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**CENTRE *for*  
EDUCATIONAL  
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**STUDENTS' EXPERIENCE OF THE  
TRANSITION FROM HN TO  
DEGREE STUDY  
2012-2013**

**REPORT TO ELRAH**

**July 2013**

**The University *of* Edinburgh**



**Students' Experience of the Transition  
from HN to Degree Study  
2012-2013**

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*by*

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# SECTION 1: OVERVIEW AND RECOMMENDATIONS

## Overview

### *Supporting the HN route to degree study*

It is evident that the HN route to degree study makes a valuable contribution to widening access by providing individuals with the opportunity to gain entry to a degree in a way that meets their particular needs – whether after a break in their education or as a bridge between school and university or providing them with a way to keep their options open with the possibility of certificated intermediate exit points.

Nevertheless, this study and the two previous ones have shown that the transition from HN to degree was not an easy experience for a considerable proportion of students. Three months into their degree just under half judged their transition as “quite or very difficult”. They noted difficulties in their degree study in respect of the different modes of study, learning and assessment at university; gaps or lack of match in the formal curriculum; the level of demand and insecurity about standards; lack of awareness of teaching staff; unfamiliarity with the university environment; lack of social support.

Students who had articulated were more likely to have experienced the transition as difficult but what was striking was the difference in the experience of HNC and HND students who articulated; the latter were much more likely to find the transition quite or very difficult. HND articulating students are a group facing particular challenges. Indeed some HND students thought they should have articulated into second year from their HNC rather than continue to an HND and enter the third year of a degree with all of its challenges. These findings demonstrate the need not only to sustain current provision but to develop it further.

As ELRAH enters the final stages of Hub funding over the next two years, the issue is how to ensure that not only are individuals able to take advantage of the opportunity offered by the HN route but, crucially, they are also supported to make a successful transition. The focus of ELRAH must now, in its final phase, be on embedding support for HN students into college and university structures.

### *The decision to articulate*

The study indicates that the decision to use the HN route to degree study may be a gradual process for some. A substantial minority of students did not start their HN with this intention and most of the students who had not progressed straight from their HN to a degree course had not initially planned to return later and undertake degree study. This has implications for ELRAH partner institutions in the planning of articulation numbers and the provision of advice and support for students since some may have missed out on the preparatory activities at college and thus may need more support at the beginning of their degree.

Not all HN students articulate although the SFC supports the progression of students with HN qualifications to a degree with 'no loss of time'. The study found that under half of students with HNCs did not articulate, instead applying to the first year of a degree. HND students were more likely to articulate, nevertheless, just over a quarter of them did not do so. Although for some HNC students this was a positive choice in that they wanted the full university experience, for others it was less positive – they thought that they would struggle academically if they went directly into second year. Concern about coping with the academic demands of the course was the main reason given by the HND students who did not articulate.

### ***Continued need to improve preparatory and support provision for students***

The findings demonstrate a continued need to improve the preparation of HN students for degree study and to further develop articulation routes (eg in terms of curriculum matching) so that students have the confidence to take advantage of the opportunity to articulate, universities will be more likely to offer advanced standing and students will have a better experience of degree study. The expansion of 'guaranteed articulation' places between colleges and their partner universities should help in this respect but these only apply to a minority of potentially articulating HN students. Colleges and universities need to continue to work together to ensure that HN students are confident of meeting the academic demands if they articulate. They also, however, need to ensure that students are aware of the possibility of articulating, about a fifth of non-articulating students responded that they did not know they could have applied for entry with advanced standing. Nevertheless, the study also demonstrates that some HN students do not want to articulate and this choice should be respected.

Comparing the transition experience of students who reported receiving a substantial amount of information and advice while at college with those who had had little input suggests that such information and advice is effective and worthwhile. There were, however, significant gaps in college provision in respect of a number of specific study skills such as the type of assessment on degree courses, using the university library, referencing and use of electronic and online tools. University visits were a key source of information but students also wanted some opportunity to undertake what some referred to as the 'university style' of work and assessment in their HN programme. This and the important role of college tutors (in addition to that of student support staff) in providing information and advice about the transition to degree study suggests the need for more embedding of preparatory activity within HN programmes as well as possible modifications to HN provision. It is important that any such changes are accompanied by appropriate staff development and support.

The SQA HN Enhancement Pilot which is considering possible 'enhancements' to the content, assessment, and structure of HNs could make a valuable contribution in terms of helping to align (where appropriate) HN programmes' content and learning, teaching and

assessment methods more to university approaches. Although the timeframe of the Enhancement Pilot mean that opportunities to do so may remain limited in 2013-14, it is important that articulation work in the next two years take account of the outcomes of the SQA Enhancement Pilot so that developments are used and embedded into programme delivery models to help ease students' transition to degree study.

ELRAH partner institutions have developed a range of workshops and other support activities including on-line materials to help prepare students for degree study. The ELRAH Regional Support Model is designed to provide support at critical points from when students start their HNC/D programme through to graduation. This approach includes pre-exit support activities at college for students likely to articulate and customised induction and academic support at partner universities. Survey respondents were extremely positive about the events and activities they had experienced. Nevertheless, there remains an issue with students' awareness of workshops, courses and online provision despite institutions' efforts to publicise them; student engagement is thus an outstanding area that needs continued attention.

### ***Developing provision and capitalising on experience***

In the final phase of Hub funding over the next two years, it is vital that that support for HN students is sustained and further developed across the colleges and universities in the partnership. Development is necessary: while students valued the information, advice and support they had received at college and university, there remain substantial gaps in provision, especially at college, and the difficulties students experienced in their degree study indicate that current provision is not fully meeting their needs.

The way in which ELRAH operates in the next two years will be on a somewhat different basis, moving from a team of the Articulation Support Advisers based within partner colleges and universities to a centralised team within each of the most active universities. This team will provide tailored support for students who have articulated and will also provide support on an outreach basis to college partners. In moving forward, it is important to recognise and capitalise on the knowledge and experience that has been built up over the life of ELRAH to date. The ELRAH Regional Support Model outlines the minimum support elements that should be provided for all articulating students.

All of the most active ELRAH partners have indicated that they will implement these minima and some also aim to put in place many of the additional recommended support measures. The findings of this study indicate the need for all the colleges and universities to implement the additional recommended measures eg visits, embedded academic skills across HN programmes and pre-entry support such as summer schools and early access to learning materials, resources and timetables as well as online learning support- these are all aspects called for by students.

The ELRAH Regional Support Model is well founded having been developed from existing good practice in institutions and the experience gained and lessons learnt from the ELRAH project to date (including the external surveys of students). It sets out a comprehensive model of provision that offers support to students from the beginning of their HN course, continuing throughout their HN in a co-ordinated way and then into and through their degree study. As such, it offers a valuable resource for the Associate Student Scheme to draw on.

### ***Continued regional working***

A vital element of ELRAH's success has been its ability to facilitate regional partnership working across the colleges and universities and establish a co-ordinated approach<sup>1</sup>. Among other benefits this has enabled the sharing of good practice, stimulated the development of resource and made progress towards ensuring greater consistency in the support HN students receive across the different partner colleges. In the model for the new ELRAH Regional Articulation Hub, it is essential that colleges and universities establish effective mechanisms to maintain this regional working (with all of its benefits) and avoid fragmentation of provision.

## **Recommendations**

### ***Staff perceptions and awareness***

- Colleges' and universities' active commitment to continued support for HN students is vital and it is more important than ever to focus on developing the awareness and involvement of *teaching* staff in colleges and universities.
- Tutors at college are HN students' main source of information and advice about the transition to degree study; this role needs to be recognised and appropriate time and staff development provided.
- There is a need for awareness-raising among academic teaching staff in the universities about HN students, their previous learning experience and how they might be supported, especially in the first few months.

### ***College support***

- The possibility of progressing to a degree, doing so with advanced standing and from an HNC as well as an HND should be raised in a consistent way with all HN students.
- The research shows that support at college makes a difference to students' experience of transition. Colleges should address gaps in the coverage of specific areas of study and academic skills for HN students, preferably through embedding, and extend opportunities within HN courses for students to experience the 'university approach'.

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<sup>1</sup> Weir A. and Howieson C. (2011) External Evaluation of the Articulation Support Advisers. ELRAH

- University visits were identified by students as one of the main ways in which they not only gain information but crucially gain an understanding of the expectations of degree study and should be developed.
- A continued challenge is how to persuade students to engage with support provision. Consideration should be given to expanding systems to facilitate contact between current college students and students who have articulated (eg, outreach mentoring/ambassador schemes) which have been shown elsewhere to be an effective way of engaging students.

### ***University support***

- University partners should continue to offer tailored induction programmes for articulating students.
- There are a number of practical activities that universities should undertake that would improve the transition of HN students eg highlight the essential knowledge and skills covered in previous years of most common degree areas; make key materials available online; and provide exemplification of work.
- Universities should monitor the progress and outcomes of articulating students; among other benefits this would enable them to identify individuals who could be offered any necessary support, especially during the first semester.
- When planning preparation and support activities, universities should bear in mind that some HN students will have not had the opportunity to undertake preparatory activities at college.
- HEIs should assess the possible use of online skills audits or similar tool as a way to identify gaps in HN students' knowledge or skills base and build in appropriate support<sup>2</sup>.
- Current workshops, courses and online materials are very highly valued by HN students who attend them and should continue to be funded and developed. It would be useful to review how they can be further publicised to students including the role that college and university staff can play.

### ***Collaboration and regional working***

- There is a need for continued collaboration across partner institutions so that HN students receive consistent support; colleges and universities should ensure mechanisms are in place to facilitate regional partnership working as well as bi-lateral collaboration.
- It is critical that partner colleges and universities maintain their commitment to the main elements of the ELRAH Regional Support Model and continue to plan and deliver it in a coordinated way across institutions.

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<sup>2</sup> The University of Dundee has developed an audit tool for use in its accelerated degree programme.

- The ELRAH Regional Support Model offers a valuable resource which should be used to inform the development of the Associate Student Schemes.

## **SECTION 2: SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH**

### **1. Introduction**

- The articulation route to degree level study continues to be a key element of government policy on widening access to degree study.
- Articulation refers to students who have a Higher National Certificate (HNC) entering the second year of a degree programme and those with an Higher National Diploma (HND) going into the third year ie entry with advanced standing.
- ELRAH commissioned the Centre for Educational Sociology to investigate HN students' experience of the transition from HN to degree study and the preparation and support received at college and in the first year of their degree. The study is concerned with Scottish domiciled HN qualified students who enter Edinburgh Napier, Heriot Watt, Queen Margaret and Stirling Universities, the most active ELRAH partner universities.

### **2. The study**

- The study covers three cohorts of HN students, the first of which were surveyed in 2010-11. This report deals with the third HN cohort: those who entered their first year of degree study in 2012-13 in the four universities.
- It includes HN students who did not articulate enabling a comparison with the experience of those who did articulate.
- The students were surveyed in November-December 2012 by means of an internet based questionnaire. The survey was completed by 303 students, giving a 23% response rate from the HN qualified students who had entered Edinburgh Napier, Heriot Watt, Queen Margaret and Stirling Universities.
- Two thirds of survey respondents had studied for their HN at colleges within the ELRAH partnership.

### **3. Findings of the Student Survey**

#### *3.1 Timing and reasons for progression to degree study*

- The main reasons students decided on degree study were that this fitted with their careers plans, was the natural progression from their HN as well as interest in the course or subject.
- Students taking a college-based degree (10%) had chosen to do this largely because of the proximity of the college to their home.

- While a majority (65%) had started their HN with a serious or definite intention to go on to a degree, the others – a sizeable minority – had only made this decision later. Most of those who had taken a break between their HN and degree had not initially intended to return to take a degree.

### *3.2 Progression and articulation*

- Under half of respondents with an HNC articulated compared with almost three quarters of HND students.
- Non-articulating HNC and HND students gave different reasons for not articulating: for HND students the main reason was that they thought they ‘would struggle academically’ while for HNC students the desire to ‘have the full university experience’ was the most commonly given reason.
- As in the two earlier surveys, around a fifth of non-articulating students were unaware of the possibility of gaining advanced standing.
- For most students, especially those with an HND, there was some continuity in the subject area of their HN and degree.
- Just over two thirds of articulating students were studying the same subject as their HN but over third quarters of non-articulating students were also continuing with the same subject.

### *3.3 Reflections on year of entry and the HN route*

- Most thought they had started at the right year of degree study although a number qualified this in the light of the challenges they had encountered.
- In their open-ended comments, the possible advantage of progressing from an HNC straight to degree rather than onto an HND was raised.
- HND students were less likely to think they had started at the right year than HNC students. The extent to which students were happy with their year of entry varied according to the university attended.
- Most students – whether or not they had articulated – thought that taking the HN route to degree study had been the right decision for them.
- The HN route had provided a way to get back into education after a break, offering accessible teaching and learning approaches; given the confidence as well as the qualifications to apply for degree study; acted as a bridge between school and university; offered a more incremental approach which kept options open and allowed students to test out their subject or career interests.

### *3.4 Preparation while at college*

- Around two thirds of students had received some information and advice about the UCAS application with slightly fewer being informed about choice of degree and university; there was some variation in this across the ELRAH partner colleges.
- As in the earlier surveys, students' responses indicate considerable gaps in the information and advice about degree study, especially on specific aspects of degree study.
- Students who had attended an ELRAH partner college were more likely to report input on general study skills than those who had been at other colleges.
- University visits were a key source of information and advice. College lecturers/tutors as well as student support staff played an important role. Preparatory workshops, classes or courses were mentioned by a fifth of students.
- Some students thought their college had done all they could to prepare them for degree study but many wanted more information about a wider range of degree programmes and possible universities, about differences between HN and degree study and exemplification of work required. Students especially wanted the chance to try out and practice the "university style" and/or modifications to HN courses.
- There was a view expressed by a small number of students that some colleges want to retain their students to HND or to a college-based degree.
- Students' comments suggest that some may be unaware of the provision available at college.

### *3.5 Students' experience of transition*

- Three months into their degree, just under two thirds of students thought they had been quite or well prepared for degree study.
- Articulating students were less likely than non-articulating students to think they had been well prepared as were students with an HND compared with those holding an HNC.
- The improvement in the proportion of articulating students responding that they had been well prepared noted in the second survey compared with the first one has been maintained
- Articulating students were much more likely to have experienced the transition from HN to degree as quite or very difficult compared with non-articulating students.
- The experience of transition and articulation is substantially different for HNC and HND students; the latter are much more likely to find the transition quite or very difficult. HND articulating students are a group facing particular challenges.

### *3.6 Information and advice provided at college makes a difference*

- Students' responses suggest that those who had had a considerable amount of information and advice at college about different aspects of degree study were more likely to think they were well prepared and less likely to report the transition as being quite or very difficult.

### *3.7 Students' experience of degree study*

- Sizeable minorities – from a third to under a half – had some or a lot of difficulty in relation to: the extent of independent study; time management; various aspects of assessment; not knowing about a subject other students had already done; and finance.
- Students also commented on difficulties relating to workload and level of demand; lack of guidance about expectations; lack of contact with staff; essay writing and referencing; and making friends. Part-time students referred to issues relating to course organisation.
- Articulating students were more likely than those who had not articulated to report difficulty with a number of aspects of degree study. Students' HN qualification, age and university attended each made a difference to their experience in several areas of study.

### *3.8 Advice and support on their degree programme*

- The most commonly attended workshops and courses were on using the library, referencing, research skills academic essay writing. Levels of attendance varied across the universities but were not explained by different levels of provision.
- On-line and computer based materials on referencing, presentations, research skills and academic writing and time management were used by between half and two-thirds of students. Articulating and non-articulating students had similar levels of usage but take-up varied across the universities.
- Students' opinion of the workshops/courses and the on-line support materials was extremely positive with between 79% and 94% rating them as useful.
- Up to a quarter of students were unaware of the workshops, courses and on-line support provision.
- Some students commented appreciatively on the support from their university but there were also suggestions for more extensive inputs at the start of the academic year and for support over a more extended period including early review of progress.

- Other suggestions included universities making expectations more explicit, providing more exemplification of work, providing access to previous year's materials and for teaching staff to be more aware of HN students and their previous learning experience.

### *3.9 With hindsight: students advice to others considering degree study*

- Over half of respondents took the opportunity to offer advice to HND students considering degree study. Most offered encouragement to go on to a degree so long as individuals were prepared to work hard and had a real interest in the subject.
- Students were advised to research the degree and its requirements while at college to identify where preparatory support might be needed and do as much work for the degree as possible in advance of starting.
- Students emphasised the value of attending pre-entry support activities and induction provision as well as using the range of learning support services available at university.
- They advised HN students be aware of and try and prepare themselves for a much greater degree of independent study. But they should also be proactive and approach staff with questions or difficulties.
- The need to be organised and have good time management skills to cope with the workload was strongly emphasised.
- They also offered advice about assessment, dealing with group work, the value of making friends and use of the library and online sources.

## SECTION 3: INTRODUCTION

The articulation route to degree study has been a central feature of government strategy on widening access for a number of years<sup>3</sup>. Its continued importance has been demonstrated recently by the inclusion of ‘articulation from college’ as one of the stated areas that HEIs are expected to address in the outcome agreements they now agree as a condition of their grant from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC)<sup>4</sup>. In addition, the SFC has recently announced the expansion of ‘guaranteed articulation’ between colleges and their partner universities with the decision to fund an additional 1,020 places for articulation routes in 2013-14<sup>5</sup>.

Articulation refers specifically to students who have a Higher National qualification gaining entry to the second or third year of a degree programme: second year for those who have a Higher National Certificate (HNC) and third year for those with a Higher National Diploma (HND); this is referred to as entry with ‘advanced standing’. It plays a critical role in widening access offering, for example, an alternative route to school leavers who may not have gained the necessary entry qualifications for university entry while at school or do not feel ready for the level of independent study required at degree level and to adults, some of whom may have been away from education for a considerable time. Critically, colleges attract more students from socially disadvantaged backgrounds than do universities<sup>6</sup>. The articulation route is also seen as cost effective for the public purse since it enables students to complete a four-year degree at lower annual cost during their years at college. The SFC estimated the average annual cost of one year of study at college as £5,000 compared with £8,300 at university thus the average costs to the public purse of a degree gained via an HND plus two years of study at university would be £26,600 compared with £33,200 if taken at university over four years<sup>7</sup>.

The SFC has sought to encourage the creation of more articulation routes, to promote a greater degree of formality in the existing articulation agreements and to encourage institutions to provide more support for articulating students to ensure their transition from HN to degree study is successful. As part of this strategy, it has funded five Regional Articulation Hubs, each based on a regional partnership of universities and colleges whose role is to work with these partners to develop articulation routes and support activities. ELRAH – the Edinburgh, Lothians, Fife and Borders Regional Articulation Hub – is one of these five Regional Articulation Hubs.

ELRAH’s three main objectives are to:

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<sup>3</sup>SFEFC/SHEFC 2005 Learning for All: Edinburgh SHEFC; SFC 2007 Articulation For All: Edinburgh SFC

<sup>4</sup>Scottish Government (2011c) *Ministerial Guidance to the Scottish Funding Council*. [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/About\\_the\\_Council/SFC\\_Letter\\_of\\_Guidance\\_21\\_September\\_2011.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/About_the_Council/SFC_Letter_of_Guidance_21_September_2011.pdf)

<sup>5</sup>SFC (2013) Additional articulation places scheme for partnership between colleges and universities. [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance/Guidance\\_06032013\\_Articulation\\_scheme.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Guidance/Guidance_06032013_Articulation_scheme.pdf)

<sup>6</sup>Learning for All: sixth update report on measures of success 2012 [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Access/Learning\\_for\\_All\\_sixth\\_update\\_report\\_on\\_measures\\_of\\_success.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/Access/Learning_for_All_sixth_update_report_on_measures_of_success.pdf)

<sup>7</sup>SFC (2011/12) Flexible entry into higher education [http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/ReportsandPublications/Flexible\\_entry\\_into\\_higher\\_education.pdf](http://www.sfc.ac.uk/web/FILES/ReportsandPublications/Flexible_entry_into_higher_education.pdf)

- support the development of new and more effective articulation routes between colleges and HEIs which minimise the time it takes students to achieve their goals;
- support the development of HEI and College collaboration and partnership activities;
- support partners to implementation planned systems of articulation and embed student support activities to ensure students can make an effective transition.

ELRAH has made considerable progress in developing and implementing a consistent student support model for articulating students across its partners. Further details can be found on the ELRAH website<sup>8</sup>. The ELRAH Model for Student Transition Support is designed to provide support at critical points from when students start their HNC/D programme through to graduation. This approach includes pre-exit support activities at college such as university visits and academic skills workshops for students likely to articulate and customised induction and academic support at partner universities as well as a range of online resources. The current funding for the Articulation Hubs comes to an end in July 2013 and the key issue is how the transition support activities can be sustained across the ELRAH partner institutions after this time.

## **Aims and methodology**

### *The study*

As part of the development of the student support model, ELRAH has commissioned the Centre for Educational Sociology at the University of Edinburgh for the past three years to investigate HN students' experience of the transition from HN to degree and the information, advice and support available to them and to identify areas where further development might be needed.

The study of HN students' transition to degree study started in the academic year 2010-11. It has studied three cohorts of HN qualified students who enter their degree programme in the most active ELRAH HEIs in 2010-11, 2011-12 and 2012-13. The target sample for each of the surveys is Scottish-domiciled students in their first year of degree study Edinburgh Napier, Queen Margaret, Heriot-Watt and Stirling Universities whose entry qualification was an HNC or HND.

The first HN cohort was surveyed in 2010-11 and the second cohort in 2011; both reports are on the ELRAH website<sup>9</sup>. This report covers the third cohort, HN students who started their degree in September 2012 at Edinburgh Napier, Queen Margaret, Heriot-Watt and Stirling Universities. The survey was carried out over November-December 2012.

The surveys aim to investigate HN students' experience and opinion of:

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<sup>8</sup> [www.elrah.ac.uk](http://www.elrah.ac.uk) - Staff Zone

<sup>9</sup> Howieson C. and Croxford L. (2011) Students' Experience of the Transition from HN to Degree Study, ELRAH: Edinburgh. Howieson C.. (2012) Students' Experience of the Transition from HN to Degree Study 2011-12, ELRAH: Edinburgh, [www.elrah.ac.uk](http://www.elrah.ac.uk)

- the preparation for undergraduate study received from their college and HEI before entry to their degree programme;
- their transition from HN to degree and the first months of their degree study;
- the on-going activities and support received during the early stages of their degree study.

### ***Respondents: progression, advanced progression and articulation***

The prime focus of ELRAH is on articulating students ie those who gain advanced standing (HNC students entering year 2 of a degree programme and HNDs entering year 3). There is also a second category of HN student, those who gain a partial credit for their HN such as HND students who gain entry to year 2 and this is referred to as Advanced Progression. In the case of students who use their HN as an entry qualification to a degree but gain no additional credit for it and start in first year, this is termed Progression.

At the beginning of the study it was decided that it would be valuable to include HN students who do not articulate and so enable comparison of the transition experience of both groups of HN entrants to degree study. The inclusion on non-articulating also offered the opportunity to find out why some students with HN qualifications do not apply to or do not succeed in articulating with full advanced standing.

Including all HN entrants to degree study raised the question of how to deal with Advanced Progression students (those with HNDs who entered 2<sup>nd</sup> year of their degree). Should they be treated as a separate category or combined with either the Progression or articulating students? Investigation of the data showed that the responses of Advanced Progression students differed from those of students who had articulated and were, in fact, similar to the responses of Progression students (those who had started in first year). It was decided therefore that the analysis would focus on two groups: articulating students (full advanced standing) and non-articulating students (Progression and Advanced Progression students).

### ***Survey design and methodology***

The student questionnaire was developed in 2010 in collaboration with the Articulation Support Advisers and relevant ELRAH staff and piloted with students; it was amended for use with the second student cohort and further small changes were made for the third cohort (including additional support activities) but the aim has been to retain as much similarity as possible to allow comparison across the cohorts.

While most of the questions are pre-coded lists, the questionnaire also includes a number of open-ended questions to allow respondents to say more in their own words about their own experiences and to raise issues that they perceive to be relevant. In all of the surveys, the high proportion of respondents who took the opportunity to make such open-ended comments has been striking. A copy of the questionnaire is contained in Appendix 2.

In the survey students were offered the opportunity to request a contact with support services.

The survey was internet-based, designed using SNAP software and mounted on the CES website. The survey was promoted by the Articulation Support Advisers and other ELRAH staff by a variety of means including direct email of the web link to students, inclusion on plasma screens in public areas in the HEIs; promotion through Web CT; messages on Facebook and Twitter; announcements in relevant classes; and encouraging tutors and lecturers to publicise it to students.

The survey was completed by 303 students which is a 23% response rate from the HN student cohort<sup>10</sup>. This is less than the response rate of 34% achieved in the second survey but similar to that of the first survey (25%).

Additional data from the surveys is contained in Appendix 1. In reporting the findings of this year's survey, comparisons are made with the previous surveys where relevant. All of the figures reported are statistically significant at the  $p > 0.5$  level unless stated otherwise.

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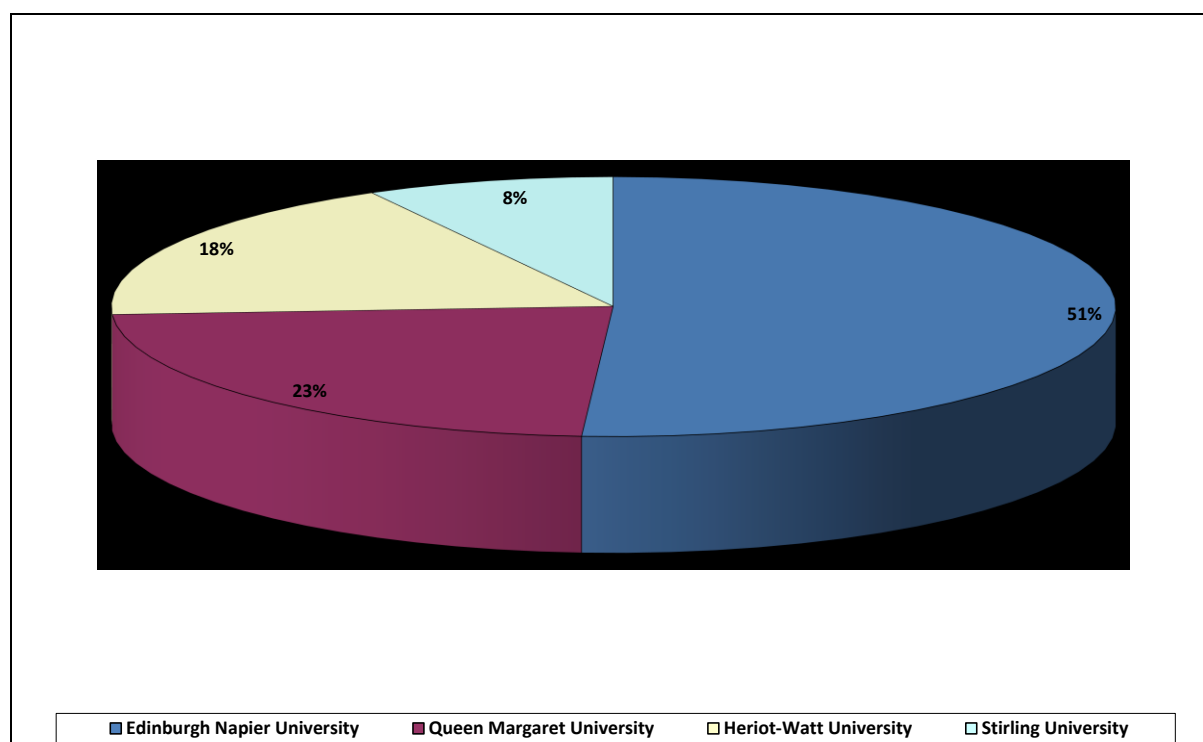
<sup>10</sup> This is based on provisional figures for the cohort from the National Articulation Database that are pending the outcome of ongoing NAD review and development

## SECTION 4: FINDINGS OF THE STUDENT SURVEY 2011-12

### Survey respondents

A total of 303 HN students completed the survey. The profile of the students who responded is very similar to that of the two previous surveys. Just over half of students were studying at Edinburgh Napier University; Queen Margaret and Heriot Watt Universities each accounted for around a fifth of respondents while the remaining 8% were studying at Stirling University (Figure 1). Ten percent of the respondents were college-based, that is studying for their degree at a college campus rather than at the university site; the large majority of these college-based students were taking their degree through Edinburgh Napier University. Only 5% of respondents were studying on a part-time basis, the vast majority were full-time students.

**Figure 1:** Universities attended by respondents (%)



Detailed figures about the students who completed the survey are given in Tables A1.1 -1.10 in Appendix 1. In summary, there were more female than male respondents (60% vs 40%), as in the previous surveys. While there was a spread in terms of the age of students who completed the questionnaire, two-thirds were under the age of 25 and the vast majority were under 39 (94%). In terms of respondents' HN qualification, a somewhat higher proportion had an HND than an HNC (59% vs 41%); students with an HNC were more likely to be under 20 than were those holding an HND (27% vs 11% respectively). Two-thirds of students had gained their HN qualification from one of the ELRAH partner (66%) while the rest had studied at a college elsewhere in Scotland. The large majority of students had

progressed directly from their HN to degree study (85%) with only a small proportion having had a break between gaining their HN and starting a degree.

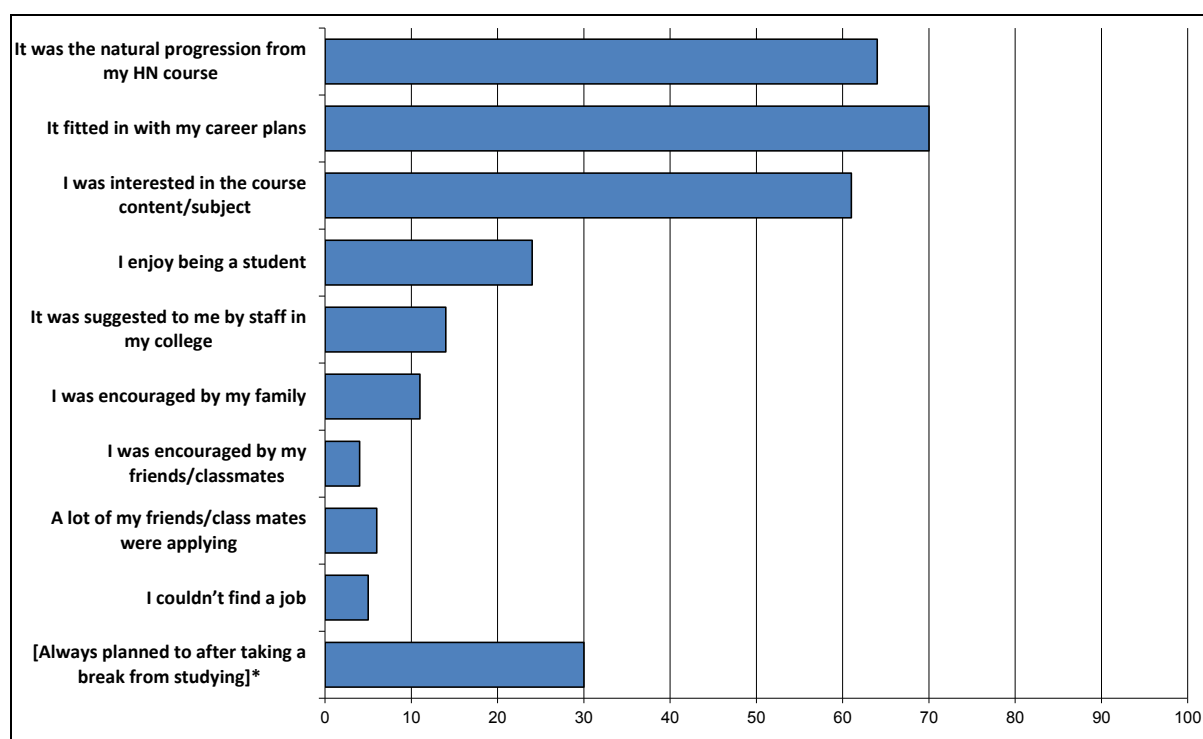
Business and Administrative Studies was the subject area that accounted for the highest proportion of students, almost a third were studying for a degree in this subject area<sup>11</sup> (32%); 15% were taking a degree in the area of Creative Arts while 12% were in Mathematical and Computing Sciences. Respondents who had articulated were more likely to be taking a degree in the area of Business and Administration than were their non-articulating counterparts (44% vs 9%). There were also differences in the extent to which articulating and non-articulating students were studying in the areas of Mathematical and Computing Sciences (15% artic vs 7% non-artic).

## Progression from HN to degree

### *Why did students decide to go on to degree study?*

The most common reasons given by students for their decision to apply to degree study were that “it fitted in with my career plans” (70%), “it was the natural progression from my HN course” (64%), and “I was interested in the course content/subject” (61%, Figure 2; also Table A1.11). This is very similar to the picture in previous years. Of those who had taken a break between their HN and degree study, just under a third had ‘always planned to’ (30%).

**Figure 2:** Reasons for applying to degree study (%)



\*Only students who had gained their HN before 2011 (n=43)

<sup>11</sup> JACS2- the Joint Academic Coding System used for subject coding across the UK by UCAS and HESA.

The reason that ‘it was the natural progression from my HN course’ was a more frequently cited reason for applying by students who had articulated than by those who had not (71% vs 52%) and articulating students were also less likely to note an interest in the course content/subject as a reason (57% vs 70%). Students’ reasons also varied according to their age: ‘it fitted in with my career plans’, ‘interested in the course content/subject’ and ‘enjoy being a student’ were less common reasons for students over 25 than for their younger counterparts. The older students were, however, more likely to state that they had applied for degree study because they ‘couldn’t find a job’.

***Why take a college-based degree?***

As noted above, 10% of students were taking a degree delivered through college rather than at university and they were asked why they had chosen to do so. By far the main reason given was the proximity of the college; the teaching approach and teaching environment at college were also common reasons:

- The college is near where I live (93%);
- I thought the teaching methods would suit me better (59%);
- I thought the class sizes would be smaller (52%).

***At what point do HN students decide on degree study?***

In planning their information, advice and support provision for HN students who may go on to degree study, it is important that colleges and universities take into account the stage at which HN students make this decision. Table 1 shows that just over a half (51%) were planning to go on to a degree when they started their HN and another 14% were thinking about it as a serious possibility. Nevertheless, this leaves around a third of students who were not thinking about a degree or only considering it among other possibilities when they started their HN (32%).

**Table 1:** Did you plan to go on to degree study when you started your HNC/D?

	<b>All (%)</b>
No, hadn’t any plans to do so when I started	11
It was only a vague possibility in my mind	13
I was thinking about it along with other options but wasn’t sure	8
I was thinking about it as a serious possibility	14
Yes, it was my definite plan from the start	51
I didn’t know then that it was possible to go on to a degree	3
<i>(n)</i>	<i>(302)</i>

Among this group of students who had not initially planned to progress to a degree when they started their HN just under a quarter decided early on in their HN course (23%) while around a half did not decide until part way through (51%) and another quarter or so (26%) only took the decision after their course had finished (Table 2). This variation in when

students make the decision to progress to degree study creates a considerable challenge for college and universities in planning their support activities. A further issue for universities' support provision is that two-thirds of the HN students who had taken a break between their HN and degree (15% of respondents) had not planned to return to education and would therefore not have taken part in specific support activities when at college.

**Table 2:** When did you decide to go on to degree study (if not definite or not thinking about it seriously)?

	%
Early on in my HNC/D	23
Part way through my HNC/D	51
At the end of my HNC/D	17
After I got my results	9
<i>(n)</i>	<i>(128)</i>

### *Extent of articulation among respondents*

As noted earlier, articulation refers to when students with an HNC award enter the second year of a degree programme and those with an HND go into third year. Considering the students who responded to the survey, Table 3 shows that overall 64% of them articulated<sup>12</sup>. The level of articulation varied considerably between HNC and HND students: less than half of students with an HNC entered 2nd year while nearly three quarters of HND students went into year 3 of their degree programme (46% vs 74%). Both the level of articulation overall and the difference in the extent of articulation between HNC and HND students mirror that in the two previous student surveys. Older students – those 25 and over – had a higher level of articulation than their younger counterparts (58% vs 38%).

**Table 3:** Articulation between HN and degree (%)

	All %	HNC students %	HND students %
<b>% articulating</b>	<b>64</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>74</b>
<i>Year of entry (all students)</i>			
1 <sup>st</sup>	27	54	11
2 <sup>nd</sup>	29	45	15
3 <sup>rd</sup>	44	2	74
<i>(n)</i>	<i>(300)</i>	<i>(125)</i>	<i>(175)</i>

### *Continuity of subject but not all students gained full credit*

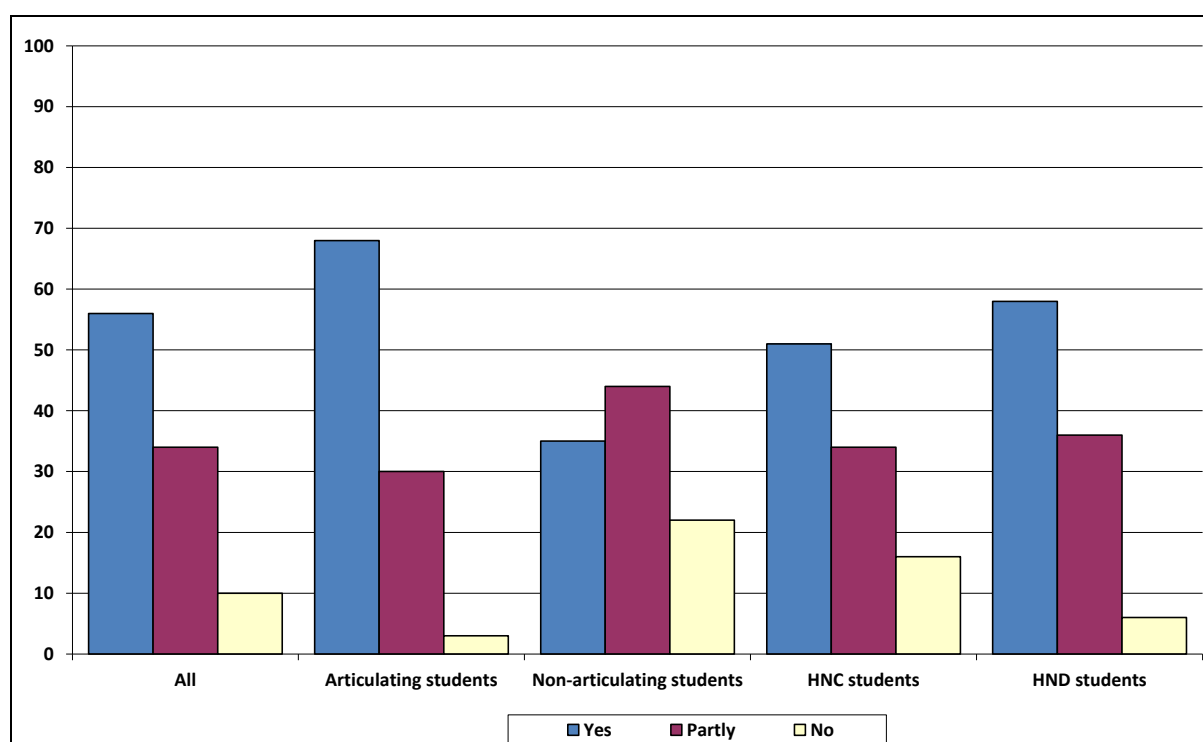
Well over half of students were taking a degree in the same subject as their HN (56%) and another third stated that their degree was partly related (34%, Figure 3; also Table A1.12). Unsurprisingly, articulating students were more likely to be studying the same subject at degree level than were those who had not articulated (68% vs 35%). Nevertheless, this

<sup>12</sup> Overall 54% of the HN cohort who entered degree study in the academic year 2012-13 articulated.

means that despite continuing with the same subject at degree level over a third of non-articulating students had not gained full credit for their HN qualification. This is similar to the figures in the previous two surveys<sup>13</sup> despite the attention that has been given to the mapping of articulation routes over the period of the surveys.

Students with an HND were slightly more likely to be continuing with the same subject at degree level than were their counterparts with an HNC (58% vs 51%). The degree subject profile on HNC and HND students varied somewhat: HND students were more likely to be in Business and Administration than were those who were HNC qualified (39% vs 21%) and also in Creative Arts and Design (22% vs 4%).

**Figure 3:** Continuity of subject studied: articulating and non-articulating students



### *Students' reasons for not articulating - differences between HNC and HND qualified entrants*

Over half of students holding an HNC choose not to articulate, applying instead for entry to the first year of their degree (52%). This was in contrast with HND students, the large majority of whom did seek to articulate, applying to third year, only a quarter applied to either first or second year (25%)<sup>14</sup>.

Students' reasons for not articulating are summarised in Figure 4, in the case of HNC students the reasons they gave for making an application to 1st year and for HND students applying to 1st or 2nd year rather than 3<sup>rd</sup> (see also Table A1.13).

<sup>13</sup> 1<sup>st</sup> survey: 34%; 2<sup>nd</sup> survey: 27%

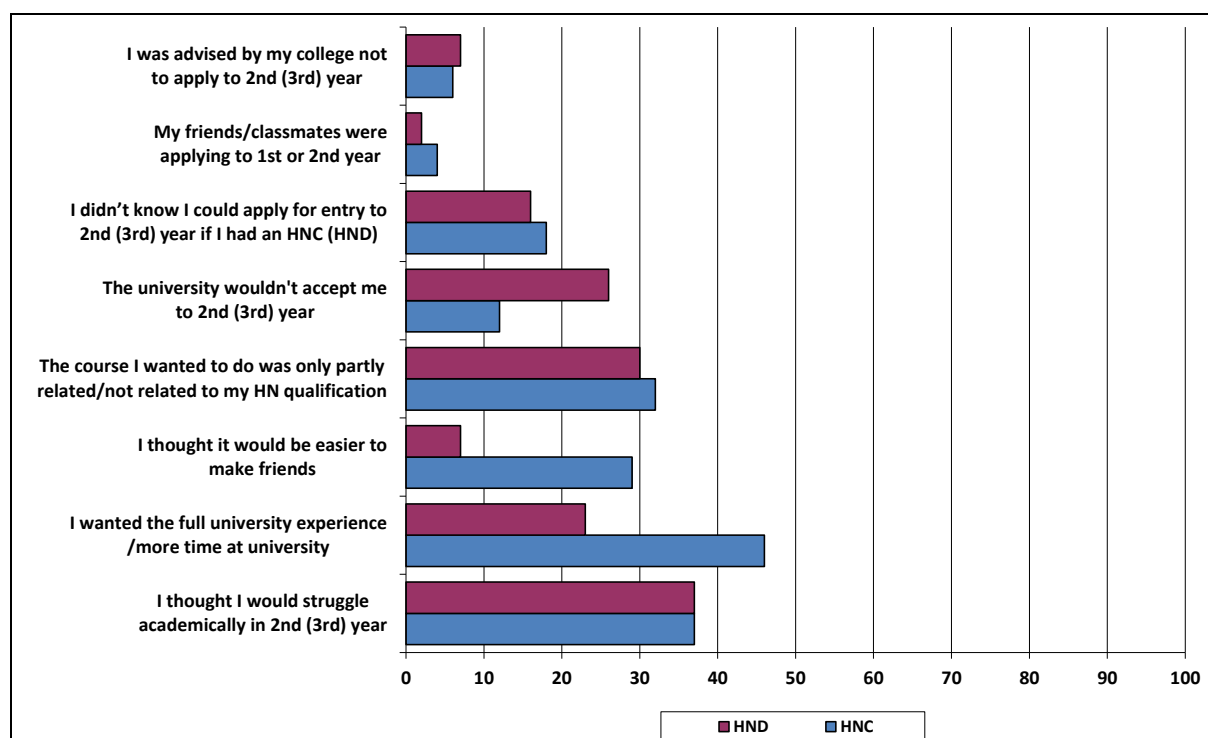
<sup>14</sup> These two figures differ slightly from those in Table 3 since they refer to the percentage who applied to the year(s) in question whereas Table 3 refers to the year that students eventually entered.

For HNC students the most common reasons were that they *'wanted the full university experience'*, that they thought they *'would struggle academically in 2nd year'* and that the degree course they wanted to do was *'only partly or not related to my HN subject'*. The view that it would be easier to make friends was another common reason for HNC students applying to 1<sup>st</sup> year. There was less variation in the reasons given by HNC students according to their age than in last year's survey. Age made a difference to only one item: HNC students under 25 gave more weight to having the full university experience than did those 25 and above (51% vs 20%).

The view that they would struggle academically if they articulated was also the most common reason given by HND students; the fact that their degree course was not sufficiently related to their HN subject was the next most stated reason followed by *'the university wouldn't accept me'*. There are differences between HNC and HND students in the reasons given for not articulating, especially the weight given to having the full university experience and making friends (Figure 4, see also Table A1.13).

Among both HNC and HND students, there was some ignorance of the possibility of articulation, under a fifth said that they had not known they could apply for entry to 2<sup>nd</sup>/3<sup>rd</sup> year (HNC:18%; HND:16%).

**Figure 4:** Reasons for non-articulating applications\* (% within HN level)



\* ie students with HNC applying to 1st year and students with HND applying to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year

### *Students' reflections on whether they had started at the 'right' year*

Students were also asked whether, on reflection, the year that they had started their degree had been the right year for them. A majority, over three-quarters, replied 'yes'

(77%), this is very similar to the view expressed by students in the previous two surveys. As before, HNC students were more likely to think that they had started their degree at the right year for them than were those with an HND (Table 4). Students' opinion, however, did not vary significantly according to whether or not they had articulated, nor did it by their age or between males and females.

**Table 4:** If think started at the right year of degree study by HN qualification

	All %	HNC %	HND %
yes	77	81	73
no	8	8	8
not sure	16	11	19
	(n) (303)	(123)	(175)

The other factor that made a difference to students' views on their year of entry is the university attended with 81% of students at University 1 thinking they had started at the right year compared with 63% at University 2 (Table 5). Variation in students' opinion according to the university attended was also evident in the 2011-12 survey

**Table 5:** If think started at the right year of degree study by university

	All	Uni 1	Uni 2	Uni 3	Uni 4
yes	77	83	63	78	74
no	8	5	14	9	9
not sure	16	13	23	13	17
	(n) (303)	(154)	(71)	(55)	(23)

Just under half of the students expanded on their responses making additional open-ended comments. Some of those who had articulated were in **no doubt that it had been the right decision:**

*"What we learnt in the HND followed straight onto 3<sup>rd</sup> year and also we had further insight to what was required in some subjects in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of the degree."* (HND student entered 3<sup>rd</sup> year)

*"I feel like I'm on par with fellow 3<sup>rd</sup> year degree students, the knowledge I gained at college set me up excellently for this level and I was in no way lacking in information."* (HND student entered 3<sup>rd</sup> year)

*"I feel like if I'd gone into 1<sup>st</sup> year, I would have found it very easy as the modules I completed at HNC level were the same modules and topics covered in first year. Second year entry although difficult was the best option for me."* (HNC student entered 2<sup>nd</sup> year)

While responding that on balance they had started at the **right year**, this had **not been easy** for some:

*“Yes, but it was really difficult for me, College does not prepare you for university. I didn’t know anything about referencing, I felt it would have helped if this was done at college.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“The jump from HND to 3rd year is definitely bigger than I had anticipated and I have struggled with adjusting to how 3rd year uni operate. However with hard work and asking for relevant support it is possible to find your feet at 3rd year level.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

But others were **less sure that articulating** had been the **right decision** for them:

*“I think it has been extremely hard to get used to the ways of University on top of working at a 3rd year level, it’s been exceptionally hard.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“University is so different from college. I would have preferred to start a year earlier to get used to the university way of working.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I sometimes think I should have joined the course at a second year level as I sometimes feel overwhelmed by the difficulty of the course.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“To adapt to university life takes time so repeating the same year may have been a better option.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

While a few regretted that they had **not articulated** since they had not ‘learnt anything new’, the more common comment was that this had been the **right decision** for them:

*“I wasn’t sure I would have coped academically in second year therefore I am glad I didn’t risk failing and started in first year.”* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*“I changed my mind after the discussion at interview which encouraged me to take more time to learn the core skills for my degree. Very happy with the course now.”* (HND student entered 2nd year)

The decision whether or not to continue **to an HND at college or to apply to university after gaining their HNC** was an issue that had not been noted in the previous surveys but was commented in this time:

*“I feel that if I had gone onto my HND and then enter 3rd year I would have struggled. Going into 2nd year allowed me to get to grips with the difference and also in a year when my grades wouldn’t affect my overall degree classification.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“As of now it is too hard for me. I wish I had decided to enter 2nd year after completing my HNC.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

### ***Students’ views on taking the HN route to degree study***

Most students were positive that the HN route had been the right choice for them: 84% stated ‘yes’, only 6% gave a definite ‘no’ and the remaining 10% were not sure. Students who had articulated were slightly less likely to be definite that the HN route had been the right choice than their non-articulating counterparts (80% vs 88%, Table 6) and more likely to indicate that they were not sure (14% vs 5%, Table 6).

**Table 6:** If HN route to degree study the right choice

	All %	Articulating students %	Non- articulating students %
yes	84	80	88
no	6	6	7
not sure	10	14	5
	(n) (303)	(123)	(175)

The small number of students who had decided to take their degree based at college were very largely happy with this decision: 86% responded that this was the right choice for them. The size of this group of students is too small to enable further analysis.

The role of the HN route in **extending access** in a various ways was evident from students' comments. For some, it had enabled them to **return to education** after a break:

*"Allowed me to build up confidence after a long time away from study and convince myself that I can do it."* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*"I was getting into full-time education after a break, the college environment was familiar and served as a useful stepping stone to university."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*"i am a mature student and found going back to education a bit scary at first as i entered at NC level but by the time i had progressed through to HND i found it easier to understand what was expected from me and how i could aim higher if i put the work in."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

It also extended access by enabling those who live some distance from a university and perhaps with family commitments to **study locally**:

*"Perfect for me, I have a young family, so allowed me to study at college, which was a ten minute drive. Commute now 3hrs a day, but not so bad doing that for 2 years, rather than 4!"* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"Yes in terms of distance from home. I don't think I would have been able to commute the distance to the nearest university. This was a deciding factor for me."* (HND student entered 3rd year, college-based)

For those who had not gained the necessary entry qualifications while at school, going to college and gaining an HNC/D HN route provided an **alternative route** to degree study:

*"I had terrible grades at higher and this was the only opportunity for me to better myself and get me onto the right career path."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"College has been the perfect way to enter a degree course at a higher level without the constraints of results achieved at school. Based on my school grades I would never have gotten into university straight away. College gave me an alternative way in and also taught me just as much as the first two years at university would have."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

The idea of the HN as a **bridge between school and degree** study was another positive aspect that came through from students' comments:

*"I think that going to college before university has helped me to gain a fuller understanding of my degree subject and what is expected of me as a student. I think that attending college first has given me a more mature approach to me education."* (HND student entered 1st year)

*"It was a good way to bridge the gap between high school and university, and helped me understand the level of work and effort that was expected at this level."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"I wasn't mature enough to handle the stresses of university straight from high school. Taking the longer path was the more appropriate option."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

The HN route also offered individuals a way to pursue their career **after redundancy**:

*"I left school in 5th year and was taken into a civil design office who sent me to college on day release... three years later the company entered liquidation and I was made redundant. So I continued at college to get my HND and followed through to my degree. So in whole I would say I have followed a reasonable path to get here."* (HND student entered 1st year)

*"After being made redundant for a full time apprenticeship as a draughtsman it was the only route of progression available to me."* (HND student entered 1st year)

The **teaching and learning approaches** and college environment were important factors for some students who preferred or felt they needed this type of learning:

*"Being older and new to a subject such as accounting, the teaching methods college provided was more helpful. I would not have been likely to pursue this subject of level of learning without the strong foundation college provided in its way."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"It was more 'spoon fed' type of learning and individualized so it help me to stay motivated and not to focus on work commitments too much."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"The class contact time at college was very important to me. It also offered a greater vocational style of teaching I am more in tune with."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"As I am Dyslexic I found that the HNC route was the right route for me to go down as I learned study skills and got myself into a study routine to support me on my way through university."* (HNC student entered 1st year)

Part of the attraction of the HN route for some was the opportunity it offered to make **decisions incrementally, providing a safety net** and enabling them to keep their **options open**:

*"It gave me a qualification at every level. This is an advantage if I was to fail a subsequent year."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"Yes, it meant I could leave at any time with a qualification if a job opportunity came up."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I wasn't sure how long I wanted to study for so I am glad that I did it in stages to ensure I achieved some kind of qualification if had decided not to go on to university.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

Another aspect that comes through from students' comments is the opportunity that the HN route offers to **test out** which **subjects or careers** they would like to follow without the commitment of a three or four year degree:

*“I wasn't sure what i wanted to do at university so done a HNC first to see if it was something i wanted to do.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“I didn't know what to do after high school and didn't want to leap into a degree until I was sure. So, attending college was a great way of deciding what my career plans would be while working towards a qualification.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Yes it gave me time to decide what I actually wanted to study.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

While the large majority of comments were positive about the HN route to degree study, mirroring the quantitative responses, a few students expressed **regret** or felt that they should have moved on to **degree study from their HNC**:

*“I wish I could've started university instead of going to college to have the advantage.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I feel I should have only completed 1 year at college and gone into 2nd year as that wouldn't have a less significant 'jump'.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I think I should have applied for the second year to be well prepared for the third one.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

### ***What type of degree were students aiming for?***

When asked about the type of degree they were aiming for, over two third of students indicated that they hoped to graduate with an Honours degree (69%) while 11% planned on gaining an Ordinary degree. Another 13% were still to decide but a small proportion of students (7%) were unsure of the difference between an Ordinary and Honours degree (Table 7). These figures are very similar to students' responses in the previous surveys. In contrast with the previous surveys, however, articulating and non-articulating students had somewhat different intentions in that a lower proportion of articulating students were aiming for an Honours degree (64% vs 78%) In addition, college-based students were less likely than those taking their degree at the university campus to be aiming for an Honours ordinary degree (13% vs 9%) and also more likely to be undecided (28% vs 11%).

Students who were not aiming for an Honours degree, were asked the main reason for this. The most common reasons given were that *'it will depend on my grades'* (39%), that they had *'had enough of studying'* (28%) and that *'an Honours degree isn't necessary for my career plans'* (25%).

**Table 7:** Type of degree students aiming for (%)

	%
Ordinary	11
Honours	69
Haven't decided yet	13
Not sure of the difference	7
	(n) (303)

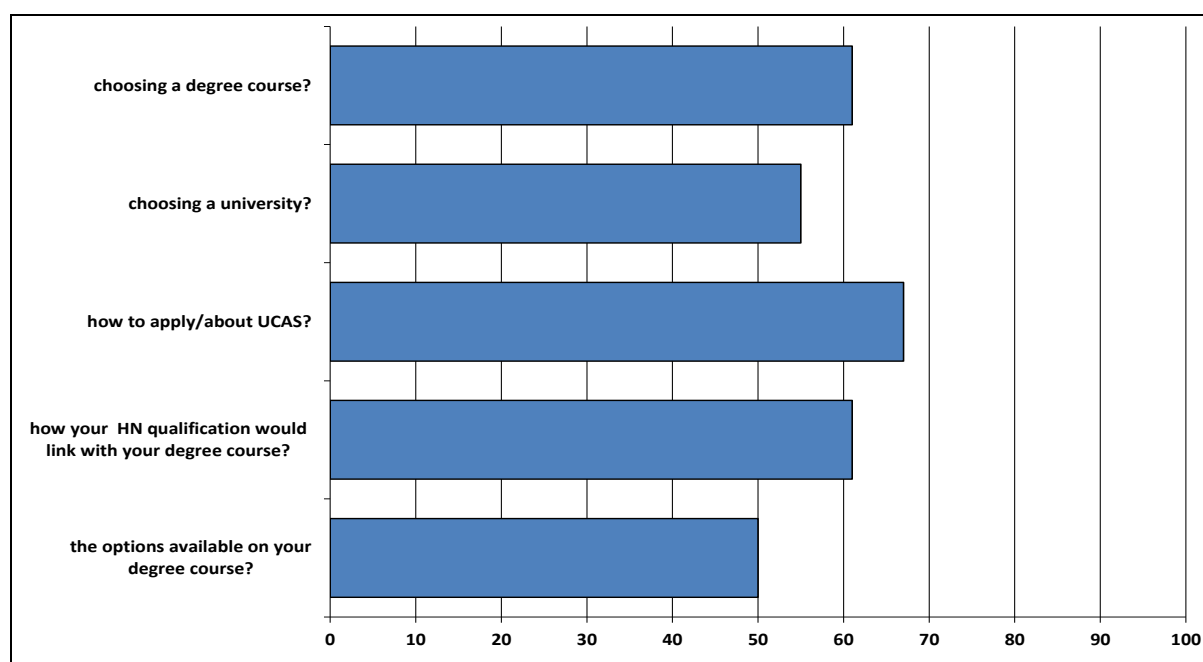
### The information and advice students received while at college

The development and embedding of support activities for HN students to help them make an effective transition to degree study is a central aim of ELRAH. The survey therefore asked a number of questions about colleges' pre-exit support provision.

#### *The extent of the information and advice students received about degree choice and UCAS*

Students were asked how much information and advice they received at college concerning their choice of degree and university, the application process and the link between their HN and degree and options available (Figure 5, also Table A1.14). While 67% reported having some/lot of information and advice about making a UCAS application, this was the highest figure and students were less likely to have had some/lot information and advice on the other topics. Only half of them had had information and advice about the options available on their degree course. This level of information and advice is very similar to that reported in the previous two surveys.

**Figure 5:** How much information and advice received at college about degree and university choice (% some/lot of information and advice)



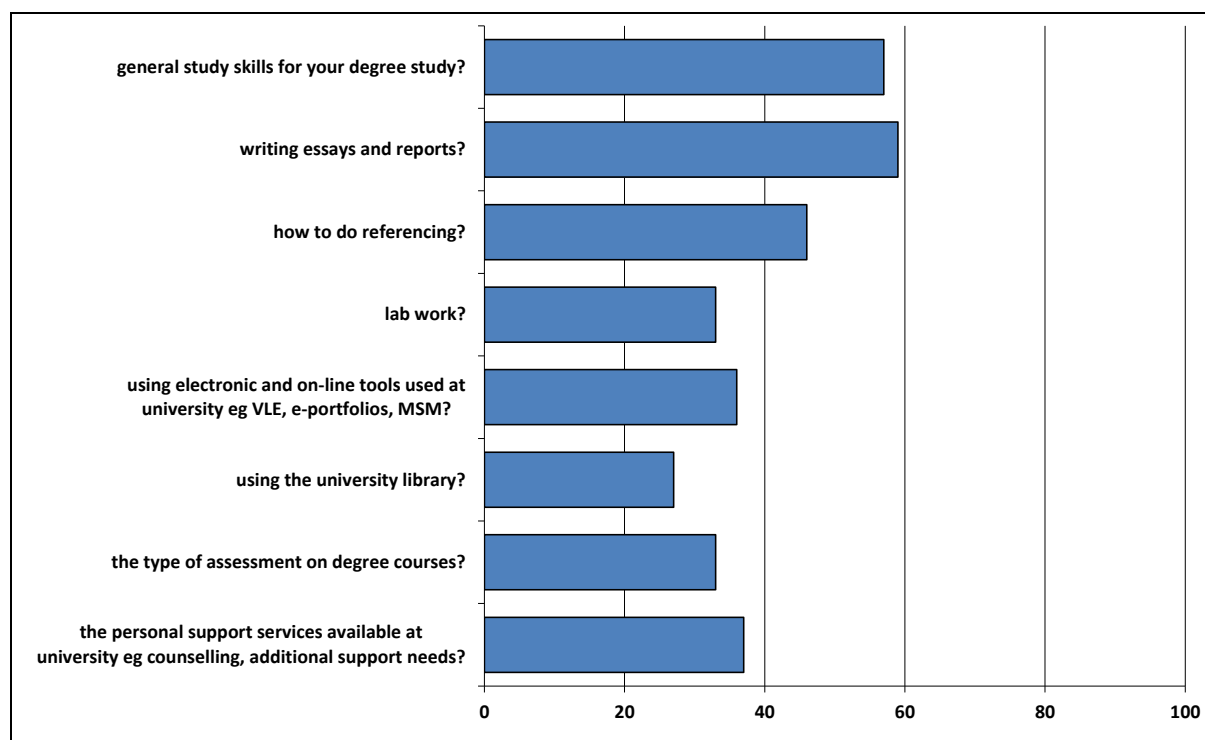
The only item where there is a significant difference in the responses of articulating and non-articulating students is in relation to how their HN qualification would link to their degree course: in this case 65% of articulating students reported some/lot information and advice compared with 53% of students who did not articulate.

Analysis of students' responses according to the college they had attended is limited because of the small numbers in most cases. Nevertheless, while the results do not reach statistical significance and so are not reported, there is a consistent pattern across the colleges in terms of which ones provide higher or lower levels of information and advice.

***Gaps in the information and advice received about degree study***

Students' responses indicate a continuing issue about the extent of the information and advice about different aspects of degree study they receive while at college - students' responses this year mirror those made by respondents in the previous two surveys.

**Figure 6:** How much information and advice received at college about degree study (% some/lot of information and advice)



In relation to help with study skills, over half of the students said they received at least some advice on general study skills for degree study and on writing essays and reports while they were at college (57% and 59% some/a lot, Figure 6; Table A1.15<sup>15</sup>). Nevertheless, this leaves over two-fifths who had only a little or no help in these areas. The picture in respect of advice on more specific skills is worse: only a minority of students reported receiving

<sup>15</sup> In all of the analyses on information and advice received at college, students who indicated that they did not want information and advice on the topic were excluded from the analysis.

some/a lot of advice on the more specific skills or about the personal support services available at university. Indeed, a substantial proportion said they had received no information or advice about:

- Using the university library (46% no advice);
- Lab work (46% no advice);
- Using electronic and on-line tools (42% no advice).
- The type of assessment on degree courses (39% no advice);
- How to do referencing (30% no advice).

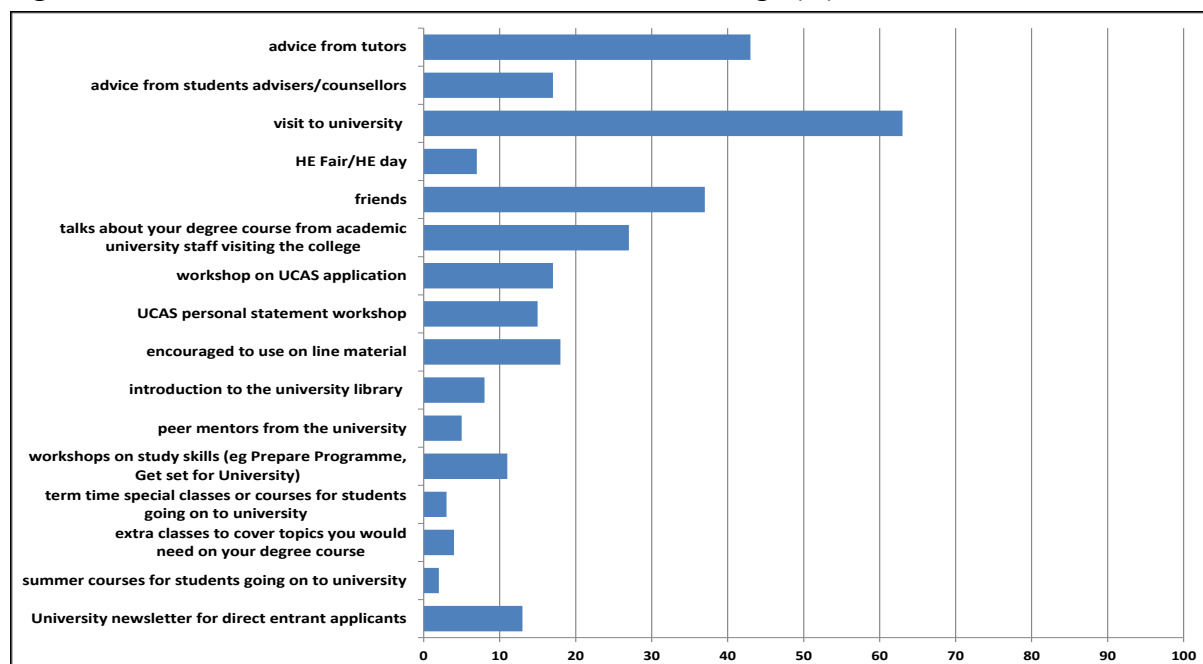
It might have been expected that students who were likely to articulate would have been especially encouraged to access or to have been targeted for study skills support this is not evident from the data – there were no significant differences in the extent of information and advice received by articulating and non-articulating students. Whether respondents had an HNC or HND made no significant difference to their responses nor did their age.

It was notable that students who had attended an ELRAH partner college were more likely to report input on general study skills than those who had been at colleges elsewhere (63% vs 47% some/lot information and advice).

### *Sources of information and advice while at college*

University visits emerge as the most common source of information and advice for students while they were at college: just under two thirds of them reported going on university visits either before or after applying or at both times (Figure 7; also Table A1.16). Talks from university academic staff visiting the college were noted by over a quarter of students as one of the ways in which they got information and advice (25%).

**Figure 7:** Sources of information and advice while at college (%)



Students' responses underline the important role of college tutors in providing information and advice about progressing to degree study, 43% of students noted that they had received information and advice from their college tutors. Friends also figured quite prominently as a source of information and advice (37%). In addition to the UCAS workshops, around 20% of students mentioned the specialist workshops, courses or classes as among the ways in which they gained information and advice.

### **Students' suggestions for developing colleges' transition support**

Students were asked an open-ended question about what else their college could have done to make the move to degree study as easy as possible for them and almost two thirds wrote in comments; this is a very high proportion of respondents and more than would normally be expected. Most made suggestions but a minority, especially HNC students, thought that **their college could not have done more:**

*"Nothing, I think my experience at [X] College, especially with my tutors was great. They are all very supportive and have helped me throughout my study and made sure I was well prepared when going to University."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*"Gave me lots of information and help when needed, helped with application and contact details."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

Most of the students, however, made suggestions about additions or improvements to the information, advice and support available at college. One theme of the comments was the need for **information** about a **wider range of degree programmes** and **possible universities:**

*"Provided more on what was on offer at the various uni's."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"It would have been nice to have more information or visitors from other universities instead of just information on the mainstream unis."* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*"Suggested other courses rather than just the ones that could be done at the college campus."* (HND student entered 2nd year)

An issue related to this last quote is the view that **some colleges wanted to retain their students** to HND or to a college-based degree:

*"The college did not seem too supportive when students left for university after the HNC."* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*"They were not the sort of college that would want you to move onto another university."* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*"Actually tell you that this could have been achieved from my HNC course."* (HND student entered 2nd year)

As in the previous surveys there were comments about wanting more information while at college about the **differences between colleges and university** and **expectations** in the type and level of work:

*“Information on referencing and studying would have been useful to be able to enter third year with more knowledge of the general aspects of university studying.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“It would have been useful if they had explained the way info is delivered at uni and how we are assessed.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“In HN study I didn’t have to rely on other people’s work for my grade nor did other people have to rely on my work. This is the hardest thing I’ve had to deal with ...there’s a fine line between helping classmates and doing their work for them. ...The collaborative process, and reliance on other people to pass, is perhaps something the HN courses could better prepare students for.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

The focus of comments this year, however, was especially on wanting **the opportunity to learn about and practise the ‘ university approaches’, perhaps within their HN** rather than simply being told about the differences:

*“If they had integrated referencing, research skills, essay and report writing workshops or classes into the HN course prior to starting the degree course, I feel I would have been more prepared. Although we were told briefly what to expect it was still a shock to the system once it started.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“More preparation during the courses (ie report writing, referencing) not just a two day summer school.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Teach us how to reference...not have open book assessments, teach us how to have an exam, structure a report and essays.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I believe that college should have a transition week where the students have mock lectures, also on how to tackle work load and vast difference from HN written to academic writing.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I strongly believe that classes on Harvard referencing and how to write essays and reports should be compulsory in HND.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

A demand for **exemplification of the type and level of work at university** was a related theme:

*“Sample lectures from uni and an example of critical essays.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I would liked to have been issued with more example of uni coursework and a template/guidelines to go by that showed how to tackle it. Not a mandatory thing to complete but only optional for students serious about going to uni.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Given some examples of course work from the university.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

It might be noted that a small number of students' comments suggest that they were **unaware of provision** at college, for example, requests for study skills workshops, academic writing workshops and university visits all of which were available at the colleges in question. Effectively publicising stand-alone events and encourage attendance is an acknowledged challenge for colleges and universities and is one argument in favour of embedding as much support as possible within HN programmes.

## **Making the transition from college to university**

### *How well prepared did students think they were for degree study?*

Students were asked reflect on how well prepared they felt they had been for degree study, including a comparison between how well prepared they felt *before starting* university, and *after three months* at university.

Thinking back to their situation before they had actually started their degree, most students responded that at this point they had judged themselves to be quite or very well prepared for degree study. (73% quite well/very well prepared, Table 8). There was no difference between articulating students and those who had not articulated in the extent to which they had thought themselves to be well prepared. Nor was there variation according to students' HN qualification, the college they had attended, their age or gender.

With the experience of three months or so of degree study, the picture changes: the proportion of students who rated themselves as having been quite/very well prepared for degree study had declined from 73% to 65% (Table 8). This is largely accounted for by the change in the views of articulating students: the percentage who considered that they had been quite/very well prepared had dropped from 71% to 59%. In contrast there was very little change in the perception of non-articulating students.

**Table 8:** Articulating and non-articulating students: opinion of how well prepared for degree study (% quite/very well prepared)

	<b>Before started degree</b>	<b>After 3 months of degree study</b>	
	<b>%</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>n</b>
All	73	65	(303)
Articulating students	71	59	(183)
Non- articulating students	76	74	(110)

Students' perceptions of the extent to which they were prepared for degree study did not vary by age and, in contrast with the previous survey (2011-12), did not vary depending on the university attended. However, as in the previous survey, differences were evident in relation to whether students had an HNC or HND. While before starting their degree similar proportion of HNC and HND students had similar views, at the three month point a gap had

appeared and those with an HND were less likely to report that they had been quite/very well prepared than were HNC students (57% vs 72%, Table 9).

**Table 9:** HNC and HND students: opinion of how well prepared for degree study (% quite/very well prepared)

	Before started degree	After 3 months of degree study	(n)
	%	%	
All	73	65	(303)
HNC	74	75	(123)
HND	72	57	(175)

Comparing the responses of the three cohorts of HN students surveyed, the improvement in the proportion of articulating students who thought that they had been quite/very well prepared for degree study noted in the second survey compared with the first survey has been maintained (Table 10).

**Table 10:** Articulating students' opinion across the three surveys of their level of preparation for degree study (% quite/very well prepared)

	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
	%	%	%
Quite/very well prepared after three months of degree study	47	61	59

***How easy or difficult did students find the transition from HN to degree?***

Overall, under half of respondents rated the change from HN to degree as quite or very difficult (45%, Table 10) but the experience of articulating and non-articulating students was substantially different. While under a third of non-articulating students found the change from HN to degree to be quite/very difficult, well over a half of articulating students had experienced it as such (quite/very diff: 32% vs 58%, Table 11).

There were no significant differences depending on the university students had gone to; this contrasts with the second survey.

**Table 11:** Opinion of change from HN to degree: articulated and non-articulating students

How have you found the change from college to university?	All	Articulating students	Non-articulating students
	%	%	%
Quite/very easy	53	42	68
Quite/very difficult	48	58	32
	(n)	(182)	(110)
	(301)		

Students' experience of the transition also varied considerably depending on whether they had an HNC or HND: those with an HNC were much less likely to have found the transition quite/very difficult than those entering with an HND (31% vs 60%, Table 12).

**Table 12:** Opinion of difficulty of change from HN to degree by HN qualification

How have you found the change from HN to degree?	All	HNC students	HND students
	%	%	%
Quite/very easy	52	70	40
Quite/very difficult	48	31	60
	(n)	(122)	(174)

Taking account of students' HN qualification and also whether they articulated or not reveals some interesting results (Table 13). HNC students who articulated were much less likely to find the transition from HN to degree quite/very difficult compared with HND qualified students who articulated (39% vs 66%). This is a large difference. In principle this should not be the case since both sets of students are moving one step up the Scottish Credit and Qualification Framework (SCQF) levels but in practice there are important differences. Articulation for HNC students means entry to second year of degree study while for HND students it means entering third year. Third year is the final year for some students and so is a much 'higher stakes' year than second. In addition their fellow students have had two years of degree study in which to develop the necessary study skills and understanding of the requirements of degree study; academic staff will generally expect third year students to be well acquainted with, and able to meet, the expectations and demands of degree work. This finding indicates that HND students entering third year are a group facing particular challenges which universities need to recognise and give attention to.

**Table 13:** If the change from HN to degree was quite/very difficult by HN qualification and articulation status

	HNC students		HND students	
	% quite/very difficult	n	% quite/very difficult	n
<b>Articulating</b>	39	(56)	66	(126)
<b>Non-articulating</b>	23	(65)	44	(45)

The proportion of articulating students in this survey who had experienced the transition for HN to degree as quite or very difficult was higher than in the second survey but is lower than the level reported in the first student survey (Table 14).

**Table 14:** Articulating students’ opinion across the three surveys about the extent to which they found the change from HN to degree to be quite/very difficult (%)

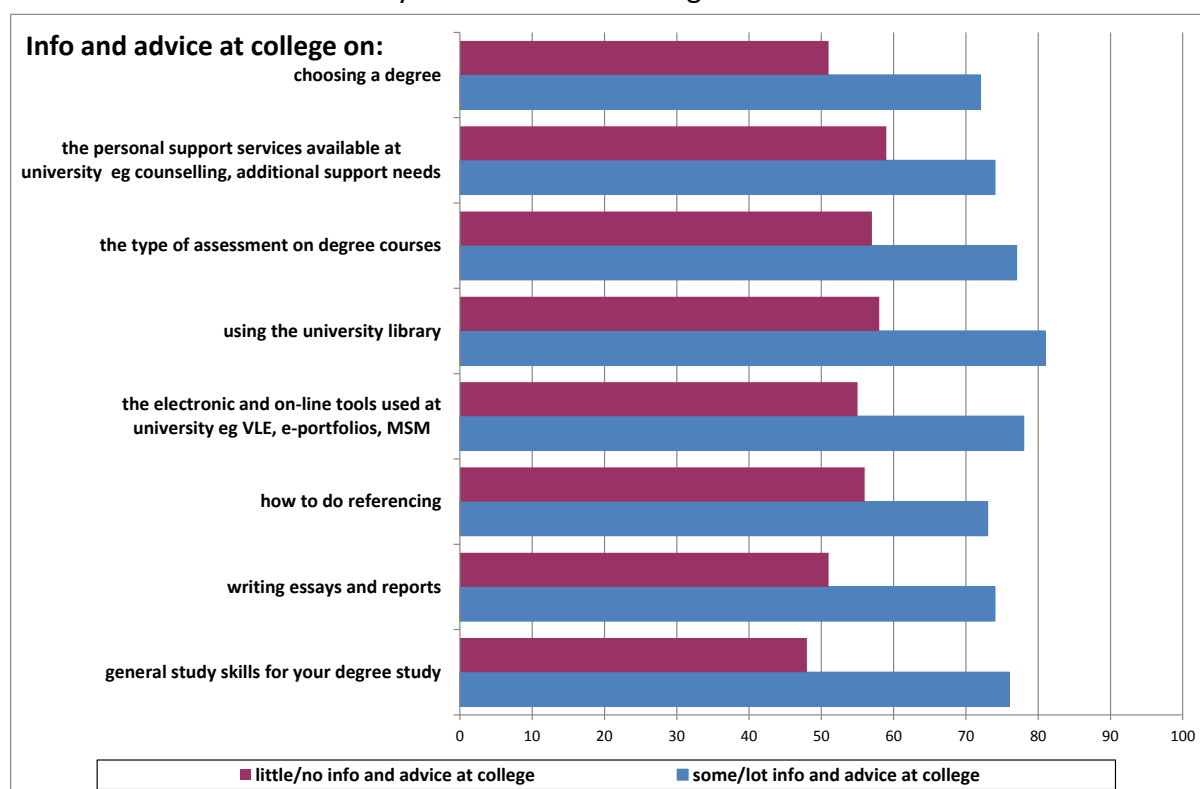
	Survey 1	Survey 2	Survey 3
	%	%	%
Quite/very difficult	65	52	58

***The information and advice provided at college makes a positive difference***

As noted, the ELRAH partnership has put a great deal of effort into developing information and advice to prepare students for degree study and the key question is whether this support makes a difference. Comparing the transition experience of students who reported receiving a substantial amount of information and advice while at college with those who had little input suggests that such information and advice is effective and worthwhile. The results reported are all statistically significant at the level of 0.05.

Figure 8 illustrates that across a range of topic areas, students who had had a considerable amount of information and advice at college were more likely to think they were well prepared for degree study.

**Figure 8:** Students who thought they were well prepared for degree study\* and the amount of information and advice they had received at college

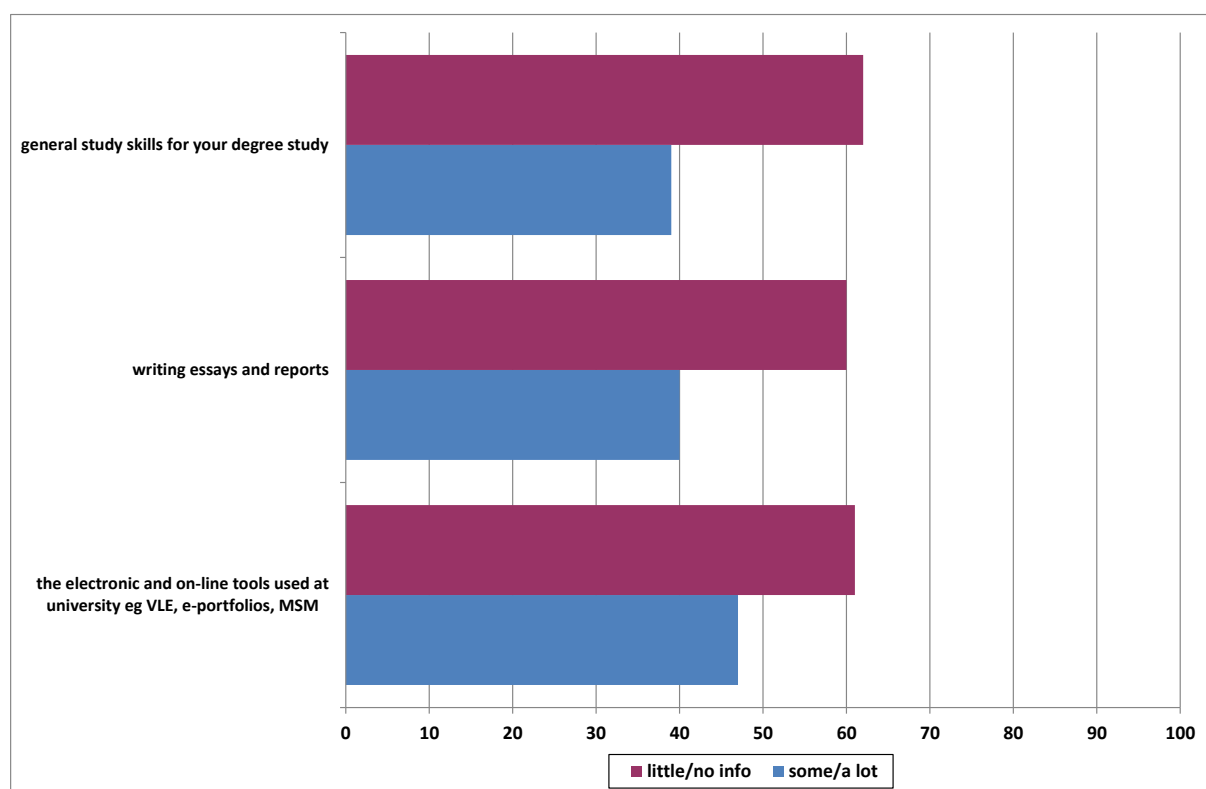


\* after three months of degree

Focusing on information and advice provided on general study skills: over three-quarters of students who had had considerable input on this thought that they had been well prepared for degree study compared with less than half of students who had had little or no support

on this topic (well prepared: 76% who had some/lot info vs 48% who had little/no info (Figure 8; also Table A1.17). As Figure 8 shows, a similar pattern is evident in relation to a number of the more specific areas of support. In each case a higher proportion of students who had received some/a lot of information reported feeling well prepared for degree study than their counterparts who had had little or no such input: essay/report writing (74% vs 51%); how to reference (73% vs 56%); using electronic or online tools (78% vs 55%) and the type of assessment on degree courses (77% vs 57%). Those students who had received some/lot of information and advice about the support services available at university were also more likely to view themselves as having been well prepared for university compared with other students who had not had a similar input (74% vs 59%). Those who had received some/a lot of information and advice about choosing a degree course were also more likely to consider that they were better prepared for degree study (72% some/lot info vs 51% little/no info).

**Figure 9:** Students who found the transition from HN to degree difficult and the amount of information and advice they had received at college



Whether students thought that the change from HN to degree study was difficult or not was also related to the extent of information and advice they had received at college. Those who had had higher levels of input in several areas were less likely to find the transition from HN to degree difficult (Figure 9; also Table A1.18). Students who had had considerable input on general study skills were less likely to state that they had found the change from HN to be quite or very difficult (39% who had little/no info vs 62% who had some/lot info). Those who

had received quite or a lot of input on essay and report writing were less likely to judge their transition as difficult compared with their fellow students who had not had the same level of input (40% vs 60%). Similarly, those who had had quite/lot of information and advice on electronic and online tools used at university were less inclined to perceive the transition as difficult than other students who had not received as much help with this (47% vs 61%).

Some students (43%) took the opportunity to elaborate on their experience of the change from HN to degree. Most comments concerned the differences between HN and degree study, for some this had **not been a particular problem** or, at least, that **they were coping**:

*“It hasn't been as big a step as i thought it was going to be so far. Also new friends have helped me settle in very well.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“Essay writing is difficult after the summer off, but have quickly learned the academic difference and improved my writing to meet the higher level of education. My tutors have been very helpful with feedback on how I can improve.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“The standard required of me for work is greatly increased, however it is something I am definitely working on and there is plenty of support available from the university.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

The greater need for **independent study and less contact with staff** came through in the students' comments:

*“University is nothing like college. It is so much more work as you have to self teach most of the time and there is hardly any one on one sessions with lecturers like you can do at college if you are having difficulty with certain aspects of the class/module.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“The change is a big shock, in college lecturers helped you out a lot more. In university they don't so much.”* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*“Getting used to the more self-directed learning and less contact with tutors has been hard to get used to.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

**Differences in the teaching and learning approaches, workload and level of demand** of degree study featured strongly in students' comments:

*“I feel it was quite a jump from HNC to degree level... although I was the top of my class at college; I came to uni to discover the study techniques and the way I wrote and answered questions were inadequate for degree level.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“I found it difficult in some aspects to understand the literature used in some of my classes as in my HND it mostly reports and live campaign ideas and presentation. The level of writing was higher and I find that maybe my english isn't as broad as I thought it was in regards to writing an academic essay or an argument.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I wasn't used to the harvard referencing, and the module assignments are very strict.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“In college it is acceptable to use websites to find information, however at university refereed journals, articles and government reports are the acceptable forms of sources. This takes up a lot of time trying to find relevant information therefore a lot more time has to be spent on individual pieces of work. (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

*“The workload has been significantly more than it was at college. As a mature student, this has been a problem because I didn't expect it to be quite so much more. The level of work is slightly more difficult which I did expect and can cope with, it's the quantity/pace that I struggle.” (HNC student entered 1st year)*

A related issue in terms of the differences between HN and degree is **lack of guidance** in some cases about **expectations**:

*“I'm still wishing I knew what is expected of me, even in the run-up to my first block of assessment, so maybe there could be more help given there from the universities.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“I found it quite difficult to adapt to the way things are expected at [X uni] mainly due to the fact that we were not told and had to ask fellow students who were not direct entrants or figure things out for ourselves which wasted a lot of time...Due to this reason many direct entrant students left the university as they could not cope.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

Other aspects commented on related to **assessment**: different assessment methods, issues of timing and also a lack of early feedback so they could find out if they were working at the expected level:

*“The assessments are completely different and I have no idea if I'm doing it right.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“With the HN course we had regular assessments which allowed us to receive feedback on how well we were learning. With a degree course we don't have that option. Personally feedback on my progress helps motivate me and give me the confidence that I lack most of the time.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“I have ticked ‘a lot of difficulty’ for feedback on assessments and meeting assessment deadlines as we haven't had any as yet.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“The biggest challenge is having the assessments so close together, should the assessments have been placed further apart there would be less stress on the students.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

The challenge faced by students who articulate in **making friends and integrating** into existing student groups came through in the comments :

*“It is also harder to make friends as people already know other people from a year ago and I am the only one from my college that came here so I feel disadvantaged.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

*“Making friends is very hard at first. I'm not really shy either, but everyone else has had a year of being with each other in advance so they already have their friend groups. Only why I was*

*put into a random group for one of my modules, I then started to talk to other people.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

*“Adjusting to group assignments and peer group assessments was difficult. Especially being the newcomer when bonds were already created at university.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

The issue of making friends was exacerbated because in most courses at university students **do not stay together as a class group**:

*“Unlike college where you are in a class that remains together and travels to each class as a group and you can form connections with others at Uni because of the choice of subjects you study you might not see the same people in each class/lecture. This can make it difficult to form connections which can hamper studying (if you don't have anyone to discuss a subject with).” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“It was strange how different classes were ... at college you are used to being with the same people everyday whereas at university you can be in classes with people from entirely different subjects. One thing I was worried about was making friends as I thought groups would have already been formed and it would be hard to talk to people, and it was at the start for the first few weeks but then it became easier and tutorials allowed me to sit and interact with people. (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

Other comments highlighted **financial concerns which in some cases impacted on their study**:

*“I have to work a number of hours to meet expenses as funding is not adequate. This infringes on the time I could be spending studying.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

*“If it were not for the delays with SAAS payments, I don't think I would be finding the workload quite so difficult to manage. It's hard to participate in a practical course when you can't afford to attend your classes.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“I did not receive any information as to how often I would be required to attend university i.e a timetable, in advance of starting the course so I moved into the student halls at a great cost. As it turned out I was only to attend class 3 times a week at most and many weeks were only twice a week. So I could have definitely commuted from Glasgow to Edinburgh saving thousands of pounds.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

Only a very small proportion of respondents are **studying part-time (5%)** but the issue that characterised their comments related to lack of information and the **organisation of provision**:

*“Lack of forward planning of courses and timetables for part time student. Currently in full time employment in subject related work place but unable to be definite with dates that i will be in university. No real guidance as to how the course will run for part time - told we will "migrate" to the full time programme to complete the course rather than a timetable be offered for Part Time Students.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

*“I am doing a part time degree only to find out that the course is counted as a full time course so do not qualify for a SAAS grant - frustrating!” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

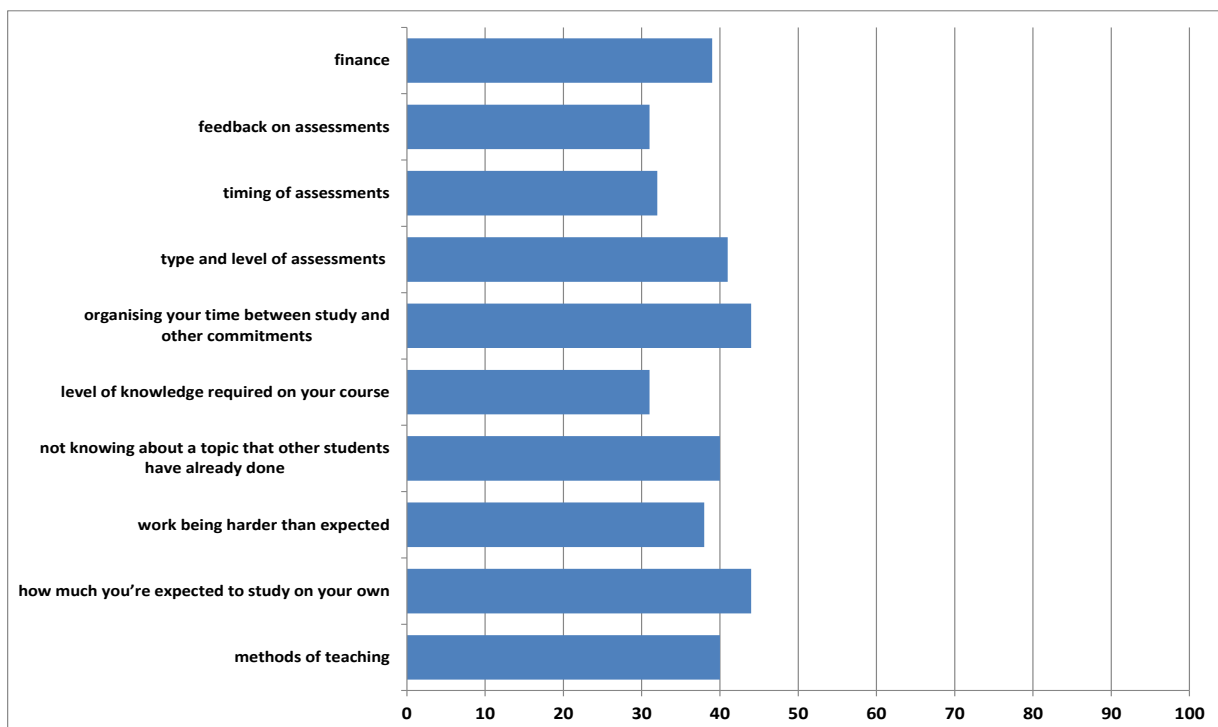
*“It was not made clear until after I matriculated and begun that the ‘Part-Time’ course was not actually timetabled as such and that you just had to integrate with the Full-Time Classes ... I am left in a situation where I may have to reduce my working week further.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

## Students’ experience of degree study

Students were asked if they had experienced difficulty with various aspects of study since they had started their degree (Figure 10; also Tables A1.19 and A1.20).

Figure 10 illustrates the main areas that students identified as difficult: time management; the extent of independent study; methods of teaching; various aspects of assessment and not knowing about a topic that other students had already done. Finance was also noted as an area of difficulty. There is consistency across the three surveys in the areas that students identify as causing them difficulty.

**Figure 10:** Main areas students found difficulty with in their degree (% responding some or a lot of difficulty)

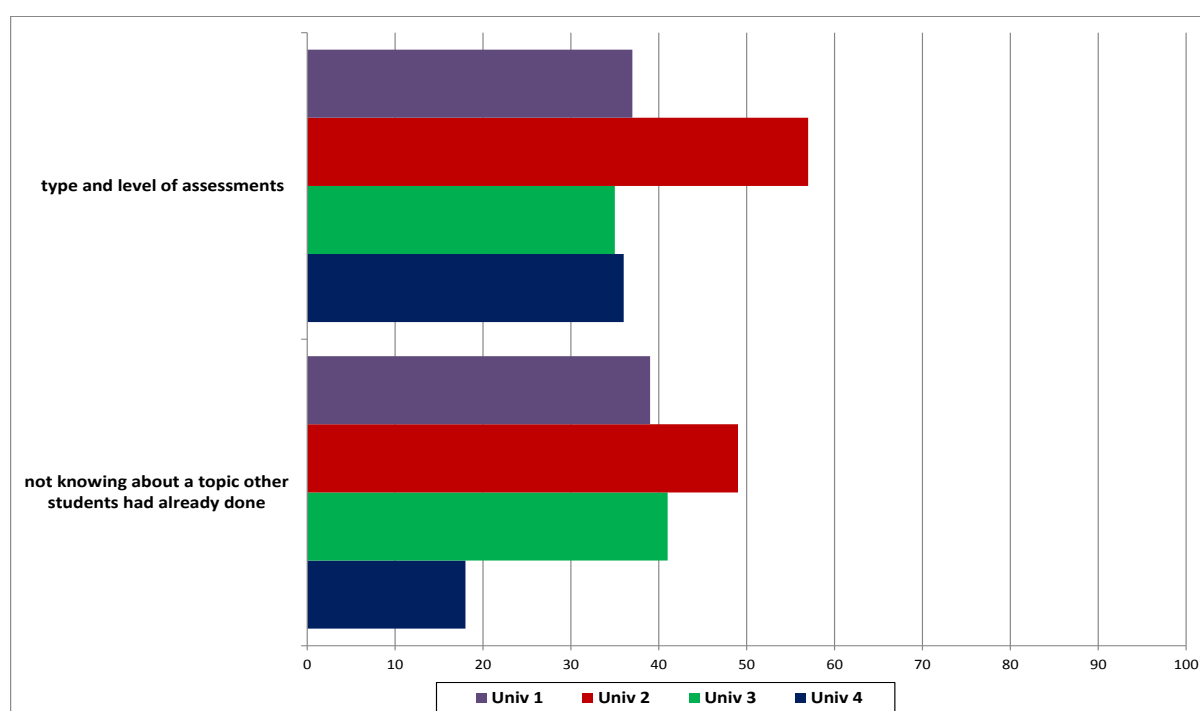


The type and level of assessments and their timing were two areas where the responses of articulating and non-articulating students were significantly different. A higher proportion of students who had articulated reported some/lot of difficulty with these aspects of their degree compared with non-articulating students (46% vs 31% and 37% vs 25% respectively). There were several other areas where articulating students were more likely to report having experienced difficulty although the differences did not reach statistical significance:

not knowing about a topic other students had already done, methods of teaching and work being harder than expected.

Other factors had some impact on students' experience of degree study: their HN qualification, their age and the university they were attending. Students with HNDs were more likely than their HNC counterparts to report some or a lot of difficulty with the level of work being harder than expected (42% vs 31%). A higher percentage of older students (25 and over) noted some or a lot of difficulty with tutorials and the large size of lectures than did their younger counterparts (19% vs 10% and 22% vs 13% respectively) although age made no difference to other aspects of degree study.

**Figure 11:** Variation across universities in the areas students found difficulties with (% some/lot of difficulty)



There was less variation in students' experience of degree study depending on the university attended compared with the 2011-12 survey. In the current survey, only two aspects differed significantly: a higher proportion at University 2 reported some/a lot of difficulty with the type and level of assessments and not knowing about a topic other students had already done (Figure 11, also Table A1.21).

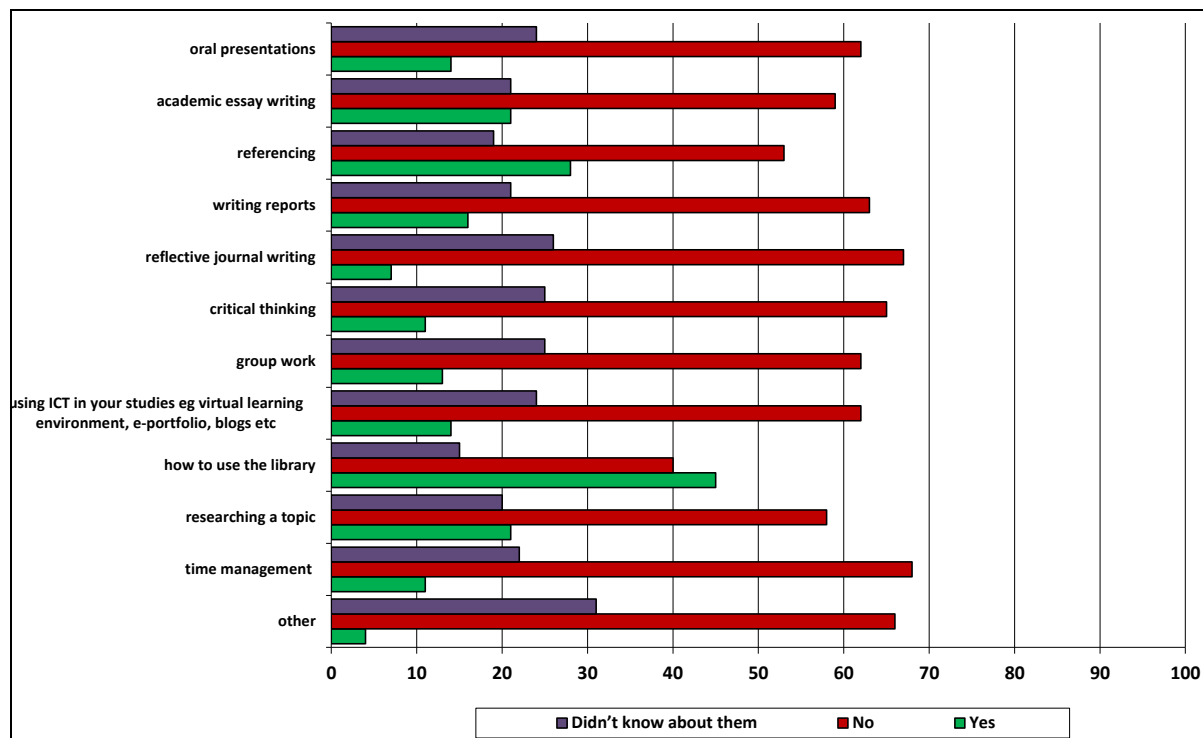
## Advice and support during the first year of degree study

### *Awareness and attendance at workshops and courses*

Students were asked if they were aware of the workshops and courses that the universities provide to support them in various aspects of their degree study, if they had attended any, and, if so, whether they found them to be useful. Figure 12 shows the extent to which

students knew about this provision and their level of attendance (also Table A1.22). Overall, a substantial minority of students were not aware of the provision: between 19%-26% of students responded that they did not know about the various activities; the exception was on workshops or courses about using the library (15%). This is a lower level of awareness than that reported in the previous two surveys.

**Figure 12:** Awareness of and attendance at workshops and courses since starting degree



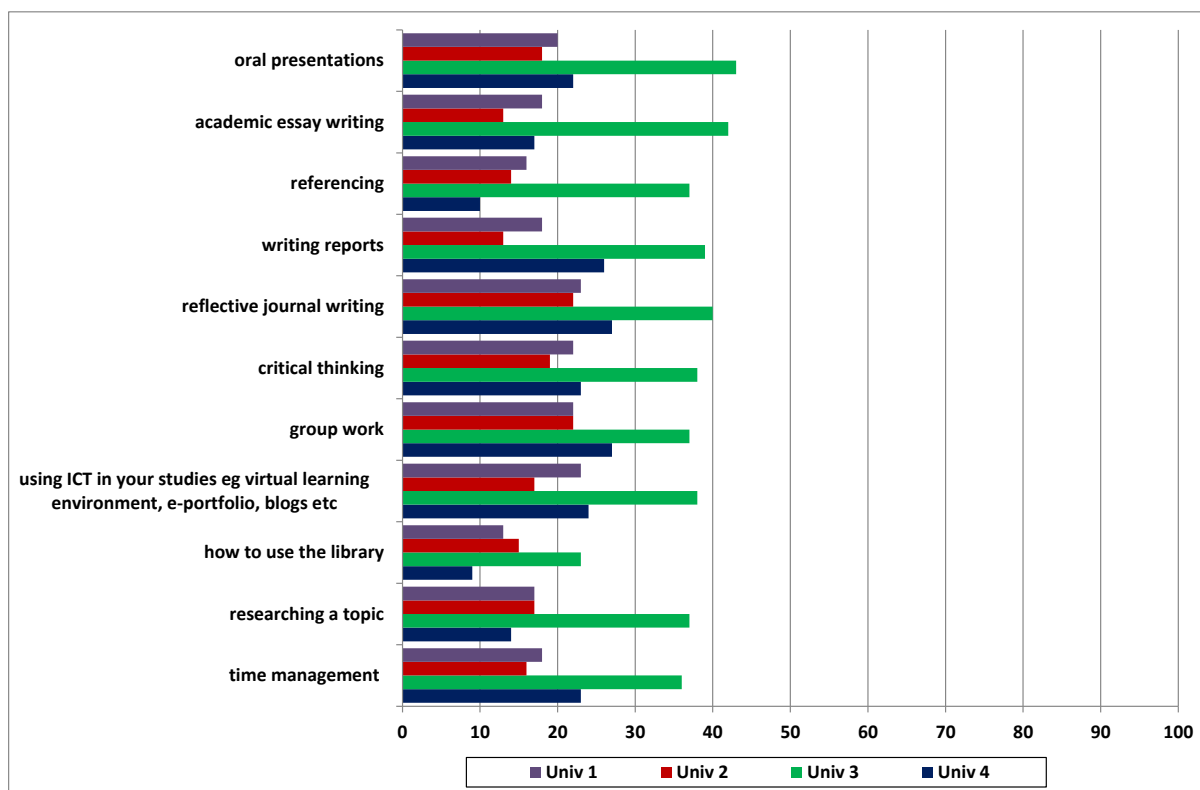
While there was very little difference in the awareness of articulating and non-articulating students about the existence of the workshops and courses, there was variation in the responses of HNC and HND students. The pattern of response was that across all items (except using the library) students with an HND were more likely than HNC students to report that they did not know about the support activities. While the difference was statistically significant only in respect of workshops or courses on reflective journal writing (32% vs 18%); critical thinking (30% vs 16%); group work (31% vs 17%); and using ICT in their studies (30% vs 17%) the pattern is clear: HND students were less likely to be aware of the support activities.

As Figure 12 shows students were most likely to have attended a workshop or course on:

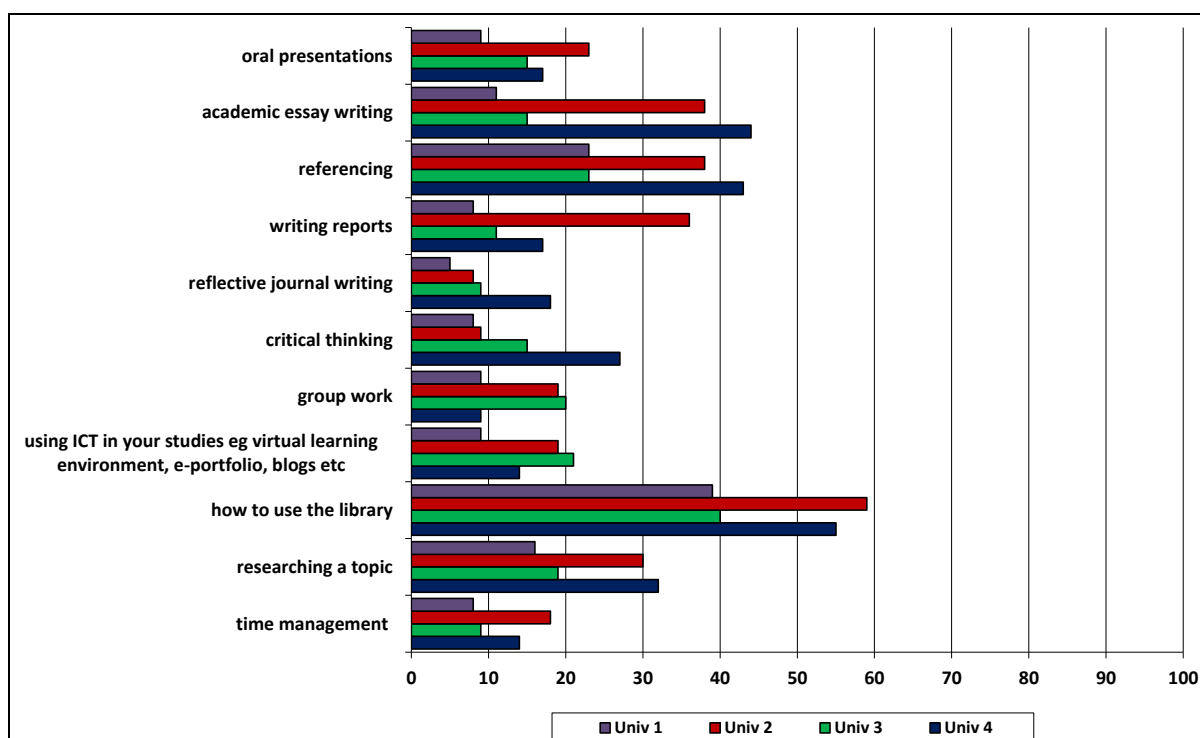
- using the library (45%);
- referencing (28%);
- researching a topic (21%);
- academic essay writing (21%).

Attendance did not vary between articulating and non-articulating students nor did in respect of students' HN qualification.

**Figure 13:** Awareness of workshops and courses by university (% didn't know about them)



**Figure 14:** Workshops and courses attended since starting degree by university (% attending)

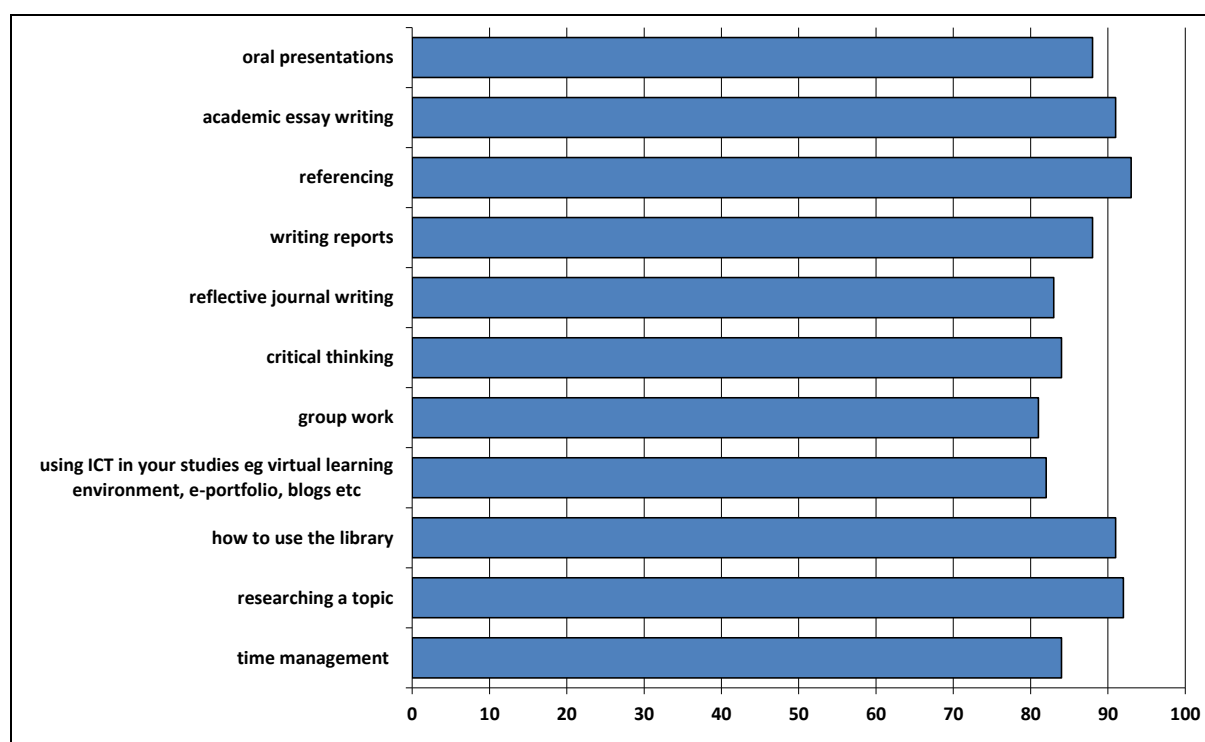


The university students were attending was the factor that made most difference, both in terms of their awareness of the workshops and courses and the level of attendance. This is illustrated in Figures 13 and 14 (Tables A1.23 and A1.24). There were two aspects to this. Firstly, students at university 3 were more likely to state that they ‘didn’t know’ about the support activities than were students elsewhere; secondly, those at university 1 had a lower level of attendance at seven of the 11 workshops/courses than students studying at the other universities. This is not explained by the level of provision in the universities. The proportions attending vary considerably across the universities which suggests that there may be some lessons to learn as to why certain universities achieve a higher level of attendance. Similarly, certain universities appear to be better than others in ensuring that students know about the workshops and courses.

***Positive opinion of the workshops and courses attended***

Students were extremely positive about the workshops and courses they attended with all being rated as quite/very useful by a very large majority (Figure 15, also Table A1.25). Workshops or courses on referencing, research skills, how to use the library and academic essay writing were thought to be useful by over 90% of students who attended them. These results underline the need to ensure students are aware of the workshops and to encourage attendance. There was no difference between articulating and non-articulating students in their rating of the workshops/courses attended or in respect of HN qualification, age, gender or university attended.

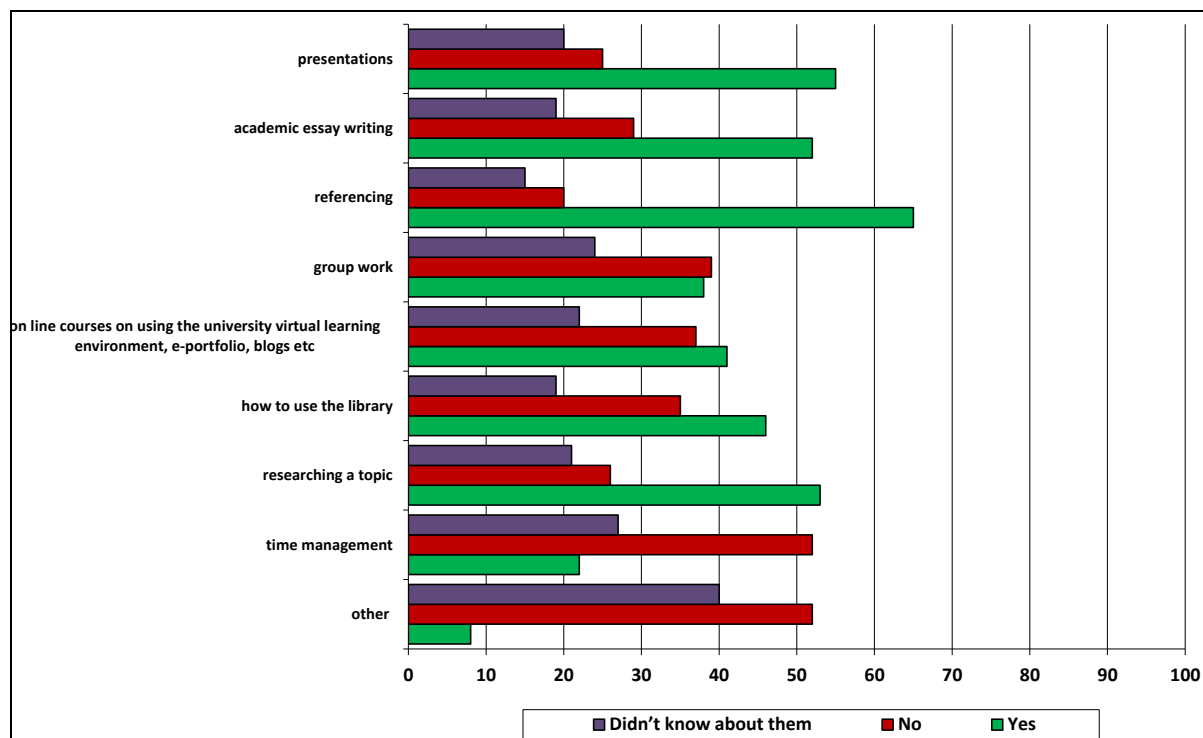
**Figure 15:** Students’ opinion of workshops attended (% stating quite or very useful)



### *Awareness and use of online and computer based support materials*

In addition to workshop and courses, another resource for students is a range of online and computer based materials. Students were again asked whether they knew about these materials, if they had used them and how useful they judged them to be.

**Figure 16:** Awareness and use of online or computer based materials



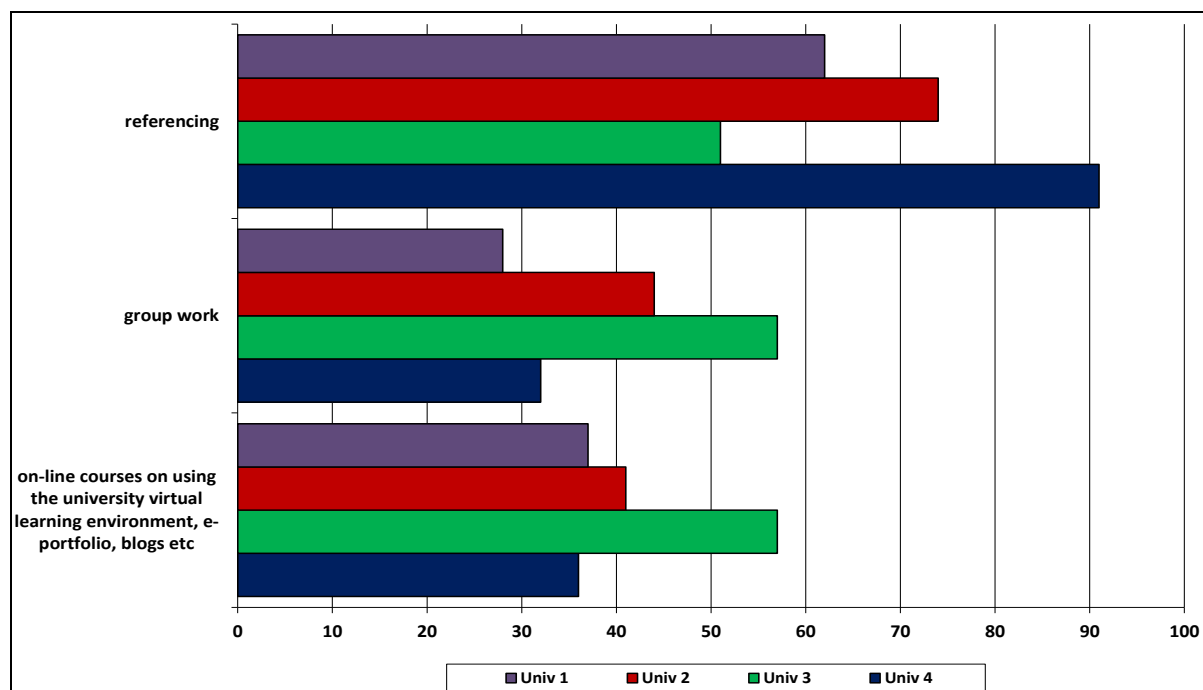
Between 15-27% of students indicated that they did not know about the availability of online and computer based materials (Figure 16, also Table A1.26); this is similar to the proportions who were not aware of the workshops and courses and is at the same sort of level as in the 2011-12 although slightly higher than in the first survey in 2010-2011.

As Figure 16 shows substantial proportions of students made use of the online and computer based materials to help them with their degree study. Nearly two-thirds used materials on referencing (65%) while over half accessed materials on presentations, research skills and academic essay writing (55%, 53% and 52%).

Students were more likely to make use of online and computer based materials than to attend workshops/courses as was the case in the previous surveys.

Students who had articulated were just as likely to make use of online materials as were non-articulating students and there was also no difference in take-up according to their HN qualification or age. Figure 17 illustrates the difference across the universities in relation to three of the topics covered in the online support materials: referencing, group work and using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc (also Table A1.27).

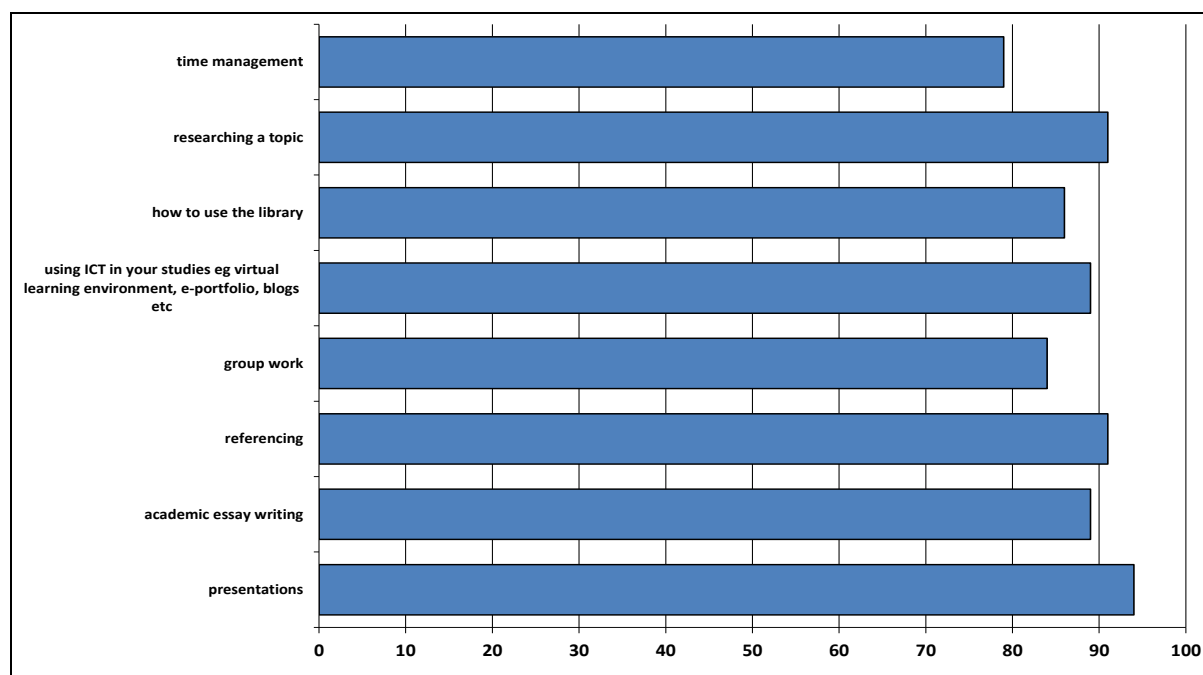
**Figure 17: Use of online or computer based support materials by university**



***Students positive about the online and computer based materials***

The large majority who used the online or computer based materials were positive about their value, judging them to be quite or very useful to them. Materials on presentations, referencing and how to research a topic were rated positively by over 90% of students who made use of them (Figure 18, also Table A1.28). Positive responses to the other topic area varied between 79%-89%. Students’ opinion of the materials did not vary significantly in relation to whether or not they had articulated, their HN qualification, age or university attended.

**Figure 18: If used any of the online materials since starting degree: how useful? (%)**



## Students' suggestions for developing university support for HN students

Students were asked what more they thought their university could do to develop its support for HNC/D students during their degree study. Some thought there was **nothing more** they could suggest:

*"Nothing at all.... My mentor XX put in a lot of time as well to welcome myself and other direct entrants to the course."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"They do their best by running all the workshops."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"The university had a two day workshop for HN students which was extremely helpful. They are very aware that people come from very different levels which is good."* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*"The induction week was a huge help to me, and especially being able to do some work and have it marked and receive one to one feedback."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

The idea of more **extensive inputs at the beginning of the academic year** was suggested by a number of students:

*"Have a few more mentoring sessions at the beginning to make sure direct entry students are coping okay."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"Give us more time and advice. The first induction week program rushed us so much."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"Have more than one introduction week where there will be all the work shops that would help inform and develop the skills needed. And more than one day academic support day at the uni."* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*"Make information and help with referencing, academic writing and university style exams more readily and widely available."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

Other comments related to the provision of **support over a more extended period**:

*"Have a follow-up session in between trimester 1 to let students ask any questions, remind them of all the facilities and workshops available. This could be a great boost for coursework/exam time."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*"Tutorial halfway through first semester with tutor or mentor just to discuss how things are going and any difficulties they have."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*"Having more than one meeting at the start of the year ... it is as though we have been forgotten about and just left to get on with it."* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

A considerable number of comments concerned the desire for more information and advice on **various aspects of degree study**, especially with **examples** of what is required at degree level and to make this **available in advance** of starting their degree:

*“Providing details on referencing beforehand, perhaps through a mock essay showing the examples.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“Give examples of tutorials in the induction package. More worked examples to work with/from.”* (HND student entered 2nd year)

*“More support or teaching on how to write reports, essays and reference at a degree level.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Help more with showing/telling how they would like reports done and what is expected of them and what to do, the direct entrants were expected to figure everything out themselves.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

In calling for more information and advice, students suggested that it would be helpful to have **access to previous year’s materials** to be able to familiarise themselves with the key aspects of their course. They made a number of specific suggestions:

*“Perhaps providing students with summaries of past modules (first year) that may assist them in coping with second year modules.”* (HND student entered 2nd year)

*“Something like a few lessons from first year that HNC students would not have been at, so they can learn what's happened and get the most important info before they dive into 2nd year.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“Possibly access to previous years study material so students can bridge any gaps before starting.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“It would maybe be useful for the University to have an online pre-study programme which could give students the chance to sample some of the university practices that will be required of them.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

A related area of comment concerned the need for **university staff to be more aware of HN students** and their previous learning experience:

*“... more recognition that HNC students did not attend 1st year, and therefore not possibly as au fait with systems in place.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“Acknowledge that there are direct entry students. A lot of my lecturers refer to work done over the previous two years that we were not here for and we then need to find out later what the work was that they were discussing.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Have a better understanding of the change in methods and be able to explain these, more initial communication with students coming to the university especially in person.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Visit the colleges to see the type of work students are doing before beginning the degree course to give the students more of a heads up on their coursework.”* (HND student entered 1st year)

There was also a view expressed that a key aspect is for **colleges to prepare HN students** for degree study rather than, or as well as, universities doing more:

*“Have Referencing workshops when still at collage. Colleges should be more strict about Referencing, students will be able by the time they get to uni.” (HNC student entered 1st year)*

*“Not much more [at university]. needs to be done more at college level e.g introducing referencing etc.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

**College based students** made suggestions specific to their situation:

*“I study my degree course in the college...I also think there should be a place where degree students could congregate in the college building. Even for quiet study or just to chill between classes.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“A university representative in the college office would be useful.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

Only a very small minority of respondents were studying **part-time** and overall, the open-ended comments they made throughout the survey, not only to this question, give the impression that they can feel **marginalised**, a sentiment that appears to underlie this suggestion about what more universities might do:

*“Remember about students that are working full time and studying part time.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

For those students who had entered one of the ELRAH HEIs from a **non-ELRAH college**, **missing out** on the local college-universities support activities was an issue:

*“Probably have more links with students that plan to come to your university from further afield. I felt that there was no support for me....I went along to some [at local universities] but they were not relevant to my course ...Even just more info for the students would be great, such as sending the other colleges some literature so they know you are there and you are an option. Clarifying expectations with the course leaders would be useful too.” (HNC student entered 1st year)*

### **With hindsight - students’ advice to others considering degree study**

At the very end of the questionnaire, students had the opportunity to write in their own comments about their experience of moving from HN to degree study and also to offer advice to current HN students who might be considering degree study. It is striking the extent to which they responded to this invitation with over half offering comments, and especially advice, and most doing so at some length – their text ran to 22 pages.

The majority of students who made comments **offered encouragement** to current HN students to **go on to degree study** but often with the proviso **so long** as they were prepared to **work hard** and had a **real interest** in the subject.

*“The transition is made out to be this big and scary thing that you should be worried about. Truth is; it's not. As long as you work hard and come prepared then the transition will be easy.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“I would say that the main thing is to emphasize that a degree is a lot of work and only to go for it if you want to put the work in.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Certainly it is a step up - there is no escaping that. There is a lot of dedication required, and although it is more work it is what I had come to expect in attending university. I would say that if you want it, if you really want it and you are prepared to put the work and hours in then you should go for it. If you are doing it because you want another year or two of being a student, don't bother you are wasting funding that can potentially be of value if you decide to apply for a course you genuinely want to do in the future.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“At first i was rather nervous to attend as i was going straight into 2nd year. Regarding the course work itself. It can be rather tough and hard going at times but mostly it hasn't been too bad...if you have the hard work ethic and want the degree, it is achievable.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

Students suggested that current HN students should **research their possible degree programme(s)** and begin to **plan ahead for it:**

*“Plan a lot, check the course content of the degree you want to study against what you are actually doing in college. Take all extra classes that are available.”* (HND student entered 2nd year)

*“To really find out all the different classes that the course contains to make sure you know exactly what you will be studying and if you can handle it. Also to speak to students who are already on the course and how they are finding it.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Ask your college tutors how closely your academic work matches university level and if it is very different ask someone for advice/practice writing in the new style.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“To those coming into uni from college, I would say research what is expected of you, has your college fully prepared you to the styles and workload needed at university level.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

The idea of finding out more about the degree programme was related to another piece of advice from current students to try and do as much **preparatory work in advance** of **starting** their degree and get a head start:

*“The main tips I would give to someone ....would be try and find out what work you can do over the summer so that you don't have a heavier work load.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“The best advice I could give anyone moving onto to degree study from an HN course is to be well prepared. By preparing I mean ...in advance of the course start date start to read through the books to get a feel for the content. Take notes if you can.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“For future students, I would say ...try to find more information on what your course will cover, and possibly read up on some of the subjects prior to starting. and good luck!”* (HNC student entered 1st year)

In many comments students urged those currently studying HNC/Ds to take advantage of any **pre-entry preparatory activities** at college and university:

*“I wish I had taken more advantage of some of the services and talks the college provided before I left.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“I would recommend finding out and attending workshops about the transition, as well as workshops about writing essays, referencing, and other relevant skills you will need.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Take advantage of any summer schools available during the transition period. It was very valuable to me. If you lack in any particular skills don't be afraid to ask. Skills like referencing, essay writing, report writing, researching and note taking skills etc.; these are not something that you can just develop. You have to learn them independently and if you already have some of these skills it is highly recommended to practice before you start the degree course. Or take advantage of the summer schools as a refresher.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Make sure you go to all the university open days as it gives you a proper feeling for the place and enables you to ask questions face to face.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I would recommend a few trips to the university, and if possible sit in on a lecture.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

In a similar vein, HN students were advised by current students to **take up the induction** and other provision offered to students on entry to their degree study:

*“If your university offers any induction days for college students, they are well worth going to. You get lots of tips/advice and it's a chance to get to meet other people. They [induction days] help with a lot of the practical stuff (finding your way around, how the time-table works etc) that a lot of people on my inductions had been worrying about.”* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*“I would recommend that they make use of any induction sessions; familiarise themselves with the campus and library in particular; find out points of contact for certain difficulties - know that there is advice for study techniques, finance, etc.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Make sure that you hit the ground running ...try and attend a few freshers nights out to make yourself some new friends in case there isn't a large number of you who are successful in getting to university. It will really help you out in the long run, especially if you're having to do group projects.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Find out how to do the basics quickly. do this by attending workshops and seeking advice.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

A number of students pointed out the **learning support available** at university and that they should not hesitate to use it:

*“And make use of your university's student learning services, they really help.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“Just don't be afraid to ask for support. I went from being, what I thought was, a very strong student at college to somebody struggling badly at university. But with the support I sought out and received I am gradually getting on top of things.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“There are support networks in place, such as the ELS [Effective Learning Service], and academic development tutors, so I highly recommend using these facilities, especially if you ever feel like coursework is getting you down. Your PAT [Personal Academic Tutor] can be so helpful too, and will listen to anything you have to say, about your course or otherwise.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Asking for help from the LRC [Learning Resource Centre] whether it be about essay writing or references which I struggled with at first then was told about write and cite booklet at the induction week that was very helpful.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

While many comments concerned the need for independent study and the much reduced level of individual contact with staff, nevertheless, another theme of the suggestions made was that staff are responsive and will help students experiencing difficulty but students need to be **proactive** and **approach staff with any questions** or difficulties sooner rather than later: :

*“If you are stuck with something just ask your lecturers at the start and don't wait until it's too late.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“I think its important to remember that although the class sizes are vastly bigger in university the lectures are willing to help and listen if you reach out to them, so as not to be so isolated.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“... and if they have any questions no matter what, even if they think it might be silly, just to ask.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Don't be scared to ask Lecturers or other staff questions at the University they are willing to help you and want you to do well.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

The need for a much **greater level of independent study** or what was frequently referred to as ‘self study’ and the need to work extensively outside of lectures etc was probably the most common theme. It was a feature of degree study that current students thought that prospective students had to be aware of and, if possible, try and prepare themselves for:

*“The amount of self study to learn a subject is also very much increased. Most of the learning on HN can be achieved in-class with work done outside class 'firming up' what you have been taught. At Uni you are given information (sometimes just 'headlines' of subjects) and you must research and teach yourself. Something I found difficult after the hand-holding at college.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“University is nothing like college. It is so much more work as you have to self teach most of the time. You have to constantly revise and there is hardly any one on one sessions with lecturers like you can do at college.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“Try to practice independent study and get out of the habit of expecting everything to be given to you because you won't get that at university.”* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*“The most important advice I could give to the new students is to make sure that self-studying is the key to success in this new environment because the lectures and tutorials won't be enough.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

*“It is a totally different style of learning, you will have a lot more time away from the classroom but don't let this fool you, you're meant to be studying in it. Make sure you keep on track. I attend university everyday but some days only for one hour so there is plenty of opportunity.”* (HNC student entered 1st year)

*“Make sure you put in the extra work and do the extra required reading because it's going to help you out when it comes to test and exams. This is where most of your knowledge will come from. Some of it is given to you but the majority you have to go out and find for yourself so make sure you're prepared to do that.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

Related to the advice to be prepared for the extent of independent study was very strong advice about the need to **be organised** and the critical need for **good time management** to cope with the workload:

*“My advice would be to be organised for seminars, lectures and ask for help when needed. Also time management is a huge factor in that I've found a lot of my course work has been due in for submission on the same week or having a week apart.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“I discovered that time management is far more important at university than college due to the work-load you have concurrently.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“... if you'd rather leave the work until the last minute and pull it out the bag before hand-ins, university will become a struggle. Time management and studying are key to keeping on top of the coursework. Other than that I'd recommend direct entry to university to any other college student considering it.”* (HND student entered 3rd year)

*“And NEVER leave things until the last minute. Everyone knows this and does it anyway - I have already - and it was ok in high school and college but isn't now.... in solo work (especially reports) you need to do it before the deadline. Not all of it, but plan and research early, do some parts some days, because redrafting and references are a massive part of a report.”* (HNC student entered 2nd year)

**Differences between college and university in the extent and scheduling of assessments** and greater strictness in **enforcing deadlines** were aspects that students thought prospective students should be aware of:

*“In HNC, we got assessments every now and then but at University, we get them every week. Improved time management is essential as the workload piles on faster than you expect and*

*before you know it, you are knee deep in reports and coursework while being given assessments to study for.” (HNC student entered 1st year)*

*“make sure that you meet deadlines for assessments, compared to college, University is far more strict on timing.” (HNC student entered 1st year)*

*“the deadlines are a bit sooner than on the HN, the different modules don't communicate to spread the different deadlines out, so there's usually a lot all at once too.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

The **extent of group work** at university compared with college was a surprise to many students and some made suggestions about how to cope with this:

*“Another thing are group works/presentations. Synergize. Don't rush your group mates on the first week, get to know them first, be-friend them even. I think it's good to have a nice relationship with them before working on a presentation, arrange time to suit everyone and don't exclude any one of them. Finish presentations early so as to avoid panicking and arguments. I know from personal experience that it's really hard to work with someone you barely speak to.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

*“I know it's obvious saying ‘do work before the last minute’... but a lot of the time you could be working in groups and if you're behind, they're behind. And 9 times out of 10 they won't hesitate and just throw you out the group because people don't wait around.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

Students emphasised the value of **making friends and being supportive** to other students, not just for the social side but as essential for mutual support and help with study:

*“Make friends as soon as possible this will help a lot because they can help if your struggling.” (HND student entered 2nd year)*

*“Friends are nice to have at uni but in some cases they are needed and are useful because you need to ask one of your friends a question about your work sometimes. The lecturers can't always be there to help you and everyone will need help at some point.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

*“Support your fellow students in work - they will also support you.” (HNC student entered 2nd year)*

A useful piece of specific advice offered was that prospective students should not rush to buy books but to save money by **using the university library instead and online sources**:

*“Use the library books I have spent a fortune on books that I've only needed to read one chapter out of, the libraries are well stocked so take advantage.” (HNC student entered 1st year)*

*“Do not worry about books, there are library materials and online materials available for free that are very suitable.” (HND student entered 3rd year)*

## Appendix 1: Additional Tables

**Table A1.1:** Universities attended by respondents

	Number	%
Edinburgh Napier	154	51
Queen Margaret	71	23
Heriot-Watt	55	18
Stirling	23	8
	(303)	(100)

**Table A1.2:** Location of study

		%
College based		10
University based		90
	(n)	(296)

**Table A1.3:** Sex of respondents

		%
male		40
female		60
	(n)	(294)

**Table A1.4:** Age of respondents

		%
under 20		18
20-24		48
25-29		17
30-39		11
40-49		5
50-59		1
60+		-
	(n)	(298)

**Table A1.5: Age of respondents by HN qualification**

	HNC %	HND %
under 20	27	11
20-24	46	50
25-29	14	19
30-39	7	13
40-49	3	6
50-59	2	1
60+	1	-
	(n) (121)	(172)

**Table A1.6: Mode of study**

	%
full-time	96
part-time	5
	(n) (286)

**Table A1.7: HN qualification**

	%
HNC	41
HND	59
	(n) (303)

**Table A1.8: College where respondents had gained their HN**

	%
ELRAH	66
other Scottish	34
not Scottish	-
	(n) (303)

**Table A1.9: Year in which HN gained**

	%
2011	85
Before 2011	15
	(n) (296)

**Table A1.10: University/Degree course of respondents (JACS2 coding\*)**

	%
B Health, subjects allied to Medicine	8
C Biological & Sports Sciences	8
G Mathematical & Computing Sciences	12
H Engineering	6
J Technologies	3
K Architecture, Building & Planning	3
L Social Sciences	8
M Law	2
N Business & Administration studies	32
P Mass Communications and Documentation	3
W Creative Arts & Design	15
Other	1
	<i>(n)</i> <i>(302)</i>

\* JACS2 is the Joint Academic Coding System used for subject coding of provision across higher education in the UK by UCAS and HESA

**Table A1.11: Why did you decide to apply to University/degree study?**

	%
It was the natural progression from my HN course	64
It fitted in with my career plans	70
I was interested in the course content/subject	61
I enjoy being a student	24
It was suggested to me by staff in my college	14
I was encouraged by my family	11
I was encouraged by my friends/classmates	4
A lot of my friends/class mates were applying	6
I couldn't find a job	5
Other	5
[Always planned to after taking a break from studying]*	[30]
	<i>(n)</i> <i>(300)</i>

\*Only students who had gained their HN before 2011 (n=43)

**Table A1.12: Continuity of subject studied: articulating and non-articulating students**

Is your HN qualification in the same subject as your degree?	Non-				
	All	Articulating	articulating	HNC	HND
	%	students	students	students	students
		%	%	%	%
Yes	56	68	35	51	58
Partly	34	30	44	34	36
No	10	3	22	16	6
	<i>(n)</i> <i>(302)</i>	<i>(131)</i>	<i>(165)</i>	<i>(122)</i>	<i>(175)</i>

**Table A1.13:** Reasons for non-articulating applications\* (% within HN level)

	HN Qualification		
	HNC	HND	
I thought I would struggle academically in 2 <sup>nd</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) year	37	37	
I wanted the full university experience/more time at university	46	23	
I thought it would be easier to make friends	29	7	
The course I wanted to do was only partly related/not related to my HN qualification	32	30	
The university wouldn't accept me to 2 <sup>nd</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) year	12	26	
I didn't know I could apply for entry to 2 <sup>nd</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) year if I had an HNC (HND)	18	16	
My friends/classmates were applying to 1 <sup>st</sup> or 2 <sup>nd</sup> year	4	2	
I was advised by my college not to apply to 2 <sup>nd</sup> (3 <sup>rd</sup> ) year	6	7	
Other	6	2	
	(n)	(68)	(43)

\* ie students with HNC applying to 1st year and students with HND applying to 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> year

**Table A1.14:** How much information and advice received at college about degree and university choice

	a lot %	some %	a little %	none %
... choosing a degree course?	24	37	25	14
... choosing a university?	28	27	25	20
... how to apply/about UCAS?	41	26	22	11
... how your HN qualification would link with your degree course?	30	31	21	18
... the options available on your degree course?	19	31	25	25
(N= 295 -298)				

**Table A1.15:** How much information and advice received at college about degree study

	a lot %	some %	a little %	none %
... general study skills for your degree study?	19	38	25	17
... writing essays and reports?	22	37	27	15
... how to do referencing?	18	28	24	30
... lab work?	17	16	21	46
... using electronic and on-line tools used at university eg VLE, e-portfolios, MSM?	15	21	23	42
... using the university library?	12	15	27	46
... the type of assessment on degree courses?	9	24	28	39
... the personal support services available at university eg counselling, additional support needs?	13	24	26	38
(N= 295-300 )lab work n = 224				

**Table A1.16: Sources of information and advice while at college**

	%
advice from tutors	43
advice from students advisers/guidance counsellor at college	17
visit to university	63
<i>(visit before applying only)</i>	(19)
<i>(visit after applying only)</i>	(25)
<i>(visit before and after)</i>	(19)
HE Fair/HE day	7
friends	37
talks about your degree course from academic university staff visiting the college	27
workshop on UCAS application	17
UCAS personal statement workshop	15
encouraged to use on line material	18
introduction to the university library	8
peer mentors from the university	5
workshops on study skills (eg Prepare Programme, Get set for University)	11
term time special classes or courses for students going on to university	3
extra classes to cover topics you would need on your degree course	4
summer courses for students going on to university	2
University newsletter for direct entrant applicants	13
Other	6
	<i>(n)</i>
	<i>(290)</i>

**Table A1.17:** If students who thought they had been well prepared for degree study by extent of information and advice received at college

Information & advice received at college on:	Quite/very well prepared for degree study %
general study skills for your degree study:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	48
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	76
writing essays and reports:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	51
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	77
how to do referencing:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	56
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	73
lab work:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	
using electronic and on-line tools used at university:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	55
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	78
using the university library:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	58
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	81
the type of assessment on degree courses:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	57
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	77
the personal support services available at university:	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	59
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	74
choosing a degree	
<i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	51
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	72

**Table A1.18:** If change from HN to degree was quite/very difficult by the amount of information and advice received while at college

<b>Information &amp; advice received at college on:</b>	<b>Change was quite/very difficult %</b>
general study skills for your degree study: <i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	61
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice</i>	38
writing essays and reports: <i>little/no info &amp; advice</i>	58
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice:</i>	40
using electronic and on-line tools used at university <i>little/no info &amp; advice:</i>	53
<i>some/lot info &amp; advice:</i>	39

**Table A1.19:** Main areas students found difficulty with in their degree (% responding some or a lot of difficulty)

	<b>Some/ lot of difficulty %</b>
... methods of teaching	40
... how much you're expected to study on your own	44
... work being harder than expected	38
... not knowing about a topic that other students have already done	40
... level of knowledge required on your course	31
... organising your time between study and other commitments	44
... type and level of assessments	41
... timing of assessments	32
... feedback on assessments	31
... finance	39

**Table A1.20:** Main areas students found difficulty with in their degree 2 (% responding some or a lot of difficulty)

<b>Since you've started your degree, have you had any particular difficulties relating to...</b>	<b>A lot of difficulty %</b>	<b>Some difficulty %</b>	<b>A little difficulty %</b>	<b>No difficulty %</b>
... university ICT systems eg e-library, e-timetabling, electronic submission of work	6	15	26	53
... the large size of lectures	3	13	22	63
... tutorials	2	12	24	63
... lab work	2	10	15	73
... travel	8	16	21	55
... social/making friends	6	13	21	60
... finding your way around	2	12	27	59
... finance	15	25	23	38
... other area	5	6	6	84

**Table A1.21:** Variation across universities in the areas students found difficulties with (% some/lot of difficulty)

	All %	Uni 1 %	Uni 2 %	Uni 3 %	Uni 4 %
Type and level of assessments	41	37	57	35	36
not knowing about a topic other students had already done.	40	39	49	41	18
	(n)	(154)	(71)	(55)	(23)

**Table A1.22:** Awareness of and attendance at workshops and courses since starting degree

	Yes %	No %	Didn't know about them %
oral presentations	14	62	24
academic essay writing	21	59	21
referencing	28	53	19
writing reports	16	63	21
reflective journal writing	7	67	26
critical thinking	11	65	25
group work	13	62	25
using ICT in your studies eg virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	14	62	24
how to use the library	45	40	15
researching a topic	21	58	20
time management	11	68	22
<i>(N= 287- 292)</i>			

**Table A1.23:** Lack of awareness of workshops and courses (% didn't know about them)

<i>Didn't know about these workshops or courses</i>	All %	Uni 1 %	Uni 2 %	Uni 3 %	Uni 4 %
oral presentations	24	20	18	43	22
academic essay writing	21	18	13	42	17
referencing	19	16	14	37	10
writing reports	21	18	13	39	26
reflective journal writing	26	23	22	40	27
critical thinking	25	22	19	38	23
group work	25	22	22	37	27
on line courses on using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	24	23	17	38	24
how to use the library	15	13	15	23	9
researching a topic	20	17	17	37	14
time management	22	18	16	36	23

**Table A1.24:** Workshops and courses attended since starting degree by university (% attending)

	All %	Uni 1 %	Uni 2 %	Uni 3 %	Uni 4 %
oral presentations	14	9	23	15	17
academic essay writing	21	11	38	15	44
referencing	28	23	38	23	43
writing reports	16	8	36	11	17
reflective journal writing	7	5	8	9	18
critical thinking	11	8	9	15	27
group work	13	9	19	20	9
on line courses on using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	14	9	19	21	14
how to use the library	45	39	59	40	55
researching a topic	21	16	30	19	32
time management	11	8	18	9	14

**Table A1.25:** Students' opinion of workshops attended (% stating quite or very useful)

	Quite/Very useful %
oral presentations	88
academic essay writing	91
referencing	93
writing reports	88
reflective journal writing	83
critical thinking	84
group work	81
using ICT in your studies eg virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	82
how to use the library	91
researching a topic	92
time management	84

**Table A1.26:** Awareness and use of online or computer based materials

	Yes %	No %	Didn't know about them %
Presentations	55	25	20
academic essay writing	52	29	19
Referencing	65	20	15
group work	38	39	24
on line courses on using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	41	37	22
how to use the library	46	35	19
researching a topic	53	26	21
time management	22	52	27
other	8	52	40

**Table A1.27:** Use of online or computer based support materials by university

Yes, used online or computer based materials to help with...	All %	Uni 1 %	Uni 2 %	Uni 3 %	Uni 4 %
referencing	65	62	74	51	91
group work	38	28	44	57	32
on line courses on using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	41	37	41	57	36

**Table A1.28:** Students' opinion of online or computer based support used (% stating quite or very useful)

	Quite/very useful %
presentations	94
academic essay writing	89
referencing	91
group work	84
using ICT in your studies eg virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc	89
how to use the library	86
researching a topic	91
time management	79

## Appendix 2: Student Questionnaire

### Did you study an HNC or HND at a college in Scotland before starting your degree? Did you start your degree in September 2012?

If you did, we really hope that you'll complete this survey, your answers are needed to help colleges and universities plan services for you and other students who are moving on to degree study after taking an HNC or HND.

Fill in the survey now and you'll be in with a chance to **WIN 1** of **15 VOUCHERS** to spend in amazon.co.uk's massive store. Up for grabs in our great prize draw are 15 vouchers @ £20 - closing date: **24th December 2012**.

The survey should take no more than 15 minutes to complete.

All the information you have provided will be treated in confidence. It will only be used by members of the project for the purposes of research about students going on to degree studies. No information on any individual will appear in any report or be passed on to any college, university or other body.

If you have any queries about the survey, please contact

Cathy Howieson  
Edinburgh University  
c.howieson@ed.ac.uk  
tel: 0131 651 6241

**Please indicate if you are**

*male*  *female*

**What age group are you in?**

*under 20*  *25-29*  *40-49*  *60+*   
*20-24*  *30-39*  *50-59*

**Are you studying?**

*full-time*  *part-time*

**What is the name of your degree course?**

*(list of degree courses)*

*Other, please say what*

**What is the name of your HN qualification?**

*(list of HN qualifications)*

*Other, please say what*

**Which college did you obtain your HN qualification from?**

*... Adam Smith College*

*... Jewel and Esk College*

*... Borders College*

*... Oatridge College*

*... Carnegie College*

*... Stevenson College Edinburgh*

*... Edinburgh's Telford College*

*... West Lothian College*

*... Forth Valley College*

*... Other College*

**If you got your HN qualification from another college, please select the relevant one from the list below**

*(list of colleges not noted above)*

**Did you gain your HN qualification ...?**

*... in 2011*

*... before 2011*

**Is your HN qualification in the same subject as your degree programme?**

*yes*

*no*

*partly*

**Why did you decide to apply to university/for degree study?**

*(please tick the top 3 reasons)*

*it was the natural progression from my HN course*

*it was suggested to me by staff in my college*

*it fitted in with my career plans*

*I couldn't find a job*

*always planned to after taking a break from studying*

*I was encouraged by my family*

*I was interested in the course content/subject*

*I enjoy being a student*

*I was encouraged by my friends/classmates*

*Other*

*a lot of my friends/classmates were applying*

*Other, please say more*

**Thinking back to when you started your HNC/D, did you plan to go on to degree study if you were successful in your HNC/D?**

*(please tick one box)*

*no, hadn't any plans to do so when I started*

*I was thinking about it as a serious possibility*

*it was only a vague possibility in my mind*

*yes, it was my definite plan from the start*

*I was thinking about it along with other options but wasn't sure*

*I didn't know then that it was possible to go on to a degree*

**If you didn't plan to go on to degree study when you started your HNC/D, when did you decide to do so?**

*(please tick one box)*

- |                           |                          |                        |                          |
|---------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------|
| early on in my HNC/D      | <input type="checkbox"/> | at the end of my HNC/D | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| part way through my HNC/D | <input type="checkbox"/> | after I got my results | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**Which HN qualification do you have?**

- HNC  HND

**If you have an HNC, how many credits do you have?**

- 12 credits  15 credits  not sure

**If you have an HNC, which year of study at degree level did you apply for?**

- 1st year  2nd year

**If you applied to 1st year, why was this?**

*(please tick all that apply)*

- |   |                          |  |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| I didn't know I could apply for entry to 2nd year if I had an HNC | <input type="checkbox"/> | I was advised by my college not to apply to 2nd year                                 | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| the university wouldn't accept me to 2nd year                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | I wanted the full university/degree experience                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I thought I would struggle academically in 2nd year               | <input type="checkbox"/> | the course I wanted to do was only partly related/not related to my HN qualification | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I thought it would be easier to make friends                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| my friends/classmates were applying to 1st year                   | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |                          |
| Other, please explain   |                          | _____  |                          |

**If you have an HND, which year of study at degree level did you apply for?**

- 1st year  2nd year  3rd year

**If you applied to 1st or 2nd year, why was this?**

*(please tick all that apply)*

- |   |                          |  |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| I didn't know I could apply for entry to 3rd year if I had an HND | <input type="checkbox"/> | I was advised by my college not to apply for 3rd year                                | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| the university wouldn't accept me to 3rd year                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | I wanted the full university/degree experience                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I thought I would struggle academically in 2nd/3rd year           | <input type="checkbox"/> | the course I wanted to do was only partly related/not related to my HN qualification | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I thought it would be easier to make friends                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| my friends/classmates were applying to 1st or 2nd year            | <input type="checkbox"/> |  |                          |
| Other, please explain   |                          | _____  |                          |

**Which year of degree study did you enter?**

- 1st year  2nd year  3rd year

**On reflection, do you think the year that you've started at is the right one for you?**

yes  no  not sure

*Please say more*

---

**When you were doing your HNC/D at college, how much information and advice did you receive about ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>a lot</i>	<i>some</i>	<i>a little</i>	<i>none</i>	<i>not wanted/not relevant</i>
<i>... choosing a degree course?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... choosing a university?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... UCAS application?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... how your HN qualification would link with your degree course?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... the options available on your degree course?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**When you were doing your HNC/D at college, how much information and advice did you receive about ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>a lot</i>	<i>some</i>	<i>a little</i>	<i>none</i>	<i>not wanted/not relevant</i>
<i>... general study skills for your degree study?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... writing essays and reports?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... how to do referencing?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... lab work?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... the electronic and on-line tools used at university eg VLE, e-portfolios, MSM?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... using the university library?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... the type of assessment on degree courses?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... the personal support services available at university eg counselling, additional support needs?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**How did you get the above information and advice while at college?**

*(please tick all that apply)*

<i>visit to university before applying</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>visit to university after applying (eg Applicant Day)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>talks about your degree course from university staff visiting the college HE Fair/HE Day</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>class talks from UCAS Adviser in college</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>UCAS application workshop</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>personal statement workshop</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>workshops on study skills/academic skills (eg referencing, library skills, essay writing etc)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>extra classes to cover topics you would need on your degree course</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>term time special classes or courses for students going on to university (eg Prepare Programme, Get set for University Workshop)</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>summer courses for students going on to university</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

- visit to the university library
- used online material (eg SPICE UK; preparing for university pages on college or university websites)
- from tutors
- from student adviser/guidance counsellor etc at college
- from friends
- from peer mentors from the university
- university newsletter for Direct Entrant Applicants
- other
- Other, please say more \_\_\_\_\_

**What else could your college have done to make the move to degree study as easy as possible for you?**

---

**Before you started your degree, how well prepared did you feel?**

- very well prepared  quite well prepared  not very well prepared  not at all prepared

**Looking back now, how well prepared were you for your degree (study)?**

- very well prepared  quite well prepared  not very well prepared  not at all prepared

**How have you found the change from HN to degree?**

- very easy  quite easy  quite difficult  very difficult
- Please say more \_\_\_\_\_

**Since you've started your degree, have you had any particular difficulties relating to ...**

(please tick one box on each line)

	<i>a lot of difficulty</i>	<i>some difficulty</i>	<i>a little difficulty</i>	<i>no difficulty</i>
... methods of teaching?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... how much you're expected to study on your own?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... type and level of assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... timing of assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... feedback on assessments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... meeting assessment deadlines?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... using the library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... work being harder than expected?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... not knowing about a topic that other students have already done?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... the level of knowledge required on your course?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
organising your time between study and other commitments?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If other, please explain _____				

**Since you've started your degree, have you had any particular difficulties relating to ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>a lot of difficulty</i>	<i>some difficulty</i>	<i>a little difficulty</i>	<i>no difficulty</i>
<i>... university ICT systems eg e-library, e-timetabling, electronic submission of work?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... the large size of lectures?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... tutorials?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... lab work?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... travel?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... social/making friends?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... finding your way around?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... finance?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... other?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If other, please explain*

---

**Which university are you studying at or taking your degree through?**

<i>Edinburgh Napier</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>Stirling</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Queen Margaret</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<i>other</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Heriot-Watt</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>		

**Have you ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>didn't know about it/them</i>
<i>... attended a 'Making a Successful Start' Workshop?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... attended a Direct Entrant Induction programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... attended any Freshers Week events?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... attended any 'Getting Started' workshops?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... taken part in the 'Signposts for Success' programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... heard about the 'Confident Futures' programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... used the SPICE online study skills resource?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... used the student mentoring scheme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you attended or used any of these events or programmes, how useful have you found them?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>very useful</i>	<i>quite useful</i>	<i>not very useful</i>	<i>not at all useful</i>	<i>didn't attend/use this one</i>
<i>a Welcome Workshop?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>a Direct Entrant Induction programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Freshers Week events?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>'Get Started for University Study' workshops?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>the 'Signposts for Success' programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>the SPICE online study skills resource?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>the peer mentoring scheme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please say more</i>					

---

**Have you ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>yes</i>	<i>no</i>	<i>didn't know about it/them</i>
<i>... attended a Direct Entrant Induction programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... attended any other Induction Week activities?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... attended any Freshers Week events?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... taken part in the QMU Advance Programme (university orientation)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... taken part in the QMU e-portfolio scheme (personal development scheme)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... used the QMConnect MentorNet scheme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>... used the QMConnect student mentoring scheme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you've attended or used any of these events or programmes, how useful have you found them?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	<i>very useful</i>	<i>quite useful</i>	<i>not very useful</i>	<i>not at all useful</i>	<i>didn't attend/use this one</i>
<i>the Direct Entrant Induction programme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>other Induction Week activities?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>any Freshers Week events?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>the QMU Advance Programme (university orientation)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>the QMU e-portfolio scheme (personal development scheme)?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>the QMConnect student mentoring scheme?</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please say more</i>					

---

**Have you ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	yes	no	didn't know about it/them
... attended a Direct Entrant Induction programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... attended any other Induction Week activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... attended any Freshers Week events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... taken part in the PDP@HNU programme (personal development planning)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you've attended or used any of these events or programmes, how useful have you found them?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	very useful	quite useful	not very useful	not at all useful	didn't attend/use this one
a Direct Entrant Induction programme?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other Induction Week activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Freshers Week events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the PDP@HNU programme (personal development planning)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please say more</i>					

---

**Have you ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	yes	no	didn't know about it/them
... attended welcome and information sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... attended Induction events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... used the STEER student mentoring system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you've attended or used any of these events or programmes, how useful have you found them?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	very useful	quite useful	not very useful	not at all useful	didn't attend/use this one
welcome and information sessions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Induction events?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
the STEER student mentoring system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>Please say more</i>					

---

**Have you attended any workshops or courses on the following since you started your degree study?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	yes	no	didn't know about them
oral presentations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
academic essay writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
referencing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reflective journal writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
critical thinking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
group work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
using ICT in your studies eg virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
how to use the library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
researching a topic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
time management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If other, please explain*

---

**If you've attended any of these workshops or courses, how useful have you found them?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	very useful	quite useful	not very useful	not at all useful	didn't attend this one
oral presentations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
academic essay writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
referencing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
writing reports?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
reflective journal writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
critical thinking?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
group work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
using ICT in your studies eg virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
how to use the library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
researching a topic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
time management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If other, please explain*

---

**If you're studying for your degree at college, where would you prefer these workshops and courses to be held?**

<i>on the college campus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>on the university campus</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>not sure</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<i>not applicable, I'm studying at university</i>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Have you used any online or computer based materials since you started your degree study to help with the following ...**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	yes	no	didn't use this one
... presentations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... academic essay writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... referencing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... group work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... using ICT in your studies online courses on using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... how to use the library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... researching a topic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... time management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
... other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If other, please explain*

---

**If you've used any online or computer based materials, how useful have you found them?**

*(please tick one box on each line)*

	very useful	quite useful	not very useful	not at all useful	didn't use this one
presentations?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
academic essay writing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
referencing?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
group work?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
using ICT in your studies online courses on using the university virtual learning environment, e-portfolio, blogs etc?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
how to use the library?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
researching a topic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
time management?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
other?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*If other, please explain*

---

**What could the university do to develop its support for HNC/D students during their degree studies? What would you suggest?**

---

**What type of degree do you aim to graduate with?**

Ordinary	<input type="checkbox"/>	haven't decided yet	<input type="checkbox"/>
Honours	<input type="checkbox"/>	not sure of the difference between the two	<input type="checkbox"/>

**If you're not aiming for an Honours degree, or are not sure, why is this?**

*(please tick one box for your main reason)*

I've had enough of studying	<input type="checkbox"/>	I haven't gained the required grades	<input type="checkbox"/>
I can't afford another year of study	<input type="checkbox"/>	it will depend on my grades	<input type="checkbox"/>
I've too many other time commitments	<input type="checkbox"/>	an honours year is not available	<input type="checkbox"/>

an Honours degree isn't necessary for my  Other   
career plans

If other, please explain \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you think that the HNC/D route to degree study was right for you?**

yes  no  not sure

Please say more \_\_\_\_\_

**Are you studying for your degree at college rather than at university?**

yes  no

**Why did you decide to take a degree delivered through college rather than at university?**

(please tick the top 3 reasons)

- |  |                          |   |                          |
|--|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|
| the college is near where I live                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | it fitted better with my childcare/caring responsibilities  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| recommended by friends   | <input type="checkbox"/> | I thought class sizes would be smaller at college than at university                              | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| recommended by college   | <input type="checkbox"/> | I didn't think I would fit in at university   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I thought the teaching methods at college would suit me better | <input type="checkbox"/> | I decided after reading official course information eg prospectuses, publicity leaflets, websites | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| some of my friends were staying at college to do degrees       | <input type="checkbox"/> | other   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| I thought it would be cheaper                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> |   |                          |
| Other, please say more   |                          |   |                          |
- \_\_\_\_\_

**Do you think that taking your degree at college was the right choice for you?**

yes  no  not sure

Please say more \_\_\_\_\_

**Please use this space to tell us more about your experience as someone with an HN qualification who has moved onto degree study. We would be particularly interested in any advice you could pass onto current HN students who are considering degree study.**

\_\_\_\_\_

**Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.**

*All the information you have provided will be treated in confidence and used only for the purposes of research about students going on to degree studies. No information on any individual will appear in any report or be passed on to any college, university or other body.*

## Possible future research

We may undertake further research about HNs and degrees and may want to contact you again. If you don't want to be contacted, please tick this box.

## Entry to prize draws

Please tick this box if you wish to be entered for the prize draw

## Please add your contact details here

Name

---

Telephone  
number

---

Email address

---

*Your contact details will be kept confidential and will only be used to notify you if you win the prize draw (if you've entered it) and possibly to get in touch again if you've agreed to take part in any future research.*

## Contacts for information and advice

If you feel you would benefit from information or advice about any aspect of your degree study please contact:

Edinburgh Napier: Tom Campbell <[t.campbell@napier.ac.uk](mailto:t.campbell@napier.ac.uk)> 0131 455 2636

Heriot- Watt University: Keith MacAskill <[K.MacAskill@hw.ac.uk](mailto:K.MacAskill@hw.ac.uk)> 07913 483 712

Queen Margaret University: Keith MacAskill <[KMacAskill@gmu.ac.uk](mailto:KMacAskill@gmu.ac.uk)> 0131 474 0000

Stirling University: Tracey Kerr <[tracey.kerr@stir.ac.uk](mailto:tracey.kerr@stir.ac.uk)>

Adam Smith College: Susie Harris <[susieharris@adamsmith.ac.uk](mailto:susieharris@adamsmith.ac.uk)>

Carnegie College: Carole Mooney <[c.mooney@napier.ac.uk](mailto:c.mooney@napier.ac.uk)>

Edinburgh's Telford College: Mairi Taggart <[mairi.taggart@ed-coll.ac.uk](mailto:mairi.taggart@ed-coll.ac.uk)>

West Lothian College: Mairi Taggart <[mtaggart@west-lothian.ac.uk](mailto:mtaggart@west-lothian.ac.uk)>

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