



Student Success Toolbox

Project Title:

Student Success Toolbox for Flexible Learners:
Supporting Transitions from Thinking about Study to the First Weeks

Challenge

The project seeks to address the problem of effective transitions and the foundations for student success during the initial stages of the study lifecycle with a specific focus on flexible learners. In the context of this project a broad definition is adopted of flexible learners, which includes adult learners engaged in part-time and online/distance learning. Enhancing retention and completion rates of this group of flexible learners is a significant problem both globally and within the Irish context.

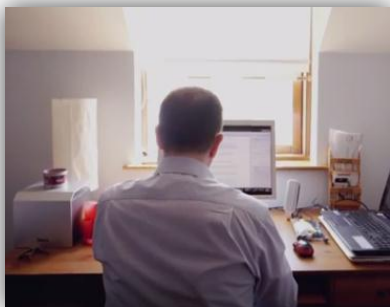
Solution

The particular focus of this project is on supporting flexible learners through key transitions in the early stages of the study lifecycle: from thinking about study, making choices, the registration process and through to the first few weeks. A basic premise of the project is that the foundations for student success start early in the study lifecycle, and that insufficient attention has been given in the literature and within institutions to the importance of the period before flexible learners formally commence their study. A related underlying assumption is that this crucial transition period may be enhanced by the availability of appropriately designed digital readiness and preparation tools, which help to scaffold both prospective students and those about to embark on part time or online/distance study for the first time.



Learning Impact Outcomes

This project has produced both a guide for the sector on how to improve flexible learner readiness, and a suite of digital readiness tools for the initial stages of the study lifecycle that will aid programme teams/institutions in facilitating part-time, flexible undergraduate learner transition into Higher Education. The project leverages digital technologies to establish new approaches to assist advisors in helping new applicants to assess their own readiness for part-time, flexible learning and in providing learners with relevant, timely feedback to enhance their chances of success. The digital tools developed through this project will impact on the ability of part-time, flexible learners to make a successful transition into Higher Education. The utilisation of these digital tools to increase student readiness, both by the learners who engage with certain tools and the discipline teams who will access the guidance tools and also choose, adapt and deploy tools for use with students as required on their programme, will aid in the fostering of a culture that fully embraces digital learning and digital innovation.



Return on Investment

The project's website can be found at www.studentsuccess.ie. This website is being used to disseminate the digital tools as well as project information and publications, and to facilitate national and international discussions on the project, specifically through the use of the linked twitter account @FLSuccess. The tools are available to programme teams/institutions to take, adapt and use through the most open Creative Commons licence, CC-BY.