



# THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH

## Enhanced Academic Induction

### Divinity Bites 15<sup>th</sup> September 2014

**Session hosts:** Abby Shovlin and Jenna Mann (IAD)

**Induction Facilitators (students):** Tracy Docherty, Jen Telfer, Ruairidh Dalglish, Alexandra Jaber, Rebecca Walker, Jessica Woods, Kirsty Scott (off sick) and Tara Ennis (off sick)

**Induction Facilitator (staff):** Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka (EUSA)

**Background:** Divinity Pick ‘n’ Mix had been run as an induction event by AS in 2013. Divinity Bites was the new and improved version of this Enhanced Academic Induction in 2014.

#### Aims of the session:

- To be enjoyable
- To be useful and relevant for new Divinity students by giving them a flavour of some of the activities/contexts that they will be learning in.
- To allow students an opportunity to meet with their peers in an informal setting
- To allow students an informal space in which to ask more senior students questions
- To whet students’ appetites for their upcoming courses
- To encourage students to take a proactive approach to studying, learning and university life
- To build students’ confidence before classes begin (this session had a specific focus on tutorial skills building)

#### Feedback

<b>Key</b>
<b>Green: aims achieved</b>
<b>Orange: negative feedback</b>
<b>Yellow: what we could do differently next time</b>
<b>Pale blue: subject specific comments</b>
<b>Pink: feedback on presenter</b>

41 feedback sheets were received in total-56 students attended the session.

	Completely Agree	Somewhat agree	Neutral	Somewhat Disagree	Completely Disagree
<b>This was an enjoyable session</b>	25	12	1	3	0
<b>This session was helpful for me as a new students</b>	19	16	4	2	0
<b>This session allowed me an</b>	17	12	9	3	0

<b>opportunity to get to know my fellow students</b>					
<b>This session encouraged me to be proactive in my approach to studying, learning and university life</b>	16	18	7	0	0
<b>Would you recommend that the University hold more of these subject specific and activity based inductions for new students</b>	<b>Yes</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>No</b>		
	34	6	1		

### Free text Comments

<b>The best activity of today was:</b>
The small groups in which I got to meet and debate with lovely new people. I enjoy engaging with people intellectually, so I'm really pleased to think that this will be a regular event☺
The tutorial type session was brilliant as it gave me a taste of what to expect. Also the university challenge was good to get the group talking/discussing
Mock tutorial
University Challenge = competitive aspect
Tutorial practice: it gives more confidence
Tutorial exercise-ideas to order thoughts and arguments
Debate-good to hear differing opinions
The University challenge
Debate-introduced to tutorial setting
Practice tutorial
Practice tutorial
Tutorial session-this allowed everyone to voice their opinion
Sharing thoughts
The practice tutorial
Facts quiz-uni based questions
Debate in groups/kind of tutorials
Tutorial activity because it will be useful for the future
Debate/mini tutorial
University challenge-straight questions suit me better than discussions
Group debate. It was very useful to simulate what a tutorial would be. It is always interesting to hear other people's ideas
Group debate. It made our group have really in depth discussions and made me get to know people better.
The student panel. Their comments were helpful, informative and reassuring.
The debate, conversation and pizza
The quiz because it was fun and informative
The mock tutorials with our helpers (can't remember her name but she did 4 <sup>th</sup> year Psychology) and the pizza
Simulated tutorial. Why? Even though I have done science tutorials before, these were very different, so practice was appreciated

Pizza and tutorial
Tutorial (I like debating)
Tutorial discussion as it allowed me to see the range of thoughts others have
Friend making, always good☺
Tutorial taster
Debate/discussion
Debating and discussing topics
Talking and hearing from the current students
The debate-to hear different people's opinions on certain issues
Eating pizza
Pizza!
Free pizza and debating the questions
The quiz!
Eating pizza, mock tutorial and pizza
The debate, gave a good opportunity for discussion.
University challenge

<b>If you were designing an induction week for new students, which activities from today would you choose to feature? (please feel free to add in any ideas of your own):</b>
All (especially the pizza!)
Quiz = good icebreaker, team aspect and Contro topics = more detailed and relevant
Debate
The discussion thing but I would do it in the actual tutorial groups of this semester, because those are the people you wanna know and learn with.
Make sure people who study the same modules know each other and give more practical advice
University challenge and tutorial activities
University challenge and tutorial style activities
The tutorial style questions as they made me less scared of starting them
Tutorial style session
The tutorial, a game
I would just keep it the same
All
Who to ask about timetables! Still don't know
Something more on essays
Essay writing skills
All of them
All from today
The advice from current students
Quiz, tutorial (and pizza!)
Get more pizza!
Endless pizza-win those hearts
Debating the questions, quiz
More quizzes
Quiz, the sample tutorial and pizza
Practice tutorial, quiz
Tutorial activity, student panel
The group debate
The debate and a broader range of topics

Course specific social events
It worked well, the set up as was
Free food is always a winner, also perhaps increased induction with the tutors might be good – not if it detracts from their prep time !! 😊
N/A
Pizza, tutorial

<b>Would you recommend that we make any changes to the session?</b>
Have Divinity students be the group facilitators/mentors (or students from the same subject/school as the first years) as it would probably make discussions easier/flow better
Have one student from the School we're at. Would have helped to stir the pot of discussions.
Maybe also assistants who study in the School of Divinity
It would make more sense to do it with people from your course instead of your school
Students from the School of Divinity
Have 2nd-4th year students from the school of divinity to make the tutorial sessions more realistic
Students from our own school to give us more specific advice
Nothing significant- but difficult at times to hear with other groups in the same room
No
No
No
No
N/A
N/A
All good to me
It was very good!
Nope!
Nah it was good
None
No
Introduce essay writing skills. No quiz.
Little more info/FAQ e.g. on tutorials etc.
For the question time, if we put anonymous questions in a fish bowl to be answered by the panel that would be swell.
Make the discussion slightly longer, we only just got into it when we stopped
The quiz wasn't useful. Pizza was worth waiting through quiz though.
Food first? 2pm is late for lunch if you've been in since 9am.
Pizza at the start😊

**In order to plan and deliver this session, AS undertook the following tasks:**

- Review of last year's Divinity session (Divinity Induction: Pick n Mix, 2013)
- Consultation with Alison Jack, Director of Undergraduate Studies, and Karen Duncan (Student Support Assistant) in the School of Divinity
- Updated last year's University Challenge Quiz to reflect new developments in Student Support
- Planned mock tutorial session on 'controversial' topics in Divinity in collaboration with Alison Jack
- Advertised post of Student Induction Facilitators, recruited students and held briefing sessions
- Delivered the session along with JM who led the mini tutorial activity and plenary
- Booked pizza-was helped on the day by Kristin Hunger who met, welcomed and directed the students to the venue (Martin Hall) and ensured that the pizza was delivered and set out in Rainy Hall.
- Gathered feedback on the event-assisted by KH

**Comments from AS**

This was a successful session that included two significant enhancements from last year. In 2013, the Divinity Induction was facilitated by more staff than students and the aim for 2014's Induction was to redress this balance. This aim was achieved, as 6 out of the 7 groups facilitators were students, the 7<sup>th</sup> Group Facilitator was EUAS's Academic Engagement Coordinator, Tanya Lubicz-Nawrocka.

AJ suggested that new students would greatly benefit from the main focus of this year's session being the tutorial skills building exercise. 2014's session was designed accordingly, with the tutorial skills building activity lasting 30 minutes, the University Challenge Quiz taking 10 minutes at the beginning and the Student Panel lasting 15 minutes at the end. The feedback shows that a significant number of students commented positively on the benefits of the tutorial activity. As the tutorial learning environment is new to the majority of students and may take a while to adjust to, it is recommended that this remain the focus of next year's Enhanced Induction.

The Student Induction Facilitators performed an excellent job on the day-the session would not be possible without them. They brought a high level of enthusiasm and expertise in group facilitation ensuring the success of the event.

**Suggestions for improvement:**

As the feedback shows, a significant number of students requested that the Induction Facilitators are students from the School of Divinity. If possible, this would be a welcome enhancement to 2015's Induction. However, if this cannot be arranged for next year's Induction then the introduction to the tutorial activity should explain the benefits of having a facilitator that is from outside of your subject e.g. this person can bring a fresh perspective to the debate and all points have to be explained clearly so that people from outside your discipline can follow the debate.

## **Emails from A J:**

### **1. Dear Abby**

Many thanks for your contribution to our Induction Week programme. You brought lots of energy and expertise to our meetings, enabling our students to get to know each other, and to think about the sort of contribution they might make to tutorials in the year ahead- both very important!

Please pass on my thanks to your colleagues and facilitators, who also did a great job.

With best wishes  
Alison

2. Many thanks for this, Abby. Really fascinating comments from the students- and they obviously enjoyed the session and found it useful. Definitely one suggestion for next year would be to use Divinity students in some way, to offer advice and reassurance from an informed perspective (which is not to take away from the contribution of the student facilitators, who were well prepared and did a great job!).

All best wishes  
Alison

Student Induction Facilitators were asked if they would like to comment/provide feedback on the event:

### **Comments from Student Induction Facilitator Rebecca Walker:**

#### **Rebecca's Feedback**

I enjoyed being able to facilitate a group and was very impressed by how confident the group was. I think it's really important for new students to have a mock run of tutorials before they get started so it is not too intimidating. I felt the student panel worked well but felt a bit rushed at the end. Having said that, having pizza at the end gave the students an opportunity to ask questions individually which they may not have asked in a larger group.