Understanding a Whole Institution Approach to Widening Participation

Dr Michelle Kempson, Lecturer – Michelle.Kempson@solihull.ac.uk

Sue McGregor, Dean of Higher Education – Sue.Mcgregor@solihull.ac.uk
Projects

- Involved in 2 projects – one for the QAA on Transition
- Liz Thomas research for OFFA - Whole College Approach to Widening Participation
Difference in Widening Participation FT - PT

Full Time

- Non WP: 297
- WP: 309

Part Time

- Non WP: 83
- WP: 159
Broad Institutional Approach

• Whole lifecycle approach
• Staff from across institution involved, not just WP professionals
• WP embedded into all roles and processes
• Explicit institutional commitment
• Range of WP target groups
Student Age Profile

All HE Students (848 in Total)

- 16 To 18: 9%
- 19 To 24: 56%
- 25 to 34: 23%
- 35 to 60: 12%
Student Areas of Residence

All HE Students

- Birmingham: 352
- North Solihull: 82
- South Solihull: 191
- Other: 223

Solihull College & University Centre
Evaluating the Impact on Students

- Applications
- Admissions
- Continuation
- Completion
- Attainment
- Employment
- Progression to further study
New Year Honours 2018 - Charlie Fogarty

- Solihull's Charlie Fogarty suffered brain damage when he was hit by a car aged just 15. Now he's one of the youngest people in the New Year Honours list.

- Charlie, who is appointed MBE, is a public speaker alongside his work as a player-manager for the Open Age Disability Team he founded.

- Currently studying on the Oxford Brookes Sports Top-up Degree at Solihull College and University Centre, he told the BBC that he hoped the award would prove to others that "anything is possible".

https://t.co/SxS834Mizq
Good Transitions: Lessons from the ‘Transitions West Midlands’ Project

• Transitions West Midlands (TWM) is a collaborative project, funded by the Quality Assurance Agency for Higher Education (QAA), that brings together staff and students from a group of institutions (further and higher education) who have been working together for the past four years through the West Midlands Post '92 Research Forum.

• The research sought to capture the experiences of students who were transitioning into Higher Education with HEIs and a Further Education College in the West Midlands.
The project was driven by three key questions:

1) How do prospective students from under-represented groups in HE understand/perceive their support needs prior to transition?

2) How do HE students from under-represented groups self-define the enablers and barriers to effective transition?

3) How do HE and FE institutions best support students from under-represented groups as they progress through the various stages of transition from FE to HE?
Data was collected via 3 methods:

- Multi-institution survey
- Focus groups
- Graphic facilitation
Emerging themes

- **Risk** – The ‘gamble’ made by students when returning to education after a substantial gap
- **Literacies** - issues associated with ‘writing themselves in to being’
- **Readiness** – ‘becoming’ identities and how to ‘recognise’ them
- **Meandering** – A concern that too much time will be wasted in securing their desired career
- **Story-telling**
  - what will happen to student identity narratives when they encounter HE?
  - the stories FE teachers tell about FE, about HE, about themselves, students and other teachers
The Transitions Framework

The framework will support users to:

• **Explore** existing attitudes and approaches to transition in their own context

• **Engage** the wider college or university community towards better understanding of transitions in their own context

• **Create** new meanings, identities and roles in relation to transition

• **Collaborate** with colleagues, students and partners in the wider education community towards more effective approaches to transition

• **Drive** innovation and implement change.
Activity

• In your groups, share practice across institutions and prepare to feedback on nominated questions
The full Transitions Framework can be viewed at:

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- 468: Widening Participation: WP
Difference in Widening Participation FT - PT

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