

What Works? Student Retention & Success



HERE Project (2008 – 2011) Final Report

Appendices



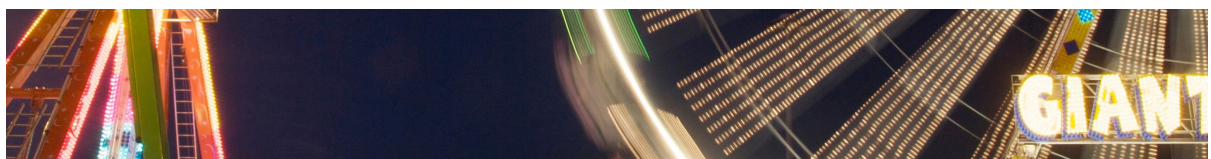
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Appendix 1

The HERE Project 2009 Student Transition Questionnaire



The HERE Project 2009 Student Transition Questionnaire¹

Please note this was an online survey so the layout was slightly different in the survey presented to the students.

About the research

NTU has been asked to conduct academic research to better understand the experience of students starting university by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) because we have an excellent reputation in retaining students. This research (the HERE Project) will be used to improve the experience of future students here at NTU and at other universities.

What data do we need?

We are interested in your experience here at NTU, in particular, how you are finding learning here and if you have had doubts about staying on your course. It would be very helpful for our research if we could also look at your course marks during your time at university and incorporate these with other research findings. This will only be done with your permission and we will ask you about this at the end of this survey.

What will be done with the data?

We take the protection of your identity seriously. The data will be analysed and anonymised: when we report our findings your answers will not be linked to you as an individual. Anonymised data and findings may be shared with various staff members of the university to help identify the ways in which we can improve the experience of future students here at NTU (for example to develop activities such as Welcome Week). Anonymised data and findings may also be used in academic papers and shared with other universities. If you wish to withdraw from the study at any time please notify either sarah.lawther@ntu.ac.uk or ed.foster@ntu.ac.uk.

¹ The example shown here is the NTU survey.

☐ I agree that my anonymised answers can be used here at NTU, in academic papers, and shared within the HE sector.

Most questions will require a simple click in a box; some will require more open-ended comments. All completed questionnaires will be entered for a prize draw to win £50 of Amazon vouchers.

Thanks for your time.

Q1 Can you tell us your student ID number? We will use this number to contact you if you win the prize draw. If you choose to withdraw, we will use this number to trace your answers and delete them from the research. When we analyse the data we will separate your answers from your ID number.

My ID number is

Q2 How much have you enjoyed your course so far?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= “not at all” and 5= “very much”

Q3 Before you started your course at NTU, did you read any materials to help prepare you for your course (e.g. prospectus, course induction materials)?

Yes Go to Q4

No Go to Q5

Q4 Was the information from NTU before starting your course;

Very accurate

Reasonably accurate

Not very accurate

Very inaccurate

Q5 Please rate the following aspects of your studies, where 1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”, on balance,

My subject is interesting

My course is well organized
I have enthusiastic lecturers teaching on my course
My taught sessions (such as lectures, seminars) are interesting
Lecturers are accessible
I feel valued by teaching staff
The assessment on my course is what I expected it to be
The feedback I receive about my work is useful
I feel confident that I can cope with my coursework

Q6 Please rate the following aspects of your studies, where 1 = “strongly disagree” and 5 = “strongly agree”, on balance,

My fellow students are supportive
My family is supportive
I have easy access to University resources (e.g. computers, library books that I need)
I would know where to go within the university if I had a problem
I like the house/flat/halls that I am living in
I have an enjoyable social life
I am confident that I will have enough money to complete my course
Completing my degree will help me achieve future goals (eg career)

Q7 Please rate how important the following aspects are to you, where 1 = “not important at all” and 5 = “very important”...

My subject is interesting
My course is well organized
I have enthusiastic lecturers teaching on my course
My taught sessions (such as lectures, seminars) are interesting
Lecturers are accessible
I feel valued by teaching staff
The assessment on my course is what I expected it to be
The feedback I receive about my work is useful
I feel confident that I can cope with my coursework

Q8 Please rate how important the following aspects are to you, where 1 = “not important at all” and 5 = “very important”...

My fellow students are supportive

My family is supportive

I have easy access to University resources (e.g. computers, library books that I need)

I would know where to go within the university if I had a problem

I like the house/flat/halls that I am living in

I have an enjoyable social life

I am confident that I will have enough money to complete my course

Completing my degree will help me achieve future goals (eg career)

Q9 Since coming to university has anyone at NTU explained to you the difference between learning at university and your prior learning, particularly learning since age 16 (eg A' Levels, BTEC)?

Yes

No

Q10 Do you feel that you understand the differences between learning at university and earlier learning?

Yes, in some detail

Yes, a little

No

Q11 How difficult have you found your studies so far this year?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= “not at all difficult” and 5= “very difficult”

Q12 How hard have you worked so far this year?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= “not at all hard” and 5= “very hard”

Q13 In your first year at Nottingham Trent University (NTU), how much focus are you putting on the following? Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1 = “no focus at all” and 5 = “a lot of focus”

Family

Friends from home

My academic studies

Part-time work

Social life at university

Volunteering and other community activity

Other

Q14 What grade are you aiming for when you graduate?

70+ (1st)

60-69% (2:1)

50-59% (2:2)

40-49% (3rd)

0-39% (Fail)

Q15 What grade are you aiming for at the end of this academic year?

70+ (equivalent of a 1st)

60-69% (equivalent of a 2:1)

50-59% (equivalent of a 2:2)

40-49% (equivalent of a 3rd)

0-39% (equivalent of a Fail)

Q16 Do you have a personal tutor?

Yes Go to 17

No Go to Q18

Q17 How often do you see your personal tutor?

Weekly

Fortnightly

Monthly

Less often

Q18 Have you considered withdrawing at any point during your first year at NTU?

- | | |
|--|-----------|
| Yes, but I have decided to stay at NTU | Go to Q19 |
| Yes, and I have decided to leave NTU | Go to Q20 |
| Yes, but I haven't made up my mind about my future plans | Go to Q20 |
| No, I have never considered withdrawing | Go to Q21 |

Q19 What has helped you decide to stay on your course?

Q20 Please tell us what made you consider leaving NTU

Q21 How do you think the University could improve the academic and pastoral support for students?

Q22 Is there anything that we haven't asked that you'd like to share with us?

Q23 What age are you?

- 16 - 18
- 19 - 21
- 22 - 25
- 26 - 45
- 46+

Q24 Are you...?

- Male
- Female

Q25 At which academic school are you studying?

- Nottingham Business School
- Nottingham Law School

School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Science
School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment
School of Art and Design
School of Arts and Humanities
School of Education
School of Science and Technology
School of Social Sciences

Q26 What level are you studying?

Undergraduate (BA/BSc)
Undergraduate (Foundation level)
Further Education

Q27 Which course are you studying?

Q28 Are you...?

Full-time
Part-time
Distance learner

Q29 What part of the world are you from?

UK	Go to Q30
European Union (EU)	Go to Q31
Outside European Union	Go to Q31

Q30 What part of the country are you from?

Nottingham
Nottinghamshire
East Midlands
Rest of the UK

Q31 At what campus are you based?

City

Clifton

Brackenhurst

None (e.g. distance learner)

Q32 Which type of accommodation do you currently occupy whilst studying?

NTU / UPP halls of residence

Private halls of residence

Private rented / shared house

Living with relative(s)

Own home

Q33 Please tick the category below that you feel is the most appropriate classification of yourself.

Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi.

Asian or Asian British - Indian.

Black or Black British - African.

Black or Black British - Caribbean.

Chinese.

Mixed - White and Asian.

Mixed - White and Black African.

Mixed - White and Black Caribbean.

Other Asian background.

Other Black background.

Other Ethnic background.

Other Mixed background.

Other White background.

White - British.

White - Irish.

Other

I do not wish to declare

Q34 Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

No, I have no known disability go to Q36

Yes go to Q35

I do not wish to declare go to Q36

Q35 If yes, please specify

dyslexia

visual impairment

deaf/hard of hearing

mobility or wheelchair user

mental health

autistic spectrum

hidden disability

more than one disability

disability not listed above

I do not wish to specify

Q36 Did you apply to NTU...?

Through the standard UCAS process

Through UCAS at clearing

Q37 Was this your first choice of university?

Yes

No

Q38 Is this your first time living independently?

Yes

No

Q39 Are you the first person in your immediate family (we mean parents, brothers, sisters) to go to university?

Yes

No

Q40 How could we improve this survey?

We would like to conduct further research, for example, focus groups. If you would like to be invited to take part in further research please tick the box below.

I agree to be invited by email to take part in further research

The HERE project will run for three years. Do you give permission for your course marks and enrolment status to be accessed from University records and incorporated anonymously with other research findings? If you do, please tick the box below.

I agree to allow my course marks and enrolment status to be accessed from University records during the time I am registered here and incorporated anonymously with other research findings. To ensure the protection of your identity, we will store this information separately from your student ID number.

Thank you for your feedback. By clicking on the submit button now, we will enter you into the prize draw to win £50 worth of Amazon vouchers. If you are a winner we will contact you via your student email. Good luck!

Final page confirmation (after respondents click submit)

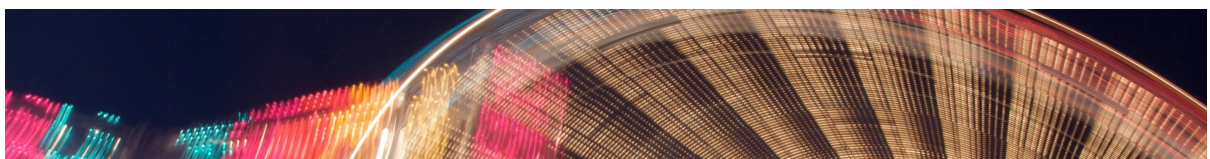
Thank you very much for completing this survey, your responses have been submitted.

Remember, if you would like to withdraw at any point from this survey you are free to do so with no affect on your studies. If you would like to discuss any issues connected to participation in the project please contact sarah.lawther@ntu.ac.uk.

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised in this questionnaire and would like any further information or would like to discuss this with anyone, you may wish to visit the [NTU Student Support Services](#) webpage for further information or speak to your personal tutor.

Appendix 2

The HERE Project 2011 Student Transition Questionnaire



The HERE Project 2011 Student Transition Questionnaire²

Please note this was an online survey so the layout was slightly different in the survey presented to the students.

About the research

Nottingham Trent University (NTU) has been asked to conduct academic research to better understand the experience of students starting university by the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) because we have an excellent reputation in retaining students. This research (the HERE Project) will be used to improve the experience of future students here at NTU and at other universities.

What data do we need?

We are interested in your experience here at NTU, in particular, how you are finding learning here and if you have had doubts about staying on your course.

What will be done with the data?

We take the protection of your identity seriously. The data will be analysed and anonymised: when we report our findings your answers will not be linked to you as an individual. Anonymised data and findings may be shared with various staff members of the university to help identify the ways in which we can improve the experience of future students here at NTU (for example to develop activities such as Welcome Week). Anonymised data and findings may also be used in academic papers and shared with other universities. If you wish to withdraw from the study at any time please notify either sarah.lawther@ntu.ac.uk or ed.foster@ntu.ac.uk.

Most questions will require a simple click in a box; some will require more open-ended comments. All completed questionnaires will be entered for a prize draw to win £100 of Amazon vouchers.

² The example shown here is the NTU survey.

Your feedback will help us to continue to improve the learning experience for new students.

I agree that my anonymised answers can be used here at NTU, in academic papers, and shared within the HE sector.

Please click "next" to continue.

Can you tell us your student ID number? When we analyse the data we will separate your answers from your ID number. If you choose to withdraw from the research, we will use this number to trace your answers and delete them from the research.

As an incentive to complete the survey, we will randomly select one of the completed surveys and award a prize of £100 worth of Amazon vouchers to the lucky respondent.

My student ID number is....

Thank you very much. Please click "next" to continue.

How much do you agree with the following statement?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree"

1 - Strongly disagree 2 3 4 5 - Strongly agree

Completing my degree will help me achieve my future goals

How useful did you find Welcome Week for the following?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "not at all useful" and 5 = "very useful"

1 - Not at all useful 2 3 4 5 - Very useful

Making friends

Feeling that you belonged to your course

How important is working hard at your studies to you?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "not at all important" and 5 = "very important"

1 - Not at all important

2

3

4

5 - Very important

How interesting is your course?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "not at all interesting" and 5 = "very interesting"

1 - Not at all interesting

2

3

4

5 - Very interesting

What makes your subject personally interesting to you?

How enthusiastic are your lecturers?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 = "Not at all enthusiastic" and 5 = "very enthusiastic"

1 - Not at all enthusiastic

2

3

4

5 - Very enthusiastic

Do you feel at least one member of your course team knows you personally?

Yes

No

Do you feel confident that you could talk to your tutors if you had a problem or concern?

Yes

No

Have you struggled with any aspects of your course so far?

Yes

No

Have you spoken to anyone about it?

Yes

No

Who have you spoken to about your struggles with your course?

Have you received any support or additional help?

Yes

No

How much do you agree with the following statement?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= "strongly disagree" and 5 = "strongly agree"

1 - Strongly disagree 2 3 4 5 - Strongly agree

I have an enjoyable social life at University

How frequently on average do you take part in the following leisure activities?

If you do not take part in an activity, please select "N/A"

More than once a day Daily Weekly Monthly Less frequently than
once per month N/A

Community activities & volunteering

Facebook/ other social networking sites

Participate in clubs or societies

Play computer games

Pubs

Night clubs

Reading

Religious activities

Visit the gym/ play sports

Watch performances (gigs, comedy, theatre etc)

Watch TV

Visit other friends homes/ halls

How many good friends have you made since starting University?

None

1-2

3-4

5-6

7+

How friendly are the people on your course?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= "very unfriendly" and 5 = "very friendly".

1 - Very unfriendly

2

3

4

5 - Very friendly

Why do you feel this is so?

How much do you feel you fit in on your course?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= "not at all" and 5 = "very much".

1 - Not at all

2

3

4

5 - Very much

Why do you feel this way?

Have you ever considered withdrawing from (leaving) University at any point in your first year?

Yes

No

How seriously have you considered doing so?

Please use a scale of 1 to 5, where 1= "a little" and 5 = "very seriously".

1 - A little

2

3

4

5 - Very seriously

When did you consider leaving?

Please tick all that apply.

Before I arrived

Welcome Week

During the first term

After Christmas

Now

Other, please specify

Please tell us what made you consider leaving.

Please tick *all that apply*.

Problems associated with my course

Student lifestyle (social life, problems with other students etc)

Finance

Homesick

Personal problems

I doubted whether this course would help my future goals

Other (please specify in the box below)

Other, please specify

Please tell us the *most important* reason for considering leaving.

Problems associated with my course

Student lifestyle (social life, problems with other students etc)

Finance

Homesick

Personal problems

I doubted whether this course would help my future goals

Other

Have you made a decision about whether to stay at University?

Yes, I have decided to stay

Yes, I have decided to leave

No, I haven't made my mind up yet

Please tell us what made you decide to stay.

Please tick *all that apply*.

Friends made at University

Family

Friends from home

Lecturers

Personal tutor

Course staff (e.g. administrators)

Professional support staff (e.g. counsellor, student support services)

Problem was solved

Future goals/ employment

Personal determination to stick at it

I adapted to life at University

I started to enjoy my subject

Changed course

Other

Please tell us the *most important reason* for deciding to stay.

Friends made at University

Family

Friends from home

Lecturers

Personal tutor

Course staff (e.g. administrators)

Professional support staff (e.g. counsellor, student support services)

Problem was solved

Future goals/ employment

Personal determination to stick at it

I adapted to life at University

I started to enjoy my subject

Changed course

Other

Is there anything the University could do to help you stay?

Is there anything else you would like to add?

What age are you?

16 - 18

19 - 21

22 - 25

26 - 45

46+

Are you...?

Male

Female

At which academic school are you studying?

Nottingham Business School

Nottingham Law School

School of Animal, Rural and Environmental Science

School of Architecture, Design and the Built Environment

School of Art and Design

School of Arts and Humanities

School of Education

School of Science and Technology

School of Social Sciences

What level are you studying?

Undergraduate (BA / BSc)

Undergraduate (foundation level)

Further Education

Which course are you studying?

Are you...?

Full-time

Part-time

Distance learner

What part of the world are you from?

UK

European Union (EU)

Outside of the EU

What part of the country are you from?

Nottingham

Nottinghamshire

East Midlands

Rest of the UK

At what campus are you based?

Brackenhurst

City

Clifton

None (e.g. distance learner)

Which type of accommodation do you currently occupy whilst studying?

NTU / UPP halls of residence

Private halls of residence

Private rented / shared house

Living with relative(s)

Own home

Please tick the category below that you feel is the most appropriate classification of yourself.

Asian or Asian British - Bangladeshi

Asian or Asian British - Indian

Asian or Asian British - Pakistani

Black or Black British - African

Black or Black British - Caribbean

Chinese

Mixed - Asian and White

Mixed - Black African and White

Mixed - Black Caribbean and White

Other Asian background

Other Black background

Other Ethnic background

Other Mixed background

Other White background

White - British

White - Irish

Other

I do not wish to declare

Do you consider yourself to have a disability?

No, I have no known disability

Yes

I do not wish to declare

Please specify your disability.

Dyslexia

Autistic spectrum

Visual impairment

Hidden disability

Deaf / hard of hearing
More than one disability
Mobility or wheelchair user
Mental health
Disability not listed above
I do not wish to specify

Did you apply to NTU...?

Through the standard UCAS process
Through UCAS at clearing
Other

How many UCAS points do you have?

160 or less	201 - 220	261 - 280	321 or more
161 - 180	221 - 240	281 - 300	Don't Know
181 - 200	241 - 260	301 - 320	

Are you the first person in your immediate family (i.e. parents, brothers, sisters) to go to university?

Yes
No

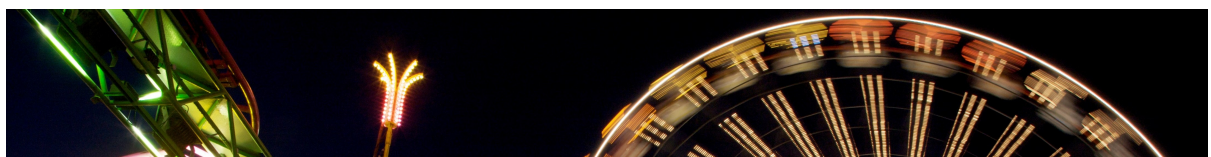
It would really help us to understand the student experience if we could follow your future progress. Do you give permission for your enrolment status to be accessed from University records and incorporated anonymously with other research findings? If you do, please tick the box below.

I agree to allow my enrolment status to be accessed from University records during the time I am registered here and incorporated anonymously with other research findings. To ensure the protection of your identity, we will store this information separately from your student ID number.

Thank you very much for your feedback. By clicking on the "submit" button below, you will have completed the survey.

Appendix 3

Details of the ten programmes who participated in the HERE Project Strand 2 research



Details of the ten programmes who participated in the HERE Project Strand 2 research

1) Programme³ from The Business School, BU

246 (full-time) students, four year course (placement year during third year) with good retention rates. Course uses first year tutor role and Peer Assisted Learning (PAL) scheme.

4 staff interviews: Course leader, 2 Senior Lecturers and 1 other Lecturer (this lecturer was also the first year tutor for the course)

Student survey 27% (67 students)

Retention data⁴ for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
06/07	11.3%	88.7%	221
07/08	5.8%	94.2%	225
08/09	6.3%	93.7%	253

2) Programme from The School of Design, Engineering and Computing, BU

155 (full-time) students, recent significant rise in student numbers. Personal tutor system now replaced first year tutor role due to rise in student numbers.

2 staff interviews: Course Leader and 1 Senior Lecturer

Student survey 12% (18 students)

³ Further details about the context of the programmes and why they were chosen for this study can be found in the Case Studies for each programme.

⁴ We do not have data for all institutions for gender of these programmes nor those who have transferred course or who are repeating a year.

Retention data for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
06/07	N/A	N/A	N/A
07/08	14.3%	85.7%	70
08/09	10.3%	89.7%	117

3) Programme from the School of Health and Social Care, BU

46 (full-time) students, high retention figures for this three-year professional course. There is a placement on each year of the course.

4 staff interviews: Course Leader, 2 Senior Lecturers and 1 other Lecturer (this lecturer was also the first year tutor for the course)

Student Survey 37% (17 students)

Retention data for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
06/07	2.2%	97.8%	46
07/08	0.0%	100%	46
08/09	4.9%	95.1%	61

4) Programme from School of Applied Sciences, BU

41 (full-time) students, STEM subject, two placements (first and second year), employment and future goals a key focus of course.

3 staff interviews: Course Leader, Framework Leader and PAL leader

Student survey 24% (10 students)

Retention data gained for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
07/08	9.5%	90.5%	21
08/09	9.1%	90.9%	33

5) Programme from the School of Management, UoB

94 students, non-sandwich route and therefore lower entry tariff; predominantly aged under 21; all full time; nearly a quarter international students.

4 staff interviews: Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programmes), Director of Studies (Stage 1), Senior Lecturer, Undergraduate Programmes Manager

Student survey 9.6% (9 students)

Retention data⁵ for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1st years
06/07	6.0%	43.9%	82
07/08	12.4%	41.6%	89
08/09	12.9%	51.5%	101

6) Programme from the School of Lifelong Education & Development, UoB

305 students (73 of which part time), foundation year students, low entry tariffs, predominantly local students, high proportion of mature students.

2 staff interviews: Lecturer; Deputy Manager – Academic Administration

Student Survey 1% (3 students)

Retention data for previous cohorts (no. of first year students progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data	Foundation Year (all courses and students)			Foundation year (all courses – part-time students only)		
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
06/07	5.9%	47.1%	130	4.9%	87.8%	45
07/08	2.4%	33.3%	152	0%	25.8%	23
08/09	14.3%	75.4%	272	21.9%	76.4%	55

7) Suite of six programmes from the School of Computing, Informatics & Media, UoB (shared common first year)

⁵ We do not have data for all institutions for gender of these programmes nor those who have transferred course or who are repeating a year. Where we do have further information, this is provided in the Case Study for the programme.

73 students in total – including 5 joint honours courses, STEM subject, low entry tariff compared to accredited course that runs in the same department, high proportion of male students, local students and those taken via clearing.

3 staff interviews: Dean of School; First Year Tutor; Student Support Secretary

Student Survey 11% (8 students)

Retention data for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
06/07	23%	57.4%	61
07/08	15.7%	68.6%	51
08/09	14.1%	71.9%	57

8) Programme from the School of Life Sciences, UoB

90 students; STEM subject, sandwich route, professionally accredited, high entry tariff; very high retention rates

2 staff interviews: Programme Leader; Programme Leader (they both had the same title)

Student Survey 28.9% (26 students)

Retention data for previous cohorts (number of first year students who withdrew from the programme and the number progressing from year 1 to year 2 over 3 years):

Registry data			
	Left	Cont'd to yr 2	Total no. 1 st years
06/07	0%	69.1%	97
07/08	0%	97.6%	82
08/09	0.9%	97.2%	108

9) Programme from College of Business, Law and Social Sciences, NTU

38 full time students - typically with low entry tariffs and a “*range of issues on top of the normal transitional issues*” (programme leader) such as severe financial hardship, a very difficult family life, dependents, and cultural issues.

3 staff interviews: Programme Leader, Year Tutor and a Senior Lecturer who teaches the first year.

Student survey 21% (8 students)

Registry data

Retention 2007/08

88% continuing (total no. 1st years 80)⁶

10) Programme from College of Business, Law and Social Sciences, NTU

408 full time students (altogether), programme offered as single and joint honours (in combination with other social science subjects).

3 staff interviews: Programme Leader joint honours programme and Programme Leader of single honours programme, Senior Admissions Tutor.

Student survey 17% (70 students)

⁶ Figures are data from central NTU data/registry. Please see case study for further discussion of figures.

Registry data

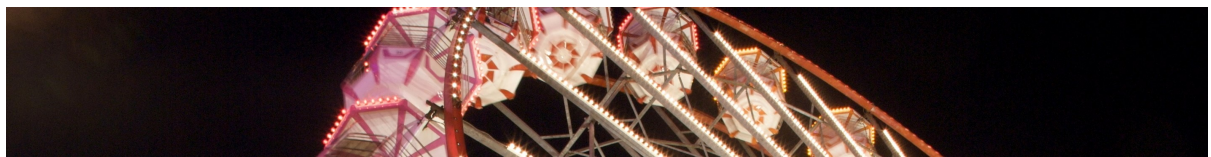
Retention 2007/08⁷

90% continuing (430 first years)

⁷ Figures are data from central NTU data/registry. Please see case study for further discussion of figures.

Appendix 4

Further statistical analysis Student Transition Survey data (2009) NTU



Further statistical analysis Student Transition Survey data 2009 (NTU)

The larger sample size at NTU (2009) allowed further statistical tests to be carried out. As the sample for the Student Transition Survey was a convenience one, there were, however, some statistical tests that could not be conducted.

Tests were carried out⁸ on both the initial, larger data set to look at doubting/non-doubting (656 students) and on the smaller data set of those students that gave us permission to monitor their destinations (370 students). In this smaller data set we identified whether students had continued with their studies⁹ or whether they had withdrawn.

Larger NTU data set (656 students): doubting

Factor analysis

A factor analysis (using KMO measure of sampling adequacy, Bartlett's test of Sphericity, Principal Component Analysis and a Rotated Component Matrix) was carried out that provided us with three component factors:

A. Academic Experience

1. My subject is interesting
2. My course is well organised
3. I have enthusiastic lecturers teaching on my course
4. My taught sessions (such as lectures and seminars) are interesting
5. Lecturers are accessible
6. I feel valued by teaching staff
7. The assessment on my course is what I expected it to be

⁸ By Nick Foard, Nottingham Trent University

⁹ Students were said to have continued if they were still enrolled at the same institution. This therefore included students who were repeating their first year and who had transferred to another course within the same institution.

8. The feedback I receive about my work is useful
9. I feel confident that I can cope with my studies

B. Support, Resources and Future Goals

10. My fellow students are supportive
11. My family is supportive
12. I have easy access to University resources (e.g. Computers, library books that I need)
17. Completing my degree will help me achieve my future goals

Rotated Component Matrix^a

	Component		
	1	2	3
My subject is interesting	.572	.354	-.037
My course is well organised	.653	.052	.042
I have enthusiastic lecturers teaching on my course	.758	.130	.030
My taught sessions (such as lectures and seminars) are interesting	.744	.208	.036
Lecturers are accessible	.658	.153	.033
I feel valued by teaching staff	.773	.071	.175
The assessment on my course is what I expected it to be	.658	.158	.186
The feedback I receive about my work is useful	.623	.078	.327
I feel confident that I can cope with my studies	.443	.279	.350
My fellow students are supportive	.108	.642	.307
My family is supportive	.044	.706	.217
I have easy access to University resources (e.g. computers, library books that I need)	.215	.609	.075
I like the house / flat / halls that I am living in	.163	-.045	.725
I have an enjoyable social life	-.010	.361	.669
I am confident that I will have enough money to complete my course	.097	.169	.587
Completing my degree will help me achieve future goals	.292	.589	-.032

C. Student Lifestyle

14. I like the house/ flat/ halls that I am living in
15. I have an enjoyable social life
16. I am confident that I will have enough money to cope

Item 13. "I would know where to go within the University if I had a problem" did not fit in well with other factors and is therefore not included as part of any further factor analysis.

A regression analysis was then used to look at whether these new variables: 'Academic Experience', 'Support, Resources and Future Goals' and 'Student Lifestyle' could indicate whether a student was more likely to have doubts about being at university. A number of other variables were also

age, gender, whether the respondent was the

^a. Rotation converged in 5 iterations.

first person in the immediate family to go to university, whether NTU was their first choice of university, whether this was their first time living independently, whether they had applied though clearing.

It was found that there was no link between doubting and the variables; age, whether the respondent was the first person in the immediate family to go to university, whether this was their first time living independently or whether they had applied though clearing.

It was found that the variable that had the most impact¹⁰ on whether a respondent had had doubts was 'Academic Experience'; the more positive their course experience was rated, the less likely students were to have had doubts about being at university. The variables that also had an impact in order of decreasing importance (that is, with the most important at the start) were; 'Student Lifestyle', 'Support, Resources and Future Goals'¹¹, and gender (females were twice as likely to have had doubts than males). We can infer from this then that the more positive an experience we can create for our students in these areas the less likely they are to have doubts; creating a positive course experience being most important here in reducing doubting.

Cramer's V

A Cramer's V¹² test was applied to the 17 Student Experience Factors (for all 656 respondents) to see whether there was an association between these variables and doubting.

This table illustrates the strength of association between these factors and doubting in order of strongest association first (the top five have been highlighted).

¹⁰ This impact could not be tested for statistical significance, as the sample is a convenience sample.

¹¹ Again, a positive experience of these variables increased the odds of being a non doubter.

¹² Cramer's V provides a measure of association between variables ranging from 0 to 1 (the higher the number, the stronger the association).

NTU Student Transition Survey data 2009

Cramer's V	Agree/Disagree
I feel confident that I can cope with my coursework	0.42
My subject is interesting	0.318
I feel valued by teaching staff	0.316
I am confident that I will have enough money to complete my course	0.315
My taught sessions (such as lectures, seminars) are interesting	0.269
The assessment on my course is what I expected it to be	0.267
Lecturers are accessible	0.263
I have enthusiastic lecturers teaching on my course	0.26
The feedback I receive about my work is useful	0.233
My course is well organized	0.229
Completing my degree will help me achieve future goals (eg career)	0.217
I have an enjoyable social life	0.215
My family is supportive	0.213
My fellow students are supportive	0.209
I would know where to go within the university if I had a problem	0.196
I like the house/flat/halls that I am living in	0.182
I have easy access to University resources (e.g. computers, library books that I need)	0.135

We have used box plots to illustrate the impact of these variables on continuation/persistence.

How to Read the Box Plots

The box plot illustrates how the scores given by NTU students in answer to the statement "*I feel confident that I can cope with my studies*" (rated from 1-5 where 1= strongly disagree and 5= strongly agree) vary according to their subsequent destination, recorded in the following four groups:

- No doubts and stay
- Have doubts but stay
- Have doubts & leave
- No doubts but leave-

The box illustrates the middle fifty percent of cases. The thick black line across the box illustrates the median value. The vertical lines either side of the box (with a T at each end) indicates the remaining cases except the outliers, which are indicated by a dot (with the reference number of each case alongside).

You will note that in the box plots, the group 'No doubts but leave' often has a higher overall level of satisfaction. This group only contains four respondents and so the score needs to be treated cautiously.

Testing the impact of the three variables on retention (December 2009)

Box plots were created to illustrate patterns between students' destinations and their factor analysis scores.

A pattern emerges for factor A. Academic Experience:

- Students with no-doubts who continued have a higher score than doubters who stay.
- In turn, doubters who stay have a higher academic experience score than doubters who leave.
- Therefore doubters who leave have the lowest score of all.

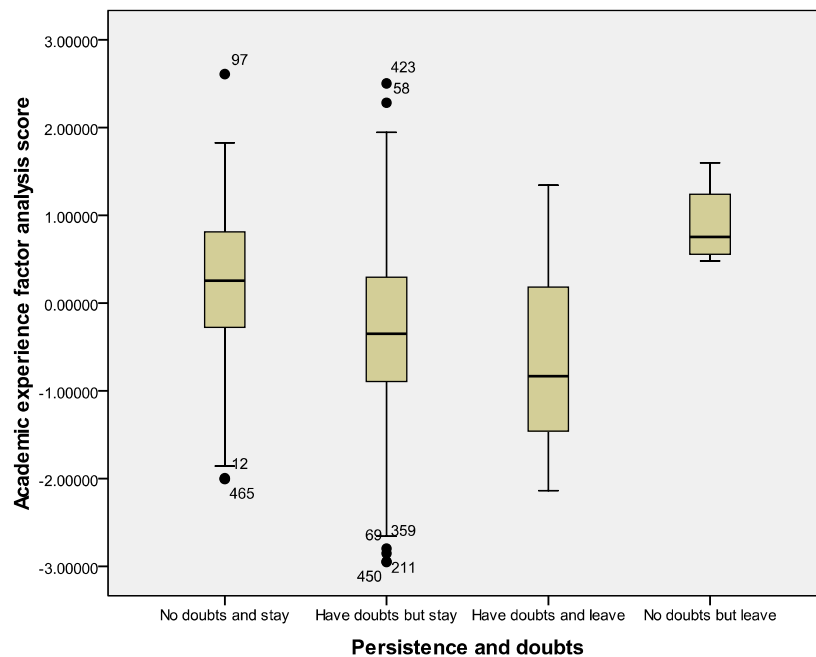
As is often the case with the analysis of individual factors, we note that non-doubters who leave actually have a very high level of satisfaction. However, we are only dealing with very small numbers of students (4 at NTU) and so have not particularly focused on these sets of answers.

If we discount the small number of non-doubters who withdrew, a trend emerges.

Dissatisfaction with the academic experience is associated with doubting. Therefore, the more dissatisfied a student is with the experience, the more likely they are to

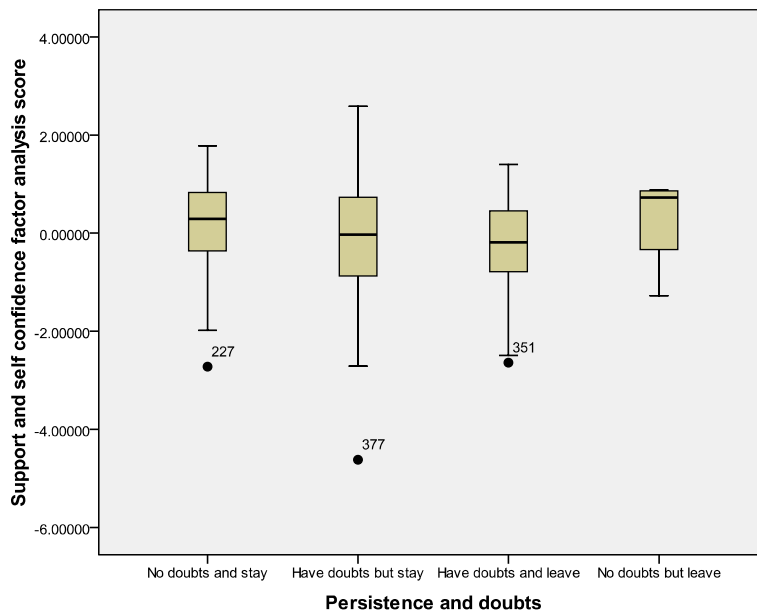
have doubts and to leave early. Scoring lowly in these factors is therefore fairly useful as a predictor for doubting.

Factor A - Academic Experience box plot



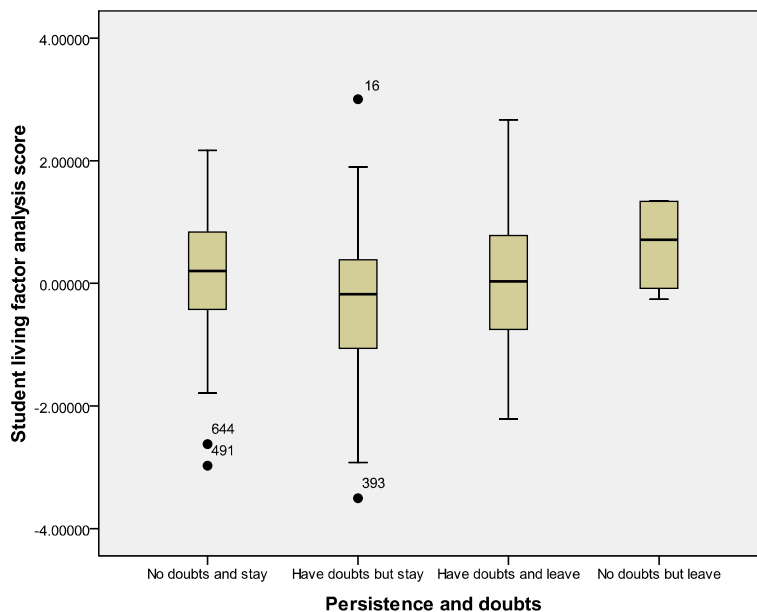
However this was not the case for the other two factors: B. Support, Resources and Future Goals and C. Student Lifestyle.

Factor B - Support, Resources & Future Goals box plot



There is a general trend towards lower satisfaction in factor B amongst doubters, but is only marginal, scoring lowly in these areas is not particularly useful as a predictor for doubting.

Factor C - Student Lifestyle box plot



In factor C Student Lifestyle Factors, students who have doubts and leave actually

score higher than students with doubts and stay. Scoring lowly in this area is not useful as a predictor for doubting and/ or withdrawing.

When taken together this appears to reinforce the message that doubting is primarily driven by academic factors.

Cramer's V: demographics and student destinations

A Cramer's V test¹³ also explored the relationship between demographics and student destinations within the sample. The table below lists all values of Cramer's V association with the 'persistence/doubters' variable¹⁴, in descending order.

Variable	Cramer's V
Type of disability	0.308
Full/part-time	0.285
Age	0.222
UCAS/clearing/other	0.168
First time living independently	0.163
Ethnicity	0.159
School	0.154
From which part of the country	0.142
Accommodation	0.14
Gender	0.118
From which part of the world	0.116
Campus	0.086
NTU first choice	0.082
Disability	0.07
First person in family to attend university	0.035

It is of note that there is a low association with disability, but a higher association with type of disability. This may be because there are small numbers of students who declared a disability (24) which may exaggerate small differences. This may be worthy of further exploration.

¹³ Cramer's V provides a measure of association between variables ranging from 0 to 1 (the higher the number, the stronger the association).

¹⁴ This variable looked at the destinations of student respondents: students with no doubts who stayed, students with doubts who stayed, students with doubts who left, and students with no doubts who left.

A cross tabulation of 'persistence/doubters' variable with age revealed that students in the 22-25 age group are most likely to have doubts but that none of this age group left. Students who were 46 and over were most likely to leave (although there were small numbers here).

Persistence and doubts * What age are you? Crosstabulation

			q22 What age are you?					Total
			1 16 - 18	2 19 - 21	3 22 - 25	4 26 - 45	5 46 +	
Persistence and doubts	No doubts and stay	Count	38	154	16	18	4	230
		% within What age are you?	61.1%	64.2%	61.6%	58.1%	44.4%	62.2%
	Have doubts but stay	Count	9	77	15	12	1	124
		% within What age are you?	32.2%	32.1%	48.4%	38.7%	11.1%	33.5%
	Have doubts and leave	Count	2	7	0	1	2	12
		% within What age are you?	3.4%	2.9%	.0%	3.2%	22.2%	3.2%
	No doubts but leave	Count	0	2	0	0	2	4
		% within What age are you?	.0%	.8%	.0%	.0%	22.2%	1.1%
Total		Count	59	240	31	31	9	370
		% within What age are you?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

A cross tabulation of the 'persistence/doubters' variable with mode of study found that (although very small numbers of students) part time students were more likely to have doubts and more likely to leave than full time students. We believe that this is worth exploring further in future studies.

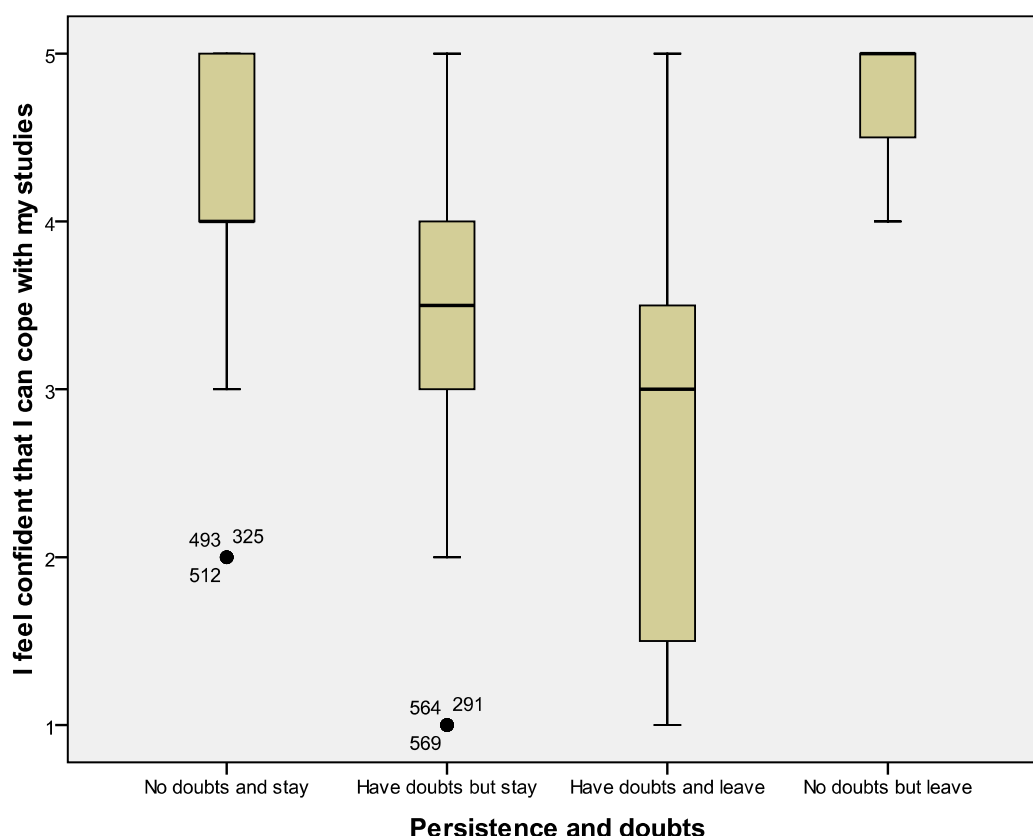
Persistence and doubts * Are you...? Crosstabulation

			Are you...?			Total
			1 Full-time	2 Part-time	3 Distance learner	
Persistence and doubts	No doubts and stay	Count	225	3	2	230
		% within Are you...?	62.8%	30.0%	100.0%	62.2%
	Have doubts but stay	Count	122	2	0	124
		% within Are you...?	34.1%	20.0%	.0%	33.5%
	Have doubts and leave	Count	9	3	0	12
		% within Are you...?	2.5%	30.0%	.0%	3.2%
	No doubts but leave	Count	2	2	0	4
		% within Are you...?	.6%	20.0%	.0%	1.1%
Total	Count	358	10	2	370	
	% within Are you...?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Confidence and student destinations (NTU 2009)

The single Student Experience Factor with the strongest association with doubting is 'I feel confident that I can cope with my studies'.

Relationship between the statement 'I feel confident that I can cope and the impact upon the destination of students within the sample (2009) NTU



Which factors have a relationship with confidence? (NTU 2009)

We then sought to identify which factors had a relationship to confidence. Further statistical analysis¹⁵ at NTU looked at whether there was a correlation between student responses to the statement 'I feel confident that I can cope with my studies' and their responses to the 17 Student Experience Factors'. This analysis therefore looks at the link between confidence and these factors rather than doubting/persistence.

¹⁵ Pearson correlation

The strongest associations related to feedback and assessment. The variables '*the feedback I receive about my work is useful*'¹⁶ and '*the assessment on my course is what I expected it to be*' had the strongest correlation with confidence in coping (both .399). The variable '*I feel valued by teaching staff*' had the next strongest correlation with confidence (.396) followed by '*my subject is interesting*' (.369)¹⁷.

¹⁶ Correlation for each of these variables is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

¹⁷ The HERE Project interim report (2009-10) tested the following five factors: 'Lecturers are accessible', 'The feedback I receive about my work is useful', 'I would know where to go within the university if I had a problem', 'My fellow students are supportive', 'Do you have a personal tutor?'. For this report, all 17 Student Experience Factors were tested.

Appendix 5

The HERE Project: Strand 2, Research into programmes with better than peer rates of retention



The HERE Project: Strand 2, Research into programmes with better than peer rates of retention

Why we developed two sets of review questions

It was decided that two sets of review questions would be developed. The first would be shorter, containing an outline of question areas that we wanted to ask programme teams. This was sent to programme staff before they were interviewed so that they could gain an idea of question areas we wanted to ask about. Within this outline we also included some of our research findings. This was so that our interviewees could see why we were asking about certain topics, but also as a way of sharing our research findings. Our aim here was that this would involve staff in our research, that it would be a means of communicating our findings to staff with the hope of affecting change at this level. What we found was that it encouraged discussion around these themes and interest in our research. This version also included details of the research purpose, research design, anonymity and intended use of the research data (to comply with ethical guidelines).

This outline of questions was then developed further based on a more detailed statistical analysis of Strand 1. This second set of review questions was for the researchers and included more detailed questions and areas to prompt during the interview that were based on our findings.

The HERE Project: Strand 2

Research into programmes with better than peer rates of retention

Guide for staff participants

Research Purpose

The HERE project is a 3 year research project funded by HEFCE/ PHF as part of the “What Works? Student Retention & Success” programme of work. We are interested in student retention, but unlike most studies we are primarily investigating why students stay rather than why they leave. The work has two strands: students with doubts who stay and those actions programmes can take to better support retention.

Our aim is to find out what works in your programme to support retention and help first year students to stay at university. We are primarily looking for good practice and, whilst we will seek to be rigorous, we are looking for examples of good practice, not flaws and weaknesses.

Research Design

The focus of our research is to find out what works best in your programme to support retention. We have applied the principles of the Appreciative Inquiry approach in order to do this. Appreciative Inquiry “...focuses on identifying and developing what works in an organisation rather than trying to fix what doesn’t” (Dovestone and Keenaghan, 2006, p5). We will ask you about what you do best in your programme to support students to stay. We would then like to ask you about specific areas that we have found (from our Strand 1 research) that appear to support retention.

Our Strand 1 research collected feedback from just under 1,000 first year students between March & May 2009.

Approximately 1/3 had, at some point, doubted and considered withdrawing from university. Importantly, the reasons for doubting were not the same as the reasons that doubters cited for remaining. For example, the most common reason for doubting related to the course (poor initial choice, dissatisfaction with some aspects of the experience etc.), but the main reason that doubters cited for subsequently remaining were associated with support from friends and family (particularly friends made on the course).

We have therefore structured the questions to reflect the need to reduce activities likely to lead to doubting and also to enhance those activities that support students who have doubts.

What would we like to find out?

We would like to know what you do in your programme to support students with retention.

We would like to find out what you actually do (rather than what you would like to do or think would work given more time/resources etc). Where possible we would like to explore actual activities, examples and practices.

We would be particularly interested in exploring any research or evaluation that you have carried out into your own practice (formal and/or informal).

Anonymity

The information that we collect from you will be reported anonymously. A programme, for example, may be referred to as 'a large programme within the School of Social Sciences at Nottingham Trent University'.

Individuals will not be identifiable from the information reported. No incentives will be offered to staff for participation in the interview. Participants may withdraw from the project at any time and ask for their data to be destroyed.

Data will be stored according to the Data Protection Act 1998. An audio recording of the interview will be made only with permission. This will be stored safely and not made available to those outside the project. Data will be kept for six years after the end of the project in line with

current ethical guidelines. After this time, the data will be destroyed.

Intended use of the research data

The data will be used to report on progress for the “What Works? Student Retention & Success” programme of work. A final report will be produced that makes recommendations (based on evaluation and evidence from all projects within the programme) about how best to support student retention across the sector.

The data will also be used to produce academic articles and conference presentations.

Doveston, M., and Keenaghan, M., 2006. Improving classroom dynamics to support students’ learning and social inclusion: a collaborative approach. *Support for Learning*, 21(1), pp.5-11.

Interview Structure

The structure below illustrates the areas that we would like to ask you about. We may prompt you for further details, and are happy for you to give us additional information that you feel is relevant.

Questions

Background information about the programme

Can you give us some background information about your programme, common issues, types of students, its particular challenges to retention etc.

What works?

What is it that your programme **does now** when it is at its **best** in terms of retaining students?

What is it about your programme that makes this possible?

Programme Practice

Reducing leaving	Increasing staying
<p>COURSE RELATED</p> <p>The most common reasons that students who answered our questionnaire gave for having doubts about being at university were course related, for example, wrong choice of course, describing difficulties in making the academic transition to HE and problems with the workload. Students who had had doubts about being at university (doubters) were much less likely to agree with the statement ‘I’m confident that I can cope with my studies’ than non doubters.</p> <p><i>Could you tell us what you do in your course that you think helps students in these areas?</i></p> <p><i>(Academic transition, coping with work, choice of course, problems with the course).</i></p>	<p>SUPPORT FROM FRIENDS & PEERS</p> <p>The most common reason that students gave for why they had decided to stay (after having doubts) was because of ‘friends and family’. Friends were mentioned most often, and students often described friends they had made at university such as ‘seminar buddies’.</p> <p><i>Can you tell us about the kinds of things that you do that help students get to know each other?</i></p>
<p>RELATIONSHIP/COMMUNICATION WITH STAFF</p> <p>Students that we spoke to in our qualitative research that had not had doubts about being at university all described that they had ‘someone they could talk to’ (be it a lecturer, personal tutor, or so on) about their work if they needed to. Student doubters were also much less likely to agree that they felt valued by teaching staff.</p>	<p>ADAPTING TO UNIVERSITY</p> <p>In our focus groups, all students who had never had doubts could describe a time when they felt they belonged to the university, and this was often linked to recognizing faces, or places. More of these students (non doubters) described taking part of the social life of the university (student union, student ambassador) than student doubters.</p>

Closing questions

Can you summarise why you think your retention rate is as good as it is and what it is you do best?

What have you plans to improve on?

It would be extremely beneficial if we were able to survey some of your students, may we do so?

As this is a pilot study for further research, could you also tell us if there any questions that we haven't asked that you think would be useful?

We are happy to share our findings with you. Is this something you are interested in? We could, for example, facilitate a workshop about the project, forward presentations, academic articles etc.

Thank you very much for taking part in this research.

Contacts

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Appendix 6

Interview questions with full prompts for researchers



Interview questions with full prompts for researchers

Prompts are in blue

The HERE Project: Strand 2

Research into programmes with better than peer rates of retention

Research Purpose

The HERE project is a 3 year research project funded by HEFCE/ PHF as part of the “What Works? Student Retention & Success” programme of work. We are interested in student retention, but unlike most studies we are primarily investigating why students stay rather than why they leave. The work has two strands: students with doubts who stay and those actions programmes can take to better support retention.

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We have therefore structured the questions to reflect the need to reduce activities likely to lead to doubting and also to enhance those activities that support students who have doubts.

What would we like to find out?

We would like to know what you do in your programme to support students with retention.

We would like to find out what you actually do (rather than what you would like to do or think would work given

more time/resources etc). Where possible we would like to explore actual activities, examples and practices.

We would be particularly interested in exploring any research or evaluation that you have carried out into your own practice (formal and/or informal).

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Intended use of the research data

The data will be used to report on progress for the “What Works? Student Retention & Success” programme of work. A final report will be produced that makes recommendations (based on evaluation and evidence

from all projects within the programme) about how best to support student retention across the sector.

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Doveston, M., and Keenaghan, M., 2006. Improving classroom dynamics to support students’ learning and social inclusion: a collaborative approach. *Support for Learning*, 21(1), pp.5-11.

Interview Structure

The structure below illustrates the areas that we would like to ask you about. We may prompt you for further details, and are happy for you to give us additional information that you feel is relevant.

Questions

Background information about the programme

Can you give us some background information about your programme, common issues, types of students, its particular challenges to retention etc.

Prompt – size, profile of students, UCAS tariff/actual entry, typical issues, any changes over last few years. Are there key times students are more at risk?

What works?

What is it that your programme does now when it is at its best in terms of retaining students?

Why do you think it works? (ie what are you basing this on? Evidence rather than just what staff opinion)

What is it about your programme that makes this possible?

Prompt – specific examples and practices

Actions that you take as a programme on retention? Why do you think you have good rates of retention?

Do you use statistical data on retention for example, have you analysed your own rates of student retention, has anything changing such as retention rates improving/worsening and any actions taken Have you any evidence (formal and informal) to support why your retention is as good as it is? (we will also ask about this as we go along).How do you evaluate your programmes? (eg module evaluation forms?)

Programme Practice

Reducing leaving

Course Related

The most common reasons that students who answered our questionnaire gave for having doubts about being at university were course related, primarily; wrong choice of course, describing difficulties in making the academic transition to HE, coping with the workload and feeling confident that they would be able to complete their work.

Could you tell us what you do in your course that you think helps students in these areas?

Academic transition

What do you do to induct students? How long is the induction period/how do you see induction? (prompt academic induction here?)

How do students come to understand the differences between learning in FE and learning in HE? (particularly the differences in assessment and feedback)

Prompt – FE outreach work, skills, independent learning, use of language.,

Coping with work

How do you support students with managing their workload?

Can you talk us through how you support students with

Increasing staying

Support from friends & peers

The most common reason that students gave for why they had decided to stay (after having doubts) was because of 'friends and family'. Friends were mentioned most often, and students often described friends they had made here such as 'seminar buddies'.

Can you tell us about the kinds of things that you do that help students get to know each other?

What do you do in induction to enable students to get to know each other? Activities in induction, social, making friends, icebreakers. Throughout year?

What opportunities do students have to get to know each other within the course/taught sessions? (prompt - peer mentoring? PAL scheme Bournemouth formal and informal, online)

What opportunities do students have to get to know each other across the university and what do you do as programmes to encourage this? Prompt – advertise volunteering, events

Do students work together? If so, how often is this?

Closing questions

Can you summarise why you think your retention rate is as good as it is and what it is you do best?

What have you plans to improve on?

It would be extremely beneficial if we were able to survey some of your students, may we do so?

As this is a pilot study for further research, could you also tell us if there any questions that we haven't asked that you think would be useful?

We are happy to share our findings with you. Is this something you are interested in? We could, for example, facilitate a workshop about the project, forward presentations, academic articles etc.

Thank you very much for taking part in this research.

Contacts

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Appendix 7

HERE Project Programme Student Survey



HERE Project Programme Student Survey

Please note this was an online survey so the layout was slightly different in the survey presented to the students¹⁸

NTU has been asked to conduct academic research to better understand the experience of students in their first year at university.

We are looking at programmes to see what we can learn about what helps students to stay at university. We would like to know what it is that your programme does that helps students to stay so where possible we would like you to tell us about actual activities, examples and practices that you have found to be helpful (if any).

All completed questionnaires will be entered for a prize draw. The first prize is a £30 Tesco voucher, the second prize is a £15 Tesco voucher.

This survey has been set up so that your answers will not be linked to your email address so the answers you give will be anonymous. As the researcher, I will be provided with a list of email addresses of students that have responded (to enter for the prize draw) but these will not be linked to your answers in any way.

If you have any questions at all, please do get in touch with me, Sarah, at sarah.lawther@ntu.ac.uk

Please tick to confirm that you have read the questionnaire information

Yes (question requires an answer)

Consent

I understand that my participation is voluntary.

¹⁸ This is the survey that was sent to students in our programme research at NTU via survey monkey. Some additional questions were asked at UoB and BU and these are referred to in the report where relevant.

I understand that the information I give will be anonymised.

I agree that anonymised data and findings may be used in academic papers and shared within NTU and with other universities.

Consent agreement

Yes I have read and agree to the above consent information

No, I do not agree to give my consent

HERE Project Programme Student Survey

1 Can you tell us what you like best about your course?

2a How interesting do you find your course?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= “not at all interesting” and 5= “very interesting”

1 2 3 4 5

2b What makes it interesting/not interesting (as you indicated in question 2a)?

3 How friendly are the students on your course?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= “not at all friendly” and 5= “very friendly”

1 2 3 4 5

4a How valued do you feel by staff on your course?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= "not at all valued" and 5= "very valued"

1 2 3 4 5

4b Can you tell us what makes you feel this way? Are there any specific examples that you can give us?

5 Have you made any good friends on your course? (please circle)

Yes No

6a Can you give us any examples of opportunities in your course to make friends *during* induction?

6b Can you give us any examples of opportunities in your course to make friends *after* induction?

7a Have you considered withdrawing from your course at any point during the academic year? (Please circle one of the following)

No, I have never considered withdrawing *Please go to question 8a*

Yes, and I have decided to stay at NTU *Please answer questions 7b,7c and 7d*

Yes, and I haven't made up my mind about my future plans *Please go to question 8a*

7b Can you tell us if there is anything about your course that has helped you decide to stay?

7c Is there anything about any other aspects of your life that have helped you decide to stay?

7d Can you *also* tell us what made you consider leaving? *Please then answer question 8a onwards*

8a How confident do you feel that you can cope with your coursework?

Please use a scale of 1-5, where 1= "not at all confident" and 5= "very confident"

1 2 3 4 5

8b How does this compare to when you began the course? Please circle one of the following;

I feel less confident I feel about the same I feel more confident

**8c Can you tell us what is it about your course that makes you feel this way?
Can you give specific examples?**

**9a Do you feel that you understand how learning at university is different from
your previous learning?**

Yes

No

**9b If yes, please could you give examples of what has happened on your
course to help you understand the difference?**

10a Is your course helping you to achieve your future goals?

Yes

No

10b If yes, can you tell us how?

**11 Thinking back over your first year, when did you feel most committed to
being on your course? Can you describe how you felt and what made this
possible?**

12 If you had to pick one thing that you think that the course team do best, what would it be? Can you tell us how this affects you?

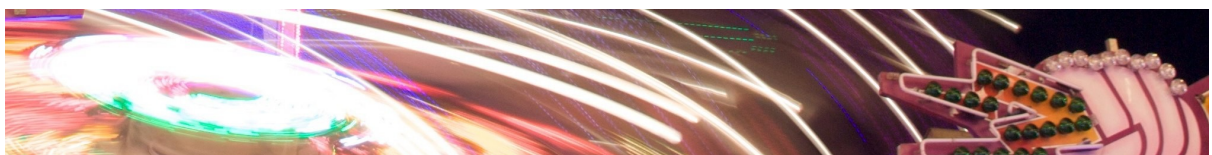
(requires an answer)

13 Is there anything else that you would like to tell us about that you think may be relevant to our research?

Thank you very much for completing this survey.

Appendix 8

The impact of student demographics on doubting



The impact of student demographics on doubting

Particular groups of students more likely to doubt

Students with disabilities

University of Bradford

2009

46.7% (7 out of 15) of students who considered themselves to have a disability had considered withdrawing

34.6% (27 out of 78) of students with no known disability had considered withdrawing

3 students did not wish to declare (one of whom had had doubts) had considered withdrawing.

2011

46.2% (12 out of 26) of students who considered themselves to have a disability had considered withdrawing

25.2% (63 out of 250) of students with no known disability had considered withdrawing

33.3% (3 out of 9) students who did not wish to declare had considered withdrawing

UoB	2009		
Disability	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
No, I have no known disability	77.1%	88.6%	85.4%
Yes	20.0%	9.1%	12.2%
I do not wish to declare	2.9%	2.3%	2.4%

UoB	2011		
Disability	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
No, I have no	80.8%	90.3%	87.8%

known disability			
Yes	15.4%	6.8%	9.1%
I do not wish to declare	3.8%	2.9%	3.2%

Type of disability (2011) University of Bradford

Of those that stated that they did consider themselves to have a disability:

57.1% (4 out of 7) of those with dyslexia had considered withdrawing, as had:

66.7% (2 out of 3) of those with a visual impairment

0% (0 out of 1) of those who are deaf/hard of hearing

0% (0 out of 1) of those who are mobility or wheelchair users

50% (1 out of 2) of those who selected a mental health disability

0% (0 out of 0) of those on the autistic spectrum

0% (0 out of 3) of those with a hidden disability

50% (1 out of 2) of those with more than one disability

60% (3 out of 5) of those who said their disability was not listed above

50% (3 out of 6) of those who did not wish to specify

UoB Disability	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Dyslexia	28.6%	18.8%	23.3%
Visual impairment	14.3%	6.3%	10.0%
Deaf/ hard of hearing	0.0%	6.3%	3.3%
Mobility or wheelchair user	0.0%	6.3%	3.3%
Mental health	7.1%	6.3%	6.7%
Autistic spectrum	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Hidden disability	0.0%	18.8%	10.0%
More than one disability	7.1%	6.3%	6.7%
Disability not listed above	21.4%	12.5%	16.7%
I do not wish to specify	21.4%	18.8%	20.0%

Bournemouth University

2009

60% (6 out of 10) of students who considered themselves to have a disability had considered withdrawing

43% (33 out of 76) of students with no known disability had considered leaving

33% (1 out of 3) of students who did not wish to declare had considered withdrawing

2011

53.8% (7 out of 13) of students who considered themselves to have a disability had considered withdrawing

40.8% (42 out of 103) of students with no known disability had considered leaving

0.0% (0 out of 1) of students who did not wish to declare had considered withdrawing

BU	2009		
Disability	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
No known disability	82.5%	89%	85.4%
Declared disability	15%	9%	11.2%
Do not wish to declare	2.5%	2%	3.4%

BU	2011		
Disability	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
No known disability	85.7%	89.7%	88.0%
Declared disability	14.3%	8.8%	11.1%
Do not wish to declare	0%	1.5%	0.9%

Nottingham Trent University

2009

Students who declared a disability were more likely to have had doubts. 36% of those students who declared that they had no disability had considered withdrawing (n=595). However, 50% of those who stated they had a disability had declared that they had considered withdrawing, as did 52% of those who chose not to declare.

NTU further statistical analysis 2009

Overall continuation of the students who granted us permission to monitor their progress was worse than non-disabled peers although we need to be cautious here as these were very small numbers of students. The Cramer's V test, however, indicated that whether a student declared a disability had a low association with

continuation compared to other factors. There may be a link with *type* of disability and continuation although again the numbers are very small.

Type of disability (2011) Nottingham Trent University

NTU Disability	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
No, I have no known disability	95.9%	92.7%	93.9%
Yes	4.1%	5.7%	5.1%
I do not wish to declare	0%	1.6%	1.0%

Of those students (20) that declared a disability, 6 students were doubters and 14 were non-doubters.

55.6% (5 out of 9) of those with dyslexia had considered withdrawing, as had:

0% (0 out of 0) of those with a visual impairment

0% (0 out of 1) of those who are deaf/hard of hearing

0% (0 out of 1) of those who are mobility or wheelchair users

0% (0 out of 1) of those who selected a mental health disability

0% (0 out of 0) of those on the autistic spectrum

0% (0 out of 1) of those with a hidden disability

0% (0 out of 2) of those with more than one disability

0% (0 out of 4) of those who said their disability was not listed above

100% (1 out of 1) of those who did not wish to specify

Gender

University of Bradford

2011

25.6% (46 out of 180) of female students had considered withdrawing and 29.4% (30 out of 102) of males had.

2009

28.2% (20 out of 71) of female students had considered withdrawing and 27.5% (14 out of 51) of males had.

UoB	2009		
Gender	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Male	41.2%	41.6%	41.6%
Female	58.8%	58.4%	58.4%
Prefer not to say	N/A	N/A	N/A

UoB	2011		
Gender	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Male	39.0%	35.0%	36.0%
Female	59.7%	65.0%	63.6%
Prefer not to say	1.3%	0.0%	0.4%

Bournemouth University

2009

49% (30 out of 61) of female students had considered withdrawing and 35% (9 out of 26) of males had.

2011

44.6 % (37 out of 83) of female students had considered withdrawing and 36.1% (13 out of 36) of males had.

BU	2009		
Gender	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall

Male	23%	35%	30%
Female	77%	65%	70%

BU	2011		
Gender	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Male	26.0%	33.3%	30.3%
Female	74.0%	66.7%	69.7%

Nottingham Trent University

2009

41% of female students at NTU had considered withdrawing, only 31% of males had.

NTU further statistical analysis 2009

A regression analysis found that the odds of being a non-doubter are almost double for males (see Appendix 4) .

2011

NTU			
Gender	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Male	29.5%	35.6%	33.6%
Female	70.5%	64.4%	66.4%

Application Process (Clearing)

University of Bradford

2009

26.1% (24 out of 92) of students that entered university through the normal UCAS process were doubters.

Of those students who applied through clearing 23.1% (3 out of 13) were doubters and 35.3% (6 out of 17) of those who applied direct to the university were doubters.

2011

29.1% (53 out of 182) of students that entered university through the normal UCAS process were doubters.

Of those students who applied through clearing 25.0% (13 out of 52) were doubters.

25.0% (9 out of 36) of those who applied direct to the university were doubters.

18.2% (2 out of 11) who applied through other means were doubters.

UoB	2009		
Application process	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Through standard UCAS process	72.7%	75.0%	73.6%
Through UCAS clearing	9.1%	10.9%	10.1%
Applied directly to the university	18.2%	12.0%	14.7%
Other	0.0%	2.1%	1.6%

UoB	2011		
Application process	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Through standard UCAS process	70.7%	66.2%	67.4%
Through UCAS clearing	17.3%	20.0%	19.3%
Applied directly to the university	12.0%	13.8%	13.3%
Other	2.7%	4.6%	4.1%

Bournemouth University

2009

49% (36 out of 73) of students that entered university through the standard UCAS process were doubters.

Of those students who applied through clearing or directly to the university, doubters' figures were low – 17% (1 out of 6) of students who applied through UCAS at clearing were doubters; 17% (1 out of 6) of students who applied directly to the university were doubters; and 0% (0 out of 1) had selected 'other' route to university.

2011

43.4% (49 out of 113) of students that entered university through the standard UCAS process were doubters.

0.0% (0 out of 2) of students who applied through UCAS at clearing were doubters.

0.0% (0 out of 3) of students who applied directly to the university were doubters.

0.0% (0 out of 0) had selected 'other' route to university.

BU	2009		
Route to university	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Through standard UCAS process	94.7%	78%	86%
Through UCAS clearing	2.6%	11%	7%
Applied directly to the university	2.6%	9%	6%
Other	0%	2%	1%

BU	2011		
Route to university	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Through standard UCAS process	100.0%	92.8%	95.8%
Through UCAS clearing	0.0%	2.9%	1.7%
Applied directly to the university	0.0%	4.3%	2.5%
Other	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%

NTU

2009

Students who had entered NTU through clearing were more likely to have doubts than students entering university through the normal UCAS process. Amongst students entering University through the normal UCAS process, 37% were doubters, amongst those who entered through the clearing process, 45% had considered leaving university. However, this is slightly contradicted as we also asked the question 'was this your first choice of University?'. 38% of those who answered 'yes' had considered withdrawing, only 31% of those who said 'no' felt the same.

Whether a student had gone through clearing had the fourth strongest (from our list of demographics) association with the 'persistence/doubters' variable¹⁹, as indicated by the Cramer's V test (see Appendix 4).

2011

NTU Route to university	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Through standard UCAS process	93.8%	85.0%	87.8%
Through UCAS clearing	5.5%	5.2%	5.3%

¹⁹ This variable looked at the destinations of student respondents: students with no doubts who stayed, students with doubts who stayed, students with doubts who left, and students with no doubts who left..

Other	70.0%	9.8%	6.9%
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Accommodation

University of Bradford

2009

Students living in private halls of residence – 52.9% (9 out of 17) and those living with other relatives – 60% (3 out of 5) were most likely to have doubts – although these are small numbers. 27.5% (8 out of 29) of those living in a private rented/shared house had considered withdrawing, as had 26.3% (5 out of 19) of students living in their own home; 20% (5 out of 25) of students living in Bradford halls of residence. Students living with their parents were least likely to doubt at 1.2% (5 out of 29).

2011

22.9% (8 out of 35) of those living in UoB halls had experienced doubts

33.9% (21 out of 62) in private halls had

25.5% (13 out of 51) living in private rented/shared house

18.2% (6 out of 33) living with relatives

32.2% (29 out of 90) in their own home had

8.3% (1 out of 12) of those who preferred not to say has had doubts

UoB	2009		
Accommodation	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
UoB halls of residence	14.3%	22.2%	20.0%
Private halls of residence	25.7%	10.0%	13.6%
Private rented/shared house	22.9%	23.3%	23.2%
Living with relatives*	22.9%	28.9%	28.0%
Own home	14.3%	15.6%	15.2%
Prefer not to say	N/A	N/A	N/A

UoB	2011		
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Accommodation	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
UoB halls of residence	10.3%	13.2%	12.4%
Private halls of residence	26.9%	20.0%	21.9%
Private rented/shared house	16.7%	18.5%	18.0%
Living with relatives	7.7%	13.2%	11.7%
Own home	37.2%	29.8%	31.8%
Prefer not to say	1.3%	5.4%	4.2%

Bournemouth University

2009

50% (18 out of 36) of those living in BU halls of residence

62% (8 out of 13) of students living in private halls of residence experienced doubts

32% (6 out of 19) of students living in a private rented/shared house

55% (6 out of 11) living with parents had

0% (0 out of 0) of students living with other relatives

22% (2 out of 9) of those living in their own home

2011

43.6% (24 out of 55) of those living in BU halls of residence experienced doubts

47.2% (17 out of 36) of students living in a private rented/shared house

55% (3 out of 12) of students living with parents had

100% (1 out of 1) of students living with other relatives

33.3% (5 out of 15) of those living in their own home

BU	2009		
Accommodation	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
BU halls of residence	45%	37%	41%
Private halls of residence	20%	11%	15%
Private rented/shared house	15%	26%	22%
Living with parent(s)	15%	11%	13%
Living with other relative(s)	0%	0%	0%
Own home	5%	15%	10%

BU	2011		
Accommodation	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
BU halls of residence	48.0%	44.9%	46.2%
Private halls of residence	Not asked in 2011		
Private rented/shared house	34.0%	27.5%	30.3%
Living with parent(s)	6.0%	13.0%	10.1%
Living with other relative(s)	2.0%	0%	0.8%
Own home	10.0%	14.5%	12.6%

Nottingham Trent University

2011

NTU	2011		
Accommodation	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
NTU/UPP halls of residence	52.7%	45.4%	47.8%
Private halls of residence	21.9%	17.6%	19.0%
Private rented/shared house	12.3%	18.0%	16.2%
Living with relatives	8.2%	11.1%	10.2%
Own home	4.8%	7.8%	6.9%

Living Independently (2009 only)

University of Bradford

30.1% (25 out of 83) of those students living independently had doubted compared to 23.7% (9 out of 38) of students who were not living independently.

Of those living independently, 35.9% (14 out of 39) were doubters who were doing so for the first time. 31.4% (11 out of 35) had doubts and were not living independently for the first time (only 74 of the 83 students living independently answered this question, therefore these percentages are calculated using the number who answered).

UoB Living Independently?	Doubters	Non- Doubters	Overall profile of survey
Yes	73.5%	66.7%	68.0%
No	26.5%	33.3%	32.0%

Bournemouth University

45% (30 out of 67) of those students living independently had experienced doubts, compared to 50% (7 out of 14) of students who were not living independently and had doubts.

Of those students living independently, 55% (22 out of 40) were doubters living independently for the first time. 26% (6 out of 23) of students for whom it was not their first time living independently had considered withdrawing (63 of the 67 students living independently answered this question, therefore these percentages are calculated using the number who answered).

BU Living Independently?	Doubters	Non- Doubters	Overall profile of survey
Yes	81%	84%	83%
No	19%	16%	17%

If yes, is it for the first time? (out of total	Doubters	Non- Doubters	Overall profile of survey
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numbers)			
Yes	79%	53%	63%
No	21%	47%	37%

Nottingham Trent University

37% of students who lived away from home for the first time had doubts and so did those students who were not living away from home for the first time. Those living with relatives were least likely to have doubts (30%), those in private halls the most (42%), other types of accommodation such as NTU halls had doubt rates of 37 – 39%.

First Generation in Higher Education

University of Bradford

2009

24.1% (13 out of 54) of students who were the first person in their immediate family to go to university experienced doubts.

32.4% (22 out of 68) of students who were **not** the first person in their immediate family to go to university considered leaving.

2011

26.1% (30 out of 115) of students who were the first person in their immediate family to go to university experienced doubts.

26.7% (44 out of 165) of students who were **not** the first person in their immediate family to go to university considered leaving

4 students preferred not to say (3 of whom had doubts)

UoB	2009		
First person in family at university	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Yes	37.1%	46.6%	52.7%
No	62.3%	53.4%	47.3%
Prefer not to say	N/A	N/A	N/A

UoB	2011		
First person in family at university	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
Yes	39.0%	41.1%	40.5%
No	57.1%	58.5%	58.1%
Prefer not to say	3.9%	0.5%	1.4%

Bournemouth University

2009

39% (19 out of 49) of students who were the first person in their immediate family to go to university experienced doubts.

53% (21 out of 40) of students who were **not** the first person in their immediate family to go to university considered leaving.

2011

44.6% (29 out of 65) of students who were the first person in their immediate family to go to university experienced doubts.

37.7% (20 out of 53) of students who were **not** the first person in their immediate family to go to university considered leaving.

BU First to go to university in immediate family?	2009		
	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
Yes	47.5%	62%	55%
No	52.5%	38%	45%

BU First to go to university in immediate family?	2011		
	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
Yes	59.2%	52.2%	55.1%
No	40.8%	47.8%	44.9%

Nottingham Trent University

2009

48% of respondents to the survey stated that they were the first person in their immediate family to come to university, 39% of them had doubts compared to 35% amongst those for whom other members of the family had already experienced higher education.

2011

First to go to university in immediate family?	Doubter	Non-doubter	Overall
Yes	44.5%	42.2%	42.9%
No	55.5%	57.8%	57.1%

Mode of study

University of Bradford

2011

27.4% (75 out of 274) of full time students were doubters compared to 30.0% (3 out of 10) part-time student respondents (again the numbers are very small here)

2009

28% (33 out of 118) of full time students were doubters compared to 50% (2 out of 4) of part time student respondents – although the number of part-time students is very small.

UoB	2009		
Mode of Study	Doubter	Non-Doubter	Overall
Full time	96.2%	96.6%	96.5%
Part time	3.8%	3.4%	3.5%

UoB	2011		
Mode of Study	Doubter	Non-Doubter	Overall
Full time	94.3%	97.7%	96.7%
Part time	5.7%	2.3%	3.3%

Bournemouth University

2009

46% (38 out of 83) of full time students were doubters. None of the part-time respondents (0 out of 1) or part-time distance learners (0 out of 2) had experienced doubts.

2011

45.8% (54 out of 118) of full time students were doubters. There were no part-time students.

BU	2009		
Mode of Study	Doubters	Non-Doubters	Overall
Full-time	100%	100.0%	100.0%
Part-time	0%	0%	0%
Part-time distance learner	0%	0%	0%

BU	2011		
Mode of Study	Doubters	Non-Doubters	Overall
Full-time	100%	93.5%	97%
Part-time	0%	2.2%	1%
Part-time distance learner	0%	4.3%	2%

Nottingham Trent University

2009

The very small number of part-time respondents (14 students) were more likely to have doubts than their full-time counterparts (43% compared to 37% amongst full time students).

2011

NTU mode of study	Doubter	Non-Doubter	Overall
Full time	98.6%	97.4%	97.8%
Part time	0.7%	1.6%	1.3%
Distance learner	0.7%	1.0%	0.9%

UCAS Tariff (2011 only)

University of Bradford

60% (3 out of 5) of those students who had 160 or less points were doubters

25% (2 out of 8) of those with 161-200

38.5% (5 out of 13) of those with 201-260 points

37.5% (6 out of 16) of those with 261-300 points

32.0% (8 out of 25) of those with 301+ points

40% (4 out of 10) of those who did not know were doubters

UoB UCAS tariff points	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
160 or less	10.7%	4.1%	6.5%
161-200	7.1%	12.2%	10.4%
201-260	17.8%	16.3%	16.9%
261-300	21.4%	22.5%	20.8%
301+	28.6%	32.7%	32.5%
Don't know	14.3%	12.2%	13.0%

Bournemouth University

50.0% (1 out of 2) of students with 0-160 UCAS points had experienced doubts

0.0% (0 out of 0) of students with 161- 200 UCAS points

71.4% (5 out of 7) of students with 201-260 UCAS points

50.0% (5 out of 10) of students with 261-300 UCAS points

43.3% (13 out of 30) of students with 301+ UCAS points

18.2% (2 out of 11) of students who did not know how many points they had

100.0% (1 out of 1) of students who said UCAS were not applicable to their application

BU UCAS tariff points	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
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160 or less	10.7%	4.1%	6.5%
161-200	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
201-260	18.5%	5.8%	11.4%
261-300	18.5%	14.7%	16.4%
301+	48.1%	50.0%	49.1%
Don't know	14.3%	12.2%	13.0%
Points not applicable to application	3.7%	0.0%	1.6%

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28.6% (2 out of 7) of those students who had 160 or less points were doubters

66.7% (4 out of 6) of those with 161-200

38.2% (26 out of 68) of those with 201-260 points

26.35% (21 out of 80) of those with 261-300 points

33.1% (40 out of 121) of those with 301+ points

32.4% (53 out of 170) of those who did not know were doubters

NTU UCAS tariff points	Doubters	Non-doubters	Overall
160 or less	1.4%	1.7%	1.6%
161-200	2.8%	0.7%	1.3%
201-260	18.1%	14.0%	15.3%
261-300	14.6%	19.7%	18.0%
301+	27.8%	26.9%	27.2%
Don't know	36.9%	38.9%	38.0%

Is there a link between lower UCAS tariff point on entry and whether students struggled with their work?

**Students' self-perception of struggling to cope (count by UCAS tariff band)
(NTU 2011)**

UCAS tariff points	Yes, I did struggle with work	No, I didn't struggle with work	Total in each tariff band
160 or less	5	2	7
161-200	6	0	6
201-260	46	22	68
261-300	49	31	80
301+	71	50	121
Don't know	100	70	170

Students' self-perception of struggling to cope (percentage by UCAS tariff band) (NTU 2011)

UCAS tariff points	Yes, I did struggle with work	No, I didn't struggle with work	Total in tariff band
160 or less	71.4%	28.6%	100.0%
161-200	100.0%	0.0%	100.0%
201-260	67.6%	32.4%	100.0%
261-300	61.3%	38.8%	100.0%
301+	58.7%	41.3%	100.0%
Don't know	58.8%	41.2%	100.0%

Appendix 9

NTU Tutorials early draft



NTU Tutorials Early Draft

This short schedule is intended to give an overview of how NTU is starting to think of strategies for embedding the findings of the HERE Project into the student learning and teaching experience. It has been developed using the HERE Project toolkit and assumes 15 sessions delivered once per fortnight. This schedule is indicative only of the early discussions and will be amended to reflect different disciplinary practices.

Session no.	Workshop themes	Tutor role	HERE Project toolkit themes
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Term 1	
1	Induction – ice breakers, building a learning community, sources of support
2	Planning & time management
3	Research skills & group problem solving activities
4	Writing for university – analysing previous students’ texts
5	Referencing skills & reflections on the first term
Term 2	
6	Future goals (particularly careers), name games & challenges
7	Learning from feedback
8	Linking between academic modules
9	Problem solving & study support/ central services
10	Better learning skills
Term 3	
11	Revision & Exam skills
12	How will year 2 be different?
13	Mapping learning this year
14	Planning inductions for students next year – advice and activities
15	Future goals & what happens next?

The tutorial proposal is intended to help students develop effective learning methods for university, but also to reflect upon their application into and across the curriculum. The tutor also plays a pivotal role as the first point of contact, ally, referrer to professional support and also a channel back to the programme

Social integration
Communication & relationships with staff
Student Support
Transition to learning in HE
Motivation & future goals
Transition to learning in HE
Student Support
Transition to learning in HE
Communication & relationships with staff

