"Like catching smoke": Easing the transition from TAFE to university

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The development of pathways from Technical and Further Education (TAFE) into university courses is part of the effort to broaden access to higher education. From the literature on the difficulties and achievements of students who take these pathways, there is strong evidence that some, at least, need more initial support. The purposes and methods of study are different in each sector, and students often struggle with the transition. In particular, those whose TAFE studies earn them advanced placement into a degree course may be disadvantaged because of missing orientation, social immersion in a cohort, and the first semester's induction into disciplinary cultures of enquiry. In view of this, Academic Language and Learning (ALL) staff at a large, multi-campus university researched the experience of regional students to discover what ALL could do to support them more effectively. Not all had difficulties, but many did; and their responses to a survey and focus groups pointed to a need for more targeted processes and resources, starting at TAFE and continuing through orientation and the first semester of their degree. This paper presents the students' perspective on the transition from TAFE to university, and the initiatives with which ALL staff have responded.

Key Words: vocational education, transition, higher education.

1. Introduction

While widening participation in higher education is facilitated by alternative pathways for students who do not follow a straightforward trajectory through school to university, access is only the beginning. Institutions need to understand and address the challenges of transition into unfamiliar cultures of learning to give articulating students the best chance of success. This paper presents a study of the experiences of students articulating from vocational colleges of Technical and Further Education (TAFE) into degree courses at four regional campuses of an Australian university, and the implications for their academic development.

Efforts to extend higher education to more students from under-represented groups have evolved alongside the development in Australia, by the 1990s, of a unified higher education system in which TAFEs provided mainly vocational education while universities provided Bachelors and post graduate qualifications (Gallagher, Osborne, & Postles, 1996). In 1995, an Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) was introduced Australia-wide, which mapped all qualifications in secondary and higher education as well as vocational training. The AQF has allowed for the development of formal credit-bearing pathways from upper level Vocational Education and Training (VET) courses into university degrees (Australian Qualifications Framework Council, 2012). As a result, explicit matching of VET competencies with university subject or unit learning outcomes became possible and many universities now have formal

arrangements where VET graduates are given credits ranging from one subject or unit to a full year of study or more, when applying for related degree courses.

At each campus of La Trobe University, there is as least one Academic Language and Learning (ALL) lecturer with TAFE teaching experience (current or past). These lecturers' knowledge of both the TAFE and university learning environments and their acquaintance with many of the students articulating from the local TAFE colleges have made them aware of the challenges faced by these students, giving rise to this research project.

2. Problems identified in the literature

The pathway from TAFE is particularly important in regional areas, where participation in higher education has been found to be persistently lower than in metropolitan areas (Aird, Miller, van Megen, & Buys, 2010, p. 8; DEEWR, 2010; James, 2001). Rural students are likely to be from lower socio-economic status, and to do less well at school; they are less likely to apply to a university, less likely to get an offer, and more likely to reject an offer or to defer their studies (Parliament of Victoria, 2009, pp. xiii–xv). In combatting these trends, "universities and campuses in rural, regional and interface areas are highly valued by their host communities …. [for] providing local study opportunities" without the expense of relocating (Parliament of Victoria, 2009, p. xix). Dow et al. (2010), however, warn that articulation requires "special understanding of student needs by the partner university's student support services" (p. 95).

The difficulties such students can experience range from practical ones such as financial pressures, travel and attendance, and balancing work and family commitments with study, to less obvious ones stemming from the incongruities between the cultures of learning at TAFE and university (for practical obstacles, see Abbott-Chapman, 2006, p. 12; Aird et al., 2010, p. 28; Brunken & Delly, 2010; Watson, 2006, 2008; Wheelahan et al., 2012**,** p. 25. For cultural incongruities, see Aird et al., 2010; Dickson, 2000). Pearce, Murphy, and Conroy (2001) identify "[a]reas of difficulty involved in this pathway [as involving] sudden changes in the depth and detail of subject knowledge, pedagogical approach and assessment, and the level, genre and independent nature of academic research and writing" (see also Aird et al., 2010, p. 21; Watson, 2006). At TAFE, students are used to an approach to learning that is more structured, and offers more direction, than at university (Brown et al., 2011, p. 7). Classes are smaller, students receive more attention, and instruction is centred on the student's needs (Aitchison et al., 2006, p. 4; Brown et al., 2011, p. 7; Wheelahan et al., 2012, p. 25). Assessment is competency-based and is repeated until the required standard is achieved, in contrast to the infrequent, high-stakes, sparsely scaffolded assessment at university (Watson, 2006; Wheelahan et al., 2012, p. 32). The reference group for TAFE is the industry, while at university it is the discipline, and each sector aims to produce different kinds of knowledge (Pearce, Murphy, & Conroy, 2001; Watson, 2008, p. 45). TAFE emphasises the learning of content and procedure, and knowledge organised by the context of its use. Higher education, by contrast, emphasises the construction, application, and testing of theory (Dickson, 2000); and knowledge is organised by conceptual frameworks developed in scholarly "conversations" in print. For this reason, university courses tend to require a large volume of reading, much of it in unfamiliar genres (Aitchison et al., 2006 p. 4; McNaught & McIntyre, 2011, p. A100) and students must learn to research and assess sources for themselves. In their own work, they are expected to question, criticise, synthesise, and construct arguments (Dickson, 2000; Watson, 2008, p. 45).

It is not surprising, then, that "[m]any students find the transition difficult due to sectoral differences in teaching and learning, and the failure of teaching staff in both sectors to recognise and accommodate them" (Watson 2006; cf. Aird et al., 2010, p. 21). It is particularly important for teaching staff to address the problems of transition actively, as it has been noted that students, and perhaps mature-aged students in particular, are reluctant to seek out academic support (Clegg, Bradley, & Smith, 2006; for TAFE articulators, see Abbott-Chapman, 2006, p. 13; Dickson, 2000; Watson, 2006, p. 6).

The effects of these differences on students' success seem to vary. Watson (2008) cites a study in 1999 which found that "53% of women and 49% of men entering on the basis of TAFE qualifications complete a degree compared to 72% of females and 64% of males who enter with a Tertiary Entrance Score". Things had improved by 2006, according to Dow et al. (2010, p. 96), as "[a] review, completed in 2006 for the Australian Government, on credit transfer and articulation … found that students moving from TAFE to higher education with credit 'perform as well or better than other student cohorts' and that retention rates for this group of students may be higher". By contrast, Aitchison et al. (2006, p. 3) allude to their institution's concern over the poor retention rates of articulators, and Aird et al. (2010, p. 22) say that "[a]cademic literacy was found to be a major issue for this cohort". Similarly, Abbot-Chapman (2006) found, in a study of Tasmanian mature-aged students, "that TAFE-background students overall perform academically on a par with other members of the cohort, but that they experience more study problems and less satisfaction during the first year." (p. 1)

These problems are often exacerbated by arrangements that grant credit for TAFE studies towards the university degree, allowing students to commence their degree in mid-year, or even to skip first year and join the degree in second year. From the students' point of view, this is appealing as it makes the (usually three-year full-time) degree course shorter, cheaper, and less repetitive (Aitchison et al., 2006; Cameron 2004). However, such students miss the orientation to university study at the start of first year, and the induction into disciplinary cultures of enquiry provided in introductory subjects (Aitchison et al., 2006, p. 3; Cameron, 2004; Dickson, 2000; Milne, Glaisher & Keating, 2006, p. ii; Pearce, Murphy, & Conroy, 2001; Watson, 2006, p. 5; Watson, 2008, p. 46). For this reason, Brunken and Delly (2010) have called such students the "hidden disadvantaged", and have argued that institutions should make an effort to identify students articulating with credit and take the initiative to help them with what is likely to be a difficult transition (cf. Dickson, 2000).

Accounts of successful transition tend to emphasise the importance of dedicated support for this cohort (Abbott-Chapman, 2006, p. 1; Aird et al., 2010, pp. 26-27; Watson, 2008). Unfortunately, though, according to Aird et al. (2010, p. 21), "knowledge about the best ways to facilitate the transition from VET to university is relatively limited .... [as] only a handful of studies have focused explicitly on student experiences and outcomes." Our study aims to make a contribution in this area, and address a "key gap" in the literature identified by Brown et al. (2011), that is, "the voice of the students", specifically with regard to "transitioning students'… actual experience of learning in VET and HE; [their] expectations and readiness; their use of supports; … [and their] perceptions of special issues for older learners".

3. Method

Approval for this research, using questionnaires and focus groups, was granted by the University's Human Research Ethics committee. Student participation was voluntary, the survey anonymous, and the focus group comments de-identified. The University's information unit provided a list, based on enrolment codes, of students who had commenced university with a TAFE qualification. However, many students we knew had come from TAFE were not included in the list. The problem identified was that the system for assigning students enrolment codes is at the discretion of the administrators. They make the judgement based on the information students provide, so for example a student might be classified mature-aged entry rather than TAFE. With the assistance of campus Student Administration staff, another seven admission codes were added to the original three as a means of identifying students who had previously studied at TAFE. Approximately 1350 students were identified on the four regional campuses, including some no longer enrolled at the university when the survey was emailed (they may have transferred, deferred or withdrawn). Despite widening our search in this way, we were convinced that some students articulating from TAFE remained unidentified.

A survey designed through *Survey Monkey* (see Appendix) began with questions to establish the respondent's background (campus, age, gender, TAFE provider and course studied, and credit granted). The next questions asked about the types of support they encountered during the transition and their assessment of the helpfulness of each. They were asked to compare their

expectations of university with the reality, and to list specific challenges of transition. The survey concluded by asking open-ended hindsight questions about what advice respondents would give to future students moving from TAFE to university and what advice they would give to the university to improve the transition experience.

The purpose of the focus groups was to stimulate elaboration on the issues we wished to learn about, to draw on a wider range of experiences, and to gain more insight than would be possible with a survey alone. With low numbers of volunteers from survey recipients, we issued personal invitations to students the researchers knew had come from a TAFE pathway. While the personal approach might have had the potential to skew responses, we do not think that this occurred: students might have hesitated to criticise the university's provision of support for them, knowing that the researchers worked in support roles; but the students were, in fact, candid in their criticisms. This direct personal approach was much more effective in encouraging involvement, and seven focus groups were conducted, with a total of 26 students attending. The hour-long focus group sessions were recorded and the researchers took notes.

A thematic analysis of the focus group comments was conducted to amplify the results of the survey. Individual comments representative of commonly expressed ideas from each campus and each section of questioning are presented to illustrate the themes that emerged.

4. Results

Of the 1350 students to whom the survey was sent, 76 responded across all four campuses. Based on such a limited response rate (5 %), our results can be regarded as suggestive only. However, the students encompass a wide range of ages and courses, and report a variety of transition experiences, which is informative in itself. Sixty-one women and 15 men responded, of whom four were aged 18–20, 39 were aged 21–29, 27 aged 30–49, and 6 aged 50–59. The courses they had done at TAFE ranged from Health/Nursing (26), Visual Arts (7) and Information Technology (7), to Accounting (3), Business and Welfare (4 each), and a scattering of one or two students in each of 18 other courses. Thirty-nine students had been given no credit towards their degree course, but 36 had received varying amounts of credit (one did not answer this question): nine got credit for less than a year; 26 for one year; and one for over a year.

The support for transition that students received at the TAFEs varied too, with 25 students saying they had had none; 17 reporting information about applying or transferring to university; and nine receiving "advice and encouragement" from a TAFE teacher or counsellor, which included, for just three students, advice on how to study at university. As Table 1 shows, when they arrived at university, they used a range of types of support for transition to university study.

Table 1. Students' use of support for transition to university study.

Support by Uni for transition to university study (Q. 9*)	Number of respondents who used each type (Q. 11)	Number of respondents who rated each type "most helpful" (Q. 10)
Transition programs	2	1
Orientation activities	32	11
Materials in print/online	32	6
Modules/tutorials/ consultations to develop skills	18	2
Peer mentors	10	2
Student services	16	2
Administrative help	3	1
Library staff	1	1
ALLU workshops/ individual consultations	6	6

* "Q. 9", for example, refers to "question 9" in the survey given in Appendix A.

When asked how they expected university to be different from TAFE (Q. 12), students responded with a range of answers, sorted into themes in Table 2 below; however, the number (at right) who expected these differences was small in every case.

Table 2. Expectations of university study.

Expected differences from TAFE	Number of respondents who expected this difference
Greater independence	13
Heavier workload esp. reading & writing	7
Harder work / higher standards	10
Different skills/ learning style	2
More theory focused	5
Different types of assessments	1
Different marking system	1
Less supportive / less contact with lecturers	6
Greater resources	5

When asked what differences they encountered once embarked upon their course (Q. 14), 21 (or 28%) found university more challenging than they expected, while 7 found it less so. In addition to the differences respondents had expected, the surveys and focus groups identified a range of technical and procedural challenges including time management / organizational skills; administrative arrangements; managing web-based components of subjects; amount and depth of reading; group work (specifically, feeling out of place in groups of younger students); online lectures; research; and referencing. The students' own words give us glimpses into their experience, as well as a wide range of very specific suggestions for how their transition could have been improved, with relevance to particular campuses, courses, and programs. As there is space here for only a few quotations, we have selected points with a broader relevance for any institution that may be reflecting on issues of transition.

Students' comparisons between TAFE and university were consistent with those identified in the literature (e.g. Dickson, 2000; Pearson, Murphy, & Conroy, 2001), as the following comments from focus groups indicate:

> *At uni you have to find your own readings, at TAFE you are given everything.*

> *At uni there is a focus on theory – some are like catching smoke, but it needs to be like that – perhaps some personal application of theory might help.*

> *TAFE focuses more on being work ready, and uni is more on theory – which is as it should be.*

> *At TAFE just showing you understood the concept was enough, here at uni how you write your answer matters too.*

These same students do not appear unhappy with the differences, though; indeed, some explicitly welcomed the challenge:

> *At Uni you need to push yourself and there is a higher level of reading required. Uni is a good stimulating challenge. As expected it's more and harder work.*

> *I expected it to be very hard but I did well straight away. To be honest I had found TAFE too easy and had pulled back with effort there.*

Others, however, had struggled with the transition:

> *I thought if uni was like TAFE I would be ready for it [but] I was pushed into the deep end.*

> *I thought I was prepared for Uni, but then found it was quite different in a range of ways including contact, workload, independent learning.*

> *It was like coming to a foreign country; the language of uni, LMS, subject guides. They told us to run, but didn't teach us to walk.*

> *I was in a daze for a while. I felt alienated because I didn't know what "went on" at a Uni. I thought everyone else seemed to understand, so was afraid to speak up and ask questions. I soon found out many others felt the same way.*

> *Theory might need to be explained many times, not just once.*

> *The biggest culture shock was having to find our own references for essays, it's all up to you. Being on your own was hard with no teachers behind you reminding you about essays. And the amount of work was overwhelming.*

> *I didn't realise how much time it would take…. I look at something and say "I can't do that. I cannot fit all that reading in." I don't think it's … reasonable.*

> *At TAFE it's structured so there wasn't much overlap [but here] you can get 3 assignments due at the same time.*

> *I'm doing 3 subjects and I've got 10 hours of contact. But [I spend another] 20, 25 or 30 hours a week [studying]. That's your full-time job.*

> *[In] O-week … you get told important things - they inform you of different resources available. Missing that is not good and [friends who missed O-week] got chucked in the deep end and didn't know what they were doing.*

> *Group work is really hard – a whole group of 20 year olds with a different way of approaching what we have to do. I got along with them but the first time I came, the look they gave me was – "go away, you're not my Mum. We don't want you in our group".*

This last comment articulates one of the "perceptions of special issues for older learners" (Brown et al., 2011); and several students, in fact, had begun university with concerns about fitting in, as older students:

> *Being a mature-age student, I wasn't certain how the "just out of Year 12" students would react to me and accept me.*

> *Myself and other older students felt "alone" – not knowing names at first was an issue.*

Students who had articulated with credit, in particular, expressed a wish for more support:

> *I came into second year and no one knew I was new – it would have helped if they did.*

> *Not doing first year hindered my connection with students in the first year subject I had to do. They were straight from school so there was an age difference. They were spending all their time together.*

> *There are things that you miss out on coming with credits and missing first year: I didn't know about assignment guides for referencing and formatting.*

> *I got dumped mainly in 2nd year and one 3rd year subject. As soon as I rocked up to Week 1 class it was deemed that everyone knew how to use LMS [the online Learning Management System], what it was, where it was etc. There I am Day 1… "What?"*

> *Being second year there [it was expected] that we understood all this language but we had no idea even how to find what to read for the first class. We bumbled for the first month ... and we were all very stressed. Later it seemed so simple.*

> *I don't think I missed out on skills in first year but I missed out on some extra knowledge – [in] some subjects [where I got] credits I almost wished I hadn't – I really missed a lot of details.*

> *Nothing was provided when I came into 2nd year ... – I taught myself to do things like referencing.*

> *When new I could have benefited from a student mentor, someone in year 3 in our course to get me rolling.*

> *If those people in support roles ... could be a part of the class in the first few weeks as it is easier to approach someone when you know who they are ... then they would be familiar to you and you would think "Oh I know her, she was in my class a few times, I'll go ask her".*

> *[We need] classes to help with writing through the assessment we are doing – not an odd grammar session but learning through what we are doing in our subjects.*

However, some students thought that much support was available that was not accessed:

> *There was enough support there. People just need to swallow their pride and ask for help, not rely on a computer screen.*

> *The services are all here but there is a disconnect in that the students don't like to ask for help as we appear [as if] we aren't managing. We need to change the culture of not accessing.*

Finally, in response to the survey question, "What advice would you give to future students moving from TAFE to Uni?", three students said, "Go for it!" and one added, "Take hold of the opportunity that you have that many people don't get but would love!" In the focus groups, when talking about whether they were happy with their decision to come to university, two students said that now they have a future; and one went further, saying that her children now have a future with her example to follow.

5. Discussion

In itself, the usefulness of our survey was limited both by the small response rate and by the design which invited, but did not require, comments on the value of the various support services that respondents had used. For example, although students told us which services they had found "most helpful" (see Table 1), not many told us why. We could see that no one kind of support stood out as meeting most students' needs: the library and ALLU were judged "most helpful" by all who had used them, but few *had* used them (1 and 6 students, respectively), while the supports that were most widely used (by 32 students in each case), were "most helpful" to roughly one-third of users (the orientation activities) or one-fifth of users (materials in print or online). We could infer that some of the supports should be improved; and/or, that more students should be informed about them, or persuaded to make use of them. Another area of ambiguity resulted from unintended overlap in questions 9, 10, and 11, which all asked about students' use of supports for transition to university study without making it clear that we sought to learn what services students were *aware* of (Q. 9), and then, which of those they had used. It would have been clearer to omit 9 ("In what ways did La Trobe University help you to make the transition to Uni study?") and to ask, instead, "If La Trobe University helped you in the transition from TAFE to Uni study, specify what service/activity you used, and when and how you learned of it?". Then, the next question could have focussed only on the value of the support: "Of the supports you used, what was most helpful about them? Least helpful?"

However, the survey was only one part of our investigation, and the focus group discussions gave a fuller picture of the variety of experiences and perceptions, and the things that students found most challenging. Our findings confirmed a number of challenges identified in the literature we had examined previously. Students spoke about the new emphasis on theory and higher standards of academic writing, and the need to work more independently, both in terms of managing their time and tasks, and finding their own resources (cf. Dickson, 2000; Pearce, Murphy, & Conroy, 2001). The learning environment was not only different, but daunting, especially the LMS. Not only was less guidance offered (cf. Brown et al., 2011), but it was difficult to know where to find it. For students who entered with advanced credit, this difficulty was compounded by lecturers' assuming that students would have learned about LMS at orientation or soon thereafter, and by students' own reluctance to seek help in case they looked as if they "aren't managing" (cf. Abbott-Chapman, 2006). For some older students, there was the added discomfort of feeling out of place among the younger students. (This seems implied, as well, in two responses to the survey question, "What advice would you give to Unis that want to help students move from TAFE to Uni study?" to which students responded that the university should facilitate "study groups" or "social inclusion activities" for mature-aged students.)

Our study revealed that students are aware of the kinds of challenges they face, and they had many constructive ideas about how these could be mediated (in brief answers to Question 18, and more extensively in the focus groups). In some cases, these involve better communication about support that already exists, while others involve initiatives that universities could readily put in place. An important finding was that students varied considerably in their experience and their ability to cope. Any solutions, therefore, should not be "one-size-fits-all", but rather, a suite of offerings from which students can choose what best suits them.

Overall, it emerged that attention to transition was needed not just at orientation (missed by many) but at various stages in the pathway. First, the university should contact prospective students while they are still at TAFE, with information that helps them make decisions about applications to study: pathways and credits should be clearly explained, and information on courses offered. As one student put it, "there needs to be more talking between TAFE and La Trobe University at a student and teacher level". Students suggested "have a go" days or "mock Uni" sessions to gain a brief experience of university. Secondly, during orientation week, transitioning students should be identified and invited to activities tailored to their specific situation. There should be discipline-specific introductions to academic cultures of learning, as well as technical training in the use of the web for study. For students entering at second year, there should be some revision of skills that lecturers in second year subjects will assume their students have (such as how to use assignment guides, how to find and use the LMS, and how to find and reference readings).

It is possible, on the basis of this study, to recommend some measures that institutions could consider to support students coming from a TAFE pathway. Our students made it clear that they would like the University to recognize the maturity and motivation of this cohort, and acknowledge the skills they bring from TAFE; at the same time, students would like to be actively made aware of, and encouraged to use, the avenues for academic development available from lecturers, ALLU staff, and student peer mentors. It may be appropriate, therefore, for universities to:

- liaise with local TAFEs to supply information that can help their students to understand what opportunities they may have to obtain credit towards a university course; what challenges they may face in commencing partway through the course; and what kinds of support they can find to help them with this transition;
- find a clear and reliable way to identify all their commencing students who come from backgrounds of studying at TAFE, and contact them early to let them know what support is available for this transition;
- consider instituting orientation activities or learning circles specifically addressing aspects of university study that different cohorts are prepared for in different ways (e.g. by recent experience at school; by work experience; by maturity); and use these opportunities to

raise issues from previous cohorts' experiences and the ways they have found to deal with these.

In the light of our students' suggestions, we have introduced a number of initiatives this year. We have written a "TAFE to Uni Survival Guide" addressing the main challenges identified by our respondents. Each challenge is introduced with a quotation from the students' comments, followed by web addresses of relevant information on the university's website. With funding from a Higher Education Participation and Partnerships Program grant, we are putting this Guide online as a resource that students and staff at any location, including TAFEs, will be able to consult (see http://www.latrobe.edu.au/students/learning/starting-out/tafe-to-uni). We will liaise with staff at our local TAFE institutions to ensure that they know of this resource and can use it to advise their students about what they can expect, and where they can find help, once at the university. Meanwhile, we have revised a bridging program and given more time and emphasis to academic matters at orientation, with more Faculty-based sessions on the LMS, subject guides, group assessments, and library skills. We have given a larger and more varied role to peer advisors, who are now involved in bridging courses and in visiting classes during the first four weeks of the semester. First year students from TAFE have been invited to join Learning Circles established for students to give one another social and academic support, and peer mentors have been assigned to students commencing their degree at second year level.

6. Conclusion

While our study was modest in scale, it produced a number of useful insights into the needs and experiences of students in transition between TAFE and university, particularly in the regional settings. It expanded our understanding not only at a practical level but also at an emotional level, as we engaged with students who were open and generous in sharing their feelings about what they had experienced. Our findings do not give cause for concern about the ability of students to articulate successfully from TAFE; but they do point to a need for TAFEs and universities to become more aware of what this involves. With early intervention and targeted help, the transition from TAFE to university need not be like "catching smoke".

Acknowledgements

Appendix A. Regional campuses survey questions

(To save space, we have omitted the choices listed under questions 1, 2, and 3; and we have omitted text boxes that followed open-ended questions.)

TAFE to Uni Research Project

We are members of the Academic Language and Learning Unit on the regional campuses. We want to survey students who have studied at TAFE before coming to Uni. The answers we receive from this anonymous survey will help us to develop better ways of supporting future students as they make the TAFE to Uni transition. We thank you for completing the survey.

1. Which country campus do you study at?

2. Which category below includes your age?

3 What is your gender?

4. What TAFE or VET provider did you attend prior to enrolling at Uni?

5. What course(s) did you do before you came to Uni?

6. Were you given credit from your TAFE study towards your Uni study?

Yes

No

7. If "Yes" how much credit were you given?

8. What support did your TAFE offer to students who were thinking about studying at Uni?

Nothing

Information about transferring to Uni

Counselling

Advice about how to study at Uni

Other support (please specify)

9. In what ways did La Trobe University help you to make the transition to Uni study?

Orientation activities

Materials in print or online

Modules/tutorials/consultations to develop your skills

Peer mentors

Student services

Nothing

Or other – if there is something we haven't thought of (please specify)

10. If La Trobe University helped you in the transition from TAFE to Uni study, specify what it was, and when and how you learned of it?

11. Of the ways listed in Qu. 9, what did you use? Comment on what was most helpful, least helpful and say why.

12. Did you expect Uni to be different from TAFE? If so, how?

13. How far has your experience matched those expectations?

Exactly

Very closely

Somewhat

Not at all

14. Has Uni turned out to be different in any ways that you didn't expect? If so how?

15. In what ways, personally, were you prepared for Uni study?

16. In what ways, if any, were you not well-prepared for Uni study?

17. Based on your experience, what advice would you give to future students moving from TAFE to Uni?

18. What advice would you give to Unis that want to help students move from TAFE to Uni study?

19. Would you like to participate in an hour-long, lunchtime focus group, early in Semester 2? The purpose of the focus groups is to gather more information about this topic.

Yes

No

Maybe

If yes, could you reply by email to your campus contact on Qu. 20

20. Thank you for participating in this survey. Please write any other comments in the box below.

[staff contact details were given at end of survey]

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