4% to 0.9% of entire student population. (Equality in HE: statistical report 2013, Equality Challenge Unit)
Social Transition

• The idealized new life?
• Adjustment/ homesickness?
• Relationships: “Ruptures and repairs”?

Consideration of your experience of these and any implications.
Discussion: exploring how transitional phases and educational factors affect mental health

Identifying the key transition and risk points especially unrealistic student expectations:

• First taught session
• First piece of academic writing
• First assessment
• First feedback
• First grades
• First six weeks
Exploring practical ways to work preventively and proactively in the first term.

How can we employ strategies to:

- Enable students to build resilience specific to the academic context and calendar?
- Remove barriers and stigma around students seeking support?
- Enhance emotional intelligence and give students the tools to support themselves through the first term?