

# A TRANSITION PEDAGOGY

## First Year Curriculum Principle - Transition

A well designed first year curriculum can support a student's transition into university, regardless of their previous experience. Helping students understand what is required of them at university and within their discipline can also support the development of their approaches to lifelong learning.

Strategies that may support **transition** include

- asking students to assess the knowledge, aptitudes, and attitudes they have when they commence your topic against discipline and/or topic expectations
- devoting class time to discussing the particular approaches that are in use and the expectations these approaches place on the student and staff
- consideration of the inclusion of a Work Integrated Learning (WIL) topic within the course at first year so that students may gain an appreciation of what the discipline requires

See also <http://transitionpedagogy.com/fy-curriculum-principles/transition/>

## First Year Curriculum Principle - Diversity

It is possible that student diversity (which covers a great range of differences including socio-economic, culture, experience, age, nationality) may intensify issues experienced by students as they transition into university. It is therefore important to recognise that within each cohort students' entering knowledge, aptitudes and attitudes are varied and to ensure that your teaching is as inclusive of all student cohorts as possible.

Strategies that may support **diversity** include

- allowing students to participate in self-reflective exercises so they become aware of their strengths and weaknesses around learning
- development of online quizzes that reinforce important points in their topics that students can complete in their own time and at their own pace
- including a range of different learning, teaching and assessment approaches and providing students with options to choose which they feel suit them best

- providing opportunities for students to reflect on their own cultural background
- scaffolding academic skills, learning processes and assessments e.g.
  - developing an assessment piece that allows students to produce an annotated bibliography
  - providing students with feedback on the bibliography and the relevance of the resources they have chosen
  - developing a second assessment piece that builds on the first and requires students to write an essay plan which includes well written topic sentences identifies key ideas and is based on the feedback they received in relation to the annotated bibliography
  - provide detailed feedback on the essay plan that will help the student write their final assignment
  - develop a final assessment piece that requires the students to write an essay based on the annotated bibliography and the essay plan which incorporates all the feedback they have received

See also <http://transitionpedagogy.com/fy-curriculum-principles/diversity/>

## First Year Curriculum Principle – Design

When designing the first year curriculum attention needs to be paid to ensuring the curriculum is student-focussed and provides a foundation so that further learning may be scaffolded. It should be explicit and relevant - forming a coherent, integrated basis for all future learning.

Strategies that may support **design** include

- introducing students to the concept of Graduate Qualities and discuss any included in your topics with them. Build activities into the curriculum that promote reflection on the Graduate Qualities and how they may be relevant to the student's career, employability and to the discipline under study
- enabling presentations from relevant industry representatives, the discipline's researchers and alumni to take place and that they are discussed within class time
- identifying and promoting linkages across first year topics so that students are aware of their integration and relevance to each other

See also <http://transitionpedagogy.com/fy-curriculum-principles/design/>

## First Year Curriculum Principle - Engagement

Activities that engage students in innovative and collaborative ways rather than those that are focused on more traditional lecture and discussion and/or text based approaches have been shown to produce quality learning experiences.

Strategies that may support **engagement** include

- utilising team-based learning approaches in first year topics. Effective team-based approaches require
  - teams are carefully formed and managed
  - students to understand that they are accountable for their own and the team's success
  - team assignments to be designed to promote learning and team development and
  - frequent and timely feedback is provided to all students.
- the modelling or role-playing of "professional conversations" by academic staff
- formal mentoring schemes that are either externally based or built into the curriculum
- assigning academic mentors to all commencing students
- using an e-portfolio (such as Mahara)
- the provision of dedicated physical and/or virtual spaces for first year students and
- providing commencing students with a passport that aids in the demonstration of students acquisition of specific skills and proficiencies.

See also <http://transitionpedagogy.com/fy-curriculum-principles/engagement/>

## First Year Curriculum Principle - Assessment

A well designed first year curriculum can support a student's appreciation and understanding of higher education assessment. Effective assessment introduces students to a range of appropriate assessment practices and provides timely, well-articulated and constructive feedback on student progress to both students and other staff. The complexity of assessment may be increased as the student progresses through the program.

Strategies that may support **assessment** include

- developing a feedback strategy and communicating it to students. The strategy should support the students growth by
  - occurring in a timely fashion so that they may utilise comments in future work
  - providing insight into errors and misunderstandings
  - guiding students on how they can improve
  - including examples to demonstrate good and bad work
  - being tailored to the individual etc.
- examples of the standards of work that is required to pass and excel may be made available to students and
- demonstrating how work is assessed by correcting a piece of writing or mathematical problem in a large class using the track changes function in MS Word.

See also <http://transitionpedagogy.com/fy-curriculum-principles/assessment/>

## First Year Curriculum Principle - Evaluation and Monitoring

Mechanisms that monitor student engagement and performance and allow timely intervention in aid of students at risk of not succeeding need to be present in first year curriculum design.

Strategies that may support **evaluation and monitoring** include

- academic staff learning student's names
- using Learning Analytics or maintaining a log of online interactions (through FLO)
- requiring all students enrolled in a course to participate in online tests that identify competence in math, English grammar or other prerequisite knowledge which is followed by face to face support in acquiring proficiency (rather than providing remedial support only after a problem is identified)
- noting non-submission of assessment and following up with the student and
- noting poor performance on early assessment and addressing this, in private, with the student.

See also <http://transitionpedagogy.com/fy-curriculum-principles/evaluation-monitoring>