

Title: **Out-duction: understanding the final year experience**

Presenter: **Marion Webb**
Kingston University

Abstract:

Session Learning Outcomes

By the end of this session, delegates will be able to:

- Identify issues which are key to understanding the final year experience
- Share good practice around the establishment of learning communities for students in their final year of undergraduate study
- Explore ways of supporting students for transition into communities beyond the university experience

Session Outline (no more than 300 words)

- The varied challenges and issues of the final year of the student undergraduate experience which have not been subject to the same level of holistic investigation, analysis and discussion as the first year.(HE Academy 2007)
- The progression, transition and induction to the final year. Does the design of a degree programme facilitate a smooth transition to the challenge of the final year? Does the design of a final year acknowledge the diversity of students? (Little,2007), for example what is the experience of students who enter the final year of a degree programme having previously studied in FE?
- The use of student interns to facilitate a sense of community for final year students
- How to prepare final year students for entering employment or the postgraduate community
- Does a Personal Development Planning scheme adequately support students and help to bring cohesion to their experience as they prepare for life beyond the honours degree?

Session Activities and Approximate Timings

1. The session will begin with an activity asking participants to identify issues which they feel are of importance to final year students (10 minutes)
2. The presenter will then outline the findings of a research project being undertaken at Kingston University and the University of Bradford into the experience of students in their final year including investigations into the academic skills required for the final year and into the use of PDP for finalists (15 minutes)
3. Participants will be divided into groups and asked to consider some case studies related to the research findings of the project including one on the establishment of a

- learning community for direct entrants into the final year and one which evaluates a range of activities designed by student interns for final year students (15 minutes)
4. Conclusion (5 minutes)

References

Little B (2007) The Student Experience and the Impact of Social Capital in McNay (ed) (2007) Beyond Mass Higher Education Building on Experience SRHE/OUP Buckingham

<http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/ourwork/research/surveys/fye> accessed 25.9.09