

# Transitioning cohorts

a comparative study of best practice in supporting direct entrant students to make a successful transition from FE college to advanced years in university.

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HEA Annual Conference 2017 Generation TEF: Teaching in the  
spotlight

# Aims for presentation

- Transition Program Development
- Transition Program offering
- Cohort Comparison
- Brief overview of research
- Key Findings
- Summary of Best Practice/ Pitfalls



By Frits Ahlefeldt

# Transition programme development

- **Co-created with students and college staff:**
- Focus groups
- Student intern positions
- Colleague-to-colleague events
- Interactive 'clicker' voting
- Evaluation
- Research

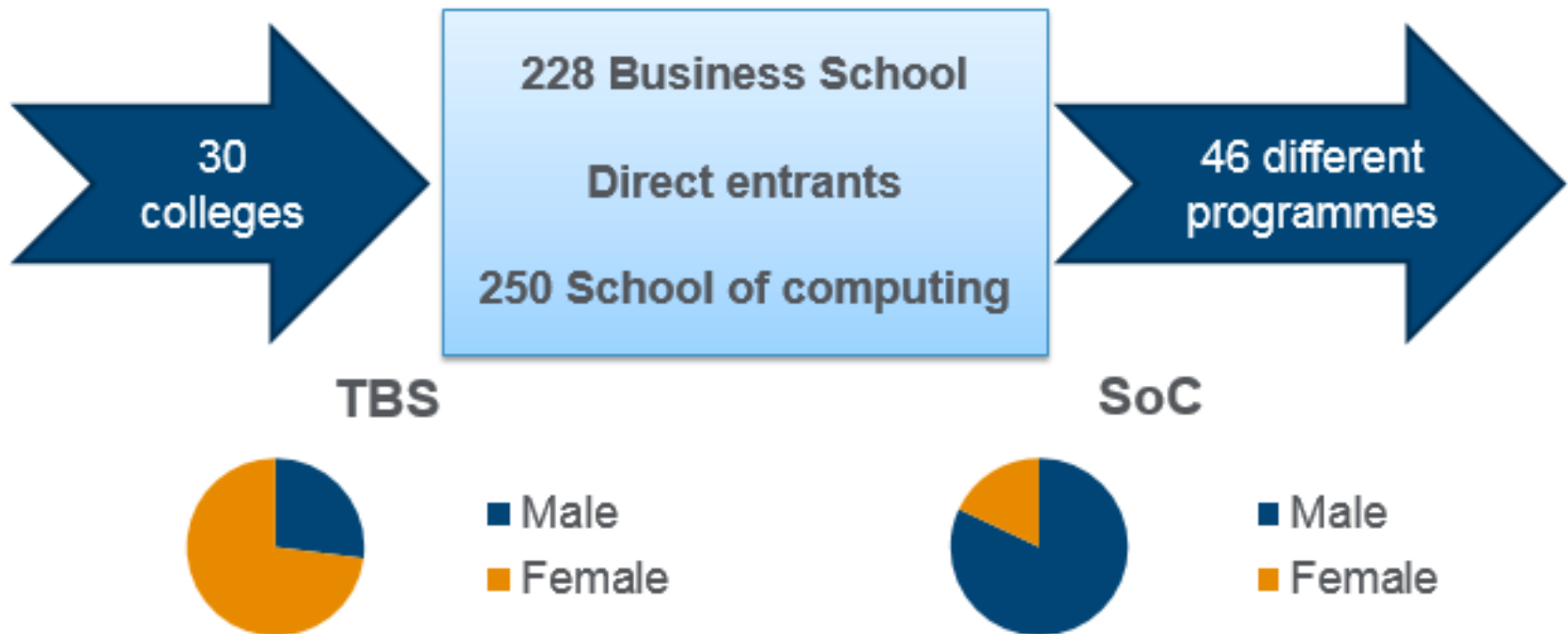


# Transition Programme Offering

- Sample drop in lectures
- UCAS sessions
- Week Zero / Induction activities
- Dedicated Moodle site
- Dedicated Facebook group
- Colleague-to-colleague events
- Pizza lunches



# Cohort Comparison



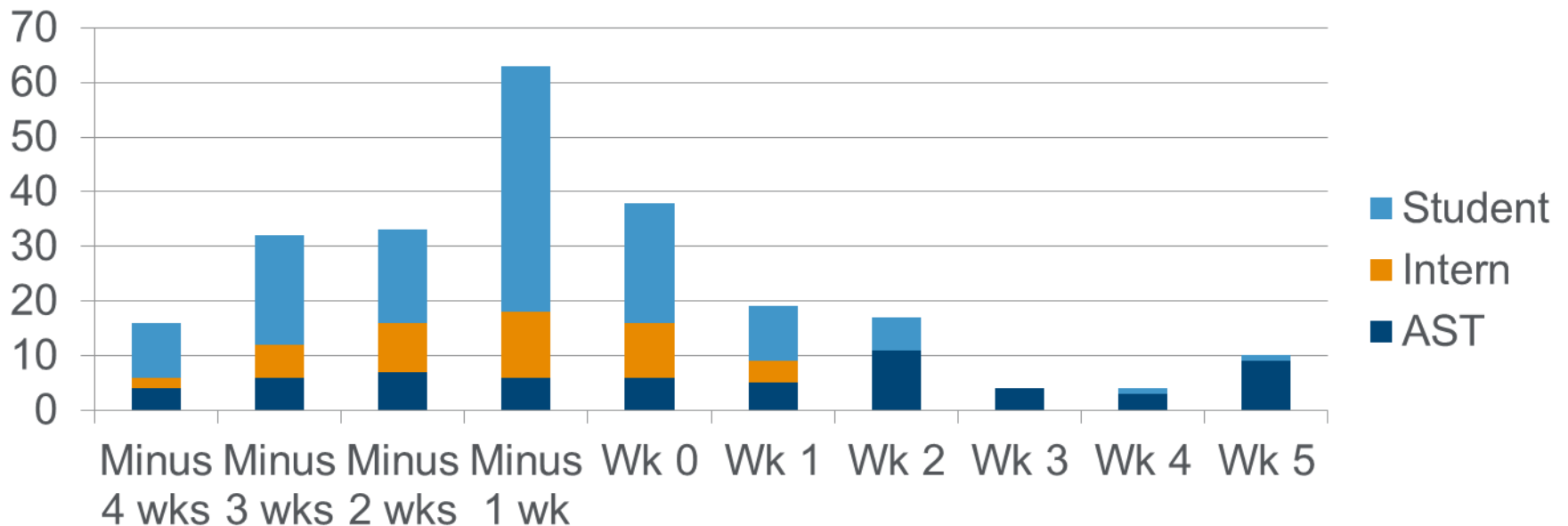
# Our research

- Survey - online
- Focus groups
- Moodle and Facebook data
- Attendance & evaluation data



facebook®

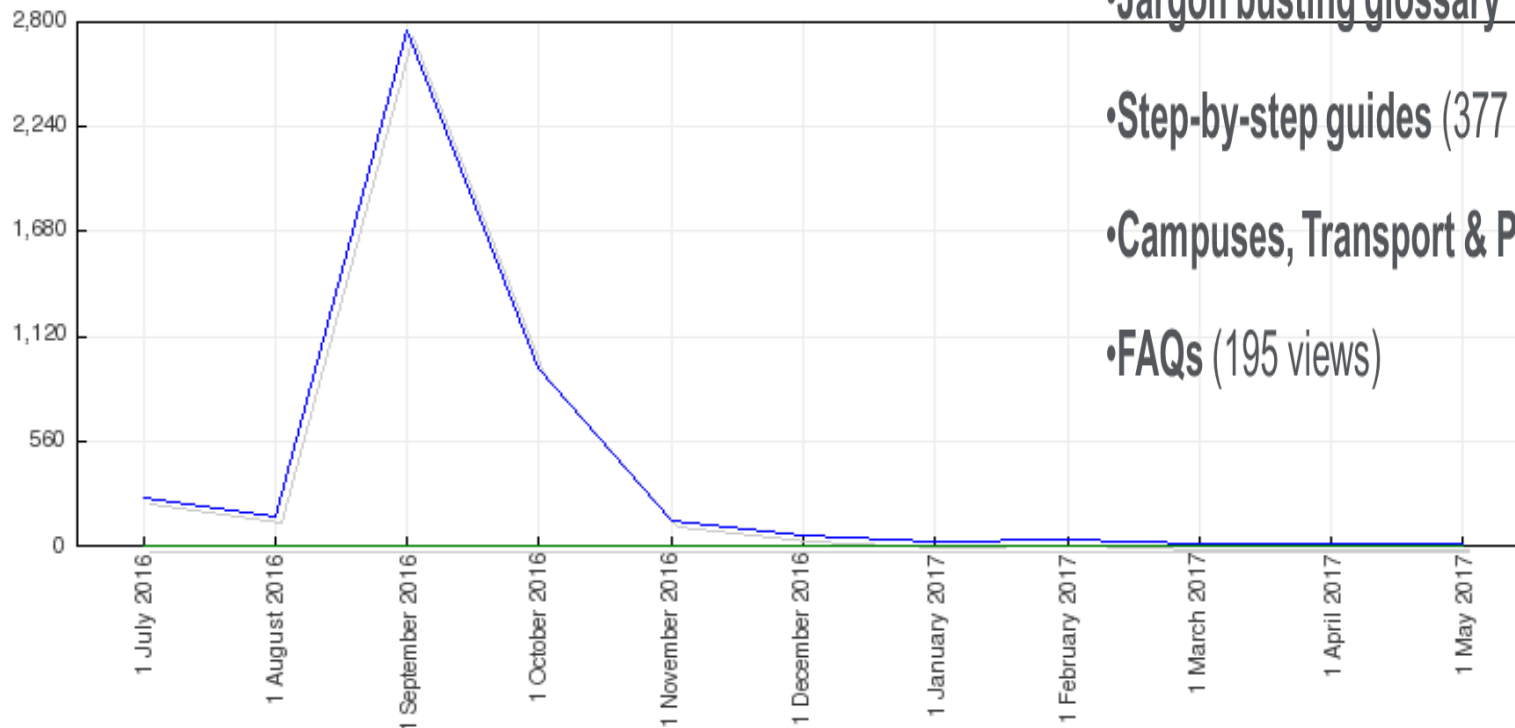
# Facebook Activity



# Moodle Community views

Most popular:

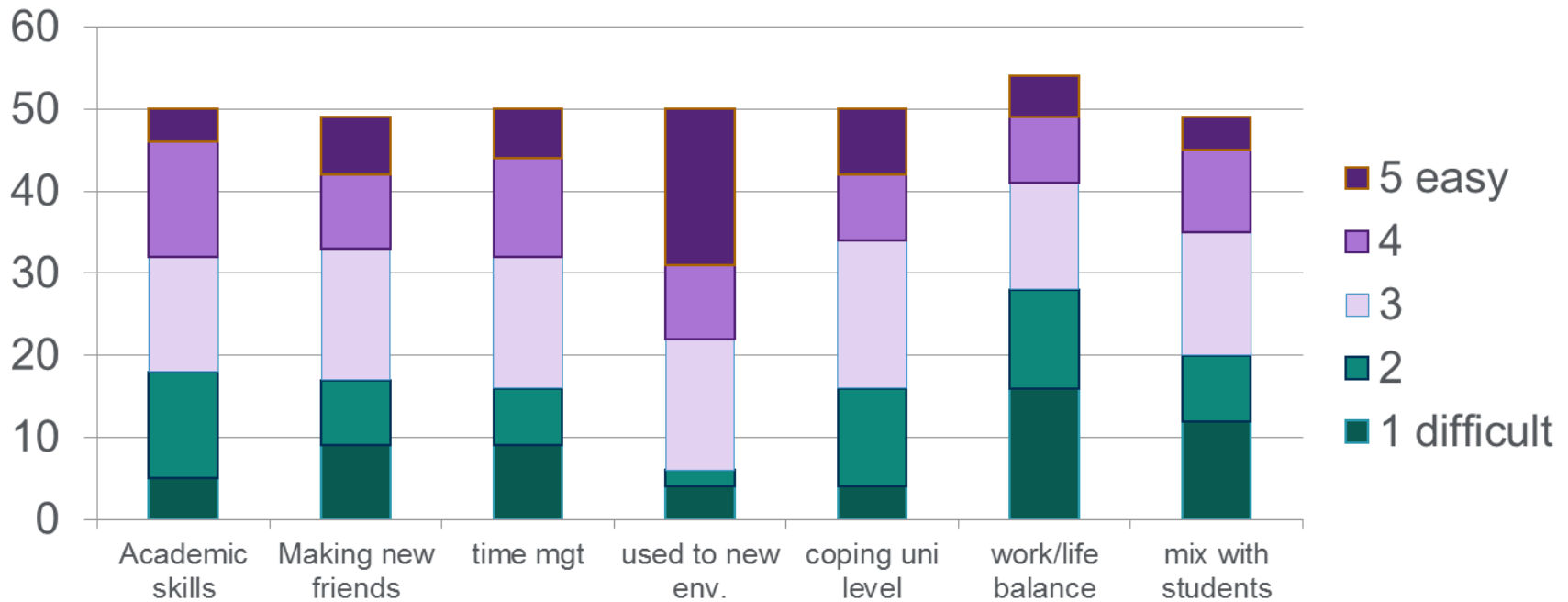
- **Jargon busting glossary** (457 views)
- **Step-by-step guides** (377 views)
- **Campuses, Transport & Parking** (341 views)
- **FAQs** (195 views)

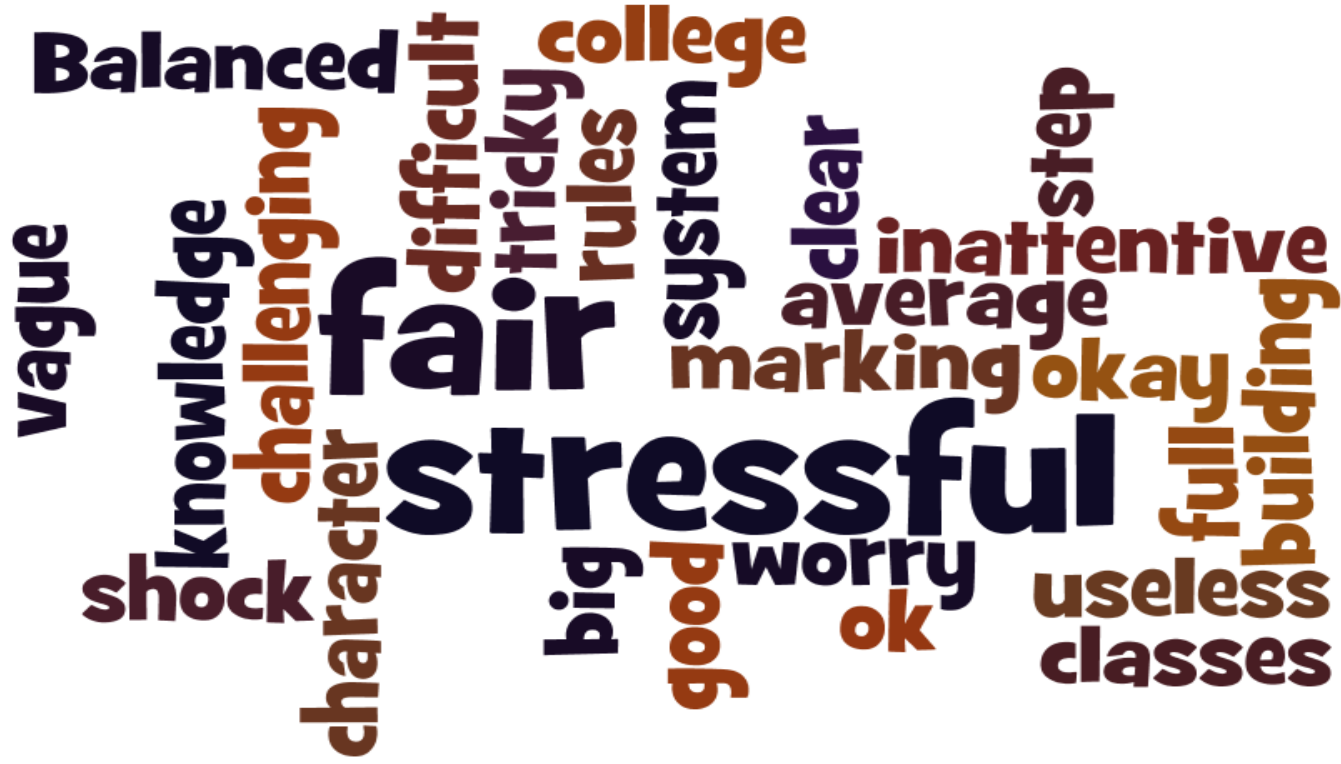


■ Views



# How easy or challenging were the following aspects in making the transition from college to university?





## The Good...

**“I tend to generally find change difficult, but my results have held up since college and surpassed my expectations.”**

**“definitely not as big of a jump as we were told at college, university is very much the same.”**

## The bad...

“the issue is that returning uni students mostly knew how to please professors - each one of them has different preferences about submissions”.

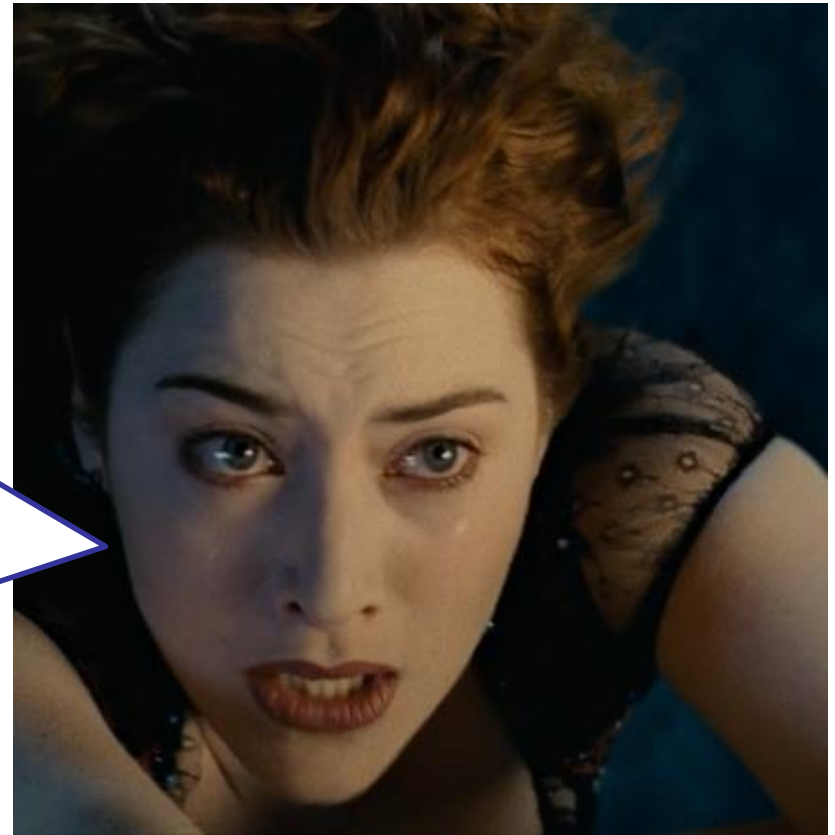
“it was a huge adjustment period settling into a new city and area knowing nobody.”

The big thing for me was the independent learning mindset. That wasn't really encouraged at college at all. It takes a wee while to get used to being disciplined. I initially struggled with that.



## And the....

**“I feel I am Rose hanging onto the floating plank after the Titanic has sunk, clinging on for dear life just trying to stay afloat.”**



# Pitfalls to avoid

- Be aware of timing and rhythm of engagement
- Lack of engagement by those who most need it
- Facebook – overwhelm in posts turned people off



# Best practice advice

- Students required tailored support before, during and after transition
- VLEs and Social Media contribute significantly to social cohesion
- No context specific differences



# Questions for Discussion

## Context specific differences

- Were you also **surprised** that there were none? Have you found the same?

## Engagement

- Have any of you made activities **compulsory** and did that work?

## Leading on transitions

- Are your transition activities led by **support** staff or **academic** staff?

## Ideas

- Other things you could **share** that have works for you?