

# ‘From Foundation Year to Undergraduate Degree, What Are the Factors That Enable Student Success?’

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## Abstract

Foundation years were introduced to upskill the UK population and to allow them to progress onto their chosen degrees (Doyle, 2003). However, there has been recent DfE scrutiny as to whether these foundation years are leading to student success and progression (DfE, 2019). Research highlights good retention and success in some foundation year institutions where retention has been between 75-85% (Johnson, 2018) and the number of entrants is rising (Ofs, 2019).

Student insight is needed in order to be able to develop and adapt future practice (Sambel, *et al.*, 2012) in maintaining student progress and successful transition (Johnson, 2018). Successful transition is of a particular concern when considering widening participation students and the challenges that may impact on their retention (HESA, 2021). For many students, understanding how to ‘play the academic game’ and adapting to the academic language and expectations can be challenging and can leave students feeling excluded.

A three-year study was conducted at the UoC to garner student and staff perspectives on what the key factors are for successful transition for foundation year students.

The study concluded that students and staff perceived the success of transition was due to the students changing to the HE identity, relationships built with staff, settling into the environment, and being sign posted to support services.

This poster presentation will demonstrate the findings and reflect on the diverse perspectives of the student and staff voice, along with analysing the practicalities of embedding these findings into pedagogical practice for any widening participation institution.

**Keywords:** higher education, perception, success, transition, widening participation