UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHAMPTON

FACULTY OF LAW, ARTS AND SOCIAL SCIENCES

School of Education

The Use of Level 1 Skills-based Intervention Strategies to Influence Expectations and Improve the Student Learning Experience.

Volume 2 of 2

by

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List of Appendices

Appendix 1.1 A history of the UK skills debate

1.1.1 The UK skills debate 1964-2004

The debate on skills in British HE goes back 40 years. Drew & Bingham (1996, p.2) cite the 1964 establishment of the Council for National Academic Awards (CNAA) as having among its aims 'their [students'] problem solving skills'. This year also saw the Robbins Report (HMSO 1963) that, Barnett (1994) argues, marked the end of a transitional era when HE was seen as of cultural or personal benefit; from then it is perceived to be a form of economic investment. Bennett et al (2000) cite Robbins as one of the first contemporary sources to distinguish skills in HE, identifying cognitive skills (clarity of thought and analysis), communication, and inter-personal skills.

In the early 1960s, argues Barnett (1994), HE was still dominated by separate academic disciplines, while Bridges (1994) talks of the traditional liberal education pre-Robbins, and the advocacy of skills being a challenge to it; this is a fundamental theme in parts of the skills/competence literature but is not one I have wished to explore in this research.

By the 1980s, the emphasis was on developing 'a market-specific set of capacities' (Bridges ibid, p.86). As Bennett et al (2000) argue, there had been a paradigm shift in attitudes by Government and business towards the role of HE in the modern economy (UGC, 1984), reinforced by the 1987 White Paper *Higher Education: Meeting the Challenge*, by the RSA's *Education for Capability* initiative and by strong CBI support for skills development in HE to meet employers' needs.

Hence, by 1991, A UDACE publication was identifying learning outcomes that social science graduates should develop in three main areas: intellectual skills, personal skills and qualities, and communication and collaborative skills. The CNAA handbook (1991) also emphasised the importance of promoting transferable intellectual skills and problem solving skills.

A main reason for the emphasis on skills through a host of government initiatives since the 1980s (Appendix 1.4) has, therefore, been the increasing perception that HE exists, to a considerable extent, to prepare graduates for work, and hence enable the UK to compete effectively in the global economy, although this argument has also been applied in other countries such as Australia (Blunden 1996) and the US (Oblinger and Verville 1998). Evers et al (1998) argue that the move to flatter business organisational structures, following heavy delayering in the late 1980s/1990s, also created a need for a skilled workforce. Personal and intellectual development cannot be justified alone, it is argued, at a time of continuing massification of HE and a parallel reduction in the unit of resource. This debate was highlighted in Barnett (1994), reinforced by Harvey et al (1997) and continues to the present, as evidenced by Education Secretary Charles Clarke's April 2003 attack on learning for learning's sake. He argued that the state should not fund 'ornamental' subjects such as mediaeval history but rather should only pay for HE that had a clear usefulness (Batty 2003). This contribution followed the then-HE Minister Margaret Hodge's blaming poor quality or 'Mickey Mouse' courses, which she defined as lacking intellectual rigour and with too little relevance to the labour market, as the main reason for over-high student attrition (Thomson 2003).

Regular employers' surveys have also dominated the period since the 1980s, arguing that graduates need to develop transferable skills (or equivalent names), rather than just subject specific knowledge (Barnett, 1994). As noted in Chapter 1 Shepherd (2000) defines transferable skills as 'non-specific or general skills which, it is assumed, can be used in a wide variety applications and contexts'; I also apply this logic to the key skills of communication, numeracy and IT.

Parallel to employers surveys have been equally regular assertions that HE does not adequately prepare graduates for the world of work (Green, 1994; Harvey et al 1997, cited in Bennett et al, 2000), and increasingly regular claims that, as key stakeholders, employers have the right to challenge the curriculum and outcomes of HE (CBI/CIHE (1990); European Commission (1995); Woollard (1995); Assiter (1995); CVCP / CBI / CIHE joint declaration (1996); cited in Bennett et al (2000)). Jenkins and Walker (1994) argue that staff prefer subject boundaries and coherence and so give these priority over the development of transferable / employability skills which are more appropriate to student needs. However, Wolf (2002) casts doubt on the linkage between skills development and economic performance while Holmes (1995) has previously argued that Gubbay (1994) had demolished such arguments; still, however, they persist and have become received wisdom nationally and internationally.

A similar logic applies to FE with the development over the last 20 years of such qualifications and schemes as NVQ, GNVQ and YTS (Murphy 2001, Wolf 2002), the Dearing Report on Post-16 Qualifications (1996) and, most recently, the key skills qualification that is part of the Curriculum 2000 reform. My research focus on higher education, and a lack of space, precludes further development of this area.

1.1.2   The current position

This has resulted, Barnett (1994) argues, borrowing from Bernstein (1962), in the development of a "common set of market-related 'flexible' capacities" as typified by the government -backed Enterprise in HE Initiative for developing capability, which in turn built upon the RSA's 1979 Education for Capability Scheme; I have discussed this in Appendix 2.11. Barnett has concerns about the impact of this on the role of the university as a developer of knowledge rather than a servant of society (Assiter 1995).

The Dearing Report (1997) reinforced the Enterprise in HE Initiative, arguing that all students need to acquire knowledge and understanding of their programme, cognitive skills, subject-specific skills and the key skills of communication (spoken and written), numeracy, CIT and learning to learn, although the use of different terms to distinguish skills has contributed to the confusion surrounding definitions, rather than clarifying them. This shift in the power structure of society has moved HE from being in the wings, with control over its curriculum and motivated by the desire for knowledge and truth, to being centre stage, with the stakeholders, especially government and business, increasingly asserting influence over the curriculum through its need to serve corporatism, the economy and profit; what Barnett (1994) calls vocationalism in the curriculum.

Having said that, there is not always total agreement between government and business as to what the latter wants. For example, CVCP et al (1998) argues that what employers want from graduates and what they are willing to contribute to make that

possible often do not coincide. Bolton (2001), cites Dench, Perryman and Giles (1998), who argue that employers' surveys do not value highly the key skills that the government emphasises but rather want more emphasis on what are sometimes called 'soft skills' i.e. personal and inter-personal skills, customer service and understanding quality, and business awareness, not all of which are skills. Boyce et al (2001), however, use the term soft skills to describe generic or non-discipline specific skills. Hence government departments now supplement Dearing's 4 key skills with 'problem-solving' and 'working with others' (http://dfes.gov.uk).

As a consequence of Dearing (1997), the QAA produced its *Guidelines for Preparing Programme Specifications* p.3 (2000a). Using variations on Dearing's definitions, a programme specification should include information on transferable/key or transferable skills [communication, numeracy, information and teamwork - Dearing has learning to learn instead of teamwork]; intellectual / thinking [Dearing's cognitive] skills [e.g. understanding methodologies or ability in critical analysis] and practical [Dearing's subject specific] skills [e.g. laboratory skills] (ibid p.3); the links with UW's unit descriptor are apparent. It further argues that programme specifications should be used as an information source for a variety of end-users including employers, 'particularly about the skills and other transferable intellectual abilities developed by the programme'.

Various QAA Benchmark Statements (QAA, 2000b,c,d,e,f,g) representing 'general expectations about the standards of achievement and general attributes to be expected of a graduate in a given subject area' (QAA 2000a. p.3) reinforce the emphasis on skills, albeit again using differing terminologies such as 'subject-specific knowledge' and 'cognitive abilities and non-subject specific skills' (QAA, 2000b); 'subject knowledge and understanding' and 'subject-specific skills and other skills' (QAA, 2000c); 'relevant knowledge and understanding' and 'skills' (QAA, 2000d); and 'subject-specific abilities', general transferable intellectual skills' and 'key skills' (QAA, 2000f). Perhaps the simplest and most useful is QAA, 2000g, which merely lists all skills under one heading 'Skills for all Masters programmes'.

Murphy (2001) notes that, from 2002, students following A and AS level courses enter HE with key skills qualifications, and will have acquired UCAS points from key skills assessments. These may cover all six of the QCA's key skills [communication; application of number; IT; working with others; problem solving; and improving own learning and performance] or some combination. This follows the pattern established by students entering HE with Advanced GNVQs, now known as AVC Double Awards, who had to demonstrate reaching at least Level 3 in the first three key skills identified above. More recent changes to the National Qualifications Framework have recommended that students entering an HE course should achieve Level 2 in the first three key skills of IT, Application of number and Communication] and at least Level 3 in one of the six key skills, the others being Improving own performance and learning, Problem solving and Working with others.

The 2003 White Paper *The Future of Higher Education*, continues the emphasis on the vocationalism of courses and their skills development, talking of 'the role of HE in equipping the labour force with appropriate and relevant skills' (p.10) to boost productivity and hence UK global competitiveness, and arguing that 'a succession of employer surveys reveals concerns about the skills of graduates, particularly in terms

3

of communication and other 'soft' skills (p.15). For example, the SEEDA Skills Insight Business Needs / Competitiveness Survey 2002/03 (2003) cites for South-Eastern England, the three skills most in demand as spoken skills, customer-service skills and team-working. The White Paper also talks of ensuring all graduates, including those with foundation degrees, have appropriate graduate skills including communication, enterprise and team-working skills for both the private and the public sectors, although the term modern skills is later used for both plumbers and graduates.

The White Paper also emphasises universities and colleges as knowledge and skills repositories to be accessed by businesses through mechanisms such as the Higher Education Initiative Funding (HEIF), Knowledge Exchanges, RDAs, and sector skills councils (DfES 2002). However, it sees such a relationship as two-way, asserting that 'good business links should also play a part in tackling the low skills levels that hold back national productivity' (p.36). The findings of the Lambert Review, Summer 2003, reinforce this.

Additionally in 2003, the Government launched its skills strategy '21st Century Skills', for which the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) nationally is the lead delivery agent. Although not specifically aimed at HE it has implications for HEIs for example through links to learning Hubs, and, among its 'key requirements for action', 'a new guarantee of free tuition for any adult who does not have a good foundation of 'employability skills' (level 2), 'increased support for the development of higher (sic) skills at technician, higher craft or professional level {level 3)'; and 'encouragement and incentives to colleges and other providers to provide employers with the learning provision they want and need' (LSC 2003). Interestingly, this document has a further proliferation of terminology including employability skills, higher skills and workforce skills.

The above discussion of skills development also links to the concept of lifelong learning, now very much central to official government thinking (Fallows and Steven 2000) through the work of the two Blair administrations and the work of the European Union (European Commission 1995). However, lifelong is not the specific focus of my research so I shall not pursue it further here.

Appendix 1.2 Undergraduate Core Skills Unit

Unit Reference:

UNIT TITLE: UNDERGRADUATE CORE SKILLS

CREDITS: 10

LEVEL: 1

Delivering School: UWBS

Parent Course: BA (Hons) ....

Parent Level: 1

Date Validated: May 2001

TOTAL STUDENT WORKLOAD   75 Hours

        Class Contact: 24 hours
        Directed Learning   27 hours
        Independent Learning   24 hours

Where normal timetabled sessions do not take place, additional directed learning may be provided, and/or students are expected to undertake additional independent learning.

PREREQUISITES

None

UNIT DESCRIPTION

This unit has been developed to help students prepare for the intellectual challenge of undergraduate programmes and enable them to maximise the benefits and enjoyment of their studies. Diverse student populations will improve their chances of success through undertaking this unit for it is dedicated to the development of skills.

The assumption that all students can acquire these skills through the study of their subject specialism is no longer tenable. Further, this unit will help clarify for students, at an early stage, what demands will be made on them and what level of performance will be expected to obtain a worthwhile degree.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

1. Describe what is meant by learning and explore the learning opportunities available as part of their degree
2. Identify and apply a range of study skills techniques
3. Recognise the importance of research concepts and techniques, and be able to apply them appropriately

B. INTELLECTUAL SKILLS

1. Explain and begin to develop the hierarchy of intellectual skills
2. Develop and demonstrate critical thinking skills
3. Explain and apply problem solving techniques

C. PRACTICAL AND PROFESSIONAL SKILLS

1. Develop an appreciation of what 'graduateness' means and how this is related to graduate recruitment in terms of employers and what they seek when recruiting
2. Reflect upon learning and recognise the importance of lifelong learning in order to achieve personal goals
3. Demonstrate correct use of citing, references and a bibliography

D. KEY SKILLS

1. Communicate effectively in written and oral formats
2. Use a range of software applications and search mechanisms to develop independent learning
3. Develop the skill of working with others

AREAS OF STUDY

Effective Learning: personal goals, sources of learning, learning styles, surface/deep/strategic approaches to learning,.

Study Skills: notetaking; strategy for reading, reading actively, writing effectively, time management.

Working with others: presentations, group work, talking and active listening.

Thinking Skills: critical, lateral, creative, problem-solving.

Research related: resource centre visit (search mechanisms, CD-ROMs, Internet etc.) citing, references, bibliographies, plagiarism, software packages that aid research e.g. Endnote.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

The outcomes of the unit require a particularly student centred and reflective approach. Experiential learning in a workshop format will be the main medium for delivery. Within the workshops mini lectures on core topics will be delivered. Through exercises, discussion, case studies, problem solving and others techniques students will further explore these concepts in groups and individually.

Students will participate in a range of activities that mirror their specialist studies and enable them to gain experience in practicing the skills developed within this unit.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

This unit will contain both formative and summative assessments thus ensuring that all learning outcomes identified are met.

The first assignment will be self reflective in nature. Students will be videoed for a presentation (formative). After reviewing the video in their own time, they will be required to assess themselves against given criteria. Students will then be required to reflect upon their presentation in terms of the skills learned (e.g. group, presentation) and using relevant literature discuss their strengths and weaknesses.

The second assignment will assess their critical thinking skills, students will be set a task which encourages argument and debate through opposing points of view. Students will be required to substantiate the debate by using appropriate literature that is correctly cited and referenced.

Coursework assessment marks will be aggregated to obtain one coursework mark.

For Groupwork the referral assignment will be an individual piece of work which covers the same learning outcomes as the original apart from working in groups.

	Learning Outcome 1	Learning Outcome 2	Learning Outcome 3
Knowledge & Understanding	Assignment 1	Assignment 1 & 2	Assignment 1 & 2
Intellectual Skills	Assignment 2	Assignment 1 & 2	Assignment 1 & 2
Practical & Professional Skills	Assignment 1	Assignment 1	Assignment 1 & 2
Key Skills	Assignment 1 & 2	Assignment 1 & 2	Assignment 1

ASSESSMENT

Coursework   **100%**
Made up of:

Weighting: 50%
Assessment type: **CSWK (Coursework)**
Special facilities: Videoing/Powerpoint/OHP (formative)
Additional information: Groupwork.

Weighting: 50%
Assessment type: **CSWK (Coursework)**
Additional details: To assess critical thinking
Additional information: Individual (no more than 2,000 words)

INDICATIVE READING

Core texts:

Cameron, S (1999) *The Business Student's Handbook, Developing Transferable Skills.* London: Financial Times, Pitman Publishing.

Recommended reading:

Blundel, R. (1998) *Effective Business Communication.* London: Prentice Hall

Chaffee, J (1995) *The Thinker's Guide to College Success.* New York: Houghton Mifflin

Dudley, G.A. (1998) *Speed Reading The Foolproof Way To Rapid Reading And Improved Learning Power. London: Thorsons*

Edwards, J. S. and Finlay, P. N. (1997) *Decision Making with Computers.* London: Pitman

Ellis, D (1994) *Becoming a Master Student* (7th Ed) Boston, USA: Houghton Mifflin

Heritage, K. (1998) *Successful Report Writing In A Week.* (2nd ed.) London: Headway.

Fairbairn, G.J. and Winch, C. (1991) Reading, *Writing and Reasoning: A Guide for Students.* The Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press

Lashley, C (1995) *Improving Study Skills, A competence approach* New York: Cassell

Laudon, K. C. and Laudon, J. P. (1992) *Solving Classic Business Problems: An Introduction to Lotus 123.* New York: Addison-Wesley Pub. C. Inc.

Race, P. (1999) *How To Get A Good Degree Making The Most Of Your Time At University.* Buckingham: Open University

Rawlins, K. (1999) *Study Skills for Adult Learners.* London: Emap Healthcare Open Learning.

Templeton, M. and Fitzgerald, S.S. (1999) *Schaum's Quick Guide to Great Presentations.* New York: McGraw-Hill

Thomas, R. (1996) *Quantitative Methods for Business.* London: Prentice Hall

Winship, I. And McNab, A. (1998) *The Student's Guide to the Internet.* London: Library Association

Date prepared: April 2001

Appendix 1.3 Undergraduate Skills Unit

Unit Reference:

Unit Title:	**UNDERGRADUATE SKILLS**
Credits:	**20**
Level:	**1**

Delivering School:	**UWBS**
Parent Course:	**BA (Hons) ....**
Parent Level:	**1**
Date Validated:	

TOTAL STUDENT WORKLOAD   150 Hours

Class Contact:	48
Made up of approximately:	
Workshops	48
Directed Learning	48
Independent Learning	54

Where normal timetabled sessions do not take place, additional directed learning may be provided, and/or students are expected to undertake additional independent learning.

PREREQUISITES

None

UNIT DESCRIPTION

This unit has been developed to help students prepare for the intellectual challenge of undergraduate programmes and enable them to maximise the benefits and enjoyment of their studies. Diverse student populations will improve their chances of success through undertaking this unit for it is dedicated to the development of skills.

The assumption that all students can acquire these skills through the study of their subject specialism is no longer tenable. Further, this unit will help clarify for students, at an early stage, what demands will be made on them and what level of performance will be expected to obtain a worthwhile degree.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

1. Describe what is meant by learning and explore the learning opportunities available as part of their degree

2. Identify and apply study skills techniques
3. Recognise the importance of research concepts and techniques, and be able to apply them

B. SKILLS AND OTHER ATTRIBUTES

Intellectual Skills

1. Explain the hierarchy of intellectual skills, and begin to develop them
2. Demonstrate and utilise the concept of logical reasoning
3. Explain and apply problem solving techniques

Practical and Professional Skills

1. Appreciate what 'graduateness' means and how this is related to graduate recruitment in terms of employers and what they seek when recruiting

Key Skills

1. Be able to communicate effectively in written and oral formats
2. To be able to use a range of IT applications
3. Review basic numeracy and develop and apply statistics
4. Develop the skill of working with others

AREAS OF STUDY

Key Area 1:

Effective Learning: personal goals, sources of learning, learning styles, surface/deep/strategic learning, lifelong learning.

Study Skills: notetaking; reading, writing effectively, basic numbers and assessment.

Working with others: presentations, group work, talking and active listening.

Thinking Skills: critical, lateral, creative, problem-solving.

Research related: Resource centre visit (search mechanisms, CD-ROMs, Internet etc.) citing, references, bibliographies, plagiarism, Endnotes package.

Key Area 2:

Information Technology: word processing (Word/WordPerfect); spreadsheets (Excel, Lotus 123); presentation package (PowerPoint), introduction to databases and SPSS.

Key Area 3:

Numeracy and Statistics: data summary; data analysis; decision making; forecasting.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

The outcomes of the unit require a particularly student centered and reflective approach. Experiential learning in a workshop format will be the main medium for delivery. Within the workshops mini lectures on core topics will be delivered. Through exercises, discussion, case studies, problem solving and others techniques students will further explore these concepts in groups and individually. The I.T. components of the unit will be delivered in specialist I.T. facilities throughout the Institute.

Students will participate in a range of activities that mirror their specialist studies and enable them to gain experience in practicing the skills developed within this unit.

Each Key Area of Study will take one third of the workshops.

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

This unit will contain both formative and summative assessments thus ensuring that all learning outcomes identified are met.

The summative assessments will take the format of three in-course assessments, one assessment for each Key Area of Study.

Students are expected to attend a minimum of 80% of the workshops. Those not meeting this requirement, without certificated evidence, will incur a deduction of 10% from their final grade (for example, a final grade of 58% would become 48%)

ASSESSMENT

Coursework
Weighting: 40%
Assessment type: **CSWK (Coursework)**
Special facilities: Videoing/Powerpoint/OHP (formative)

Computer-based Test
Weighting: 30%
Assessment type: **COMP (Computer-based)**
Special facilities: IT access

Statistical Test
Weighting: 30%
Assessment type: **NMTS (Numeracy Test (Stats))**

INDICATIVE READING

Core texts:

Camerson, S (1999) *The Business Student's Handbook, Developing Transferable Skills.* London: Financial Times, Pitman Publishing.

Recommended reading:

Blundel, R. (1998) *Effective Business Communication.* London: Prentice Hall

Chaffe, J (1995) *The Thinker's Guide to College Success.* New York: Houghton Mifflin

Dudley, G.A. (1998) *Speed Reading The Foolproof Way To Rapid Reading And Improved Learning Power. London: Thorsons*

Edwards, J. S. and Finlay, P. N. (1997) *Decision Making with Computers.* London: Pitman

Ellis, D (1994) *Becoming a Master Student* (7th Ed) Boston, USA: Houghton Mifflin

Heritage, K. (1998) *Successful Report Writing In A Week.* (2nd ed.) London: Headway.

Fairbairn, G.J. and Winch, C. (1991) Reading, *Writing and Reasoning: A Guide for Students.* The Society for Research into Higher Education & Open University Press

Lashley, C (1995) *Improving Study Skills, A competence approach* New York: Cassell

Laudon, K. C. and Laudon, J. P. (1992) *Solving Classic Business Problems: An Introduction to Lotus 123.* New York: Addison-Wesley Pub. C. Inc.

Race, P. (1999) *How To Get A Good Degree Making The Most Of Your Time At University.* Buckingham: Open University

Rawlins, K. (1999) *Study Skills for Adult Learners.* London: Emap Healthcare Open Learning.

Templeton, M. and Fitzgerald, S.S. (1999) *Schaum's Quick Guide to Great Presentations.* New York: McGraw-Hill

Thomas, R. (1996) *Quantitative Methods for Business.* London: Prentice Hall

Winship, I. And McNab, A. (1998) *The Student's Guide to the Internet.* London: Library Association

Date prepared: February 2000

Appendix 1.4 Business Methods Unit

UNIT TITLE: BUSINESS METHODS   UNIT REF:

LEVEL: 1

CREDIT POINTS: 20

Parent Course: BA(Hons) ....
Faculty: UWBS

TOTAL STUDENT WORKLOAD: **150 HOURS**

Class contact:	48 hours	Typically comprising a programme of lectures, seminars and IT practical sessions
Directed learning:	60 hours	
Independent learning	42 hours	

The total student workload is based on the unit being delivered over a three term academic year. If the unit is delivered over one semester, the total student workload will remain unchanged but will be delivered over twelve teaching weeks.

PREREQUISITES

None

UNIT DESCRIPTION

The unit will introduce and develop the various I.T., quantitative and communication skills within the framework of business scenarios. An integrated approach will be used, through the examination of an existing commercial enterprise.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion students should be able to:

Understanding and knowledge

1. Summarize data both graphically and numerically
2. Evaluate data with regard to expectation and decision tress: simple probability, expected values, construction and evaluation of decision trees
3. Understand general communications theory; including formal and informal communications
4. Use alternative methods of communication and appreciate their effective use

Skills and other attributes

cognitive

1. Evaluate data in variety ways for forecasting and managing purposes
2. Understand the appropriate use of both formal and informal means of communication.
3. Evaluate the appropriate use of computer packages and the Internet

practical and professional

1. Use and apply computer spreadsheets and statistical packages
2. Use and apply software packages for presentational purposes
3. Undertake referencing on the Internet and carry out basic research using the Internet

key skills

1. Numeracy: the analysis of statistics
2. Communications: various areas covering communications
3. I.T. skills: use and application

AREAS OF STUDY

1. Statistics.

   Data summary. Handling variations. Expectation and decision trees. Relationships.

2. Communications.

   General communications theory and barriers. Formal and informal communications in organisations. Alternative methods of communications and their effective use. Writing styles. Study skills; time management and examination techniques.

3. I.T.

The use and application of spreadsheets and statistical packages. The use and application of software packages for presentational purposes. Basic use of the Internet for referencing and research purposes.

TEACHING AND LEARNING STRATEGY

The statistics and communications topics covered in this unit will be initially presented by a weekly lecture and then developed further during seminar sessions. The seminars will develop practical skills by the use of case study and the study of actual commercial organisations. The I.T. sessions will take the form of practical hands-on sessions undertaken in specific computer areas.

ASSESSMENT

There will be a series of in-course assessments covering Communications, Statistics and I.T. To pass the Unit students must achieve an overall grade of 40%, compensation will be allowed between elements of the Unit. The Unit weighting is:

1. Communications In-Class Test
   weighting: 30%
   assessment type: In class type **(TEST)**
   special facilities: None
   duration: 50 minutes

2. I.T. In-class Test
   weighting: 30%
   assessment type: In class type **(TEST)**
   special facilities: Held in computer area
   duration: 50 minutes

3. Statistics Test
   Weighting: 40%   made up of :
       4 In-class Tests
       weighting: 10% each
       assessment type: In class test **(TEST)**
       special features: None
       duration: 50 minutes

ASSESSMENT STRATEGY

Assessment will be carried out through a combination of individual written course work. The assessments will measure the student's attainment of the given learning outcomes. The course work will include the assessment of I.T. skills, statistical methods and communications skills with appropriate printed and written presentation. Resits will be in the form of the original assessment in the case of the Communications and the I.T. elements, and there will be a timed assessment for the Statistics element.

INDICATIVE READING

Core texts

Cameron, Sheila (1999) *Business Student's handbook* London : Prentice Hall

Student Learning Pack No. 39: Business Methods

Recommended reading

Blundel, R. (1998) *Effective Business Communication* London : Prentice Hall

Edwards, J.S. and Finlay, P.N. (1997) *Decision Making with Computors*
London : Pitman

Laudon, K.C. and Laudon, J.P. (1992) *Solving Classic Business Problems:*
An Introduction to Lotus 123
New York : Addison-Wesley Pub. Co. Inc.

Thomas, R. (1996) *Quantitative methods for Business*   London : Prentice Hall

Winship, Ian and McNab, Alison (1998) *the student's guide to the internet*
London : Library Association

Wisiewski, M. (1994) *Quantitative Methods for Decision Makers*   London : Pitman

Appendix 1.5 Patterns of skills development in higher education

Pattern 1

'Skills provision is within the distinctive substantive and syntactic knowledge of the discipline which are seen by the course providers as the core skills of the subject. Generic skills such as group work, reflection, communication, library use and so on may be used or encouraged to enhance the academic study but are of an incidental nature'.

Pattern 2

'Substantive and syntactic knowledge of the discipline is developed through the purposeful acquisition and use of specific general skills. The latter are the means by which learning of the disciplinary knowledge is encouraged and enhanced. Disciplinary and generic skills are considered of equal importance'.

Pattern 3

'There is an emphasis, explicitly, for students to acquire generic skills embedded to a greater or lesser extent in the practice of the discipline. The latter is the vehicle for skill development. The outcome of the course is clearly to acquire generic skills, developing disciplinary knowledge is of minor importance'.

Pattern 4

'The focus is exclusively on generic skills, to the extent that the disciplinary knowledge and skills acquired or used could be of the students' choice or could be entirely unrelated to disciplinary study'.

Pattern 5

'The focus is on substantive knowledge and its application, particularly in those subjects that are vocational. Insight into the workplace is through occasional contacts with employers, visits to the workplace or simulations. There is also some provision for generic skills'.

Pattern 6

'There is an emphasis both on generic skills and raising awareness about the requirements and constraints of the world of work. The context for skills utilisation and development is "real" work experience in a workplace setting. The focus on disciplinary knowledge and skills will vary depending on the purpose of the experience'.

Source Bennett et al (2000, pp.50-51)

Appendix 1.6 Skills Development: official publications

This appendix presents a brief overview of some publications by the Government, employers' organisations, and other bodies over the last 25 years relating, in part or entirely, to skills. It is not intended to be an exhaustive list. Nor are the references below that were not used in the thesis included in the list of references at the end of volume 1.

1.   The Association of Graduate Recruiters

- Association of Graduate Recruiters (1993) *Roles for graduates in the 21st Century. Getting the balance right.* Cambridge: AGR.

2.   The Business and Technician Education Council

- Business and Technician Education Council (1992) *Common skills and core themes: general guidelines.* London: BTEC

3.   The Committee of Vice Chancellors and Principals (CVCP)

- The Committee of Vice-Chancellors and Principals (CVCP), The Confederation of British Industry (CBI) and The Council for Industry and Higher Education (CIHE) (1996). *Helping students towards success at work: A declaration of intent.* London: CIHE.
- CVCP, CBI and CIHE (1998) *Helping students towards success at work: an intent being met.* London: CIHE.

4.   The Confederation of British Industry (CBI)

- Confederation of British Industry (1989) *Towards a skills revolution.* London: CBI

5.   The Council for National Academic Awards

- The Council for National Academic Awards (1992) *CNAA handbook.* London: CNAA.

6.   Departments of HM Government

- Department of Education and Science (1985) *Better schools,* Cmnd 9469. London: HMSO
- Department of Education and Science (1985) *The Development of Higher Education into the 1990s,* Cmnd 9524, HMSO
- National Advisory Board (1986) *Transferable skills in employment – the contribution of higher employment.* London: HMSO
- Department of Education and Science (1986) *Working together – education and training,* Cmd 9823. London: HMSO.
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10.   The Trades Union Congress

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11.   The University Grants Committee

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Appendix 1.7   **The match between HEIs' skills development and business and employee needs**

The findings of Harvey et al (1997) re-affirm OECD research that a degree-educated employee brings substantial added value to a business. Conclusions from the 'Skills Plus Project' conducted by John Moores University, Manchester University and Manchester Metropolitan University suggested that pressures on HEIs to improve graduate employability could adversely affect student learning (Leon, THES, 19 July 2002, p.5). Rather, fine-tuning the curriculum can give students the attributes most employers require as opposed to government and HEFCE support for key-skills development through work experience and add-on modules. Additionally, a report by CSU/Universities UK (2002) argues that universities are not out-of-touch institutions producing graduates strong in terms of their knowledge of theory but weak in terms of preparation for employment.

In contrast, examining skills development from a student perspective, the Pitar Project run by Anglia Polytechnic University (APU), Brunel University and University College, Northampton, with Purdue University, Indiana, found a perceived skills-deficit by new graduates, who claimed they lacked the three skills they judged most used in the workplace – time management, task juggling and verbal communication (Leon 2002b), issues that emerge in my research-findings.

This reinforces the work of Athiyaman's (2001) with alumni in NSW, Australia, which is discussed in Chapter 2. He researched University of West Sydney Bachelor of Business graduates' perceptions of the importance of skills and attributes (enthusiasm, motivation, initiative) in their careers, and how far these developed on their course. He finds younger graduates have a negative course perception, with their workplace frustrating through failure to have developed requisite skills or through 'their inability to transfer theory to practice' (p.13). Older graduates (>45 years) also have negative course perceptions, finding career progression harder through not previously developing skills, although more research is needed to confirm these conclusions. In all cases graduates believe skills development is important. Harvey and Knight (1996) reinforce this, arguing a lack of effective inter-personal skills is the main cause of graduate adjustment-to-work problems; however, this is contrary to many UWBS undergraduate skills perceptions. They also note that employers, staff and students regard transferable skills development as an important HE output.

Additionally, a Level 3 BA (Hons) Business Studies project by Box (2001), for Southampton Business School (SBS), found that their students taking leisure and finance courses believed that only a few skills were being taught while those they did acquire were not well developed, IT causing particular concerns. In contrast, both leisure and finance employers wanted written and/or verbal communication skills, inter-personal and group-working skills, while leisure employers also wanted problem-solving skills and numeracy. The author concluded that 'there is a skills deficit occurring between what employers want and what they are getting' (p.45). However, although recognising the difficulties of determining the relevance of the skills SBS argues it teaches, she concluded that these are appropriate to employers' needs.

In contrast, Blaskó (2002) found that among UK Business and Administration graduates of 1995, sampled 4 years later, perceptions of key skills acquisition were high for communication, team-working, improving own performance and problem solving, and a little lower for computer skills and numerical abilities.

Hogarth et al (2001) reinforced the ides of a skills deficit with their survey of 27 000 employers in England, finding that 10% reported a skills deficiency, either an external skills shortage vacancy regarding potential employees [most common in the professional, associate professional, technical and skilled trade occupations and especially in the construction and business services sectors] or an internal skills gap among existing employees [most common in the personal services and operative occupations and the manufacturing and hospitality sectors]. Blaskó (2002) further reinforced this, finding a large 'competency gap' between required and possessed skills of graduates [10%-14% of employer responses] in computer skills and a large gap [5%-9% of employer responses] in team working. Having said that, Hesketh (2000) found that employers preferred graduate to have 'softer' or inter-personal skills over 'hard' technical/vocational skills, with the business and consumer sectors having the lowest skills demands, while the public services, science and engineering had the highest demands. The findings of the Skills Plus work, while posing areas for future research, are based in interviews with 10 graduates, primarily from the humanities and social sciences, and so are less generalisable. (http://www.open.ac.uk/vqportal/skills-plus/publications.htm).

Appendix 1.8 University of Wessex identification of skills

The importance of skills has been highlighted in the Dearing Report which states that 'programme specifications should identify potential stopping off points and give intended outcomes in terms of:

i.   knowledge and understanding that a student will expect to have on completion
ii.   key skills of communication, numeracy, use of IT and learning to learn
iii.   cognitive skills such as understanding of methodology, or ability to critically analyse, and
iv.   subject specific skills.

These should all be specified, particularly those most relevant to future employability. (Ref: *Higher Education in the Learning Society – the Dearing Report*, National Committee of Enquiry into HE, 1997)

18.2   IDENTIFICATION OF SKILLS

As part of the process leading to the Strategic Plan for the next five years, the University of Wessex has identified a graduate profile for its graduates. This profile is reproduced below.

The common characteristics of graduates from the programmes are defined under three headings:

i. key skills
ii. generally transferable skills
iii. subject specific knowledge and abilities

These are described in more detail in the following sections.

The following gives a summary of the identified key skills

i. **Communication** – All graduates gain verbal communication skills enabling them to present a clear and reasoned discussion and written communication using sound English grammar. All graduates will be able to make a verbal presentation to a group including students and staff. Graduates should also be able to make presentations using appropriate technology-based media, such as computer-based presentation software, video or audio systems.

ii. **Literacy** – Graduates are able to understand relevant technical language as appropriate to their subject. They also acquire a sound understanding of the use of relevant information sources and literature and can evaluate and analyse material and present arguments on the basis of appropriate evidence.

iii. **Information Technology** – All graduates have gained an appropriate use of IT, including word processing skills and use of relevant packages to present numerical data and statistics through graphical means. Furthermore, graduates will acquire the skills to access the World Wide Web, use e-mail and conduct data searches by using appropriate subject-specific search engines.

iv, **Co-operation** – All graduates will have the experience of working in teams and groups and will be assessed on their performance. Group working will include the preparation of written reports, involvement in role-plays and delivering oral presentations.

v. **Numeracy** – Graduates will have adequate numerical skills relevant to their discipline and these will be developed and enhanced throughout their degree programme. The students will be encouraged to achieve a threshold numeracy standard, where numeracy is not a subject-specific skill.

i.   These key skills will be developed on this course through a range of methods such as:
ii.   Assessment strategies (both formative and summative) will be adopted which require subject-specific library information retrieval skills and analysis of data.
iii.   The use of IT in the presentation of assessed work will be developed throughout the curriculum. IT will be used in many units over the three levels of each programme as a data presentation and analytical tool. IT training is available at all levels, irrespective of the programme.
iv.   There is an element of group work in all programmes at all levels.

During the degree programme, graduates will have demonstrated a range of General Transferable Skills including the following:

i.   Autonomous learning: the ability to take responsibility for own learning
ii.   Skills of analysis, synthesis, discrimination and judgement, logical and reasoned thinking
iii.   Ability to apply knowledge and problem-solving skills
iv.   Investigation and research skills
v.   Reflective learning
vi.   Subject-specific knowledge and abilities.

In addition to those skills outlined above, all graduates from the programme will be able to demonstrate a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject(s) studied at an appropriate level for the nature of the award. The specific primary features of the subject(s) are defined by the course at each of the three levels of the honours degree....Wessex University Business School provides sufficient breadth to enable graduates to understand their specialism within a context appropriate to the needs of industry, commerce or the professions...

18.3 LINKING SKILLS AND UNITS

The University of Wessex has, as part of its Mission Statement, the concept of 'courses for careers'. UWBS is primarily a provider of vocational courses within this context. Consequently, the relevant skills previously identified are an essential element of all the School's programmes...

The development of students' skills, both generic and subject-specific, is seen as an integral element of the Business School's undergraduate programmes and does not

solely rely upon stand-alone skills units. Thus, skills are developed throughout the whole of any individual degree programme.

A breakdown of the skills developed in core units can be found in table 7.

Table 7: linking units to skills

Key Skills	Transferable skills
A = Communication	F = Autonomous learning
B = Literacy	G = Analytical skills
C = IT	H = Application
D = Co-operation	I = Research
E = Numeracy	J = Reflection

Level 1	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J
Marketing Principles	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	*
Analytical and Business Skills	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		*
Introduction to Finance for Marketing	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
The Economics of Media and Design	*	*		*	*	*	*	*	*	*
Media Production Techniques	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*
Electronic Publishing	*	*	*	*		*		*	*	*

Comparable tables exist for Levels 2 and 3.

Source: BA (Hons) ....validation document 1997

Appendix 1.9 University of Wessex Business School spiral induction programme

The University of Wessex's Student Support Network has produced a tutor resources handbook. The 2003-04 version has been updated from the 2002-03 one, to which my research relates. Hence some exercises now existing may not have been available to students in the cohort that I examined.

For 2003-04, the following areas were some briefly covered as part of the five-week spiral induction after the Induction / Freshers' Week:

1. Library activity, which seeks to introduce students to the library layout and the range of resources available for their subject area.
2. Budget exercise, which seeks to introduce students to money management with the production of a simple personal budget to match income against expenditure
3. Reflection and Learning skills, which focuses on learning from experience, and the development of learning skills. The latter includes an embryonic skills audit table to encourage students to rank their current skills levels and also what their skills will be after week 11.
4. Planning for revision
5. Time planning
6. Peer student support to help with studying
7. Guidelines on presentational skills

Commentary

1. Library activity is reinforced by a visit to the library during induction week
2. Students have indicated to me during interviews for this research and other work that Level 2 students would have much more impact on their thinking that the tutors running this session.
3. This is a useful exercise if it is underpinned by sufficient initial preparation. The other problem is that it does not feed back to tutors so no profile is built up of the levels of skills different students have.
4. Planning for revision is useful and is also addressed within individual units. However, covering this in the first five weeks is too remote from when students actually undertake revision around Easter time.
5. Time planning is useful but as my research findings will reveal this is something with which students struggle, for various reasons.
6. This encourages students to work with each other. There is an argument for a formal peer mentoring system to be established
7. These are useful since some courses do not have a skills unit, relying instead on skills development within units. For students taking the unit *Undergraduate Skills,* there is a risk of duplication that could turn students off.

Other comments relating to the spiral induction are that it only runs for five weeks and that normally student attendance falls away as the weeks progress.

Source: University of Wessex Business School: Student Support Network, Tutor Resources Handbook 2003-04

Appendix 2.1 Approaches to learning

Introduction

Marton and Saljo (1976a and b) were the first Europeans to research approaches to learning argues Hartley (2002), although later work by researchers including Biggs (1979; 1987), Entwistle and Ramsden (1983), Prosser and Trigwell (1994), Gibbs (1992), Ramsden (1992), and Marton et al (1997) have built on this.

Surface approaches to learning

A surface approach to learning occurs when students fail to engage fully with a subject, memorising course material for later reproduction e.g. in an examination, and relying on a tutor to tell them what to learn. They lack purpose or clear goals in their learning, seeing their units/modules as a series of separate components rather than as an integrated whole. Their motivation to learn may be fear of assessment or they may seek to pass with least effort.

The knowledge that surface learners acquire is fragmented and they fail to make connections between elements, relying on memorising rather than reflection, understanding and deep learning. Surface learning results in description-oriented rather than conclusion-oriented learning outcomes and what they learn is soon forgotten.

Deep approaches to learning

In contrast, with a deep learning approach, a student seeks to make relationships between different areas of knowledge, including his/her own experience and awareness. S/he applies underlying principles, looks for patterns between different units/modules, draws on evidence, creates his/her own body of knowledge and understanding and seeks personal meaning; what Gibbs (1992) calls 'playing with ideas'. This results in conclusion-oriented outcomes with high-quality learning lasting long-term. Students adopting a deep approach have a real interest in their task and expect to enjoy learning; they also experience conceptual change, whereas a surface learner is concerned just with acquiring knowledge.

Biggs (1999) argues that a deep approach to learning is linked to four features: a motivational context; learner activity [as opposed to passively receiving information]; interaction with others [e.g. via group work]; and a well-structured knowledge base [including clear aims and intended learning outcomes]

Strategic approaches to learning

A third approach to learning is strategic (Entwistle 1998; 2000). Here a student is interested in the cognitive disciplines studied and will often adopt deep approaches to learning. However they also seek to achieve assessment success and this may involve a mix of deep and strategic learning approaches depending on the context.
It is also possible that strategic learning may involve surface approaches to learning or apathetic approaches to studying e.g. learning facts short-term to supplement or even replace deep approaches e.g. in an examination. For deep learners, strategic learning

involves efficient time-management between different tasks, of which studying is only one, and monitoring learning outcomes against aims, whether norm or criterion-referenced assessment is employed on a course, in order to succeed; for apathetic learners it does not

Entwistle (2000) does stress that these are only categories and no student should be put into one only.

Recent work has been on levels of understanding as outcomes of learning e.g. Entwistle (2000). I have not explored this in my thesis so do not discuss it in this appendix.

Appendix 2.2   Conceptions of Learning

Saljo (1979): Five conceptions of learning

1. A quantitative increase in knowledge
2. Memorising
3. The acquisition, for subsequent utilisation, of facts, methods etc
4. The abstraction of meaning
5. An interpretive process aimed at understanding reality.

Marton et al (1993): A sixth conception of learning

6. Learning as developing as a person

Appendix 2.3 Schmeck's (1983) Inventory of Learning Processes

1. Deep processing: 'students critically evaluate, conceptually organise and compare and contrast information' (p.245)

2. Elaborative processing: 'students translate new information into their own terminology, generate concrete experience from their own lives and use visual imagery to encode new ideas' (p.248)

3. Fact retention: 'students carefully process (and thus store) details and specific pieces of new information regardless of what other information-processing strategies they employ' (p.248)

4. Methodical study: 'the extent to which students study often and carefully, employing systematic techniques of study, often engaging in frequent drill-and-practice' study' (p.248-9).

Appendix 2.4 Comparing Biggs' (1999) and Prosser and Trigwell's (1994) Presage-Process-Product (3Ps) Models of Student Learning

A2.4.1 John Biggs' (1999) Presage-Process-Product model

Biggs (1999) argues that there are two main theories of teaching and learning that focus on student activity. One is phenomenography, which is a part of constitutionalism, and the other is constructivism, of which there are several forms namely individual, social, cognitive and post-modern. There is considerable overlap between the two main theories. Biggs writes from an individual constructivist perspective.

Boyce et al (2001) cite Biggs (1993) as arguing that student learning, including skills development, needs to be interpreted in a structure encompassing the students, their teaching context, their learning processes or learning focused activities and the learning outcomes; this is the 3Ps model. Learning outcomes, argues Biggs, are determined by student-learning-related characteristics [such as their prior knowledge, abilities and expectations] and their teaching context [e.g. their course structure, the curriculum, the teaching methods they experience, and the classroom climate], and by the student learning processes [also known as surface and deep approaches to learning].

Biggs (1999) argues that he adopts a systems theory interpretation of the 3Ps model; in other words, the various parts of the 3Ps model in Chapter 2.4 model do not describe a causal process. They are independently constituted but continuously interact with each other. Knowledge construction is driven internally through processes of assimilation; this involves students integrating new knowledge into existing knowledge structures and accommodation i.e. changing these knowledge structures. In other words, there is a distinction between the individual and the outside world.

To enable teachers to improve their teaching says Biggs, what is needed is 'a broad-based and empirically sound framework to aid reflection that easily translates into practice', which is the 3Ps model when viewed from a constructivist viewpoint.

A2.4.2 Mike Prosser and Keith Trigwell's (1994) Presage-Process-Product Model

Prosser and Trigwell (ibid) accept that Biggs' viewpoint is an individual constructivist perspective; in other words, knowledge is constructed internally and tested through interaction with the outside world. However, they do not agree with this explanation of the 3Ps model. Rather, they adopt a constitutionalist perspective in that individuals and the world are internally related through the individual's awareness of the world; so 'meaning is constituted through an internal relation between the individual experiences and the world / object experienced'. Perceptions, approaches and outcomes are simultaneously present in the student's awareness and are not independently constituted although, for analysis, Prosser and and Trigwell do treat them separately. Their 1994 book *Understanding Learning and Teaching* (1994) is written from this perspective.

PRESAGE   PROCESS   PRODUCT

```
┌─────────────────┐
│ Characteristics of │
│ student e.g.      │
│ previous          │
│ experiences; current │
│ understanding     │
└─────────────────┘
```

┌─────────────────────┐
│ Students' perceptions │
│ of context e.g. good │
│ teaching; clear goals │
└─────────────────────┘

┌───────────────────┐
│ *Students'*   │
│ *approaches to*   │
│ *learning — deep* │
│ *versus surface*   │
└───────────────────┘

┌──────────────────┐
│ *Students'*   │
│ *learning*   │
│ *outcomes*   │
│ *(what they*   │
│ *learn quality /* │
│ *quantity)*   │
└──────────────────┘

┌─────────────────┐
│ Course /   │
│ departmental   │
│ learning context e.g. │
│ course design;   │
│ teaching methods; │
│ assessment   │
└─────────────────┘
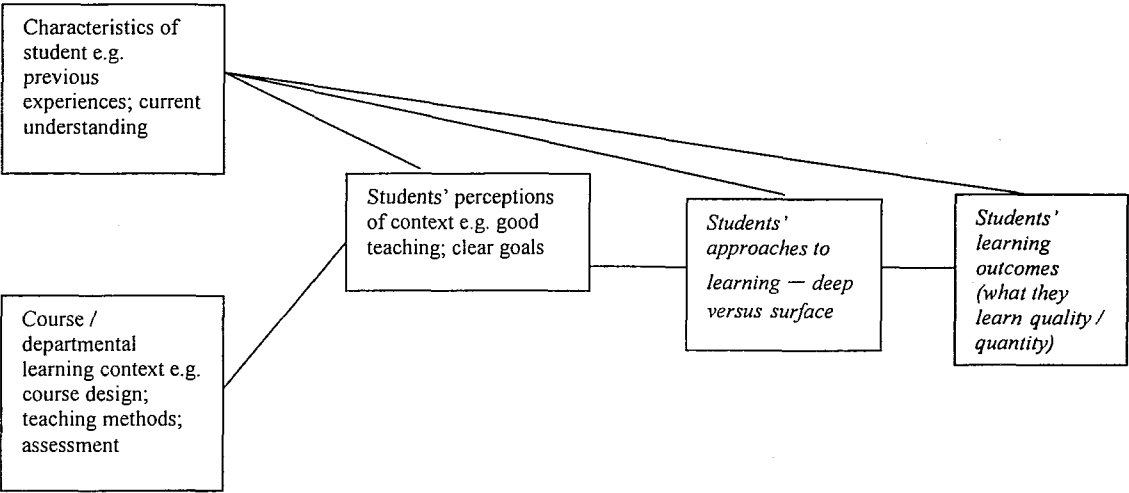
Figure A2.4   Prosser and Trigwell's (1994) Presage-Process-Product Model
(reproduced by permission of the Society for Research into Higher Education)

Ramsden (1992) and Prosser and Trigwell (1994) argue that student approaches to learning are related to their learning environment. To improve the quality of students' approaches to learning, tutors need to determine students' perceptions of their assessment, their workload, the clarity of goals and standards, and the teaching and learning choices that they receive. There is a need to change students' perceptions to influence their approaches to learning and hence improve their learning.

Both Biggs and Trigwell and Prosser argue that all components on the 3Ps model must be aligned with each other, what they call constructive alignment. If not, what is experienced are poor teaching and surface learning, inconsistencies, unmet expectations and practices that contradict what the learning and teaching theories underpinning the model.

Appendix 2.5 Cowan's (1998) version of the Kolb cycle

Kolb's cycle is presented below, taken from Chapter 2.3.4.
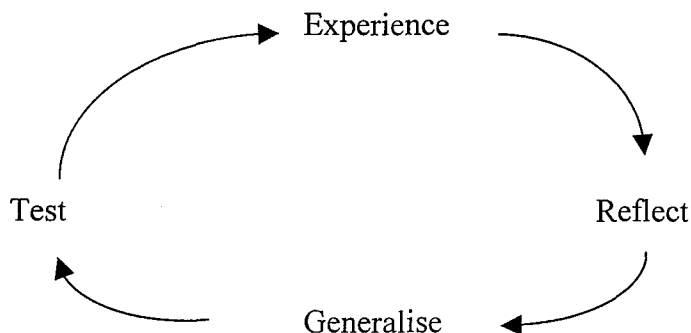
Figure A2.5.1 The Kolb Cycle
[copied from Figure 2.3)

As noted it has four stages: concrete experience, reflective observation, generalising / conceptualising and active experimenting (testing). Kolb argues that merely perceiving an experience is insufficient; a student also needs to transform his/her representation of their experience. With level 3 learning, Cowan argues, Kolbian reflection is analytical, and tutors take students around his cycle by directed activities promoting reflection and generalising, and hence deep learning approaches.

Cowan (1998) develops a spiral diagram – shown in Figure A2.5.2 - which, he argues, owes more to Schon than to Kolb. The examples he gives, relating to this, are based on a particular course he runs. He cites the example of students on this course who bring prior experiences with them, both from the previous year at the university at which they are all studying, and from elsewhere. Hence when students start a new class they began with anticipatory reflection-for-action: Loop A in Figure A2.5.2. Learning tasks have been prepared for them and, as they move into these they enter Loop B – the exploratory stage, which involved collaboration with fellow students.

Subsequently, the students engaged in reflection-in-action (Loop C), reflecting on progress made so far, where they were currently at, and the difficulties lying ahead.

They then moved on to further concentrated action (Loop D) working on consolidating input from their tutors. From this they later developed reflective journals (Loop E) to record their reflections on what they had learned about learning or thought about thinking i.e. reflection-on-action. This could then be carried forward into everyday studying.

Cowan assumes that the other elements of the Kolb cycle are included in his model, even if not explicitly stated.

Reflecting

A — for
C — in
E — on action

prior — exploratory — consolidating — further
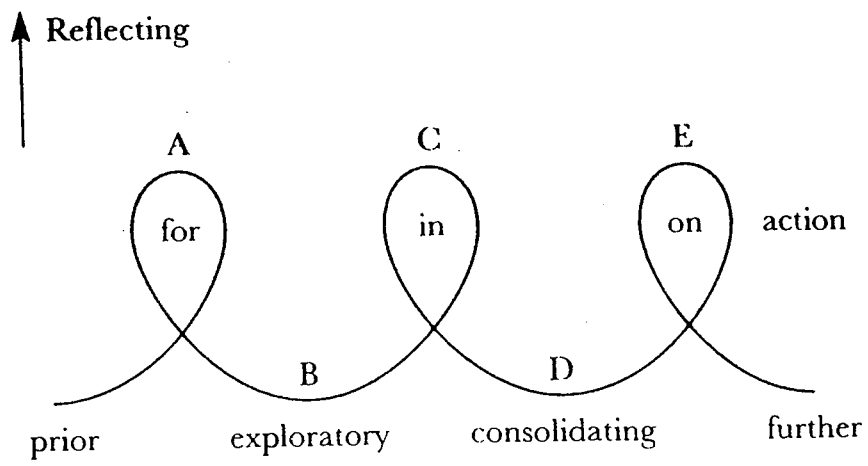
2.5.2 The Cowan Cycle

Appendix 2.6 Research on Student Questionnaires

One early instrument was the Course Perception Questionnaire to determine student satisfaction with the teaching they experience (Entwistle & Ramsden, 1983; Ramsden, 1992). As Yanhong and Kaye (1998) note, subsequent instruments developed to measure teaching quality include Feldman (Feldman, 1984); the Students' Evaluations of Educational Quality (SEEQ) (Marsh, 1984; 1987); and Endeavor (Marsh and Roche 1993). Later instruments have sought to encompass the totality of the student learning experience, rather than just teaching, including students' personal development, teaching staff, and programme and departmental issues (Harvey & Knight, 1996); the Evaluating the Student Experience Project [ESEP] (Geall, 2000), and a questionnaire by Ballantyne (2000). In other cases, a different approach is used e.g. Cheng (2001), who employs self-reports by students to construct gain scales to use as outcome measures of the student experience, while Donald and Denison (1996) examine the perceptions of former students who have graduated.

Appendix 2.7 Service quality models

A2.7.1 Introduction

Originally, in my research, I had intended using the SERVQUAL and SERVPREF instruments to measure service quality. Certainly there is a wide usage of these in the educational literature although, in the marketing literature, the SERVQUAL has been heavily criticised. As my research developed, I realised that there was a more limited alignment of my research questions with these instruments that I had originally realised. Also, my research instruments developed to gather a wide range of student experiences rather than specifically the service quality they had initially been intended to focus on. So, although my research has still focused on student experiences and expectations, it has not specifically linked this to service quality as originally intended. Increasingly I also felt that continuing this approach was at odds with my phenomenological methodology. Nonetheless, since this is an interesting area, I present my work on this as this appendix, which may encourage others to explore this in the context of their own HEI.

A2.7.2 Service quality models

In discussing student and staff expectations and experiences, many authors draw on service quality models developed for business services and apply them to higher education (Yanhong & Kaye, 1998; Rangecroft et al, 1999; Gilroy et al, 1999; Cheng, 2001; Donald and Denison 1996), although as Gilroy et al (1999) and Rowley (1996) point out there are differences between HE and other services in that students lack overall understanding of their course. As Yanhong and Kaye (1998) argue, two measures are currently used, each based on the five dimensions of service quality framework developed by Parasuraman et al (1985, 1988), namely tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance and empathy. One measure is the Gap Measurement Approach, or disconfirmation paradigm, that defines service quality in terms of the extent to which it matches customers' expectations; what are sometimes referred to as an inferred confirmation technique. These expectations are influenced by customers' ideas of what are important to them regarding the quality of the services they receive. Based on this, Parasuraman et al (1985) developed the SERVQUAL instrument, which can be defined as:

(1)   Service Quality = f_n (Perceived Performance − Expectations).

i.e. service quality is an indirect function of customer expectations and service provider performance, as perceived by the customer. The gap scores measure the level of service quality. Among others, the work of Bell (1997), Booth (1997), Cook and Leckey (1999), Narasimhan (1997), Stevenson, Sander et al (1996, 1997, 1998) and Sander et al (2000) is closer to this, although some of these focus on student and/or staff expectations without specifically employing gap analysis.

The other measure is the Performance-based Measurement Approach, which uses the SERVPREF instrument, which is referred to as a direct disconfirmation technique, along with others such as Martilla and James's (1977) importance-performance technique.

The SERVPREF model is defined as:

(2)   Service Quality = f_n (Perceived Performance)

i.e. the level of service quality is determined only by the customer's perception of the service provider's performance. It is comparable to the student questionnaires produced by such researchers as Entwistle and Ramsden (1983), Ramsden (1992) and Geall (2000) and identified above.

There has been considerable debate in the marketing and services quality literatures on the validity of the Gap Measurement Approach, with criticisms by Cronin and Taylor (1992, 1994) of the conceptualisation and measurement of services quality and the relationships between services quality, customer satisfaction and purchase intentions, and the development of a competing SERVPERF instrument whereby service quality is measured as an attitude using performance-based measures (Elliott, 1995). Certainly Cronin et al's (ibid) first two criticisms apply to higher education, although linking purchase intentions to the choice of a course and HEI is tenuous for reasons discussed below (McGill and Iacobucci, 1991).

Teas (1993, 1994) attacks the Gap Measurement Approach on the grounds of the conceptual definition of expectations, the theoretical justification of the expectations component of the model, and measurement validity of the expectations and revised expectation measures in the services quality literature, a view also endorsed by Smith (1995) in terms of the problems in interpreting the data obtained. Parasuraman et al (1994) have responded robustly to these criticisms and, although accepting that the 'current approach for assessing SQ [service quality] can and should be refined, [argue that] abandoning it altogether in favour of the alternate approaches proffered by C&T [Cronin and Taylor] and T [Teas] does not seem warranted' (p.123).

A2.7.3 The application of service quality models to higher education research

With students paying tuition fees, and increasingly aware of their rights as customers, higher education institutions (HEIs) must consider the quality of their provision. This can be measured at the point of consumption, in class or more widely in the HEI, and is known as process quality. Students' perceptions can also be measured at the end of their course, known as output quality, in terms of the quality of the services received and the output delivered e.g. class of degree. Alternatively, some researchers focus just on the first year experience, in which case the second set of student perceptions can be measured at the end of Level 1.

As discussed in Chapter 2.5, Sander, Stevenson, King and Coates (2000) distinguish between the 'inside-out' approach traditionally adopted by HEIs, and the 'outside-in' approach of non-education service providers. The former assumes that educators know what students need and what they [the students] expect the tutor to provide. However, service providers using the latter approach undertake research to determine what customers want, then seek to provide the type and quality of service to match those expectations and hence customer/student satisfaction. The HEIs' internal quality processes, and the impact of external bodies such as external examiners and the Quality Assurance Agency (QAA), provide the necessary academic integrity, since students are not just customers in the same way as in other service industries.

The outside-in approach seems more relevant in the light of the changing nature of higher education provision, and is also the basis of marketing theory. It argues that service providers need constantly to measure their service quality to serve their customers more efficiently and effectively.

Yanhong Li & Kaye (1998) test two marketing tools to measure service quality, namely the Gap measurement approach (SERVQUAL) and the Performance-based approach (SERVPREF) in terms of their ability to explain variations in students' overall satisfaction with their courses. The former examines service quality as a function of perceived performance less expectations; the latter measure focuses just on perceived performance. Their findings, using data gathered at the University of Portsmouth, support those of Churchill and Suprenant (1982) and Cronin and Taylor (1992), namely that the Performance-based method (SERVPREF) is more efficient and effective in measuring service quality compared to the Gap approach (SERVQUAL).

Yanhong and Kaye (ibid) also draw on previous research, citing two circumstances when the Gap approach is inadequate in explaining the formation of customers' satisfaction. These are, firstly, when a customer is unfamiliar with a service (McGill and Iacobucci, 1991), as with students new to higher education and, secondly, when the services are offered continuously over a period of time, when consumers' expectations tend to be passive; this reduces the effect of the Gap approach (Oliver 1989), and also applies to higher education. However, lest it be thought that this obviates the expectations model, Yanhong and Kaye (1998), citing Iacobucci et al (1994), note that the research results can be a function of the research methodology i.e. the outcomes will depend on the question asked and what items are measured. Hence they argue that the findings of their research should be treated with caution outside their context.

Rowley (1996) agrees with Yanhong and Kaye Ibid) arguing that SERVQUAL has met with little success when used in HE and cites Buttle (1994) who criticises it on theoretical and operational grounds. However, Yanhong and Li Kaye (ibid) suggest that more work be undertaken on student loyalty and student retention/withdrawal using both models to assess their superiority in explaining variations in these variables.

In contrast, Bell (1997), also evaluating the Gap approach, argues that it is an effective framework to evaluate the quality of HE, supporting Parasuraman et al's (1994) assertion that the gap quality dimensions can be used to assess quality in a range of services, including HE.

Although debate still surrounds the effectiveness of the Gap Measurement Approach, the recognition that students' expectations of higher education are often unrealistic, coupled with government pressures to improve student retention, especially at Level 1, means that educational researchers continue to focus on both student and staff expectations. This may be just considering current students' expectations as they start their course (Booth, 1997), or in conjunction with students' perceptions of the services they receive (Rangecroft et al, 1999), to address mismatches. In other words, although there may be some doubts in the services quality literature about the validity of the SERVQUAL model, in educational research, even when drawing on services

quality literature, there is still a perception that researching student and staff expectations is important for reasons outlined in this section. This approach will be followed in this thesis.

Yanhong Li & Kaye also briefly discuss other measures of teaching quality e.g. Ramsden's Course Perception Questionnaire. However, other research suggests that, to assess the quality of the student learning experience and student satisfaction with this, a wider analysis is needed, or an alternative model employed, than just the quality of the classroom experience. In other words, the 'total student experience' discussed previously (Harvey & Knight, 1996, cited in Geall, 2000). This is reinforced by Geall who argues that, since education is a transformative process, students must be central to this as participants. In other words, education is a co-operative partnership based on mutual respect, rather than students being perceived as products, customers, consumers or service users, which the services management approach argues. This provides, therefore, an alternative academic quality assurance model of the learning organization, rather than a business–shadowing model of customer satisfaction. However, in so far as both seek to assure and enhance the learning quality of their students these may not be so dichotomous as may initially seem to be the case.

Intuitively, the total student experience / transformation model is more persuasive than the customer satisfaction model since it recognizes that learning is a total environment rather than a classroom constrained experience. It also acknowledges that the educational experience cannot be equated totally with a business process such as selling an ISA. It is further true that a questionnaire can be designed, which addresses the multiplicity of issues impacting on student learning. An example of this is the Evaluating the Student Experience Project (ESEP) as used by City University, Hong Kong (Geall 2000).

Appendix 2.8 The chain-of-response model for understanding participation in adult learning activities (Cross 1981)

There is considerable literature on adult learning e.g. Knowles (1970), Simpson (1980), Cross (1981), Beder and Darkenwald (1982), Danis and Tremblay (1985), Brookfield (1986), Boud and Griffin (1987), Garrison (1992), Jarvis (1995), Foley (2000) and, although initially defined differently, more recently research into adult learning and mature students have overlapped. Foley (2000) notes that, originally, adult education was defined as 'education for adults other than initial preparation for a career, with primary emphasis on non-award education' (NSW Ministry of Education, 1986, although not in Foley's bibliography). However, he argues, as adult education has grown, it can be taken to encompass formal education, non-formal education, informal learning and incidental learning. Since the first category links to my research I draw on this literature as well.
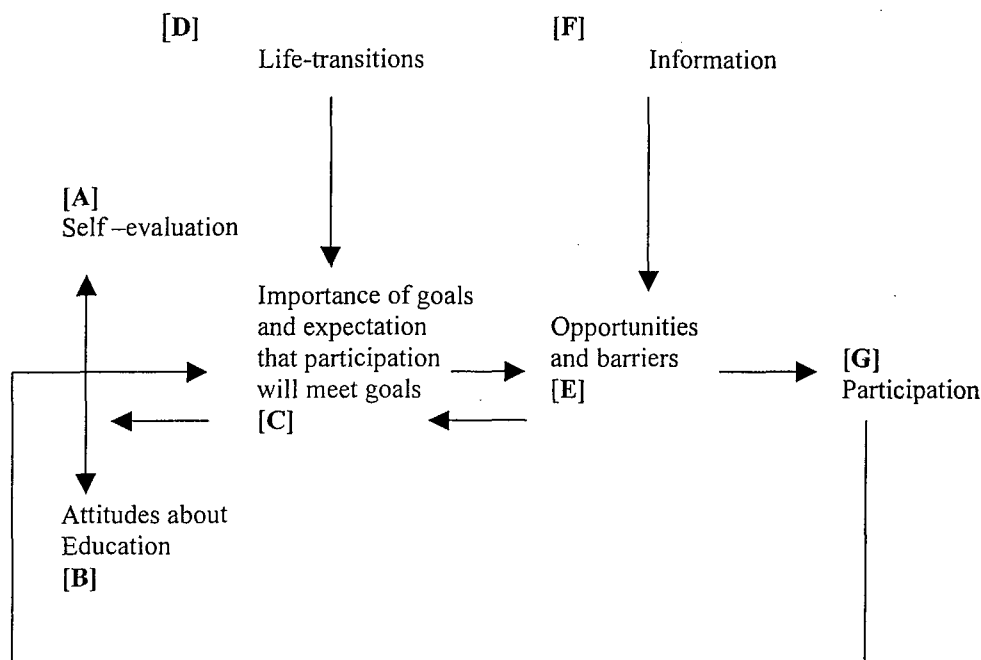
Key: A: emphasises the importance of stable personality characteristics, in determining motivation for achievement so people who fear failure are unlikely to participate; or, if they do, may well withdraw after any early unfavourable experiences

B: arise from childhood experiences / attitudes of friends and 'significant others' – the linkage of A and B reinforce participators and non-participators

C: based on the expectancy-value theory of motivation [see Section 2.4 on motivation]

D: periods of change calling for adjustment to new phases to the mature student life cycle; dissatisfaction with a job or perceived lack of opportunities, such as a glass ceiling, may cause this

E: these play a key role once an adult has decided to participate in HE – strongly motivated will seize such opportunities / overcome such barriers

F: appropriate information is available to inform and reinforce initial decisions e.g. UW Open Days

G: The mature student enrols

Figure A2.8 Cross' chain-of-response model

This diagram is from Cross, K. (1981) *Adults as learners: increasing participation and facilitating learning.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.It is reproduced by permission of John Wiley and Sons Inc. Hoboken, New Jersey.

The term adult learners is anachronistic since today, all students over 18 are adults. In reality, in UK HE, most full-time mature students are in their 20s to early 30s. Mature students at the University of Wessex differ to some extent from adult learners summarised, for example, in Brookfield (1986, p.5) as 'relatively affluent, well-educated, white, middle-class'.

As I have noted in Chapter 2.6, Cross' (ibid) chain-of-response (COR) model, Figure A2.8, explains participation in adult learning activities. I also commented that all stages are relevant to mature students at the University of Wessex, although it can also apply, in many cases, to any student not just mature ones. The key below this model is Cross's comments, updated by my own.

Regarding Cross's (1981) comment that students with low self-esteem will be deterred from education, for UW, meetings with tutors, Open Days and reassurance are importance confidence-boosting measures of positive feedback and reinforcement; skills development is another support mechanism. However, Brookfield (ibid) argues that an objectives-oriented programme, in which students acquire skills and knowledge determined in advance by the tutor, can be over-restrictive but does have merit for skills development.

In terms of A in Figure A2.8 above, Walters (2000) develops a 3Rs framework of: Redundancy – reinterpreting the past as one moves from one perspective of life to another, such as divorce; Recognition – of the occurrence of change, which facilitates personal transformation, for example, by entering HE; and Regeneration – the outcome of the developmental process e.g. creating a new personal framework of reference. The 3Rs framework is to understand mature students' experiences of HE concerning their motivations, expectations and outcomes.

With Redundancy, Walters finds that a change in status or role at work may cause mature students to return to education, or it may be 'existential self-questioning' such as work redundancy, divorce or retirement. With Recognition, 'learning involves social interaction from which there will be a reaction' (ibid p.277); for most students HE provides a positive outcome i.e. gaining a qualification, and this is a major motivating factor offsetting earlier negative school experiences. However, adjustment to the process of HE learning can be difficult with 'new responsibilities, expectations and challenges' so supportive tutors etc are important. Also some mature students expect that education will fill an emotional gap in their lives or boosting self-esteem. Regeneration offers such positive aspects as massively increased self-confidence, a qualification, and opportunity to rebuild lives. If a student leaves HE before completion, argues Walters, through free and rationale choice, it should be viewed as a successful outcome for the individual student since 'learning ...is a process not a product'.

Appendix 2.9 Dreyfus and Dreyfus (1986): 5 stages of skills development:

1. Novice
2. Advanced beginner
3. Competent performer
4. Proficient performer
5. Expert.

Appendix 2.10   **Barnett's (1994) 4 criteria for the application of the term skilful**

1. A situation of some complexity
2. A performance that addresses the situation, is deliberate and is not just a matter of chance
3. An assessment that the performance has met the demands of the situation
4. A sense that the performance was commendable.

Appendix 2.11   Capability, competences and their relations to skills

A2.11.1 Capability

CAPABILITY

Extra-curricular activities

Transferable Skills

Employability / work-based learning

Subject Knowledge

Lifelong / Independent Learning
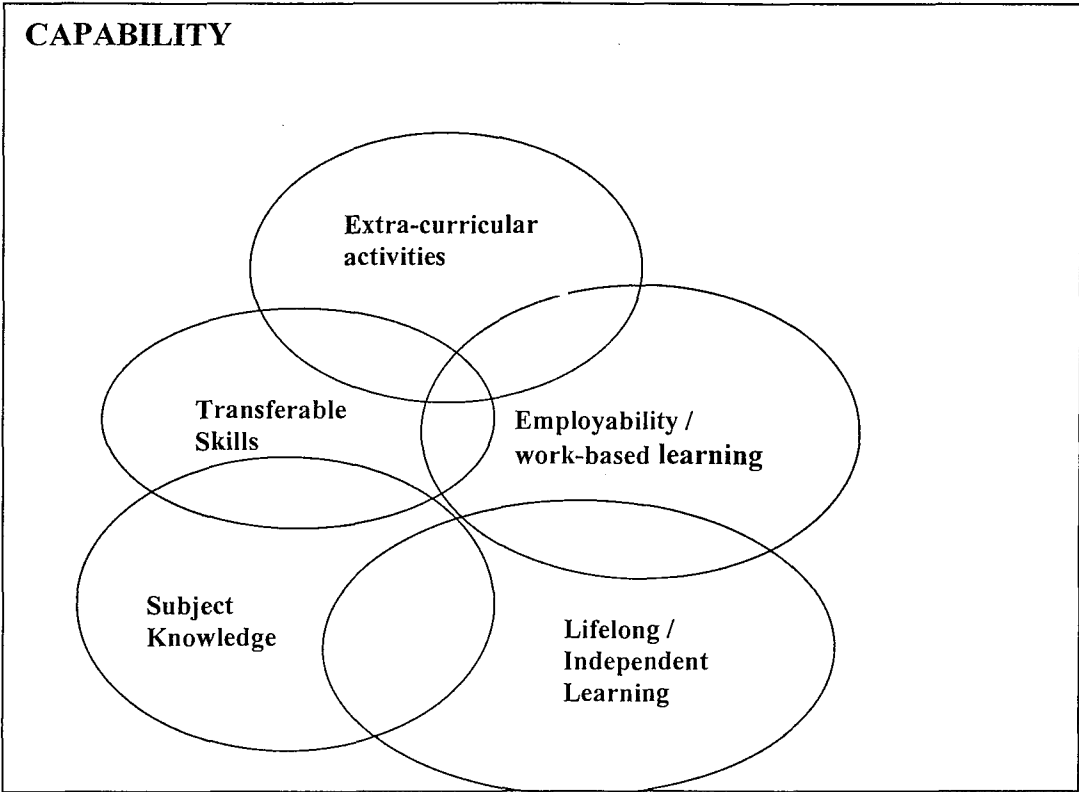
Figure A2.11.1   Diagrammatic Representation of Capability
(based on Jenkins & Walker (1994); Stephenson and Yorke (1998))

Figure A2.11.1 is a graphical representation of capability. Jenkins and Walker (1994, p.20) define capability as 'the skills and attitudes that empower them (students) as lifelong learners and that give them an edge in a competitive labour market', while Jenkins and Walker (ibid, p.24) define it as 'the ability to turn ideas into action through knowledge, imagination and skill'. These definitions are not particularly helpful and further reference to controlling one's own learning, setting one's own goals and being responsible for one's own achievements more usefully sets capability at least partly within the area of developing student / learner autonomy or independent learning (Murray and Gore 1994; Wilkins 1994)) and lifelong learning (Fryer 1997). Stephenson et al (1998, p. 2) defines capability as 'an integration of knowledge, skills, personal qualities and understanding used *appropriately and effectively*', however they are defined. To him, capability is not just knowledge and skills but also issues such as judgement, self-confidence to take risk and commitment to learn from experience; in other words to exercise what he calls independent capability (in Zone Z where unfamiliarity rules) rather than dependent capability in Zone Y in Figure A2.11.2 below.

Skills are, therefore, seen as a part of capability that also consists of 'the skilful use of knowledge' (p.29), with the emphasis on skilful to address employer feedback that they do not perceive specialist disciplinary knowledge to be that important (Harvey 1993; Harvey et al 1993) and to meet the needs of knowledge-based economies (Stephenson and York 1998). It also includes the development of employability and learner autonomy; clearly there are overlaps between these elements. Stephenson (1998) uses the helpful phrase 'fitness of purpose' to consider the quality of HE not in terms of equating quality with efficiency (fitness for purpose) but in terms of capability. Barnett (1994, p.84) reinforces this, arguing that, to meet the needs of employers, a curriculum requires general 'skills of meta-cognition', or 'higher-order capacities, rather than propositional knowledge; in other words, 'knowing what to do with knowing'.

Unfamiliar
Problems

Z

Familiar   Unfamiliar
Context   Context

Y

Familiar
Problems
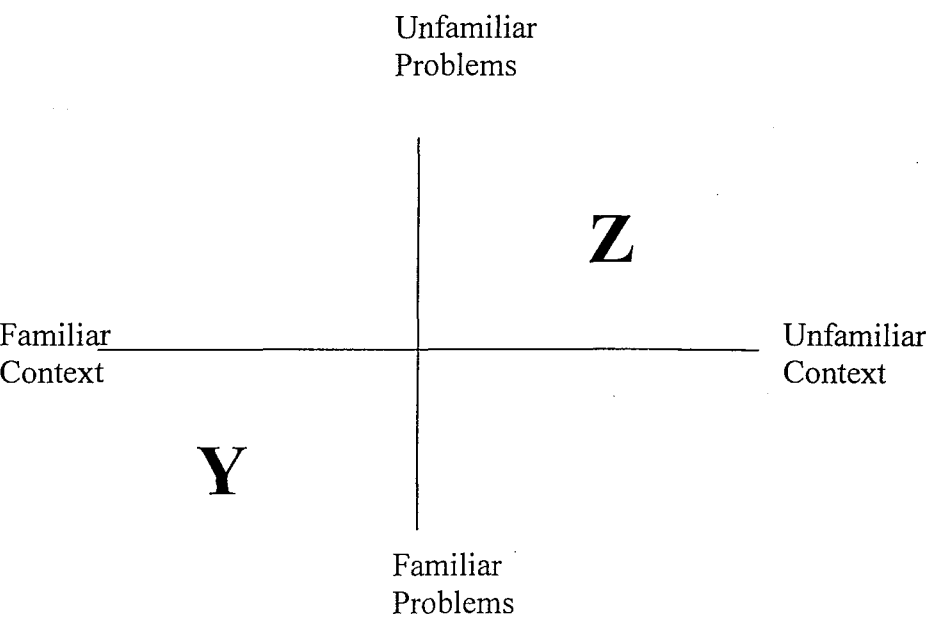
Figure A2.11.2   Dependent and Independent Capability
[from Stephenson and Yorke (1998, p.5; reproduced by permission of Kogan Page)

If one compares capability, represented in Figure A2.11.1, with Bennett et al's (2000) model in Chapter 2, Figure 2.6 there are not significant differences apart from Stephenson's (1998) emphasis on personal qualities.

In the classroom, capability, Jenkins and Walker (1994) argue, relates to a particular learning methodology encompassing active learning particularly group work, problem solving and profiling, which is consistent with independent learning. Stephenson and Yorke (1998) endorse this, arguing for the need to switch from a top-down control model of university education to a student-led teacher-supported system with students being given real responsibility and accountability for managing their own learning; in turn, this promotes deeper approaches to learning.

A2.11.2   Competences

As Wilkins (1994) argues, these have been known as competences, competencies, competency, skills, personal skills, personal transferable skills, enterprise skills, non-academic skills, life-learning skills etc. The NCVQ (1988), now the QCA, defines competence as 'the ability to perform the activities within an occupation', with a range of levels of competence from 1 to 5 (the most demanding). Hence, says Assiter (1994), a practitioner is competent if s/he can perform a range of identified skills.

Evers et al (1998), who are strong supporters of competence, define it under the 'four base competencies' of managing self; managing people and tasks; communicating; and mobilising innovation and change; together these form what Evers et al (p.6) call a model of general skills which are 'fundamental to developing more specialised skills and are generic to all academic specialities'. Comparatively, these are close to Bennett et al's (2000) four generic skills categories of management of self; management of others; management of information; and management of task, each with a sub-set of skills. The similarity is further reinforced by Evers et al's loose usage of the term 'key skill competencies'. The rationale advanced for developing competences in students is essentially the same as that for developing transferable skills; the essential difference is that competences are occupation-specific whereas transferable skills, and even more so capability, should be much wider in their usage, to all aspects of life. Additionally, skill 'connotes a dimension of increasing ability' (Attewell 1990, p. 433, in Evers et al 1998); hence skill is synonymous with competence but also denotes increased expertise.

Stephenson and Yorke (1998, p.3) are critical of the competency approach arguing that it is a top-down control model and is concerned only with fitness for specified purposes (occupations in Evers et al's analysis); in other words it seeks to achieve 'the effective delivery of current services based on standards determined by past performance'. Blunden (1996) argues that behaviourist-oriented competency-based training approaches are perceived to be linear and modular whereas, in reality, skills acquisition is complex and cyclic.

Assiter (1994) acknowledges the criticisms of competency, including that it inhibits deep learning approaches. However, she defends it from its critics arguing that, in the late 1980s, its focus was on transferring skills between contexts, having much in common with transfer skills discussed below, with an emphasis on people. However, the development of the now-defunct and unsuccessful NVQs in the 1990s (Wolf 2002) switched its focus to task analysis, or 'behaviours and the outcomes of behaviours' – what others have described as a tick-box compliance culture (Johnson 1998), and of which Barnett (1994) was highly critical. He argued, critiquing Jessup 1991, that the drafting of the learning outcomes that demonstrate competences should not be undertaken just by business professionals, but rather need dialogue with academics; that competences need to change over time in a dynamic world; and that the NCVQ asserted that the key issue was whether competences could be assessed, hence ignoring the learning process that developed them.

Assiter's argument in support of competency is for a return to the earlier model where education and training are brought closely together. This is reinforced by Barnett (1994), who argues that the two rival versions of competence, namely the business

context and the academic context are coming together as the former assimilate the latter; certainly ten years later, with the increasing influence of business on HE, this is even more so the case.

Appendix 2.12   Blackler's (1995) 5 forms of knowledge:

1. Embrained knowledge: knowledge that is dependent on conceptual skills and cognitive abilities
2. Embodied knowledge: action oriented
3. Encultured knowledge: relates to the process of achieving shared understandings
4. Embedded knowledge: resides in systematic routines
5. Encoded knowledge: information conveyed by symbols and signs.

Appendix 2.13   **Moerkamp et al's (1991) 4 groups of meta-competences:**

1. Strategies to integrate new skills and knowledge into the personal set of skills' e.g. through using analogies
2. Self-regulation strategies' e.g. self-monitoring, or asking for help
3. Strategies to abstract from specific contexts' e.g. creating schemas or mental models)
4. Transfer attitudes e.g. self-confidence.

Appendix 2.14   Key principles for teaching transfer

Key principles for teaching transfer are:

1. use of a wide range of contexts in which students can acquire and practise their skills; context-specific learning can inhibit transfer
2. Students need to be required to:

- Engage in active learning (e.g. transferring skills in the context of solving problems)
- Engage in experiential rather than instructional learning
- Construct their own solutions to transfer problems
- Continually reflect on the learning process in general / transfer process in particular
- Explain what they are learning to others (peer teaching)
- Tutors and peers to provide plenty of external feedback

3. Adopt a holistic approach – problems treated as integrated wholes rather than broken down into smaller components
4. Integrate theory and practice, knowledge & skills, procedures as well as principles and rules e.g. theory should contribute directly to the skill being learned; use all opportunities to explain principles underlying individual skills.
5. Ensure learners fully understand what they are doing – they build higher level mental representations (schema) of what they are doing
6. Use varied examples and experiences
7. Ensure mastery of the skills to be involved in transfer
8. provide a supportive learning environment in which transfer is seen as an important learning objective.

Source: Shepherd (2000) from Perkins and Salmon (1988, p.30)

Appendix 2.15   Research into HE skills development by academic or support-staff practitioners

These reflect on their experiences, at times in a particular cognate area.

Booth (2001) discusses skills development for Level 1 University of Nottingham history undergraduates who are more interested in the discipline than in skills, while Hopkins (2001) identifies a similar issue with English Studies at Sheffield Hallam University. Shepherd (2000) examines transfer skills in the context of teaching geography, as do Leask (1994) and Maguire, Evans and Dyas (2001). The latter seek to develop students' 'personal, study and transferable skills' and, by integrating skills training with a geography programme and emphasising a preference for students adopting deep approaches to learning, hope this will occur at Level 1. In reality, they find most students adopt strategic approaches to learning, confirming Ramsden, Beswick and Bowen's (1986) findings, cited in Ramsden (1992, p.63, 64), that 'attempting to train first-year students to adopt more effective learning strategies had the practical effect of increasing their tendencies to use surface approaches... we cannot train students to use deep approaches when the educational environment is giving them the message that surface ones are rewarded'.

Although not subject-specific, Dickinson (2000) discusses an established student-tutoring scheme at Surrey University whereby students help local schoolteachers and, in so doing, develop their own transferable skills. Hartley (2002) argues that traditional study-skills advice needs updating to reflect changing conditions in HE such as widening participation, more mature students, reduced resources and CIT developments. This is important in the light of Lowe and Cook's (2003) findings that, at Ulster University, although 42% of students had over-estimated the negative impact of a lack of study skills on their performance, over 20% experience greater difficulty than expected and 25% fully acknowledged this to be a problem. Killen (1994) found that academic staff rated poor student skills e.g. literacy, and insufficient effort, more highly that did the students themselves, suggesting an expectations gap.

Boyce et al (2001) discuss the use of case studies to develop deep learning and soft skills development in Australian accounting education, while Murphy (2001) discusses case studies of skills development at five UK universities and presents a picture of a variety of practices. These range from Luton's complex model of students mapping their exposure to 13 skills, and Loughborough's web-based tool to enable Construction students to develop skills and record evidence of competences in them, to the OU's Vocational Qualification Centre that requires students to take their own responsibility for improving and assessing skills by using a personal log of skills development, linked to student-tutor dialogue; this foreshadows the 2006 implementation of Personal Development Planning (PDP) in all UK HEIs.

Drew and Bingham (1996), have developed student 'SkillPacks' to raise student awareness of transferable and transfer skills, underpinning this by trying to develop deep approaches to student skills development employing Kolb's (1984) model of experiential learning. Group and project work, widely used in UWBS, are cited as examples of such experiential learning, with skills explicitly developed and assessed alongside subject knowledge; student self-assessment of their skills development and the promotion of student reflection-on-action are important adjuncts to this.

Appendix 2.16 Implications of retention for the UK and individual HEIs

'Student retention issues could well form the cornerstone of a new literature of college improvement' (Martinez 1995)

A2.16.1 National policy

In the context of national policy, with which this appendix is concerned, Ozga and Sukhnandan (1998) stress several issues. Firstly, in the HE quasi-market, HEIs compete vigorously and often adopt highly developed marketing strategies confusing vulnerable students who uncritically asimilate 'expertly marketed incorrect or outdated information'; McGivney (1996) endorses this.

In its retention programme, the OU talks of the 'need for enquirers to make informed choices about the right course of study'. Hence HEIs need to adopt responsible marketing strategies and improved quality of information. HEIs also show evidence of being unable to respond accurately and efficiently to the diverse needs and expectations of students; staff need to be more responsive and adaptable in their expectations of students as well as enabling students to match their expectations and reality more effectively.This suggests the need to improve early warning systems such as internal record keeping, promoting active learning in the early stages of the course, provide early formative assessments and undertake staff training.

A2.16.2 HEIs

There are a number of models for implementing a student retention strategy. For example, Napier University has undertaken a student retention project since 1995. Veronique Johnston (Johnston, V. 2001), in a presentation to UW staff (27/06/01) argued, in line with Spours, for an integrated strategy, focusing on the student learning experience, and encompassing all aspects of an HEI. Figure 1 illustrates this model which ranges from before students enter (Sorting), through the initial high risk period of joining the HEI (Connecting), enabling the student to be an effective learner (Transforming) to helping with the out-of-classroom support mechanisms (Supporting). Interestingly, in the light of my thesis, she argued that the introduction of a learning skills module in the first semester has made a big difference to retention, an echo of Ozga and Sukhnandan's argument for promoting active learning early in a course. She also stressed the importance of transforming the HEI through a range of policies including staff development and revisiting all aspects of the curriculum and assessment. Significantly, in the light of developing government policy towards retention, Napier has appointed Guidance Tutors, on half-teaching timetables, to coordinate retention.

Johnston's analysis also focused on the difficulties of students engaging in new areas eg business, the lack of numeracy skills, parental pressures forcing students into higher education, all of which impact on retention. As she argued , echoing Michael Shattock, 'you can't save everyone' (Shattock 2001). She also argued that Level 2 entry sees high drop out rates, so that,at Napier, it is the level of entry rather than just Level 1 which is the high risk. Male students at Napier are twice as likely to withdraw while mature students are less at risk than young students. In the presentation she

argued that the vital factor was what happens in the classroom; Ozga and Sukhnandan (1998) do not agree with this.

Year	Percentage of First Year Students Passing First Time
1993-94	60
1995-96	48
1999-2000	62 [77% if trailing modules are counted]

Table 2.16.1 Napier University: Percentage of First Year Students Passing First Time

In terms of the effectiveness of the intervention strategy she cited as evidence the data in Table 4, arguing this was against a period of widening access. Effectively, what has happened is that the position of seven years ago has been restored; had the strategy not been introduced the downward trend evidenced in 1995-96 might well have continued.

1. Transforming the Institution

Staff Development
Curriculum Redesign
Guidance Structures
Assessment Practice

2. Transforming the Student

Study skills
Developing as active learners
Lifelong Learning

5. Connecting

Induction
Student Guides
Peer Mentoring
Personal Tutors

THE STUDENT LEARNING EXPERIENCE

3. Supporting

Accommodation Service
Student Union
Student Services
Access Fund

4. Sorting

Interviews
Pre-testing
Admissions Criteria
Bridging Courses

Figure 2.16.1 Napier University Retention Strategy

Appendix 2.17   Retention research relating to Further Education

The only other research I draw on here, due to word limitations, is by Spours (1997). Although relating to FE colleges, Foskett (2001b) has argued for the transferability of policy between further and higher education. However, through word limits I include this as Appendix 2.17.

Most FE research has been college-specific case studies of what appears to work e.g. the highly rated Isle of Wight College paper (Medway and Pennay 1994). Spours also cites work by Martinez (1995) who argues that the reasons for student withdrawals are 'complex, multi-causal, and a mix of internal and external issues' including financial, student perceptions that the college does not care, and perceptions of poor induction, quality of teaching and tutorial care.

College specific case-studies reinforce this with evidence of inappropriate advice leading to false student expectations of college, over one third of non-completers believing they were on the wrong course, a gap between student and staff perceptions of reasons for withdrawal, external pressures, students' previous learning experiences and difficulty with the speed of teaching. Again students who withdrew believed they were acting rationally and resented the term 'drop-outs'. As Medway and Penney (1994) cited in Martinez (2001b, p.2) argue 'the student decision-making process could be characterised as a continuous weighing of the costs of continuing with, or abandoning, a programme of study'. A number of these issues can be seen to coincide with the work of Ozga and Sukhnandan.

Since FEDA studies (Martinez 1995) had focused on student perceptions, Spours concentrates on college managers and teaching staff at five London FE colleges. In the context of the policy focus of this paper, his research findings include the need for colleges (and HEIs, I would argue) to create an active consensus between managers and teaching staff to address retention, showing it to be an educational rather than a bureaucratic issue (a cultural change); developing a simple, systematic and educationally focused strategy rather than chasing many dislocated objectives; and looking beyond the college to 'understand the wider significance of the national reform process regarding funding, qualifications and the labour market.' All of these apply equally to HE and UW, I believe.

Appendix 3.1 The Positivist Research Paradigm

Alvesson & Skoldberg (2000, p.1) argue that the positivist paradigm of research claims to be 'the creation of true objective knowledge following a scientific [and hence rigorous] method'. The researcher is a neutral [objective] observer who collects un-interpreted facts or pure data that are the 'unequivocal imprint of reality.' The data provide the basis for empirically grounded conclusions and, from these, generalisations may be undertaken and theory built. Hence, epistemologically, the nature of evidence and knowledge of things in the social world is determined by the researcher's independence from the researched; in this paradigm, the research is researcher-focused starting from his/her ideas as of what its central issue should be.

Moreover, findings should be capable of replication as a means of testing the validity of the knowledge generated. Implicit in this, argues Douglas (1973) in Cohen, Manion & Morrison (2000), is that human behaviour is essentially governed by rules and that it should, therefore, be investigated by the methods of natural science, as identified above. Ontologically, therefore, the nature of reality is objective, singular and apart from the researcher (Cohen, Manion and Morrison 2000). Usher (2001) makes the important point that, in this paradigm, values are unacknowledged rather than absent; in other words, research cannot be value-neutral (May 1993).

I should also note that, although a binary divide between positivist and qualitative paradigms has been a theme of Chapter 3, this is argued by many to be an over-simplification. For example, Hammersley (1992) quoted in Scott, (1996), has suggested that this divide is too stark a contrast and, in reality, each may be able to used in the same research. Scott (ibid) is, however, very critical of Hammersley's work arguing that he confuses research method and methodological framework, the former referring to the instruments by which data are gathered e.g. interviews, questionnaires. In so doing, argues Scott, Hammersley obscures 'real and profound differences' between the two research paradigms.

Discussing philosophy and educational research, Bridges (1997), citing Quine's naturalised epistemology, talks of eroding the separateness between empirical [the positivist paradigm] and philosophical or a priori [the qualitative paradigm] beliefs, and raises the issue of a 'modern epistemology'. [Quine is not dated or referenced in Bridges' article so I am unable to source him]. Quoting Everitt & Fisher (1995) [also not cited] who, in turn, comment on Quine, he says:

'Quine proposed that all our beliefs could be ranged on an entrenchment continuum [from empirical at the one extreme to philosophical at the other]. *They range from the most highly entrenched to the most weakly entrenched, where degree of entrenchment measures the degree to which any particular belief is entwined with other beliefs. The crucial point here is that the beliefs differ only in degree and not in kind'.*

My concluding remark, therefore, is that although I still see my proposed research as located in a qualitative paradigm, I am also conscious of the concept of a continuum, as Foskett (2001a) argued, stretching from positivism ant the one extreme to qualitative research at the other end.

Appendix 3.2 Denzin's (1989a) five characteristics of a positivist framework

1. Objectivity can be grasped
2. Researchers can remain neutral with their values separate from the descriptions of reality they provide
3. Observations and generalisations are a-situational and a-temporal
4. Causality is linear
5. Inquiry is an objective activity

Original source: Denzin, N. (1989) Interpretive interactionism. volume 16, applied social science research methods. London: Sage.

Cited in Scott, D. and Usher, R. (eds) (1996) *Understanding educational research.* London: Routledge

Appendix 3.3 Types of Triangulation

A3.3.1. Data triangulation

In terms of data triangulation, Denzin (1970) distinguishes time triangulation, where data is collected at various times; space triangulation, where it is collected in different locations; and person triangulation, whereby data is collected from a variety of people and groups of people.

As Chapter 3, Figure 3.2 shows, I use time and person triangulation, the former because I am exploring changes in staff and student expectations and perceptions at three different times during the academic year 2002-03, and the latter because I wish to explore the experiences of a range of people, including current and former students and academic staff.

In terms of time triangulation, Cohen et al (2000) distinguish between diachronic reliability i.e. stability of data over time, and synchronic reliability i.e. similarity of data gathered at the same time; however, these seem more appropriate to quantitative than qualitative data. There is unlikely to be diachronic reliability since I expect student and staff expectations and experiences to change over time. Synchronic reliability is not likely to exist since I am exploring the lifeworld experiences of people and, even though phenomenology seeks to develop the underlying essences of a phenomenon, these are likely to differ.

A3.3.2. Investigator triangulation

The second type of triangulation identified by Denzin (1970) is investigator triangulation, which requires the use of more than one observer of the same situation; this is not appropriate to my research.

A3.3.3. Theory triangulation

Theory triangulation is the third type of triangulation and is defined as 'using more than one kind of approach [i.e. alternative theories] to generate the categories of analysis' (McDonald and Tipton, in Gilbert, 1993, p.199). McDonald and Tipton comment that this is the most difficult type of triangulation to achieve and, citing Denzin (1970, pp. 297-301), argue that he 'can only adduce a hypothetical answer, and … the three hypothetical answers he draws on are, in fact, quite closely related.'

In the case of my research proposal, I draw on two main bodies of theory. One relates to approaches to learning, which is subsumed into the Presage-Process-Product model (Prosser and Trigwell, 1994, and Biggs, 1999) and my modifications to it. The other is the work of Vincent Tinto (1975, 1987, 1993, 1997) that relates to student retention. Other theories on which I draw relate particularly on the development of skills as an intervention strategy to support the transition to higher education, and its impact on student retention.

My work seeks to integrate these groups of theories into a coherent framework applicable to the student learning experience in UWBS. Having three bodies of theory is an acceptable example of triangulation, particularly I believe, as it is theory

triangulation. To have four or five competing theoretical frameworks may cause as many problems as conferring advantages (Blaikie 1991).

A3.3.4. Methodological triangulation

The last type of triangulation cited by Denzin (1970) is methodological. He argues that there are two sub-types to this. One is within-method. If a questionnaire were used as a research instrument, for example, it might contain a mix of attitude scales such as a Likert scale, open ended questions and forced choice or closed questions. In my research proposal I have noted that I use questionnaires that are structured with closed and open questions.

The other sub-type of methodological triangulation is between-method triangulation. I identify individual, in-depth phenomenological student interviews, student questionnaires, telephone discussions with former students and staff interviews as data sources for both student groups in my research.

Also used: Denzin (1989a); Denzin and Lincoln (1994); Hermes and Zengerle (1999)

Appendix 3.4 A framework for my hermeneutic phenomenological research

Key:
- *Actions in italics indicate data gathering and analysis, and in section 19 discussion, as part of my triangulation of data sources. However, this is not, specifically, a part of the phenomenological research*
- *Dates of activities are shown in bold brackets*

1. Develop a research topic and research question(s) that seriously interests me, with significant social [includes work] meanings that encompass autobiographical meanings and values **[2000-02]**

↓

2. Undertake a thorough, systematic and on-going review of the relevant literature **[2000-04]**

↓

3. Reflect on the essential themes that might characterise the phenomenon to be explored and make it especially significant – what constitutes the nature of the lived first year experience?

↓

4. Construct a set of criteria to locate suitable and willing co-researchers / social actors from the two groups of courses identified to investigate experience as it is lived: **[January – July 2002]**

   a. contact students and staff before the start of the 2002-03 academic year, seeking their willingness to participate – including clear explanation of the nature and purpose of the research
   b. be alert to ethical considerations including power relations and staff / student right to refuse or withdraw [informed consent]

↓

5. Develop a set of questions or topics to form the basis of the hermeneutic phenomenological dialogues / discussions:

   a. test these with suitable [work] colleagues and amend as appropriate
   b. undertake pilots of the discussions with other staff and current students and amend the questions / topics as necessary **[May 2002]**
   c. *do the same with student questionnaires [recognising that this is not part of the hermeneutic phenomenological investigation but is data triangulation]*

↓

6. Contact new students, and staff, during induction week for first round of dialogues **[September 2002]**

    a. If necessary, seek more students with whom to conduct phenomenological discussions if insufficient obtained initially

    b. Ensure that all co-researchers are reminded again, at start of the hermeneutic phenomenological dialogues, of relevant ethical issues concerning their participation

    c. I seek to bracket my pre-conceptions and interpretations to listen to the interviewee and achieve phenomenological reduction; but I recognise and explicitly articulate this subjectivity in my research

    d. Conduct and tape-record in-depth discussions with academic staff and students focusing on the bracketed topic and research questions – noting, on paper, non-verbal and other communications where possible e.g. pauses, laughter, tone of voice

    e. *Visit induction week classes and ask first year students to complete questionnaires in situ - advise them carefully of their ethical rights, including that of non-participation*

↓

7. Give tapes of discussions to secretary for typing, emphasising the confidentiality of these **[October - December 2002]**

    a. Listen to tapes, seeking to suspend my meanings and interpretations [bracket the topic and questions but note any pre-suppositions I am aware of e.g. Tinto's theories]

    b. On receipt of each transcript, listen to tape again to check against the transcript for accuracy of typing; again seek to bracket the topic and questions

    c. Send copy of transcript, with accompanying letter, to each co-researcher inviting comments / amendments as they wish; again remind co-researchers of their informed consent / other ethical issues

    d. Copy final versions of transcripts from Microsoft Word to QSR's N6 qualitative data analysis package

↓

8. Organising and analysing the data

    a. Listen to tapes again, against the transcription, to secure a sense of the gestalt; also read transcripts separately to optimise data immersion

    b. Set up tree nodes in N6 to conform to broad structure of phenomenological discussion topics and emerging themes

    c. Note any general impressions or specific issues – or problems - as a Word document or as a N6 memo to a document or node (as alternative to a log)

↓

9. Develop units of general meaning, units of relevant meaning and cluster the latter

    a. Very rigorously, go over every word, phrase, sentence, paragraph etc in the transcript to elicit the participant's meaning
    b. Identify units of general meaning (which, argues Hycner, are irrespective of the research questions)
    c. Identify, within these, units of relevant [to the research questions] meaning
    d. Using N6, code these units of relevant meaning [I use paragraphs as the unit of text], and transfer these to N6 as tree nodes [if conforming to the broad structure of phenomenological discussion topics] or as free nodes if not previously identified as a research unit of relevant meaning [this is the equivalent of Hycner's (1985) clustering of units of relevant meaning]
    e. Then, check if nodes overlap or are redundant – reduce as appropriate
    f. Again, during this process, I must attempt to bracket my presuppositions and stay as true as possible to the phenomenon
    g. Note: Hycner (1985) recommends the training of independent judges to verify the units of relevant meaning; this is not a realistic option on either time or cost grounds.

9. Identify any central emerging themes from the tree nodes and free nodes

- Use the tools in N6's Node Search to automatically find the relationships between the coding of 2 or more nodes. Mason (1996) argues, the role of interpretation is very important here in making meaning of the data; however, be very mindful of Richards' (2002) warning concerning the 'quakey quicksilver of interpretation'
- These should express the essences of the nodes / clusters
- Revisit each most recent transcript and summarise it, incorporating the emerging themes above – writing and re-writing are essential on-going parts of hermeneutic phenomenological research

10. Before January 2003

- Contact staff and students before Christmas to 'touch base'
- Develop second set of questions or topics to form the basis of the January 2003 phenomenological dialogues / discussions
- Test these with suitable [work] colleagues and amend as appropriate
- Pilots are not undertaken again due to my growing immersion in the qualitative data and hence confidence in what, as a researcher I am exploring, problems of accessing additional students on which to test the second set of topics [who would not, anyway, have been familiar with the first interviews], and my, and student, time pressures – but, as before, strongly encourage co-researchers to introduce any new topics they wish

- *Analyse data from first set of student questionnaires – on basis of outcomes, develop second student questionnaires [recognising that this is not part of the phenomenological investigation but is data triangulation]*
- *Compare data from questionnaires with data from phenomenological discussions to determine if similarities or differences exist*

11. Second round of hermeneutic phenomenological discussions with staff and students [January 2003]

- Ensure that all co-researchers are reminded again, at start of the second 'round' of phenomenological dialogues, of relevant ethical issues concerning their participation
- I seek to bracket my pre-conceptions to achieve phenomenological reduction; but I recognise and explicitly articulate this subjectivity in my research
- Begin the discussion by recapping on the themes emerging from the first round of discussions and, particularly, the key issues they identified before – use this as the basis to commence discussions as to whether each co-researcher is happy with the transcript (since few responded to my letter accompanying it) and to secure their agreement as to my summary and themes. Hycner argues that this is an excellent 'experiential' validity check
- Conduct and tape-record in-depth discussions with academic staff and students focusing on the bracketed topic and research questions – in particular, exploring their lived experiences in University of Wessex Business School during the Autumn term, 2002; the changing nature of the relationships between their expectations and experiences, including skills; and staff and student differences.
- Again, note, on paper, non-verbal communications where possible
- *Visit classes I visited in induction week, and ask same first year students to complete second questionnaires in situ – again, advise them carefully of their ethical rights, including that of non-participation*

12. Repeat stages 6 to 9 above [January – April 2003]

- In coding passages to N6 Nodes, I seek to code text to existing tree and free nodes, as before, and to any new ones that emerge from the second round of discussions.
- I also seek to identify any new emerging themes, and any significant changes in themes between the first and second rounds of discussions.
- Again I seek to bracket the topic and questions but note any pre-suppositions of which I am aware.
- *I shall also develop a set of questions to ask identified students who have left the courses that I am researching before completing them; contact these by telephone. Test these with staff and also compare with an Institute exit survey questionnaire*

used in 2001 by External Relations Service (ERS); avoid contacting students already contacted by ERS. Apply same ethical principles as with other data gathering methods.

- *Analyse data from telephone discussions with students who left their courses early*
- *Analyse data from second set of student questionnaires – on basis of outcomes, develop third student questionnaires [recognising that this is not part of the hermeneutic phenomenological investigation but is data triangulation]*
- *Compare data from first and second questionnaires with data from phenomenological discussions to determine if similarities or differences exist [NB use import command in N6 to incorporate this data]*

$$\downarrow$$

13. Before Easter 2003

- Contact staff and students before Easter vacation to 'touch base'
- Develop third set of questions or topics to form the basis of the late April / early May 2003 phenomenological dialogues / discussions:
- Test these with suitable [work] colleagues and amend as appropriate
- Again, pilots are not undertaken due to my still further immersion in the qualitative data and hence confidence in what, as a researcher I am exploring, problems of accessing additional students on which to test the third set of topics [who would not, anyway, have been familiar with the first or second interviews], and my, and student, time pressures

$$\downarrow$$

14. Third round of phenomenological discussions with staff and students **[late April / early May 2003]**

- Ensure that all co-researchers are reminded again, at start of the third 'round' of phenomenological dialogues, of relevant ethical issues concerning their participation, especially with approaching end-of-year assessments
- As before, I seek to bracket my pre-conceptions to achieve phenomenological reduction; but I recognise and explicitly articulate this subjectivity in my research. This is likely to be increasingly difficult.
- Begin the discussion by recapping on the themes emerging from the second round of discussions in January 2003 and, particularly, the key issues they identified before – use this as the basis to commence discussions as to whether each co-researcher is happy with the transcript relating to this second discussion and to secure their agreement as my summary and themes as a further 'experiential' validity check
- Conduct and tape-record in-depth discussions with academic staff and students focusing on the bracketed topic and research questions – in particular, exploring their lived experiences in University of Wessex Business School during the Spring term 2003 and especially their experiences during the whole of the academic year; the changing nature of the relationships between their expectations and experiences, including skills; and staff and student differences.

- Again, note, on paper, non-verbal communications where possible
- *Visit classes I have visited twice before, and ask same first year students to complete third questionnaires in situ – again, advise them carefully of their ethical rights, including that of non-participation*

15. Repeat stages 6 to 9 above [**May – July 2003**]

16. Identify general and unique themes for all dialogues [**September 2003 onwards**]

- Now I look at the themes common to all phenomenological dialogues, as well as individual variations and those that contradict or are at variance with the emergent themes - I modify or add new themes, as appropriate
- I cluster together themes common to most interviews
- I also seek to maintain variations within a theme which appear in individual interviews
- I note themes at variance with the general themes as important counterpoints
- I ask suitable work colleagues to examine my work and give me their thoughts and insights

17. Contextualisation of themes

- After identifying both general and unique themes, I shall place these back within the overall contexts from which they emerged; as Hycner argues, the role the phenomenon plays within the context is a determinant of the meaning of the phenomenon

18. Composite summary

- Finally, I shall write and re-write a composite hermeneutic phenomenological summary of all the dialogues; it will be a synthesis of textural and structural meanings and essences and, being hermeneutic, it will be interpretive. It is intended to accurately capture first year student learning, and especially skills. I shall also note individual differences. It is intended that this hermeneutic phenomenological description, which also encompasses interpretation, will particularly answer the first two research questions that I have posed.

19. *Extension to my doctoral thesis*

- *This hermeneutic phenomenological description will form part of the data presentation, data analysis and discussion sections of my thesis.*
- *However, since I am also using questionnaires with current students, and telephone interviews with past students who have left their courses early, and myself, I shall triangulate data sources*
- *I shall also draw on current research, reviewed on my literature survey chapter. I shall import my text summarising the sources I have used from Endnote, the bibliographic database software where all my references are stored, into N6 and code it to nodes in the same way as the interview transcripts. This should help my integration of theory and my qualitative data, and my subsequent analysis.*

Sources: Brenner et al (1985); Hycner (1985), van Manen (1990), Miles and Huberman 1994, Moustakas (1994), Mason (1996), Cohen et al (2000), Anon (2002b) and personal work.

Appendix 3.5 Diener and Crandall's (1978) 4 Principles of Research Ethics

A3.5.1 Competence

Competence assumes that, if given full and correct information, adults will make the correct decisions as to whether they wish to participate in the research or not. The researcher is warned that potential participants who are immature, or have some form of psychological impairment, should not be asked to participate in the research.

A3.5.2. Volunteerism

This means that any potential participants may choose freely whether they volunteer to become involved in the research or not. Cohen et al (2000) argue that this is the application of informed consent.

A3.5.3 Full information

This implies that the consent that a co-researcher gives is fully informed. However, Cohen et al (ibid) note that it is often very difficult to give participants any information e.g. the statistical treatment of data; also researchers may not know all about the research, necessitating the application of reasonably informed consent.

A3.5.4 Comprehension

This means that research participants fully understand the nature of the research project.

As Cohen et al (ibid) note, if all four of the above are present then researchers may safely assume that full consideration has been given to co-researchers' rights.

Paraphrased from Cohen et al (2000) p. 51.

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>>>
>>>>
>>>>>
>>>>>>

>>>>>>>

Dear

<div align="center">

BA (Hons)   Title

</div>

I know from our records that you will joining us on Level 1 of the above course for the next academic year. I am writing to ask if you would be able to help me.

I am undertaking research on the experience of first year students on University of Wessex Business School courses as part of my doctorate for which I am studying part-time. The University of Wessex and the Business School already use unit and course questionnaires to obtain formal student feedback, as well as gathering informal feedback through class and tutorial contact. However, there is also considerable value in conducting more detailed discussions with students to explore their perceptions of their course and their learning experiences; these discussions can gather important information that would be lost when using just a questionnaire.

I wonder if you would be willing to be interviewed by me to help me gather student's detailed experiences of what it is like to be a first year student in Wessex University Business School. The findings of this research will help us to improve the quality of provision for our students and would also be one part of the research for my doctorate. (I am also intending to interview staff and past students to give me a fuller picture and using a questionnaire across a large number of Level 1 students.)

I would like to interview you for approximately 45 minutes during induction week (w/c Monday 23 September) and again, probably for a shorter period of time, the first week back after Christmas and the first week back after Easter. Everything you say would be totally confidential and non-traceable and would have no impact in any way on your course grades or any aspect of your course. This research would be totally independent of it. You would also have the right at any stage, including during an interview to 'I don't want to answer any more questions – good bye', although obviously I hope you would not. You also have the right to decline this request and that would be the end of the matter – this may all sound heavy but, as a researcher, I have to make absolutely clear the ethics of my research, which primarily relates to your rights.

Whatever you decide, could you please complete the attached piece of paper and return it to my Faculty Administrative Officer in the stamped addressed envelope that I have enclosed (I shall be taking my summer leave between late August and mid September, hence the need to send your response to her.)

If you were willing to be interviewed that would be really good. If so, I will arrange with your course leader to visit your course early on during induction week so that we can fix a mutually convenient time. Then it would basically be sitting in my office chatting about a number of issues over a cup of coffee. I also hope to interview a limited number of other students on your course, and several other courses, during that week.

Whatever you decide, I very much hope you enjoy your time with us and that you do well in your studies.

With best wishes

Yours sincerely

Neil Harris
Associate Dean (Enhancement)
University of Wessex Business School

STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:
Induction Week: semi-structured interviews   *Draft 8: 2 August 2002*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS I AM SEEKING TO ANSWER

1. From the perspective of students and staff, what are the structures of their expectations and experiences [perceptions] of student learning, and specifically skills demands, on Level 1 of UWBS undergraduate courses, and what do these mean?
2. What are the underlying themes and contexts that account for their expectations and experiences?
3. What are the implications, for the quality of first year student learning, of staff and student expectations and experiences, specifically of skills demands, and any divergences between them?
4. How might the quality of first year student learning, and retention, be improved through a skills-based intervention strategy to influence student expectations?

INTRODUCTION

- Making the participant feel comfortable
- Brief explanation of the phenomenon I am exploring / themes of the research
- Introduction to the research / recap on letter sent before student arrival at UWBS
- Guarantee no trick questions
- Explanation of ethical issues relating to the research – informed consent
- Recap on recording of data and anonymity / non-traceability in the public domain

---

THE INTERVIEW

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

For the record, state date and time of semi-structured interview

1. What is your name?
2. On which course are you studying?
3. Why did you choose to study at the University of Wessex?
4. What entry qualifications do you have for this course?
5. Are you a mature student i.e. over 21 years of age?
6. Are you from Newtown?
7. Are you going to live at home / in a hall of residence / rented house / other?
   Please explain
8. How many hours per week do you anticipate studying during Level 1 -
   in class contact and outside classroom learning?

9. Do you have a job during term time or holidays? *If so, how many hours per week do you work?*

10. If not, do you intend to get one? *How many hours per week would you be willing to work?*

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS OF YOUR COURSE

> - **Ask student to give examples whenever possible – these are really useful and bring things alive**
> - **Give students sheets with detailed questions on them, where question is in a box.**

---

11. Do you have any expectations of the demands your course will place on you regarding the:

    a. Workload you will face
    b. Level of work i.e. how hard compared to any previous course of study
    c. Range of subjects [units] you will study
    d. Anything else related to your course?

---

12. Do you have any expectations about your fellow students? *If so, what are they?*

13. Do you have any expectations about your tutors? *If so, what are they?*

14. Do you have any expectations about your social life over the next year?

15. Do you expect to attend all your classes over the next year? *If not, why not? What percentage of classes, roughly, would you expect to attend?*

16. Do you expect class attendance to be monitored? Would you welcome this or see it as an unwarranted interference in your personal freedom?

17. You are paying fees to attend this course. Do you think this changes your relationship with your tutors, compared with when you were at F.E.college, for example? *Please explain fully.*

18. Do you have any other expectations about your course? *If so, what are they?*

---

19. From what sources have you obtained your expectations about studying in higher education at SBS?

    a. Parents – were they higher education students in the past?
    b. friends already in higher education
    c. the media
    d. previous school or college
    e. Open day at the University of Wessex - *did you attend one?*
    f. Information from other higher education institutions
    g. other – *please explain*

20. Do you think the academic staff, who are going to teach you, have any expectations about your ability to cope with the course?

If so, what do you think they were? *Explain why you think this.*

SKILLS EXPECTATIONS

21 Do the terms key skills or transferable skills mean anything to you? *If so, what do you understand by them?*

22. Do you have any expectations of the key skills you will need to use on your course to enable you to be an effective student e.g. the ability to:

    a. use computers and software packages
    b. be able to use mathematical and statistical methods
    c. be able to communicate effectively?

If so, what are they?

23. Do you have any expectations concerning the transferable skills you will need to use on your course to enable you to be an effective student e.g. the ability to

    a. use the library effectively
    b. make a presentation
    c. read an article critically
    d. put forward your thoughts in class
    e. work effectively in a group or individually
    f. write a well structured essay or report?
    g. be an independent learner?
    h. manage your time effectively
    i. be assertive

If so, what expectations do you have?

24. How do you think these skills might be developed:

    a. in special skills-development lessons
    b. in your normal subject-based classes
    c. through support provided by the Institute outside your classes
    d. other – *please specify.*

26. What skills deficiencies do you think you currently have?

27. What additional skills would you like to possess by the end of Level 1?

28. Did your previous place of study help you to develop key or transferable skills?

29. Have you been given any opportunity so far in the University of Wessex to identify what skills you currently possess and what skills you will need on your course to be an effective student?

30. If you need any extra help with your learning, whether skills development or anything else, do you know where to go?

CONCLUSION

31. Is there anything else you would like to say about your expectations before you joined your course?

EXPERIENCES / PERCEPTIONS OF THE COURSE

32. Where did you study previously?

33. Did your tutors push you to work hard?

34. Now you are here, do you feel comfortable so far with the course, its teachers and the Business School? *Please explain fully.*

35. Have you experienced anything so far at the University of Wessex that has influenced or changed your expectations of your course, or of being a student here? *Please explain fully.*

36. How seriously do you intend to take your studies i.e. do you intend to work hard here?

37. Have you already thought about leaving your course and going back home?

   a. If so, why?
   b. What has stopped you leaving so far?
   c. Are you still thinking of leaving?
   d. Who will you ask for support?

38. Have you been satisfied with your induction experience so far? *Please explain*

39. Are there any other things you would like to say about your experiences so far as a student in University of Wessex Business School?

CONCLUSIONS

- Thank student and recap on confidentiality issues
- Ask if s/he wants to see the transcript and amend it
- Remind him/her of the next meeting after Christmas

Additional notes for me

- NB bracketing my previous assumptions
- Make notes re student body language / pauses / facial expressions (verbal and non-verbal clues) – and link to question numbers
- Also need a record of my own observations, interpretations and experiences of the interview
- May well need to vary the questions above as different issues / themes emerge from the social actor.

STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:
Post-Christmas semi-structured interviews   *8 January 2003*

NB Need previous interview summary

RESEARCH QUESTIONS I AM SEEKING TO ANSWER
1. From the perspective of students and staff, what are the structures of their expectations and experiences [perceptions] of student learning, and specifically skills demands, on Level 1 of UWBS undergraduate courses, and what do these mean?
2. What are the underlying themes and contexts that account for their expectations and experiences?
3. What are the implications, for the quality of first year student learning, of staff and student expectations and experiences, specifically of skills demands, and any divergences between them?
4. How might the quality of first year student learning, and retention, be improved through a skills-based intervention strategy to influence student expectations?

INTRODUCTION

- Making the participant feel comfortable
- Reminder of the ethical issues relating to the research – informed consent
- Guarantee no trick questions
- Recap on recording of data and anonymity / non-traceability in the public domain
- Brief recap of the phenomenon I am exploring / themes of the research

THE INTERVIEW

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

For the record, Neil to state:

(i)   date and time of semi-structured interview
(ii)   name of student and course

1. Were you happy with the transcript I sent you after our first interview?

2. I have sent you a summary of what I have interpreted as the main themes emerging from our first semi-structured interview before the start of last term – does this seem accurate (for my verification / validity purposes), or do you wish to change anything? *May need to pick up issues arising from this.*

3. Ask student to recap on his / her background i.e. age / where living – explore how things are working out re where they live e.g. cost of accommodation; ability to study; making friends

4. What has it been like for you during the last term being a student in UWBS on your course? Do you feel comfortable so far with the course, its teachers and the Business School? ***Please explain fully.***

5. Were you satisfied with your induction? ***Please explain***

6. Have you experienced anything at the University of Wessex that has influenced or changed your expectations of your course, or of being a student here? ***Please explain fully.***

7. Do you still intend to take your studies seriously i.e. do you still intend to work hard here?

8. Have you already thought about leaving your course and going back home?

   a. If so, why?
   b. What has stopped you leaving so far?
   c. Are you still thinking of leaving?
   d. Have you talked to anyone about this – if so, who?

9. Have you missed family and friends? Have you kept in touch with them? Have you ended any relationship?

10. Have you made any good friends yet? Do you feel secure socially?

11. Have your expectations of being a student / studying here proved to be realistic?

12. Ask student on average how many hours per week, [class contact + outside class] s/he is studying.

Then, recap on how many hours per week the student expected to study in his / her September interview – if any significant divergences, ask him/her to explain why.

13. Check whether the student does have a p/t job – if so:

   • how many hours per week do they work?
   • is this having an impact on their studying, or social life? *Please explain.*
   • Are you managing your time effectively?

14. Do you have any financial problems? *Please explain*

15. Are you a gap year or mature student? Are you adjusting to the demands of academic life?

GENERAL EXPERIENCES OF YOUR COURSE

- **Ask student to give examples whenever possible – these are really useful and bring things alive**

16. What are your current perceptions of the demands your course has placed on you regarding the:

    a. Workload
    b. Level of work i.e. how hard it is compared to previous study
    c. Range of subjects [units] you will study
    d. Anything else related to your course?

17. Students told me in September that they expected the work to be hard. Some staff see Level 1 as a gentle introductory year. Do you think staff challenge you enough intellectually?

18. Some staff have perceptions of students as not working very hard; leaving work to the last minute; not doing much work outside of classes – is this a true perception?

19. What have your fellow students been like? Are they what you expected? Have you had any problems working / socialising / living with them? Have you had any problems with them?

20. What have your tutors been like? Have they been friendly / helpful supportive? Have you had any problems with them? Are you comfortable with your course?

21. How has the SSN worked for you?

22. What has your social life been like? How many times per week do you socialise / play sport? Has it had any effect on your work e.g. missing classes; leaving coursework until the last minute?

23. Have you attended all your classes? If not, why not? [what makes you attend a class?] What percentage of classes, roughly, do you expect to attend during the rest of the year?

24. We talked about attendance monitoring. Have you been aware of this? Has it had any impact on student attendance?

25. Has paying fees had any impact on your attitude to your studying / the teaching you receive? *Please explain fully.*

26. Has Level 1 been a useful learning experience for you so far?

27. Do you have any other expectations about the rest of Level 1? *If so, what are they?*

SKILLS EXPECTATIONS

28. Have you had to use key skills on your course i.e.

    a. computers and software packages
    b. be able to use mathematical and statistical methods
    c. be able to communicate effectively?

Have you had any problems with these. Have you been helped to develop these sufficiently? Please explain. Do you need more help?

29. Have you had to use transferable skills on your course i.e.
    a. use the library effectively
    b. make a presentation
    c. read an article critically
    d. put forward your thoughts in class
    e. work effectively in a group or individually
    f. write a well structured essay or report?
    g. be an independent learner?
    h. manage your time effectively
    i. be assertive

Have you had any problems with these. Have you been helped to develop these sufficiently? Please explain Do you need more help?

30. How have these key and transferable skills been developed so far?

31. (Leisure students only) How have you found the Undergraduate Skills unit? Has it been useful or not? Please explain.

32. Have you used Study Assistance yet?

CONCLUSION

33. Is there anything else you would like to say about your experiences or expectations so far?

- Thank student and recap on confidentiality issues
- Ask if s/he wants to see the transcript and amend it
- Remind him/her of the next meeting after Easter

Appendix 3.9

STUDENT INTERVIEW SCHEDULE:
Easter Semi-structured Interviews v.3   *23 April 2003*

NB Need to read previous 2 interview summaries first

> ### RESEARCH QUESTIONS I AM SEEKING TO ANSWER
>
> 1. From the perspective of students and staff, what are the structures of their expectations and experiences [perceptions] of student learning, and specifically skills demands, on Level 1 of UWBS undergraduate courses, and what do these mean?
> 2. What are the underlying themes and contexts that account for their expectations and experiences?
> 3. What are the implications, for the quality of first year student learning, of staff and student expectations and experiences, specifically of skills demands, and any divergences between them?
> 4. How might the quality of first year student learning, and retention, be improved through a skills-based intervention strategy to influence student expectations?

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

Reminder

- Making the participant feel comfortable
- Reminder of the ethical issues relating to the research – informed consent
- Guarantee no trick questions
- Recap on recording of data and anonymity / non-traceability in the public domain
- Brief recap of the phenomenon I am exploring / themes of the research

For the record, Neil to state:

(i)   date and time of semi-structured interview
(ii)   name of student and course

1. Were you happy with the transcript I sent you after the second interview?

2. I have sent you a summary of what I have interpreted as the main themes emerging from our second semi-structured interview before the start of last term – does this seem accurate (for my verification / validity purposes), or do you wish to change anything? *May need to pick up issues arising from this.*

3. Are there any areas during Level 1 where you now think your experiences have not matched your expectations before you arrived here?

4. On reflection, how realistic do you think your previous expectations were?

GENERAL EXPERIENCES AS A STUDENT

NB at this stage also address any issues arising from previous 2 interviews that are specific to this co-researcher.

5. Have any new issues emerged, relating to your experiences as a student, since we last met?
[the issues can relate to you as a student, or your course, or anything outside your course which affects you].

6. Have you entered into or ended an emotional relationship since Christmas?
[Please explain any connections with you being a student]

7. Are you glad you have experienced the last year as a student on your course?
[please explain]

8. What have been the good things, if any, about being a student, **and on** your course?

9. What have been the not so good / bad things, if any, about being a student, **and on** your course?

10. Is there anything you would do differently if you were starting again?

11. Is there anything you would tell those who run your course, or the Institute, to do differently?

12. In general, are there any areas where your experiences have not matched your expectations before you arrived here?

13. How many times have you been home since we last spoke? *[Please explain why].*

LEARNING, TEACHING AND ASSESSMENT

14. During Level 1, have you understood your course's aims and learning outcomes and whether you have met these in your assessments?

15. Are you satisfied with your learning experiences and your experiences of being taught during Level 1, viz:

- your lectures
- your seminars / structured learning sessions
- how you have been taught
- your work outside of classes
- your skills development
- the organisation of your classes?

[Students to discuss as appropriate]

16. Have the above been what you expected?

17. Are you satisfied with your experiences of being assessed viz.

- provision of assessment criteria linked to learning outcomes
- group work
- assignments – content / style / **timing – including bunching, if any**
- presentations
- feedback – amount / timing / did it help you learn how to do better?

18. Have the assessments been what you expected? *[please explain]*

19. Compared with your expectations when you arrived, do you think you have been challenged sufficiently at Level 1 in terms of:

- academic content
- intellectual challenge
- workload
- skills development?

20. Are you satisfied with the support you have received from academic staff or the University? *[Please explain]*

21. How many hours per week, [class contact + outside class] are you studying now?

INTEGRATION

22. Are you in a hall of residence?

- If so, have you enjoyed the experience? *Please explain.*

23. If you are not in a hall, do you wish you had been? Please explain.

24. Has your accommodation helped or hindered your academic work?

25. Have you thought about changing your course or leaving the university since we last spoke?

If so, please explain what stopped you.

26. Assuming you pass the Level One assessments, do you intend coming back to Newtown in September 2003?

27. Have you had a satisfactory social life [including sports] during Level 1, either at the University or elsewhere?

28. Has it helped or hindered your academic work?

29. Are you sorry Level 1 is coming to an end? *[Please explain]*

FINANCES

30. Are any financial issues affecting you?

31. Check whether the student [still] has a p/t job, and, if so, how many hours s/he is working.

GENERAL EXPERIENCES OF YOUR COURSE

Support

32. Have you had any significant problems since we last spoke?

33. Have your tutors been as friendly / helpful / supportive as you would wish?

34. Have you used the SSN since we last spoke?

35. Have you used anyone else to help you with any problems?

Attendance

36. What percentage of your classes do you estimate you have attended since we last spoke?

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Reminder of key skills

a. computers and software packages
b. be able to use mathematical and statistical methods
c. be able to communicate effectively?

Reminder of transferable skills

a. use the library effectively
b. make a presentation
c. read an article critically
d. put forward your thoughts in class
e. work effectively in a group or individually
f. write a well structured essay or report?
g. be an independent learner?
h. manage your time effectively
i. be assertive
j. **problem solving?** [NB new one]

37. Do you think that acquiring and using skills has been important for your learning? *[Please explain]*

38. Since we last met, have your tutors helped you to develop any of the key skills or transferable skills above?

39. Have you been assessed in these, either formatively or summatively?

40. Have any tutors given you feedback on your skills development so you can judge your progress?

41. Do you believe your skills have developed during Level 1? *Please explain.*

LEISURE STUDENTS ONLY

42. Did you enjoy the Undergraduate Skills unit? *Please explain*

43. Has it enabled you to learn better at Level 1? *[Please explain].*

44. Have your tutors in other units explicitly referred to the Undergraduate Skills unit? *[Please explain].*

45. Are you conscious of using the skills learned in Undergraduate Skills in other Level 1units? *[please give examples]*

FOR STUDENTS WHO HAVE WORKED

46. Are you aware of any skills you acquired at work that you have used in your learning at level 1? *[Please give examples].*

47. Have your tutors encouraged you to use your work skills during Level 1. If not, should they have?

48. Do you believe these skills have been developed further during Level 1?

CONCLUSION

49. Is there anything else you would like to say about your prior expectations, or your experiences at Level 1, or about anything else?

- **Thank student and recap on confidentiality issues / sending transcript and summary**

STAFF INTERVIEW SCHEDULE
Week commencing 16 September 2002   *Draft 2: 2 August 2002*

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. From the perspective of students and staff, what are the structures of their expectations and experiences [perceptions] of student learning, and specifically skills demands, on Level 1 of UWBS undergraduate courses, and what do these mean?
2. What are the underlying themes and contexts that account for their expectations and experiences?
3. What are the implications, for the quality of first year student learning, of staff and student expectations and experiences, specifically of skills demands, and any divergences between them?
4. How might the quality of first year student learning, and retention, be improved through a skills-based intervention strategy to influence student expectations?

INTRODUCTION

NB: Need to provide sheet with themes to staff in advance

- Make the participant feel comfortable
- Brief explanation of the phenomenon I am exploring / themes of the research
- Guarantee no trick questions
- Explanation of ethical issues relating to the research – informed consent
- Recap on recording of data and anonymity / non-traceability in the public domain
- The right of the interviewee to see the transcript and amend it

---

THE INTERVIEW

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

For the record, Neil to state:

(i)   date and time of semi-structured interview
(ii)   name of member of staff and Academic School

1. How long have you been teaching in UWBS?
2. On which course do you teach: BA (Hons) .....Level 1; BA (Hons) ......Level 1; BA (Hons) ....Level 1; or BA (Hons) ....Level 1?
3. Are you the Admissions tutor / Level 1 tutor / Course Leader for this course?
4. Are you a personal tutor on the course?

5. Which unit(s) do you teach on this course?
6. Are you the unit leader?
7. Do you teach this / these unit(s) on any other courses?
8. Do you enjoy teaching on this particular course? *Please explain your answer.*
9. What are your expectations regarding student entry qualifications?
10. Why do you think these students chose to come to UWBS?

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

> - *Need to ask staff to distinguish between course and unit – probably they will focus on the unit*
> - *Also ask the staff member to give examples whenever possible – these are really useful and bring things alive*

11. Do you think Level 1 students have any expectations of the learning demands the course, and / or your unit(s), will place on them in terms of:

    a. Workload
    b. Level of work i.e. how hard compared to any previous course of study
    c. Range of work [units] they will study
    d. Anything else related to what you teach?

Please explain what you think these expectations might be.

12. If so, how do you judge what student expectations are?

13. Do you think student expectations of their course [including workload / intellectual demands etc] are realistic?

14. Do you think correct student expectations of what the course, or your unit, will involve are important to their academic success? *If so:*

15. Would you consider doing an audit of student expectations, during induction week for example, so that you could modify your course to better match these expectations? *[e.g. research shows that students like working in small groups but expect didactic lectures]*

16. Do you think it is better, as an alternative, to change student expectations to match the existing course? *[e.g. telling students during induction, I prefer giving standard lectures and that is how my unit will be delivered].*

17. Do you have any expectations about prior knowledge of the subject matter in your unit(s) that students will have? *What are these and how do you obtain them?*

18. How many hours a week do you expect students will study on this course?

19. How many hours per week do you think students should study to succeed on this course?

20. Do you expect students to attend all your classes?

If not, on average, what percentage of students do you expect to attend each week.

Do you expect this percentage to vary during the year? If so give examples of the expected variation.

21. Do you think that attendance monitoring is an effective tool to promote student attendance in class? *Please explain*.

22. Students now pay fees to undertake a course. Do you think this changes your relationship with your students? *Please explain*.

SKILLS EXPECTATIONS

23. Do you expect students joining SBS next week at Level 1 to have any understanding of what are key skills or transferable skills? **Please explain.**

---

24. Which key skills, if any, will students need to be effective learners on your unit(s) e.g. the ability to
- use computers and software packages
- be able to use mathematical and statistical methods
- be able to communicate effectively
- Any others?

Please explain

---

25. Which key skills do you expect them to actually have?

26. Have your experiences of teaching your unit on this course matched your expectations of students' abilities [especially key skills], or have they exceeded them or fallen short of them? *Please explain fully in what ways they have or have not and give examples*

27. If they fall short, how will you develop the key skills they need?

28. Which transferable skills, if any, will students need to be effective learners on your unit(s) e.g. the ability to
- use the library effectively
- make a presentation
- read an article critically
- put forward your thoughts in class
- work effectively in a group or individually
- write a well structured essay or report?
- Be an independent learner?
- use time management skills
- demonstrate assertiveness.

Please explain

29. Which transferable skills do you expect them to actually have?

30. Have your experiences of teaching your unit on this course matched your expectations of students' abilities [especially transferable skills], or have they exceeded them or fallen short of them? *Please explain fully in what ways they have or have not / give examples*

31. If they fall short, how will you develop the transferable skills they need?

32. Do you undertake a skills audit of the students on your unit? If not, have you ever considered this?

33. Do you have any expectations about students' abilities to cope with assessments?

34. Do you expect there to be any differences beween

a. males and females
b. school leavers and mature students

in terms of skills?

35. Do you have any other expectations about the students on your unit (or course)?

36. If so, what are they?

37. Are there any other ways of improving fist year student learning, including skills development, that we have not discussed?

STAFF EXPERIENCES / PERCEPTIONS

38. How seriously do you think your Level 1 students take their studies?

39. Do you advise students where to go for help with either any skills difficulties or any other learning problems?

40. Do you liase with other unit leaders at level 1 to co-ordinate skills development?

41. Has developing these skills in students caused you any problems in the past? *Please explain fully / give examples.*

42. How do you acquire student feedback about their learning experiences?

43. Does this inform your teaching for the next year? If so, how?

44. Do you think retention might be affected by improving student skills?

45. Are there any other things you would like to say?

THANK STAFF MEMBER AND RECAP ON CONFIDENTIALITY ISSUES

Additional notes for me

- NB bracketing my previous assumptions
- Make notes re student body language / pauses / facial expressions (verbal and non-verbal clues) – and link to question numbers
- Also need a record of my own observations, interpretations and experiences of the interview
- May well need to vary the questions above as different issues / themes emerge from the social actor.

Appendix 3.11

ACADEMIC STAFF DISCUSSION SCHEDULE

Week commencing 06 January 2003

PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

1. Were you happy with the transcript I sent you after our first interview?

2. I have sent you a summary of what I have interpreted as the main themes emerging from our first semi-structured interview before the start of last term – does this seem accurate (for my verification / validity purposes) or do you wish to change anything? *May need to pick up issues arising from this*

EXPECTATIONS

> - *Need to ask colleagues to distinguish between course and unit – probably they will focus on the unit*
> - *Also ask the academic colleague to give examples whenever possible – these are really useful and bring things alive*

Student Expectations

3. In September, we talked about student expectations regarding them being students in UWBS; are you aware of any student expectations last term regarding any aspect of this?

4. Have any students told you that the course / unit / being a student in UWBS is not what they expected? *Please explain.*

5. Are there any other relevant issues relating to student expectations that you are aware of, which we should discuss?

Staff Expectations

6. Have you had any new expectations about student learning, including skills, during the academic year 2002-03 so far?

7. Did you have any other expectations of students, or their learning, that have failed to materialise in reality so far this year? *Please explain*

8. Are there any other issues relating to your expectations that we ought to talk about?

GENERAL EXPERIENCES

9. Reflecting for a moment on your experiences during last term, with first year students on the courses I have identified - are there any particular issues relating to:

    a Level 1 student learning
    b. Teaching your Level 1 students
    c. Assessment

    that you would like to identify as either typical or untypical of, or totally different from, the normal Level 1 student learning experience ?

10. Did you make any changes to your teaching last term in response to student feedback? *Please explain*

Skills development

11. Did you notice any development in students' skills last term?

12. Have you tried to develop students' skills? If so, which ones and why?

13. You require students to use and/or demonstrate key skills and transferable skills on your units [SEE LAST PAGE]:

    a. Have there been any differences between your expectations of the skills they would have and what they actually have? *Please identify which skills.*
    b. How have you tried to deal with any such deficiencies?
    c. Have the deficiencies had any impact on the ability of Level 1 students to learn so far?
    d. Have students asked you for help regarding skills?
    e. Is there any integration between the skills unit and other units?

14. Have you referred any students to Study Assistance? *What have been the outcomes?*

15. Have students given you any feedback about the skills unit (For tutors on Leisure courses) and/or skills development in your Level 1 unit(s)?

16. Have any other issues arisen relating to teaching, student learning, assessment or skills which you did not expect? *Please explain.*

Other issues

17. Do you think Level 1 students are being challenged enough intellectually or in terms of their workload this academic year? *Please explain.*

18. Are you noticing any differences between

    a. Male and female students
    b. A level and GNVQ students

c. School leaver and mature students

Other than those you discussed in September?

OTHER EXPECTATIONS / EXPERIENCES

19. Have you noticed any particular differences between small and large courses in the groups we are considering?

20. Have you noticed anything regarding student integration with

- Their course
- Their peers?

21. If you are a SSN tutor, or as a unit tutor / course leader, are you aware of any students having problems with:

1. their social integration
2. their ability to cope with the course – including skills and intellectual demands
3. the possibility of leaving
4. financial problems
5. any other issues?

22. Do you know of any students who have left – if so:

1. Why did they leave?
2. Was any effort made to help them?

23. Is the SSN working? Do student use it?

24. Have any gap year students spoken to you about problems of getting back into academic ways?

25. Do all students attend your classes? If not, what percentage does? Do those who don't attend explain why not?

26. Have you monitored attendance – what have been the outcomes?

CONCLUSION

27. Is there anything else you would like to say?

KEY SKILLS

- use computers and software packages
- be able to use mathematical and statistical methods
- be able to communicate effectively
- Any others?

TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

- use the library effectively
- make a presentation
- read an article critically
- put forward your thoughts in class
- work effectively in a group or individually
- write a well structured essay or report?
- Be an independent learner?
- use time management skills
- demonstrate assertiveness.

Appendix 3.12

ACADEMIC STAFF INTERVIEW SCHEDULE

Easter 2003 Schedule v.2   23 April 2003

> **MY RESEARCH QUESTIONS**
>
> 1. From the perspective of students and staff, what are the structures of their expectations and experiences [perceptions] of student learning, and specifically skills demands, on Level 1 of UWBS undergraduate courses, and what do these mean?
> 2. What are the underlying themes and contexts that account for their expectations and experiences?
> 3. What are the implications, for the quality of first year student learning, of staff and student expectations and experiences, specifically of skills demands, and any divergences between them?
> 4. How might the quality of first year student learning, and retention, be improved through a skills-based intervention strategy to influence student expectations?

INTRODUCTORY QUESTIONS

NB: Need to provide sheet with themes to staff in advance

- Make the co-researcher feel comfortable – thank him/her for attending
- Reminder of ethical issues - informed consent; anonymity / non-traceability
- Brief reminder of the phenomenon I am exploring / themes of the research – see the 4 questions above – but **focusing on your experiences since we last met, and on Level 1 as a whole**
- Reminder of the courses I am particularly considering – Level 1 of BA (Hons) .....; BA (Hons) ....; BA (Hons) .... and BA (Hons) ....
- The right of the interviewee to see the transcript and amend it

For the record, Neil to state:

(i)   date and time of semi-structured interview
(ii)   name of member of staff and Academic School

1. Were you happy with the transcript I sent you after our first interview?

2. I have sent you a summary of what I have interpreted as the main themes emerging from our first semi-structured interview before the start of last term – does this seem accurate (for my verification) or do you wish to change anything?
   May need to pick up issues arising from this

GENERAL EXPECTATIONS

NB: at this stage, also address any issues arising from previous 2 interviews that are specific to this co-researcher.

> - *Need to ask colleagues to distinguish between course and unit – probably they will focus on the unit*
> - *Also ask colleagues to give examples and expand answers whenever possible and appropriate*

Student Expectations

3. Since January 03, have you become aware of any new issues relating to Level 1 students you teach, and their expectations of their course / your unit(s) / being a student?

4. Have any students told you since January that:

a. their course
b. the units they study
c. being a student
d. any other aspect of their life

is not what they expected?

Your expectations

5. In general, have there been any divergences between your expectations of Level 1 students and of their learning / assessment [including skills] before September 02, and your experiences since then?

6. Are there any other issues relating to:

a. student expectations of their first year experience
b. your expectations of Level 1 students

that you would like to identify?

GENERAL EXPERIENCES

Learning and Teaching

7. Are you satisfied with your students' learning experiences, and your experiences of teaching them during Level 1, viz:

a. your lectures
b. your seminars / structured learning sessions
c. how you have taught them
d. their work outside of classes
e. their skills development
f. the organisation of your units
g. the support you have given them
h. anything else?

8. Have there been any differences from what you expected?

9. Are you satisfied with your experiences of assessing students this year viz.

a. provision of assessment criteria linked to learning outcomes
b. group work
c. assignments – content / style / **timing – including bunching, if any** / feedback
d. presentations
e. skills development – have you been assessing students regarding this?
f. Feedback – amount / timing / do you believe it has been sufficient to help students learn how to do better?
g. any other?

10. Do you believe Level 1 students have been challenged sufficiently in terms of:

a. academic content
b. intellectual challenge
c. workload
d. skills development?

11. Have you made any changes to your teaching since Christmas in response to student feedback?

12. Do you believe you have given your students sufficient academic support this year?

13. Do you believe that securing a pass (40%) is sufficient for Level 1 students?

14. Do you think generally, throughout Level 1, students have studied sufficient hours per week to be appropriate for a degree course?

15. Have any other issues arisen, relating to teaching, student learning, assessment or skills, which you did not expect? *Please explain.*

16. Have you noticed any improvements in the social integration of courses that had problems in January 03? *Please explain why / why not*

17. Do you know of any students [whom we have discussed, or new] who have thought about changing their course or leaving the University since we last spoke, or have done so? *Please fully explain your answer included why they left or did not leave.*

18. Have you experienced any issues with Level 1 mature students, since January 03? *Please explain fully – covering learning & teaching; course interaction with fellow students; skills development / use of previously acquired skills; retention.*

19. Do students use the SSN now, or do they still mainly come to the course leader or level tutor?

20. Do you have anything new you would like to say about student attendance and its monitoring?

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

Key skills

21. In your units, have you sought to develop students' key skills since we last spoke viz

a. computers and software packages
b. be able to use mathematical and statistical methods
c. be able to communicate effectively?

22. To what extent do you think students have developed their key skills this year?

Transferable skills

23. Have you encouraged / required students to use transferable skills on your units viz

a. use the library effectively
b. make a presentation
c. read an article critically
d. put forward your thoughts in class
e. work effectively in a group or individually
f. write a well structured essay or report?
g. be an independent learner?

h. manage your time effectively
i. be assertive
j. problem solving? [NB new one]

24. To what extent do you think students have developed their transferable skills this year?

General skills issues

25. How have you have planned the development and the teaching of these key and transferable skills?

26. Do you judge this skills development against your unit descriptors or the course validation documents?

27. Have you assessed these skills either formatively or summatively? Please explain how you assess them.

28. Have you given students any feedback on their skills development so they can judge their progress?

29. What constraints impede your teaching and assessment of skills?

30. For mature students, are you aware of any skills they have acquired at work that they have used in your learning at level 1? Have you encouraged them to do this? *[Please give examples]*.

31. Are there any ways in which student skills development might be improved next year?

CONCLUSIONS

32. Is there anything else you would like to say about your prior expectations, or your experiences at Level 1, or about those of your students?

33. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Thank co-researchers for their help and recap the follow-up procedures for the transcript and the summary.

Also ask for permission to call into their office to clarify anything if necessary.

Appendix 3.13

STUDENT INDUCTION QUESTIONNAIRE   3 August 2002

> The purpose of this questionnaire is to help me with my research, and to help the Business School to provide the best learning opportunities for students that it can.
>
> Your responses will only be seen by me, and nothing you write can be traced back to you.
>
> Please answer the questions below by **ticking the appropriate box** or following other instructions.

1. Background Details

	Yes	No
Q1. Are you under 21 years of age?	☐	☐

	A levels	GNVQ	Other
Q2. What are your post-school qualifications?	☐	☐	☐

Q3. How many hours per week due you expect to study during Level 1? (include hours per week in class and any hours outside it)

Less than 20	☐
20-29	☐
30-39	☐
More than 40	☐

	Yes	No
Q4. Do you have a term-time job?	☐	☐

Q5. If you have a job, how many hours per week do you work? If you don't have a job, how many hours would you be willing to work per week?

Less than 10	☐
10-19	☐
20-29	☐
30 or more	☐

Q6 Will you be living		
	in a hall of residence	☐
	in a shared house	☐
	at home	☐
	Other?	☐

Q7. Do you have any expectations about the demands your course will place on you e.g. amount of work, or how hard the course will be?

Yes   No

☐   ☐

Q8. If you do have expectations, what are they?

Q9. Do you have any expectations about your social life during Level 1?

Yes   No

☐   ☐

Q10. If so, what are they?

Q11. From where did you obtain your expectations about being a student at the University of Wessex?

Parents ☐

Friends in higher education ☐

The media ☐

Previous school or college ☐

Open Day at the University of Wessex ☐

Other ☐

Q12. What percentage of your classes do you expect to attend over the next year?

100 %	☐
80-99%	☐
60-79%	☐
Less than 60%	☐

Skills expectations

Q.13. To succeed on your course, do you think you will need any of the skills listed below?

(i)   Tick either the 'Yes' box or the 'No' box for each skill.
(ii)   Then, if you think you already have the skill, please tick the 'Have' box; if not tick the 'Don't have' or the 'Don't know' box as appropriate.

	Yes	No	Have	Don't have	Don't know
Be able to use computers					
Use mathematical / statistical methods					
Communicate effectively					
Use the library effectively					
Make a presentation					
Read an article critically					
Express your thoughts in class					
Work in a group					
Learn independently of tutors					
Write a structured essay or report					
Manage your time effectively					
Be assertive					

                                          Yes   No

Q. 14. Do you know where to go in the University of Wessex to get help with acquiring the skills you need, or with other learning problems?   ☐   ☐

Q15. Do you feel comfortable so far with the course, your tutors and the Business School?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q16. If not, please explain why? [if you are OK, go to question 16]

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Q17. Have you experienced anything so far that his influenced or changed your expectations of your course?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q18. If you have, please explain what it is? [if not, go to question 18]

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Q19. Have you made any friends yet on your course?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q20. Have you already thought about leaving your course and going back home?

Yes ☐ No ☐

Q21. If you have, please explain why.

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Q22. Is there anything else you would like to say about your experiences so far in UWBS? School?

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Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire.

Neil Harris
Associate Dean (Enhancement)
University of Wessex
Room: RM 105
Internal telephone no. 3272

SPRING TERM: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

07Feb03

The purpose of this questionnaire is to help me with my research, and to help the Business School provide the best learning opportunities for its students.

Your responses will only be seen by me; nothing you answer can be traced back to you.
Please answer all questions below by **ticking the appropriate box** or following other instructions.

Background Details

Q1. Are you under 21 years of age?

Yes   No

☐   ☐ 1

Q2. What is your gender?

Male   Female

☐   ☐ 2

Q3. Do you live in a hall of residence?

Yes   No

☐   ☐ 3

Q4. If under 21, have you had a gap year?

Yes   No

☐   ☐ 4

Time Management

Q5. On average, how many hours per week do you study outside your classes?

<5 hrs   6-10   11-15   16-20   >20

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐ 5

Q6. Do you have a part-time job? [if no, go to Q.9]

Yes   No

☐   ☐ 6

Q7. If you have a part-time job, how many hours do you work per week?

<10 hrs   11-15   16-20   >20hrs

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐ 7

Q8. Has your part-time job adversely affected your studying, including attending classes?

Yes   No

☐   ☐ 8

Q9. Have your socialising and/or sports activities affected your studying, including class attendance?

Yes   No

☐   ☐ 9

Q10. How many hours per week do you study? (include all types of class contact+ private study)

<15 hours
16-20
21-25
25-30

☐
☐
☐
☐ 10

Q11. How many hours of academic work per week do you think you need to do to pass level 1?
(include attending all types of class plus your own studying outside of these)

<15hrs ☐   16-20hrs ☐   21-25hrs ☐   26-30hrs ☐   >30hrs ☐ 11

Q12. What percentage of all classes do you attend?

100%	☐
90-99%	☐
80-89%	☐
70-79%	☐
60-69%	☐
< 60%	☐

12

Q13. Have you received a letter about your Class attendance?

Yes ☐   No ☐ 13

Q.14 Has attendance monitoring influenced your attendance at classes?

Yes ☐   No ☐ 14

Course Demands

Q15. Would you work harder at Level 1 if some or all, of your unit marks counted towards your final degree?

Yes ☐   No ☐
15

Q16. How demanding is your course, in terms of workload and difficulty, compared with what you expected before you started here?

Harder ☐   About the same ☐   Easier ☐
16

Q17. Do you think students treat Level 1 mainly as a year for having fun and socialising rather than studying hard?

Yes ☐   No ☐
17

Q18. Do you think your Level 1 tutors should push you harder in terms of the academic demands your course places on you?

Yes ☐   No ☐
18

Your Experiences

Q19. Do you enjoy being a student on your course? [if no, go to Q.21]

Yes ☐   No ☐
19

Q20. How often do you go home?

Every Week ☐   Every 2 weeks ☐   Once a month ☐   < Once a month ☐   Not Applicable ☐
20

Q21. If you answered yes to Q.19, which parts of being a student have you enjoyed?

Social life ☐   Independence from home ☐

Living in a new city
(if not applicable put an x) ☐   your course ☐

Fellow students' friendships ☐   Tutors who teach you ☐

Hall of residence
(if not applicable put an x) ☐   Other (please write reasons on lines on next page)

Other_____

_____

_____

_____ 21

Q22. If you have not enjoyed being a student, why is this? (Please tick the relevant boxes; if not applicable put an x)

Course content not what I expected   ☐   Academic work too difficult   ☐

 Hard to manage financially   ☐   Miss family / friends at home   ☐

Don't like hall of residence   ☐   Haven't made friends as I'd   ☐
                                      hoped

Tutors not helpful   ☐   Don't like Newtown   ☐

Other (please write reasons on lines below_____

_____

_____

_____ 22

Q23. Did you have expectations of what it would be like being a student before you came here? (if No, go to question 25)

    Yes   No
    ☐   ☐ 23

Q.24 If Yes, to what extent have your experiences matched your expectations?

The same	Experiences better than expected	Experiences worse than expected
☐	☐	☐ 24

Q25. Have you seriously thought of changing your course within the University?

    Yes   No
    ☐   ☐ 25

Q26. Have you seriously thought of leaving The University of Wessex?

    Yes   No
    ☐   ☐ 26

Q.27 if you answered Yes to Q.25 or Q.26,
what stopped you? _____

_____

_____ 27

Q28. If you have problems, who would you go to for advice or help (please rank in order with 1 as the first person(s) you would contact, 2 as the second and so on)

Fellow students   Course Leader   Unit Tutors   SSN Tutor   Parents   Student Services 28

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

Skills Development

Q.29. **Which of the following skills do you think you have developed since you started your course?** (please tick Yes or No column as appropriate)   29

Skill	Yes	No	Skills I still need to develop
Be able to use computers			
Use mathematical / statistical methods			
Communicate effectively			
Use the library effectively			
Make a presentation			
Read an article critically			
Express your thoughts in class			
Work in a group			
Learn independently of tutors			
Write a structured essay or report			
Manage your time effectively			
Be assertive			
Use inter-personal skills			
Use research skills			

Q30. Which skills do you still need to develop further? (Please tick as appropriate in the column headed 'Skills I still need to develop').   30

Q31. What have been the main influences in helping with your skills development so far (please tick as many as appropriate)   31

Undergraduate Skills unit
(Sports and Leisure students only)   **Business Methods unit)**
(Business students only)

Other units you are studying   **Study Assistance**

Talking with fellow students   **Asking individual tutors**

Other (please specify)_____

_____

_____

Q32. Is there anything else you would like to say about your experiences of being a student on your course in Wessex University Business School?_____32

_____

_____

_____

_____

Thank you very much for your help   Neil Harris RM 105; Tel.3272

106

Appendix 3.15

JANUARY - MAY 2003: STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

> The purpose of this questionnaire is to help me research student experiences at Level 1 on Business School courses. The findings will help the Business School provide the best learning opportunities for its students.
>
> **This questionnaire will be completely confidential. Your responses will only be seen by me, and no answer can be traced to you.**
>
> Please answer all questions below, **RELATING TO JANUARY TO MAY 2003,** by **ticking the appropriate box** or following other instructions.

Background Details

Q1. Are you under 21 years of age?

Yes ☐ No ☐ 1

Q2. What is your gender?

Male ☐ Female ☐ 2

Q3. Do you live in a hall of residence?

Yes ☐ No ☐ 3

Q4. If under 21, have you had one or more gap years?

Yes ☐ No ☐ 4

Time Management

Q5. On average, how many hours per week have you studied outside your classes since Christmas?

<5 hrs	6-10	11-15	16-20	>20
☐	☐	☐	☐	☐ 5

Q6. Have you had a part-time job since Christmas? [If no, go to Q9]

Yes ☐ No ☐ 6

Q7. How many hours per week have you worked since Christmas?

<10 hrs	11-15	16-20	>20hrs
☐	☐	☐	☐

7

Q8. Has your part-time job adversely affected your studying, including attending classes, since Christmas?

Yes ☐ No ☐

8

Q9. How often has your socialising, and/or sports activities, affected your studying including class attendance, since Christmas?

>10 times	6-10 times	1-5 times	Never
☐	☐	☐	☐ 9

Q10. How many hours academic work [classes + outside] per week do you think you need to do, to pass Level 1?

<10 hrs	
11-14	☐
15-19	
> 20	10

Q11. What percentage of your classes have you attended since Christmas?

100% ☐
90-99% ☐
80-89% ☐

70-79% ☐
60-69% ☐
< 60% ☐

11

Course Demands

Q12. Have you received a letter about your class attendance since Christmas?

Yes ☐   No ☐

12

Q13. Has attendance monitoring influenced your class attendance since Christmas?

Yes ☐   No ☐

13

Q14. Has the fact that you only need to obtain 40% per unit to pass Level 1, caused you to work less hard than you might have otherwise?

Yes ☐   No ☐

14

Q15. Would you work harder at Level 1 if some, or all, your unit marks counted towards your final degree?

Yes ☐   No ☐

15

Q16. How demanding is your course, in terms of workload and difficulty, compared with your expectations before you started ?

Harder   The same   Easier   Didn't have expectations

☐   ☐   ☐   ☐

16

Q17. Looking back, did you study hard enough before Christmas? (if no, please answer Q.18)

Yes ☐   No ☐

17

Q18. If not, why not? (please tick as many boxes as appropriate)

Too much socialising / sports ☐
Homesick / went home a lot ☐
Hall of residence too noisy ☐
(if applicable)
Didn't like course / not what expected ☐
Didn't make the friends I'd hoped ☐
Couldn't get into a studying routine ☐
Part-time job ☐
Other (please explain in box to right) ☐   18

Q. 18: Other

Q19. Have you worked harder since Christmas?

Yes ☐   No ☐

19

Q20. Please explain your answer to Q19 using the box below. 20

Answer box for Q. 20

Q21. Since Christmas, do you think students have treated Level 1 mainly for fun / socialising rather than studying hard?

Yes □ No □ 21

Q22. Regarding the academic demands of Level 1 of your course, do you think your Level 1 tutors have:

got it about right	made it too hard	made it too easy
□	□	□	22

Your Experiences

Q23. Have you enjoyed being a student on your course since Christmas?

Yes □ No □ 23

Q24. How often have you been home since Christmas?

Every Week	Every 2 weeks	Once a month	< Once a month	Not Applicable
□	□	□	□	□	24

Q25. If you answered yes to Q23, which parts of being a student have you enjoyed? (Please tick the relevant boxes; if not applicable put an x)

Social life □   Independence from home □

Living in a new city □   your course □

Fellow students' friendships □   Tutors who teach you □

Hall of residence □   Other (please write reasons in box below) 25

Q.25: Other

Q26. If you have not enjoyed being a student, why is this? (Please tick the relevant boxes; if not applicable put an x)

Course content not what I expected □   Academic work too difficult □

Hard to manage financially □   Miss family / friends at home □

Don't like hall of residence □   Haven't made friends as I'd hoped □

Tutors unhelpful □   Don't like Newtown □

Other (please write in box below) 26

Q.26: Other

Q27. Did you have expectations of what it would be like being a student before you came here? (if No, go to question 29)

Yes ☐   No ☐ 27

Q28. To what extent have your experiences matched your expectations since Christmas?

The same ☐   Experiences better than expected ☐   Experiences worse than expected ☐ 28

Q29. Have you seriously thought of changing your course within the University since Christmas?

Yes ☐   No ☐ 29

Q30. Have you seriously thought of leaving the University of Wessex since Christmas?

Yes ☐   No ☐ 30

Q.31 If you answered Yes to Q29 or Q30, what stopped you? 31

Answer box for Q31.

Q.32. Which of the following skills do you think you have developed since you started your course? (Please tick Yes or No column as appropriate – if you still need to develop some skills, please tick the last column also)

32

Skill	Yes	No	Skills I still need to develop further
Use computers effectively			
Use mathematical / statistical methods			
Communicate effectively			
Use the library effectively			
Make a quality presentation			
Read an article critically			
Express your thoughts in class			
Work in a group			
Learn independently of tutors			
Write a structured essay or report			
Manage your time effectively			
Be assertive			
Inter-personal skills			
Research skills			
Problem solving			

Q31. What have been the main influences in helping with your skills development so far (please tick as many as appropriate) 31

Undergraduate Skills unit ☐
(Sports and Leisure students only)

Business Methods unit ☐
(Business students only)

Other units you are studying ☐   Study Assistance ☐

Talking with fellow students ☐   Asking individual tutors ☐

Other (please specify below) ☐

Q32. With your current knowledge, if it were May 2002, would you still come here?   Yes ☐   No ☐

Telephone Interviews with withdrawing Level 1 students 2002-03   18.09.03

Explanation of rationale for research

1. My EdD work exploring what it is like being a Level 1 student in UWBS
2. Concerns about improving the quality of the student learning experience
3. Exploring how student expectations matched with reality once they have arrived in UWBS
4. Ask student to explain anything s/he wishes to, to add to the answer
5. Informed consent and promised anonymity

---

1. Name

2. Course

3. Age

4. Why did you come to the University of Wessex to study?

5. Why did you leave the University before finishing Level 1?

6. What type of accommodation did you have?

(a) At home with family
(b) Hall of residence
(c) Lodgings
(d) Bedsit
(e) Sharing a house
(f) Other – please explain

7. How often did you go home?
(a) every weekend
(b) 1-2 times per month
(c) < once per month

8. Did you feel a part of:
(a) the University   Yes / No
(b) your course?   Yes / No

Please explain.

9. Did you have many friends at the University?   Yes / No

10. What percentage of your classes do you think you attended?

(a) 80 – 100%
(b) 60-79%
(c) 50-59%
(d) < 50%

11. Why did you miss your classes?

12. Did you have a part time job?   Yes / No

13. If Yes, how many hours per week did you work?

(a) < 10
(b) 11-20
(c) > 20

14. If you allocated your time at Level 1 between:
                                        %

(a) studying
(b) socialising / sports
(c) part-time job
(d) doing nothing

roughly what would the percentages be?

15. Before you came to University, did you have any expectations about:

(a) your course   Yes / No
(b) being a student   Yes / No

16. What were your expectations?

17. How far did your experiences match your expectations?

1. A lot   2. A reasonable amount   3. A little   4. Not at all

[Ask the ex-student to explain]

18. Do you think the last year was wasted?   Yes / No
[please explain].

19. Did the fact that you only needed to get 40% to pass each unit have any impact on the amount of studying you did?   Yes / No

20. Did your tutors help you enough?   Yes / No

21. Did you develop any of these skills while you were at University?

Skill	Yes	No
Use computers effectively		
Use mathematical / statistical methods		
Communicate effectively		
Use the library effectively		
Make a quality presentation		
Read an article critically		
Express your thoughts in class		
Work in a group		
Learn independently of tutors		
Write a structured essay or report		
Manage your time effectively		
Be assertive		
Inter-personal skills		
Research skills		
Problem solving		

22. Did these skills help you with your studying?   Yes / No

23. Would you consider coming back to the University of Wessex to take a different course?   Yes / No

24. Would you consider taking a higher education course at another university?
Yes / No

25. Is there anything else you would like to say?

Read back responses to ex-student to check everything recorded correctly
Thank him / her very much for their trouble

Appendix 3.17

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values
1	course	Numeric	6	0	What is your c	{1, Business wi
2	gender	Numeric	8	0	What is your g	{1, Male}...
3	age	Numeric	8	0	what is your ag	{1, < 21}...
4	qualifs	Numeric	8	0	What are your	{1, A levels}...
5	qualifs2	Numeric	8	0	What other FE	{0, No other q
6	hrsstudy	Numeric	8	0	How many ho	{1, < 20}...
7	ptjob	Numeric	8	0	Do you have a	{1, Yes}...
8	hrswrked	Numeric	8	0	How many ho	{1, < 10}...
9	nojobwrk	Numeric	8	0	Although you h	{1, < 10}...
10	domicile	Numeric	8	0	Where will you	{1, Hall of resi
11	crsexpt	Numeric	8	0	Do you have a	{1, Yes}...
12	whatexpt	Numeric	8	0	If yes, what ar	{1, harder than
13	soclexpt	Numeric	8	0	Do you have a	{1, Yes}...
14	whtsocex	Numeric	8	0	If so, what are	{1, expect goo
15	infsrce1	Numeric	8	0	What was your	{1, Parents}...
16	infsrce2	Numeric	8	0	What was your	{2, Friends in
17	infsrce3	Numeric	8	0	What was your	{3, The media}
18	pcntatnd	Numeric	8	0	What percenta	{1, 100 per ce
19	skills	Numeric	8	0	To succeed on	{1, Yes}...
20	usecomp	Numeric	8	0	Be able to use	{1, Yes}...
21	comphave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have c	{1, Have}...
22	usemath	Numeric	8	0	Use maths / st	{1, Yes}...
23	mathave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have	{1, Have}...
24	usecomm	Numeric	8	0	do you expect	{1, Yes}...
25	commhave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have c	{1, Have}...
26	uselib	Numeric	8	0	Do you need t	{1, Yes}...
27	libhave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have li	{1, Have}...
28	usepres	Numeric	8	0	Will you need t	{1, Yes}...
29	preshave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have p	{1, Have}...
30	arcriuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you have t	{1, Yes}...
31	arcrhave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have c	{1, Have}...
32	expthuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you need t	{1, Yes}...
33	exthhave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have th	{1, Have skill}..
34	gpwkuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you need	{1, yes}...
35	gpwkhave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have th	{1, Have skill}..
36	indepuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you need i	{1, Yes}...
37	indphave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have th	{1, Have}...
38	essyuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you need	{1, Yes}...
39	essyhave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have th	{1, Have}...
40	timeuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you need t	{1, Yes}...
41	timehave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have th	{1, Have}...
42	assrtuse	Numeric	8	0	Will you need t	{1, Yes}...

	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure
1	None	6	Right	Nominal
2	None	8	Right	Nominal
3	None	7	Right	Scale
4	None	8	Right	Nominal
5	None	8	Right	Nominal
6	None	8	Right	Scale
7	None	8	Right	Nominal
8	None	8	Right	Scale
9	None	8	Right	Scale
10	None	8	Right	Scale
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12	None	8	Right	Scale
13	None	8	Right	Nominal
14	None	8	Right	Scale
15	None	8	Right	Scale
16	None	8	Right	Scale
17	None	8	Right	Scale
18	None	8	Right	Scale
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36	None	8	Right	Nominal
37	None	8	Right	Nominal
38	None	8	Right	Nominal
39	None	8	Right	Nominal
40	None	8	Right	Nominal
41	None	8	Right	Nominal
42	None	8	Right	Nominal

	Name	Type	Width	Decimals	Label	Values
43	assthave	Numeric	8	0	Do you have th	{1, Have}...
44	skilshlp	Numeric	8	0	Do you know	{1, Yes}...
45	crsecomf	Numeric	8	0	Are you comfo	{1, Yes}...
46	notcomf	Numeric	8	0	If not comforta	{1, not settled i
47	exptchng	Numeric	8	0	Any experienc	{1, Yes}...
48	whatexpr	Numeric	8	0	What are they	{1, people I've
49	friends	Numeric	8	0	Have you mad	{1, Yes}...
50	leaving	Numeric	8	0	Have you thou	{1, Yes}...
51	whyleave	Numeric	8	0	If so, why?	{1, homesick}..
52	anyother	Numeric	8	0	Anything else t	{1, Nothing to

	Missing	Columns	Align	Measure
43	None	8	Right	Nominal
44	None	8	Right	Nominal
45	None	8	Right	Nominal
46	None	8	Right	Scale
47	None	8	Right	Nominal
48	None	8	Right	Scale
49	None	8	Right	Nominal
50	None	7	Right	Nominal
51	None	8	Right	Scale
52	None	8	Right	Scale

	course	gender	age	qualifs	qualifs2	hrsstudy	ptjob
1	1	1	1	1	0	2	1
2	1	1	1	2	0	1	2
3	1	1	1	1	0	3	2
4	1	1	1	2	0	2	2
5	1	2	2	3	0	3	2
6	1	1	1	2	0	3	2
7	1	1	1	1	0	3	1
8	1	1	1	1	0	4	2
9	1	1	2	3	0	4	1
10	1	1	1	1	0	2	1
11	2	1	1	1	1	3	2
12	2	1	1	1	0	2	2
13	2	2	1	2	0	1	1
14	2	2	1	1	2	2	1
15	2	2	1	1	2	1	-1
16	2	1	1	1	3	2	1
17	2	1	1	1	2	1	2
18	2	1	1	3	-1	1	2
19	2	2	1	1	-1	3	1
20	2	1	1	1	-1	2	2
21	3	1	1	2	0	2	2
22	3	1	2	3	0	4	1
23	3	2	1	1	0	1	2
24	3	1	1	2	0	2	2
25	3	1	1	1	0	1	1
26	3	2	1	1	0	2	2
27	3	2	2	1	0	2	2
28	3	2	1	1	0	-1	1
29	3	2	2	-1	0	3	1
30	3	1	1	1	0	1	1
31	4	2	1	-1	0	3	2
32	4	2	1	1	0	2	2
33	4	2	1	3	0	2	1
34	4	1	1	1	1	2	1
35	4	1	1	3	0	2	1
36	4	1	1	3	0	2	2
37	4	1	2	2	0	1	2
38	4	1	1	1	1	2	2
39	4	1	2	1	0	2	2
40	4	1	1	1	1	2	2

	hrswrked	nojobwrk	domicile	crsexpt	whatexpt	soclexpt
1	2	-1	4	1	1	1
2	-1	-1	2	2	-1	2
3	-1	2	1	2	-1	1
4	-1	2	1	2	-1	2
5	-1	-1	3	1	2	2
6	-1	-1	1	2	-1	1
7	2	-1	1	2	-1	1
8	-1	1	3	1	-1	2
9	3	-1	3	2	-1	2
10	2	-1	3	2	-1	2
11	-1	2	1	1	2	1
12	-1	1	1	2	-1	2
13	2	-1	1	-1	-1	-1
14	2	-1	1	1	3	1
15	-1	-1	1	2	-1	2
16	2	-1	3	2	-1	1
17	-1	2	1	2	-1	2
18	-1	-1	1	2	-1	2
19	2	-1	3	1	1	2
20	-1	2	1	1	4	2
21	-1	-1	1	2	-1	2
22	1	-1	3	1	2	2
23	-1	1	1	2	-1	1
24	-1	-1	2	2	-1	2
25	3	-1	3	2	-1	2
26	-1	1	1	1	1	1
27	-1	-1	1	1	1	1
28	1	-1	3	2	-1	2
29	3	-1	3	1	2	2
30	2	-1	2	2	-1	2
31	-1	-1	1	1	5	1
32	-1	1	1	2	-1	2
33	2	-1	3	1	1	1
34	2	-1	1	1	1	1
35	1	-1	1	1	2	2
36	-1	2	1	1	5	1
37	-1	1	2	2	-1	2
38	-1	-1	1	2	-1	2
39	-1	1	1	2	-1	1
40	-1	-1	1	-1	2	-1

120

	whtsocex	infsrce1	infsrce2	infsrce3	pcntatnd	skills
1	1	6	-1	10	1	1
2	-1	4	6	7	2	1
3	2	6	-1	-1	2	1
4	-1	1	4	-1	2	1
5	-1	2	3	4	1	1
6	1	2	-1	-1	2	1
7	1	1	-1	-1	2	1
8	-1	5	-1	-1	1	1
9	-1	5	-1	-1	1	1
10	-1	4	5	-1	2	1
11	2	4	-1	-1	1	1
12	-1	4	-1	-1	2	1
13	-1	-1	-1	-1	1	1
14	2	4	5	-1	2	1
15	-1	4	-1	-1	3	1
16	2	5	-1	-1	2	1
17	-1	1	2	3	1	1
18	3	1	2	3	1	1
19	-1	4	5	-1	1	1
20	.	4	0	0	2	1
21	-1	1	-1	-1	1	1
22	-1	3	-1	-1	-1	1
23	2	2	4	-1	2	1
24	-1	1	-1	-1	2	1
25	-1	1	2	4	2	1
26	1	2	4	-1	2	1
27	1	1	2	-1	2	1
28	-1	2	4	-1	2	1
29	-1	4	-1	-1	1	1
30	-1	2	4	5	1	1
31	1	1	4	-1	1	1
32	-1	1	2	-1	2	1
33	4	2	4	-1	2	1
34	-1	2	3	4	2	1
35	-1	4	6	8	2	1
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121

	usecomp	comphave	usemath	mathave	usecomm	commhave
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124

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127

Appendix 3.19

RESPONSES TO OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS EASTER 2003
QUESTIONNAIRE   30 Oct 03

NB responses relate to SPSS question numbers

Questions 19-22: WHYNOT1 – WHYNOT4

Student 6: going out and sleeping next day! Missing classes!
Student 20: I thought I could work harder after Christmas. Plus less essays to do.

Question 23: POSTXWRK

Student 2: found course very easy and boring

Question 24: EXPLAIN

Student 3: I've done more revision
Student 4: worked the same all year through apart from doing more work for exams
Student 6: definitely because I also had bad attendance, and I was determined to pass this course and learn to work harder for exams if you want to pass.
Student 7: worked the same all year
Student 8: as exams come closer, more revision done
Student 9: knowing that exams were coming up and meeting coursework deadlines
Student 15: set aside more time to study – cut back on socialising
Student 16: reading more, trying to understand the course better
Student 20: because there was more essays to hand in after Christmas than before
Student 21: work at same level throughout year
Student 24: realised that I had to work harder to pass
Student 26: spent more time reading outside class time
Student 27: meeting deadlines - revision
Student 31: exams
Student 35: because it's got harder with more assignments needing to be handed in
Student 36: because my grades were not good enough before Christmas so I've had to push myself
Student 38: got more into a routine
Student 40: because I needed to

Question 34: CRSENJOY

Student 2: enjoyed the Law aspect of the course

Question 35: TUTORS

Student 6: some tutors do not have a clue about their subject e.g. Economics seminar. This has resulted in me not being bothered to go to the revision class – waste of time.

Question 36: OTHER

Student 10: Being a student again and actually appreciating the fact I am getting a qualification ...(this time because I want to)

Question 50: WHATSTOP

Student 1: [thought of changing course and leaving UW] - determination
Student 2: [thought of changing course and leaving UW] - because I can train in law easily after my course if I choose that route
Student 4: [thought of changing courses but not leaving UW] – decided to try harder for a while and see how it goes
Student 5: the course was full

Questions 81-85 SKLSINF1 – SKLSINF4

Student 6: against Business Methods as a skills source has added 'definitely'.
Student 40: has added the comment 'all of them' alongside the skills grid.

THEMES EMERGING FROM THE ABOVE

Questions 19-22: WHYNOT1 – WHYNOT4

Additional comments – not new options

Question 23: POSTXWRK

Classified as No

Question 24: EXPLAIN

1. worked at same pace throughout the year
2. need to revise for exams
3. realised the need to work harder to succeed
4. got into more of a study routine / socialised less
5. wanted to understand the course better
6. more work to do after Christmas (assignments)
7. course easy and boring

Question 34: CRSENJOY

Additional comment – not new options

Question 35: TUTORS

Noted as Number 2

Question 36: OTHER

Noted as 2

Question 50: WHATSTOP

New additions:

4. opportunity to study law after graduation
5. course (I wished to join) was full

Questions 81-85 SKLSINF1 – SKLSINF4

Comments noted

Appendix 3.20

September 2003 Telephone Interviews: responses to open-ended questions

Key:

Students 1-2 = BA (Hons) ....Business courses (Group 2)
Students 3-7 = BA (Hons) M&L courses (Group 4)

NB: The numbers on the spreadsheet do not align precisely with the questionnaire
       numbers
       Some student comments not incorporated into spreadsheet – go back to
       original interview transcripts

4.   CHOICESI

Student 1: He was recommended University of Wessex for its social life and its
hockey team by his brother who is at another local HEI
Student 2: his chosen course was the particular course he wanted to study (he did not
attend an Open Day)
Student 3: heard BA (Hons),,,,, was a good course and that Newtown was a good
place to be / friendly; also had friends there on other courses
Student 4: went to UW because he wanted to go to uni. He was also interested in
sport. UW had the course he wanted to do and he had mates who went to UW who
were a year older than him. One of his mates is still at UW doing a graphics course.
Student 5: His parents lived in Newtown. He did A level PE and Business at 6th form
college so the course was a logical extension. Govt pushes HE a lot. Lots of pressure
from 6th Form teachers on students
Student 6: Came to an Open day – liked the uni and the people; also thought the
course looked interesting – also liked the city and the halls
Student 7: Wanted to do a sports course at a university – also UW was close to home,
it was an interesting course and relevant to his proposed future career.

5.   WHENLEVE

Student 1: after 3-4 weeks
Student 2: left December 02
Student 3: left January 03
Student 4: started on Level 1 in 2001 – did the first year and failed it. He was offered
a repeat year which he accepted, so started Level 1 again in October 2002; however
he left in December 02.
Student 5: left after 4 weeks
Student 6: left after 7 weeks
Student 7: left his course just after Christmas

6.   WHYLEAVE

Student 1: Many factors for leaving – course not challenging. Also, was in hall where
9/10 students knew each other so he felt isolated *[failure to integrate socially in hall]*
Student 2: found the course boring

Student 3: Ill early on in course – missed out on stuff; lazy – lying in bed late; had had an easy summer with no work (so hard to adjust); 'no one to push you'; 'no one to get you up'

Student 4: he realised half way through his repeat Level 1 that he didn't want to do 3 years more on a degree course. He was also worried about his future debts and had student loans.

Student 5: He felt he was too young when he joined his course. He felt he was studying just for the sake of studying. There was peer pressure to go into HE as his friends also went to an HEI (2 at UW have now left). He had had enough of studying – it was not to do with the University of Wessex that he left

Student 6: Course structure was not what he expected – had been told that it would be 60% Sport and 40% Business at level 1 with progressively more business at Levels 2 and 3. In reality there was too much business at Level 1 and hardly any sport. He then asked to change to BA (Hons) ....but was told that, after 7 weeks it was too late (he was annoyed because a friend at Bedford College? Was allowed to change courses after 11 weeks and is still there). Also the first 7 weeks he was on crutches recovering from a cartilage operation so he couldn't play football etc.

Student 7: Liked the course at first – later he found some units less interesting e.g. Economics, so he left.

7.   DOMICILE

Student 1: noise was a problem – in first week a 4am fire alarm caused by a student on drugs (drugs part of the Hall culture); also noise generally was a bit of a problem

Student 4: In 2001-02 he lived in Walditch hall; in second year of Level 1 he shared a house with his mates.

Student 5: Didn't like hall very much – just picked the course for the sake of it. Other students in hall were doing Media Studies so he felt isolated.

Student 6: The Hall was really good – there were nice students staying there and the guy who ran the hall was nice – it was really friendly – not problems with noise. But the course was not quite right.

8. GOHOME

Student 3: had a car – easy to get home; has not brought his car to his new West Country university

Student 4: he had a girlfriend at home in C., as did a mate – hence them going home every weekend. He also worked all weekend at B&Q, C., where he works now.

Student 5: He went home the first weekend to get some things he needed thinking this would make him feel more at home. Did three more weeks at UW but it didn't feel right (He stressed this several times).

Student 6: He went home every other weekend for the first two fortnights (month) then stayed until he left. He did not miss home at all.

Student 7: lived at home

10.   EXPLAIN1

Student 3: UW very receptive / helpful

Student 4: Had a brilliant social life. He had no problems with the uni. Just didn't fancy three more years of study.

Student 6: H e settled in really well – went out socialising with people in halls and on his course. has kept in touch with 5 students and will soon be going back to Newtown to visit them – they are now living in a rented house.

12. EXPLAIN2

Student 1: Not challenged by his course – had studied business at A level and at GCSE
Student 3: course leader very helpful; knew lots of students

13. FRIENDS

Student 1: Got on with lots of people but did not have many close friends
Student 3: Quite a few friends but mainly second years
Student 4: Chris had loads of friends – still goes back to Newtown regularly to meet up with them
Student 5: Did football trials - got on all right with the guys there – also made some friends with people on his course – but didn't get on with people in Hall (all media studies students)
Student 6: has kept in touch with 5 students and will soon be going back to Newtown to visit them – they are now living in a rented house.
Student 7: He got on very well with his fellow students. He had quite a few friends at SI – has kept in touch with a few of them

15. WHYMISS

Student 1: Only two classes missed - one class missed because the topic was tedious so he didn't go; can't remember the reason for missing the other class
Student 2: too lazy to walk to the University; laziness; didn't like early morning classes
Student 3: laziness; very late nights
Student 4: first time attended about 75%; second time he attended most of the time until he quit at Christmas. Reasons for non-attendance were social life; didn't like coming in early in the morning; hadn't done the work for the class so didn't go to the class; overslept.
Student 5: missed classes during Freshers' week because of drinking [in fact there are no classes] – otherwise reckoned he attended most classes
Student 6: He went to every class – wanted to make sure everything was right. Was a dedicated person but decided that three years on the wrong course was a waste of time.
Student 7: The train from B. was late / or the classes were early morning and late afternoon – which left a big gap in the middle of the day which he didn't like. He would use the time to go to the library or the gym or get something to eat.

17. HRSWRKED

Student 4: Worked at B&W, C.: Saturday 9-6; Sunday 10-4. Earned £500 per month.
Student 6: Was about to start one when he left. Was going to start at a local football club – went to an Open day there – secured work coaching an academy team and

working behind the bar at the ground. Had he started would have done 2-3 evenings per week + 2 afternoons per week
Student 7: working in a supermarket

18.   PERSTUD

Student 5: 50% - spent lots of time in the gym

19.   PERSOC

Student 1: went out socialising every night. Estimates however that he spent more time studying than the other activities above put together – over 50% of his time spent studying.
Student 4: would work in the library between lectures; couldn't work when he went back to the house as there were always people there – the basis of social life. He had previously played soccer to quite a high level but didn't play sport at UW because he couldn't juggle all the different things in his life (studying and social life plus going home weekends).

23. WHATCREX

Student 2: says he had no expectations but he thought the course might be interesting
Student 4: Expectations partly provided by having read up on sport – did sport at (FE) college – wanted to work in fitness clubs / Leisure Centres. But in Dec 2002 decided he didn't like the course. Wanted to pass.
Student 5: He said he has grown up a lot in the last year. He expected studying to be hard at UW - otherwise it would be wasteful. Two other friends started with him – one NH dropped out; the other DW left as he felt the time was not right but has now returned to UW
Student 6: expected the course to be more sports focused
Student 7: He expected the course to be interesting with a chance to meet people

25. WHATSTEX

Student 1: Brother was different so no real influence on his expectations; he had no expectations – he joined with an open mind
Student 4: Lots of mates at uni –loved the social life. He gained his expectations of being a student from them – they urged him to go to uni and said he would love the social life.
Student 5: Really worried about coming to UW before he started – uncertainly / insecurity
Student 6: had friends at Brighton Uni and had visited them twice. Didn't have any idea how the classes would be run – expected big lectures and not much individual tutoring

26. EXPMATCH

Student 4: Social life better than expected. Thought studying would be harder / stressful / high level of work / stricter. In fact UW was very laid-back; the most laid-back place he had been. He liked this as no one chased him. He felt he could cope

with independent learning yet found it hard to motivate himself when all the projects kept coming in at once – he kept putting things off and then three weeks had gone past.

Student 6: Did a BTEC Sports Science at FE college before coming to . The BA SSwB was not very similar to his BTEC

Student 7: Meeting new people did meet his expectations; the expected interesting course did not materialise

27. WASTEDYR

Student 1: is now at a Home Counties HEI studying Business & Finance – he is particularly interested in finance. He finds his course at his new HEI to be more in-depth and detailed – it is 'further past 'A' level and GCSE'. At UWBS he was not challenged enough; at his new HEI he is challenging himself.

Student 2: Last year has not been wasted – has enjoyed it; he worked between Jan03 to Sept03 for income; is now going to another Home Counties University to study Digital & Media (but doesn't like computers)

Student 3: 'didn't use it as well as I could have – a big learning curve'. Student said he has got to get out and meet (Level 1) students on his new course

Student 4: His mum and dad think he has wasted his time (see his father's separate comments to me). But Student 4 doesn't agree with them – he liked living alone / made lots of friends / learned a bit about the subjects he studied / enjoyed the experience.

Student 5: He had to try HE to find out if he liked it. Had he stayed at UW he could have got out of it what he wanted (even though some UW facilities not brilliant)

Student 6: H e really enjoyed his 7 weeks with the people he met at UW – the course was the least enjoyable bit. A lot of good came out of him coming to UW – he has got a good job now. There are no negatives – he enjoyed moving away / looking after himself / has gained much more confidence over the last year.

Student 7: He thinks the year was wasted in that he could have looked for a job a year earlier - but it was an experience so was not a wasted year. He made friends and got on with new people he met. This has given him confidence.

28. FRTYPCRL

Student 1: He was not told by that he only needed to get 40%; however Home Counties HEI did tell him he only had to get 40%. This hasn't demotivated him; also he didn't want the challenge to be too hard so as to discourage him.

Student 3: Didn't know until late in first term – not knowing that created a big barrier that he found it impossible to climb over – had he known might have tried harder earlier

Student 4: He was told on the first day that the first two years don't count to the final grade of the degree. Perceived that if he could get through the first two years he could take this time relatively easy. Knew he only needed to work for 40% - aimed for 50 – 60% but not for 80-90% - but if in fact you get less marks than you are aiming for, can fail.

Student 5: He believes that, had he stayed, this would [40% rule] have made him more lax.

Student 6: This had no effect on him as he wanted to do his best – some of his class reacted immediately – 'we can sit back a bit' This student very much agreed that this demotivated them

Student 7: He was aware of the need only to get 40% - but he didn't think therefore of adopting a minimalist philosophy.

29. TUTHELP

Student 1: At , tutors didn't help a lot. No direct contact – whereas at Home Counties HEI he knows the tutors at level 1 and most of those who will teach him at Level 2 [only 240 students in the whole of Level 2 at the Business School, Home Counties HEI]. His new HEI gives more help because they have less students. *[The size of was clearly a big problem to him].*

Student 3: Course leader was very good – other tutors explained / helped in class but then gave the impression they wanted to hurry to the next class – Course leader was always approachable all the time – 'like the teachers in (FE) college'.

Student 4: Yes – no problems – tutors did help especially MK and PE who always had time.

Student 5: Just about a Yes here. Lessons were fine. H e looked after himself so didn't go to tutors for help. He couldn't comment re the tutors as he was only there a short while.

Student 6: Not very helpful – this was another problem. The course was not that difficult – some tutors didn't give as much help as he would have liked. The W&F tutor was very helpful.

Student 7: The tutors were OK - some tutors were more interesting than others. The Economics tutor was OK - it was the subject that was not interesting.

30. COMPDEV

Student 1: already done at GCSE maths
Student 2: hates computer
Student 4: knew anyway
Student 7: didn't get better while at UW

31. MATHDEV

Student 1: already done at GCSE maths
Student 3: not on course

32. COMMDEV

Student 2: talking to many people in Hall and classrooms has helped develop communication skills
Student 4: Learned quite a lot – all in the same boat e.g. chatting in classes and in the corridor

33. LIBDEV

Student 1: already had
Student 5: covered in induction but he never went into the library

Student 6: Had 2 hrs guide to library in induction only
Student 7: introduced in induction

34. PRESDEV

Student 6: He is confident to speak up anyway

36. EXPTHDEV

Student 4: Also did this in FE college

37. GPWKDEV

Student 4: Always
Student 6: helps build a team relationship

38. INDEPDEV

Student 1: a bit – forced to by lack of help
Student 2: he thinks so
Student 4: Worked with others in groups a lot
Student 6: mentioned a lot by tutors
Student 7: tutors told him to read around the subject

39. ESSYDEV

Student 4: Learned a lot – not taught it in (FE) college

40. TIMEDEV

Student 3: but he's not very good at this
Student 6: Mentioned only – some tutors said if you don't get your work in on time it doesn't matter to us

41. ASSRTDEV

Student 2: ensuring each person does work in a group is where this is evidenced

42. IPSKLDEV

Student 1: helped by living in hall / group work

43. RESSKDEV

Student 1: knew already
Student 3: library induction tour

44. PROBDEV

Student 4: Via group work

Student 6: a little

45. SKLSHELP

Student 4: Structured essays not taught in FE – also learned how to do a biography (bibliography) – tutors broke stuff down – totally different way to learn at UW compared with FE
Student 5: They would have helped him had he been at UW longer
Student 6: He said that the Undergraduate Skills unit was a really helpful unit – one of the most useful
Student 7: Most of them did. Regarding the Undergrad Skills unit some things were useful while some seemed pointless to him.

46.   RETSI

Student 2: was considering returning to UW but thinks it is better at the Home Counties University he is now attending (re course)
Student 3: Did consider this but he knew people who would be in the third year – felt coming back to would be tempting fate – it would too easy to go back to a minimal effort approach again if he rejoined
Student 6: Not for a couple of years – possibly do a p/t course while working – would quite like still to get a degree

47.   RETOTHER

Student 1: is now at Home Counties HEI
Student 2: now at Home Counties University
Student 3: he is now reading Real Estate Valuation at a West Country university. A relative died and left him a house, which he has now sold – this got him interested in Real Estate. (I mentioned to him how UW used to run a degree in real estate valuation – not sure if they still do – that's why he explained in 23 above why he is not coming back to UW.

48.   ANYOTHER

Student 1: Now living at home although thinking of living independently later on – said he benefited from living away from home.
Student 2: it was fun – no problems
Student 4: He said that although he had finished his course if he was to go back to October 2001 he would not change his experience for anything.
Student 5: After leaving , he spent six months in S. France working for Keycamp –at time of phone call (13/10/03) has been home a week and is now going off to tour round Europe.   When he comes back he is going to do an apprenticeship and become a carpenter. Has grown up a lot in last year
Student 6: Now working with a firm doing coaching – doing work at Chelsea FC (He had played for a Div 1 club for three years). Still has strong feelings for Newtown as a place to live.
Student 7: He is now working in a bank and enjoying it. For his A levels he studied Sports Studies / PE and Leisure & Rec.

REDUCTION OF THE ABOVE TO THEMES TO FEED INTO SPREADSHEET RE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

CHOICSI1

1. Liked the look of UW/Newtown
2. UW / Newtown recommended for its social life / sports
3. Liked / interested in the course
4. Extension of A level course
5. had friends at UW
6. pressure from FE college
7. relevant to future career
8. UW close to home

CHOICSI2

2. UW. / Newtown recommended for its social life / sports
3. Liked / interested in the course
4. Extension of A level course
5. had friends at UW
6. pressure from FE college
7. relevant to future career
8. UW close to home

CHOICSI3

3. Liked / interested in the course
4. Extension of A level course
5. had friends at UW
6. pressure from FE college
7. relevant to future career
8. UW close to home

WHENLEVE

1. 3-4 weeks
2. 4-8 weeks
3. around Christmas time

WHYLEVE1

1. course boring / not challenging / not enjoyable
2. course not what expected

WHYLEVE2

3. social isolation
4. lazy so didn't work

139

WHYLEVE3

5. worry about debt building up
6. fed up with studying

DOMICILE

1. noise in halls
2. drugs part of hall culture
3. felt isolated socially
4. liked the halls

EXPLAIN1

1. UW very helpful / receptive
2. good social life

EXPLAIN2

1. not challenged by course
2. course leader very helpful

FRIENDS

1. lots of friends
2. no close friends
3. didn't get on with people in hall
4. has kept in touch with friends since leaving

WHYMISS1

1. laziness / oversleeping
2. social life
3. dislike of early morning classes

WHYMISS2

1. laziness / oversleeping
2. social life
3. dislike of early morning classes
4. hadn't done the work for the class
5. poor time-keeping by trains to Newtown from neighbouring city
6. attended all / nearly all classes

WHATCREX

1. no expectations
2. wanted to pass
3. expected greater sports focus
4. expected interesting classes

5. expected big lectures / limited individual tuition

WHATSTEX

1. no expectations
2. good social life
3. uncertainty / insecurity

EXPMATCH

1. social life better than expected
2. course did not match expectations

WASTEDYR

1. year not wasted / enjoyed it
2. course at UW not challenging enough
3. gained confidence living away from home
4. met new people

FRTYPCRL

1. didn't know about 40% rule
2. no effect on him
3. demotivated him / other students

TUTHELP

1. tutors did not help a lot
2. some tutors better than others
4. tutors helped a lot

ANOTHER

. 1. it was a positive experience [benefited living away from home / fun / grown up / would not change it]
2. has gone to another HEI – not lost to the system
3. has got a job – enjoying it more than studying

ANOTHER1

1. it was a positive experience [benefited living away from home / fun / grown up / would not change it]
2. has gone to another HEI – not lost to the system
3. has got a job – enjoying it more than studying

Appendix 3.21   Validity and replicability

A3.21.1   Validity

Cohen et al (2000) note that there are many different types of validity and reliability and hence different ways in which a researcher can address them. Hence a traditional quantitative definition of validity has been given in Chapter 3.9.1. In the positivist model, distinction is made particularly between internal and external validity, although there are many others (Cohen et al, 2000, p.105). In terms of internal validity, Pilliner (1973) quoted in Cohen & Manion (1994, p.172) defines the internal validity of an experiment as one where, within its own confines, its results are credible. Cohen & Manion 1994, p.170-171) identified seven threats to internal validity; when I applied these to my research at the beginning of the doctoral programme the main threats appeared to be maturation, testing, selection and experimental mortality. The other threats to internal validity, namely history, statistical regression, and instrumentation I did not believe to be significant problems.

With external validity, the issue is whether the demonstrable effects of the research can be generalized more widely to the population at large, in my case, other business courses in UWBS or similar courses in other comparable HEIs. Applying the tests of threats to external validity identified by Cohen and Manion (1994, p. 171-2), I did not believe that failure to describe independent variables explicitly, nor lack of representativeness of available and target populations were real threats. The Hawthorne effect is always a risk in any educational experiment but I felt it could be minimized. Inadequate operationalizing of dependent variables was not seen to be a problem while sensitization to experimental changes is comparable to the internal validity issue of testing and the argument advanced there can also be applied here.

A3.21.2   Replicability

Hycner (1985) also raises the issue of replicability which is an essential feature of natural scientific research i.e. that the experiment can be replicated by others. Clearly, argues Hycner, this is an important part of any research but there are differences among phenomenologists. To them, the key question is whether a reader, adopting the same viewpoint as articulated by the researcher, can also see what the researcher saw, whether or not s/he agrees with it. This, Hycner argues, is the key criterion of qualitative research (p.298). Given the fundamental nature of phenomenological research, he argues it is not surprising that there have been few attempts to replicate the results of previous studies. The main thrust is the pioneering work of applying phenomenological principles to research, which is what I seek to do in this thesis. Clearly, much needs to be done in terms of replicating studies; Hycner argues a need for a balance between the replicability of results (natural science) and the meaningfulness of the findings (qualitative research).

Appendix 4.1 Characteristics of my interview, questionnaire and telephone-interview students

Student Characteristics / sample source %	Interview students %	Sept. 02 Questionnaire sample %	Jan. 03 Questionnaire sample %	May 03 Questionnaire sample %	Telephone interviews %	UWBS %
Males	60	68	58	75	100	54
Females	40	32	42	25	0	46
Under 21	50	83	85	83	100	41
Mature students	50	17	15	17	0	39
Ethnic minority	20	N/A	N/A	N/A	0	17
A levels	50	60	N/A	N/A	N/A	27
GNVQ	20	18	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.8
A level / GNVQ / Higher combination	10	17*	N/A	N/A	N/A	52
Gateway / Access	10		N/A	N/A	N/A	0.5
No qualifications	10	5	N/A	N/A	N/A	4%

Key: N/A: Not Asked;
        * A level / GNVQ / Higher combination + Gateway / Access are added together

Appendix 4.2 Pen portraits of student interviewees

Thesis name of student participant	Initials	Age	Course size & academic school	My initial perception of student personal characteristics on entry, September 2002
Dorothy Browne	DB	20	Large: Marketing & Leisure (M&L)	Spent some months at Northern university the previous year but did not enjoy course; came to Newtown for the course and Level 3 boyfriend whom she had often visited. Confident/gregarious. Lives in hall. A level entry.
Ian Roach	IR	24	Large: M&L	Mature student with significant work experience and responsibility; joined course a week before induction after work disagreement / deciding he needed a life change. Concerns about impact on his personal life of being a student and being older than peers. Living with partner. GNVQ Intermediate + City & Guilds + mature student entry.
Barry Michaels	BM	28	Small: M&L	Mature student with considerable work experience, holding a responsible management post; supported emotionally by close ex-girlfriend when deciding to join course. Looks forward to improved social life, but renting a house several miles away with Newtown Metropolitan University students. Conscious of age. Gateway course + mature entry.
Ann Townsend	AT	19	Small: M&L	School leaver and local student living at home. National hockey player; good time-management skills due to variety of competing demands. Self-contained and focused. BTEC National Diploma + A level entry
Ruth Young	RY	21	Small: M&L	Mature student: seemingly confident but very much influenced by parents who required her to come to university; initial comments about her fellow students suggest she will soon have adjustment problems. Living in hall. BTEC National Diploma + mature student entry.
David Andrews	DA	18	Large: Business Analysis (BA)	School leaver. Pleasant personality and very anxious to integrate socially with peers. No p/t job and supported by parents to whom he feels indebted morally. Looking forward to a good social life. Living in hall. A level entry
Nick Barr	NB	21	Large: BA	Mature student who lives in Portsmouth with parents and travels in every day. Has p/t job and is determined to perform to best of ability at Level 1. Perceives a considerable age gap between himself and younger students; social life is in Portsmouth. Living at home. A level entry.
Jenny Rivers	JR	21	Large: BA	Mature student and unmarried mother with child; several years work experience. Joined course week before induction due to influence of work colleague. Some concerns about being older than fellow students. No contact with her parents for years. Living in hall. Mature student.
Oliver Cooper	OC	19	Small: BA	School leaver; in a long-term relationship; very committed to doing the best he can at Level 1. Works long hours in p/t job; lives with girlfriend near Southampton University. Seems mature beyond his years. A level entry.
Mohammed Hassan	MH	18	Small: BA	School leaver; parents expected him to progress to university; mother did everything for him before entry; financial support from parents. Very confident and looking forward to good social life. Living in hall. A level entry.

Appendix 4.3 Transcript of interview between Neil Harris and Ruth Young: 23rd September 2002

N   You're Ruth Young, and you're on BA (Hons) ....Level 1?

R   Yes.

N   OK, can I ask why did you choose the University of Wessex to study in?

R   (a) because it was closer to home.

N   Which is Berkshire?

R   Yes which is Berkshire, and (b) because I knew someone that was coming here and that had been here before and she said she'd really enjoyed herself so, but mostly because its close to home.

N   You're not going to live at home though, are you?

R   No, I'm not going to live at home, no.

N   But you can get home weekends and....

R   Yes and the course was the better one out of all the ones I was going to choose from.

N   So there was also an aspect of the quality of the course so...

R   Most definitely yes.

N   Right, OK, did you come on an open day by the way?

R   I didn't come on an open day no.

N   Right.

R   I came down and investigated with my dad just on our own.

N   Right, was that useful?

R   Yes, I thought it was, yes, just came down to look around and get a feel for the place.

N   Yes.

R   And I liked the look of it so that was why I chose it.

N   OK that's helpful thanks. What entry qualifications do you have, I mean have you got A levels or GNVQ or what?

R I've got BTEC National Diploma in Applied Science Sports Studies.

N Right, ok. Are you a mature student, are you over twenty one?

R I am, yes.

N OK, and you told me you were borne in Newtown but you haven't been here for donkies years.

R Yes.

N Right, and you're going to live in what, the Halls of Residence, are you?

R Yes.

N OK, which one is that?

R Burton Bradstock

N Oh, right, is that OK?

R Yes, I like it. Its not like home, obviously, but it's as near to it as possible, its nice and clean and don't have to worry about anything breaking at the moment anyway (chuckle).

N You don't want to live in a dump; I've lived in dirty bed-sits when I was a student, it's depressing isn't it?

R Yes.

N OK, let's ask you another question; how many hours do you anticipate studying a week during level 1, which is this level?

R Anticipate or do?

N I mean, you'll have twelve hours a week class contact, as you know, and then there's meant to be studying outside, how many hours a week do you reckon you'll be studying this year, per week?

R Per week, probably for like two or three hours a day, probably, maybe two hours, I think two hours.

N Plus your class contact.

R Yes.

N OK so it would be five times two is ten, plus twelve so you reckon you will be doing around about twenty two hours a week roughly.

R   Roughly yes.

N   OK, no one's going to hold you to this so don't worry; that's helpful. Have you got a job at all Ruth?

R   I don't at the moment, no.

N   Right.

R   But I don't quite know what to do about that because the studying is like the main reason I'm here and if I get a job and it starts to interfere with my work then I won't have a job.

N   You'll give the job up rather than study?

R   Yes, definitely.

N   How many hours at the moment do you think you will be willing to work per week?

R   Probably a couple of hours one evening a week and then a Saturday or a Sunday.

N   Right.

R   But not both days.

N   Right, so probably about ten to twelve hours at the most.

R   Yes, probably about that, yes.

N   Right, that's good, thanks. Can I go on talking about your general expectations, if you don't have expectations about your course don't worry. So I am going to give you some questions you could have a look at as I talk through them, it's probably easiest. So question eleven then, do you have any expectations of the demands your course is going to place on you, first of all regarding the workload?

R   I think the workload is going to be quite arduous I suppose.

N   Do you?

R   Yes.

N   Right.

R   I do think it's going to be hard, and I am going to be probably struggling knowing me.

N   Why's that?

R   Just because I don't feel completely ready for this course, I don't know why, it's probably just nerves.

N   You'd been working, had you?

R   I've been doing a BTEC National Diploma in Sports Science for the last two years and I've always had an interest in the health and fitness industry ever since I was ten years old so in one way or another like through physiotherapy and aromatherapy and things like that so I don't know. I just think its going to be quite hard.

N   Right.

R   Quite a lot of work.

N   OK, that's helpful. Any thoughts about how many subjects you're going to have to study? I mean has that been talked about in induction yet?

R   Yes, we've got like our... what we're actually going to be going through. I don't know how long we'll be spending on each subject but all of them interest me so I'll be looking forward to going through them.

N   Did you expect as many subjects as you've got or did you....?

R   Yes I did, roughly that amount yes, I was perhaps expecting a bit more.

N   Right.

R   But I'm quite happy with what we've got.

N   Normally, it's two hours per unit, is normally the case, then you do six units, you know, during the course of the year.

R   Right.

N   OK. Any other expectations of the demands on you by the course?

R   I think it will demand quite a lot of my time, I think I probably being a bit naive in saying that I'll only be spending two hours doing work, yes I think I probably being doing a lot of work, it will take up a lot of my time.

N   Right OK, that's fine, thanks for that. Have you got any expectations, you've met your fellow students on the course now?

R   Yes.

N   And you've probably spoken to some of them already, ideally it would be nice to speak to you as you walk through the door, one can't do that, have you got any expectations about your fellow students on the course in terms of what

they're going to be like, in terms of their attitude to work or any social life anything like that, have you thought about it at all?

R   I have looked at all of them, and at the moment they don't seem like my sort of people, but I could be wrong.

N   Right.

R   I could be wrong but they didn't seem very forthcoming, a couple of them were but a couple of them were very sort of I don't know, I didn't feel very comfortable.

N   Right OK, it's a stressful day, the first day of the course.

R   Yes.

N   I mean, I would be very nervous if I was starting here now to be honest. I suppose would people would say you're a fairly outward going confident person would you say?

R   Yes, I'm not at the moment, but I normally am. (chuckle)

N   OK, but I guess a lot of those will come out of their shells, I imagine over the course of the week, won't they?

R   Yes.

N   Which is probably why you volunteered actually and they didn't. OK, do you have any expectations about your tutors? Well you've met Paul [Naylor], haven't you, already; what about the others do you have any expectations about what they are going to be like or what they'll doing?

R   I hope they will be helpful.

N   Right.

R   I hope they will be there to sort of, if I don't understand something, they'll be there to explain it for me, I know they've got those drop-in sessions.

N   Yes, that's right.

R   Yes, I think they will be helpful and I'm hoping for that and they'll be forthcoming with advice for me.

N   Right, would you expect them to be friendly generally?

R   Yes, I'd prefer it if they were, because I feel, I tend, I'd much prefer it if they were nice.

N   Good, that makes you feel more comfortable?

R   Yes, definitely.

N   And I think Paul certainly is...

R   Yes.

N   ... having worked with him for several years. OK, a lot of these questions I'm actually asking you Ruth are guided by articles I've read, other research other people have done. Do you have any expectations about your social life over the coming year?

R   I think it will be quite varied.

N   Right.

R   And I think that maybe I'll start off being friends with people this week, but maybe next week they might not talk to me or I might not talk to them, or I'm hoping that won't happen but it might do but I seem to have got myself into a little group and then I was thrown into my course group and I didn't like or see anyone that was, I don't know. I spoke to a few people over lunch but it wasn't really...I didn't really click with any of them, so, I have clicked with the people I've met so far so I don't know.

N   Who are not on your course?

R   Mmmm

N   Right, are you likely... presumably you'll meet them again, hopefully?

R   Yes.

N   OK, do you think social life...what do you think of the relationship between your academic work and your social life and your job work for that matter is going to be?

R   I know.

N   It's quite difficult balancing actually.

R   It is, it's going to be very difficult to balance it but the main thing is for me to get a degree and for me to do well at my degree, being twenty one I'm not like eighteen just moved out of home. I've moved out of home before, I've been there done that sort of thing and I don't go out drinking every night and I won't be able to hack going out drinking every night so I think that if I ever felt that my work was suffering then I just step back and say look I'll see you guys but not all the time because I can't sort of go out and work and do my college work

150

N   Yes, yes. OK, that's good, thanks, that's helpful this. Do you expect to attend all your classes over the next year Ruth?

R   I do indeed, I want 100% pass rate, attendance rate, I do anyway.

N   Excellent, and do you expect your classes, your attendance to be monitored by tutors?

R   Yes, I do expect it to be?

N   And you'd be happy with that, would you?

R   Yes.

N   Right, OK.

R   We had to have 80% for my last course to even pass it.

N   Right.

R   You had to be there 80% of the time, and I did get that but unless I'm ill I don't miss lessons.

N   Interesting. You're paying fees now to do this course, aren't you?

R   Yes.

N   Your saying you were at FE college before doing your previous course, the fact that you're paying fees, does that change your relationship with your tutors, I mean do you, in other words, do you feel more of like a customer buying a service or…?

R   I haven't really looked at it in that way, but I suppose because my dad is paying for me, I feel that I have to really, really make a go of it because if I drop out now he'd lose the money and I haven't really looked at it in that way because its not actually me personally paying for it.

N   Right.

R   Although it's my dad I suppose he is looking it as an investment in my future but monetary not but for the rest of my life it is an investment for me but its not like monetary it's an investment.

N   There was a report in a paper recently saying that if you get a degree it earns you £400,000 more in your working life compared if you don't have a degree.

R   Yes, I have read that.

N Yes, where's my £400,000 I'm waiting for it to arrive (chuckling with Ruth). Do you have any other expectations about your course at all other than what we have talked about?

R I'm hoping that it won't be too geared towards fitness instructing and like gym instructing because we seem to have talked about it a lot today like gym instruction and stuff and although I'm interested in that part of it, I don't ever want to be a gym instructor, I don't want to be a gym instructor, I know that probably sound like really closed minded and I'm an open minded person but I know that's not the way I want to go.

N Its more the management side of it you're interested in?

R Its more the people side of it.

N Right, OK

R Like working with people and trying to like attract people and look after people while they're actually there and peoples' well being is what I'm interested in. I'm not really one for sort of watching people tire themselves out in the gym; basically I don't like gyms very much (laughing) I like health clubs but I don't like gyms very much.

N Memories of school days.

R Mmmm.

N Let me ask you another question, we are getting on quite well actually, this is good, this is again really just finding out what information, what main sources of information worked for you in terms of building up your expectations about coming to the Business School. I mean did your parents give, you said you came not on an open day, but you came on a visit with your father.

R Yes, I did.

N Did your parents go, were they in higher education?

R My dad was, he studied and got a lot of letters after his name.

N Right.

R At university and he described a first as like a freak degree in a way. He said not many people, he said, I won't basically, he was trying to like not let me worry about what grade I was going to get. Because he said you've got three years to worry about that, and I was like yes but what if I don't come out with a first and he was like that at the end of day. I think he was trying to make me feel better though because I think he wished he'd got a first but you know he said as long as I enjoyed myself and all the rest of it that he said you know at first like you'll like make friends then you might not be friends with them the

next week and like you'll meet new people and he said basically just try and spread my wings and meet as many people as I can.

N   So he was quite influential then?

R   He was, yes and my mum because I spoke to her, the other day and she said she went off to university but she came home the first month, that's because she was homesick, she came home.

N   She gave up her degree?

R   And nobody persuaded her to go back, they just let her you know cry in her room basically on her own for a month with a blanket round her just left her to it and she never went back, so she said no matter how depressed you get stay. So they were both like influential with me, my mum said yes it will be scary and all the rest of it but they both said you know they don't care what I come out with as long as I'm happy and it's what I want to do.

N   I read quite a few reports where, just to show you, students do say yes it's really a scary experience leaving suddenly for the first time in my life, responsible for my own income, my parents are not there to chauffeur me around, I've got new people who are noisy in the next door room and it's a strange city. So yes, it's always scary for everyone but it doesn't have to be the end of the world, that's the thing. Friends already in higher education?

R   Yes, all my best friends are in, at university, they went three years ago so they're now finishing, two of them are still left but all the rest of them have their degrees, and you know they've got 1st, 2.1s and all the rest of it and they said to me you'll regret it if you don't go.

N   Yes, I think so.

R   Work and go and I'm like Oh I don't know and they said no it's the best time of your life, you've got to go. She said just stick it out for the first month, it will be horrendous for the first month and you will not like it, and you'll go back to your room and think this is not home and you'll speak to your mum and dad and you'll cry but basically they sort of have made it out, they've made my expectations sort of like. I don't know as though its going to be like this life changing experience and at the moment I don't feel like its changed my life in anyway really at the moment other than the fact I am running out of money already (laughing) but yes, the media I'd say its kind of like I don't know they do push yes get a degree and then you get a job.

N   What about any soaps or anything that you've watch, have they influence you, do you think? Someone was telling me about the film American Graffiti influenced him to come to the Institute

R   American Graffiti?

N   It's a film set in the 1960's.

R   I've heard of that, but I can't remember what the film's about but I have heard of it, but no specific films. I don't get really influenced, well I don't think I do, probably do but I don't think I would like.

N   Previous school or college did they encourage you?

R   They didn't encourage me, because at first I said no I'm not going to university, I don't want to go. I don't want to spend another three years being broke and I want to go out there and do stuff and make a difference and they kind of just accepted that. They didn't really say why do you feel like that they just left me for two years and then I suddenly turned round and said hang on a minute I want to go and they were really surprised but they were all really proud of me so, I pulled my socks up and went for it.

N   Good, good, I'm sure you won't regret it, I'm really sure you won't.

R   No I hope not (laughing), I'm feeling like that today.

N   You'll grow as a person and within a week you're be thinking hey, you know you get, places become familiar and faces become familiar.

R   Yes, I suppose.

N   Its not so bad, have a couple of beers tonight to cheer you up, that always helps I find.

R   Yes.

N   Any other sort of influences on you at all Ruth?

R   I think just like the general feeling that I'd be missing out if didn't go because of all my friends and my parents and everyone kind of said you know, go and do it. But, at the end of the day, everyone said that to me a couple of years ago and I said no I don't, I haven't got the grades anyway so I can't go now. They like you could do an access course and I'm like and I just swept it to the back of my head but I actually was doing some temping work during a year where I was in between knowing what I was going to do and 1 listened to all of these like sort of like mid-twenties to thirty year-olds saying how they wished they'd gone and it just really stuck in my head. So I thought if I've got the chance I'm going to go for it so I did.

N   That's interesting, so really you're, what you're saying is you're seeing education and getting a degree as a sort of a door opening up, new opportunities.

R   Yes.

N   But there will be…

R   Preparing me for the world of work really.

N   Yes, but there wasn't sort of parental pressures saying Ruth you've got to go to university...

R   No.

N   ... because that's what we expect of you?

R   No no way, they've never been like that with me about anything, as long as I'm happy then they're quite alright. My little sister actually went when she was eighteen and I'm going when I'm twenty one and she's like in her second year and I'm just starting out so she feels like the big sister in a way, she keeps phoning me and going 'you alright then'?

N   (Chuckling)

R   And I'm like 'yes I'm fine'.

N   Where she at?

R   She's at Central Lancashire

N   Oh, right at the other end of the country.

R   I know yes.

N   Oh dear, that's a long way.

R   Yes, but that's where all my family's from anyway so, she feels quite at home up there.

N   Right.

R   She seems to think she's broken away and you know and all the rest of it and my grandma's like twenty minutes down the road and my aunty and uncle live there, so she's not really on her own.

N   So there's a support mechanism really isn't there?

R   Yes, she just says you know I'm all right but I think she goes round there for a roast every Sunday but you know...

N   Sounds good, I wished I lived nearer (laughing). Last question in this section, won't be too much longer I promise. Do you think, you've met a few academic staff so far, do you think they've got any expectations about your ability to cope with the course?

R   So far, it seems that Paul's worried that some of us are going to drop out. He kind of said, you know, if you're going to drop out just kind of really please

think about doing the course because you know we need 100% commitment from you and things like that. So I think he seems to be a bit worried, no not worried, I think he wants us to definitely, definitely want to do it so then we're all like enthusiastic and stuff but yes, I think well all teachers would want you to do well.

N   Of course, yes that's what they do it for.

R   Otherwise they wouldn't be teachers.

N   No that's right, we want all our students to get the best degrees they possibly can.

R   So I'm hoping that they've got high expectations of us then if we fall below them then they'll kind of go 'come on pick the pace up and...'

N   That's interesting. Right conscientious of time, going to move on, let's talk about skills for the moment if we may, you may know them by other names but do the terms key skills or transferable skills mean anything to you?

R   Yes, both of them do, they're the same sort of thing aren't they but the...

N   Le's start with key skills.

R   Yes, key skills, computing, statistics, communications.

N   Good, excellent. So the question then I would ask you is do you have any expectations of the key skills you'll need to use on this course to help you be an effective student?

R   I think I am going to have to learn more about computers and the software packages as I'm not......

N   Can you anything at the moment?

R   I can use word, and Excel spreadsheets.

N   Good, that's two key ones.

R   Databases, like the Access one, I'm not too bad on but...

N   PowerPoint you'll probably use a fair bit of I think.

R   Never heard of it!

N   Right.

R   Well I've heard of it but not used it.

N   It's a presentational package.

R   Right, I'm going to need to get to grips with that.

N   It's quite easy actually, easier than if you use Excel, you'll certainly be able to use PowerPoint. OK, you reckon you're going to need to use that quite a bit. What about the maths and stats, do you think you'll need that?

R   Probably for like, depending on, because its BA (Hons) ……. and not Sports Science I'm hoping we're not going to be able to do that stuff with VAT, axes and working out standard deviation and peoples' heart beats and things.

N   Right.

R   Hopefully not, although I feel it probably will come up at some point so I might have to use maths and stats occasionally, hopefully not too much.

N   And communicating effectively?

R   I think we have to do some class presentations.

N   Yes

R   I'm normally quite competent on stand up in front of a room full of people and I might go red, but I'm not that bothered about it to be quite honest, I'll just sit down and oh well, if nobody likes it then they don't like it really but say I think when I'm not nervous and I'm settled in I can be quite articulate say, it should be ok, communicating with people.

N   Right, you're correct, you will have to do some presentations, yes. OK let's go to transferable skills now then, which you also said you know about so I've just listed some of them there. Some of them you may have come across today, so do you have any expectations concerning the transferable skills you'll need to use; using the library effectively, I'm thinking of things like, you know, how to be able to locate different sources, search the Internet for different references, reference properly, I mean that's a key thing .

R   Yes, it's going to be extremely useful to be able to use the library effectively but we've got a big tour on the library, so soon as I can I'm going to get in there and have a look around.

N   Right.

R   Make sure I get use to where everything is and things.

N   And make a presentation, we've just talked about that a moment ago… read an article critically?

R   I think we've already done that this afternoon actually, we read through two separate articles and basically go by gut instinct on what we thought of what the person has written.

N   Right, OK.

R   So I think it is important not to just go yes well I agree with that.

N   Yes.

R   I don't agree with that, you've got to say why really and how can I back this up and look at what other people have said to balance it out.

N   Yes, that's very good. Put your thoughts forward in class, well you said you're fairly confident so you're not too worried about that and you expect to have to do that?

R   Yes.

N   Work effectively in groups?

R   I don't like to work in groups although I do at the same time, I like it if I don't understand something, but if I understand something I like to work on my own....

N   Right.

R   ... and get it done, but I probably will have to work in groups because it's like it's not really a non team-based course (laughing)

N   That's right.

R   In the fitness industry you sort of have to work as a team so it's not that I would say no, it's just I really feel I need to connect with people before I share my ideas with them. Because I know people at college used to pinch my ideas all the time and it used to, and they'd use it to get like a Distinction and I used to get a Merit and they'd copied me whereas because sometimes I was a bit lazy in handing in my work at college I've learnt my lesson now but because I was a bit lazy they tended to think I'd copied the other person when it was my ideas all the time but there you go, I've learnt my lesson.

N   Yes, that's a useful lesson to learn, but you're right there will be group work. Write a well structured essay or report, presumably you wrote reports on your course didn't you Ruth?

R   I have written reports previously but not to the standard that, not to university standard, no way, I really don't think I did.

N   Would you expect to have to do that?

R   Yes definitely, I would do that.

N   Be an independent learner, have you come across this term so far?

R   Independent learner?

N   It means you, if say Paul gives you some work for the particular unit he teaches that you'll go off and do it by yourself and when you go in the library you might, for example, look for other books on the subject other than the ones he has recommended, or you might do some studying of an evening when he's not given you a specific task to do.

R   Yes.

N   Just to read round the subject.

R   Yes, I would say we would probably will need to do that yes, I do expect to have to do that.

N   OK time management, effective time management?

R   Yes, it's going to be definitely imperative for me to sort out my management skills of time, definitely.

N   Do you, I mean do you do a lot of sport Ruth?

R   It's really odd, because people, as soon as you say you do have some fitness management, they automatically think you're like ace at hockey or I don't know that you're interested in sport and I'm interested in health and fitness and the effect it has on people and I know that I feel better if I go for a swim but I don't like competitive sport. I'll play like pool or bowling competitively but if you put me on to a football pitch I'll just shrivel up, I'd be just like a shrinking violet in the corner, I hate it, so its going to be quite amusing.

N   But you're OK with swimming though?

R   Yes, swimming and cycling.

N   Yes, I swim a lot, yes.

R   I really enjoy that, because you can just sort of loose yourself, you don't have to, I'm not a loner at all.

N   You go up and down the pool don't you?

R   Yes, yes.

N   I find it's like meditation.

R   It is, I find that, especially if I'm going underwater as well.

N   And if you're counting the numbers, so I make sure I've done my fifty-two lengths before I get out, that sort of thing.

R   Yes.

N   You do lose yourself, yes. OK, so time management you clearly expect to have to do and that's going to be important. Assertiveness?

R   I feel I will probably have to be quite assertive even, because at the end of the day, you're on your own now and I'm sort of not, I've never normally been I'm out for myself, and normally like to look after other people, but I will probably have to be quite assertive to get what I want and so make people listen to me. If I don't feel I am getting through, definitely make people sit up and listen to me if I want to so I think I will, probably will, have to be quite assertive

N   Good, OK. Thanks almost there, we're doing well. Number 24, skills development, how do you think skills might be developed, I don't know what you've been told, Have you been told anything about this? I don't know I just put a number of different options here, you'll be using the key and transferable skills we've just been talking about. Do you expect to have special skills development lessons or do you expect skills to be developed in just your normal subjects that you study, or do you expect support of people provided by the University outside your classes, or perhaps you haven't got any sort of thoughts or expectations?

R   I hope we're not just going to be sort of like given an assignment and just be expected to do it without knowing what format they'd like it in, how they want it presented and all the rest of it.

N   Right.

R   So in a way I think presentation skills I'd quite like to work on like to actually know what they expect of your assignment work.

N   Right, OK.

R   And like IT skills, we're getting an IT tour but I think I probably be in the Student Support quite a lot over the next couple of weeks saying, I need help with this and I need help with that and I need help with this so…

N   So you know about Student Support and you feel it'll be a useful thing to help.

R   I think it's fantastic it's around, yes and I used it at college as well.

N   Right.

R   And I used to badger the IT people and go and get them to give me private tuition and stuff.

N   And you'd expect your tutors to help you with skills development as they teach you on the units?

R   Yes, it might be totally unreasonable but I hope that they will do that, yes.

N   Right, OK that's good, there is actually a special skills unit on your course, have you heard about it so far?

R   No.

N   OK, not too worry, that's no problem, that will come up in due course. On those key and transferable skills, the message I think I've got from you Ruth is that you feel that most of the skills you've got to some extent?

R   Yes.

N   But some of them maybe like the IT skills and the library and the critical reading of an article, you probably need a bit more help on.

R   Yes, I'd say so, yes.

N   And the independent learning perhaps in the articulation of your thoughts in class, and the confidence, that you feel you got them reasonably well already. Are there any skills you think you are really weak at the moment, where you really got a big deficiency

R   Probably say IT definitely.

N   Right.

R   And statistics.

N   So they're the ones that Study Support is going to have to give you some help with?

R   Yes.

N   And you'll go to them yourself will you?

R   Yes, I will do as soon as, if I feel I don't understand something I just put my hand up straight away and I don't care what people think.

N   No that's good.

R   They can think I stupid if they want to.

N   No that's good, so by the end of Level 1, I mean if I was sitting talking to you say next summer for example, you would really hope by then to have topped up all your skills.

R   Definitely.

N   You hope to be good on computers, PowerPoint and everything and you'd hope all your stats you can handle and numeracy OK. Where you were studying previously, was that a college in Berkshire was that or...

R   In Swindon

N   Oh Swindon

R   Just outside Berkshire

N   Did they help you with key and transferable skills, you said you were going to the IT guy and asking for help?

R   Yes, I did go to the IT person and he was helpful but he was helpful in a way that where he went oh here I'll do this and he would just do it and I'd be like but I still don't understand so then I'd go to the more friendly one, obviously he was pushed for time, he had like classes after classes after classes.

N   Sure.

R   So he didn't have time to see me individually really so I just had to sort of just march up to his office door and say I need help and he'd go OK, OK but the guy just like sat on the floor where all the computers were, he'd just be sat there reading a magazine and I'd go up and say excuse me could you teach me how to do graphs and then he'd just come and help me.

N   Oh, that's good.

R   So, he was, and he actually sort of showed me first, then went through it again with me doing the controls and then he'd like stand behind me and I'd do it all and he'd sort of say now hang on a minute, you've done that bit wrong what should you have done, I'd go ahh, so he was really good actually.

N   So that's the difference between someone just telling you what to do and someone getting you to do it because you learn better when you do it yourself.

R   Definitely.

N   Almost there, obviously you haven't had any opportunity so far to identify with the skills you possess because you have only been here one day, so that's fair enough, you know where to go if you need extra help.

R   Yes.

N   Ok, I think we've covered all your expectations, when you were at your previous college did your tutors push you fairly hard?

R   No, I don't feel they did at all.

N   So it was really up to you how hard you worked was it?

R   They whinged at you if you hadn't worked very hard on an assignment but I was like you didn't even ask me where I was yesterday. You know they weren't really bothered but they were, they were bothered about the fact how bad they probably looked on the statistics like, you know, how the college was doing and they were worried about that sort of thing.

N   You feel they could have pushed you harder when you were doing that course.

R   Definitely.

N   You've only been here a day, so its an unfair question this Ruth, but have you and you've told me you got perhaps a bit discomfort with some of your fellow students but those are early days so you can't really judge too much yet.

R   Yes.

N   Have you experienced anything so far that has influenced or changed your expectations about being a student here, anything jolted you so far today; I hope not but it may have done

R   I don't, yes actually as I was walking through the corridors and everyone kept telling me everyone is in the same boat and everyone is like willing to make friends and they'll smile and all the rest of it, just smile at them and they will smile back, and there's really moody faces around here. I was trying to smile at as many people as I can and they'll like OK then I won't smile at your again and I just thought that everyone would be a lot more kind of hi how are you, hi how are you and really chatting to each other because my sister up at uni she knows everyone and everyone knows her. I mean the place is slightly smaller but and it's I don't know I was walking along today and thinking my expectations were completely wrong I thought it was going to be like I'd have like twenty friends by now and I've never been one for a massive group of friends anyway so...

N   Have you got any friends you've teamed up with a bit?

R   Yes four other girls.

N   That's good.

R   Yes, I've been out with them Saturday and Sunday night.

N   Oh, excellent.

R   And we went shopping on Sunday together so it's, yes it's been good actually, yes I really like those four girls but I don't know whether we're like sort of hang about together but they wanted me to go with them like back to the things but I told them I had this interview and they were like...

N   Oh, I'm sorry about that.

R   No that's all right, it's OK I wanted to do it so, but they said meet up with us later then so I haven't been left out.

N   That's good, and they're in the same hall as you are they?

R   Yes.

N   I think that's a good way to make friends in the Hall isn't it. I've asked about you about how serious you intend to take your studies, you've answered that. This is too soon - I was going to say have you thought already about leaving your course and going back home?

R   Yes (laughing) I have already thought about that, Sunday morning about two o'clock I phoned my mum in the morning and said...

N   Oh right!

R   ... if you don't come and get me, I'm just going to pack my bags and go and she was like don't be so ridiculous, I just, I phoned all of my friends and said would you please come and get me.

N   What two in the morning?

R   Yes, I could not sleep and I had a massive panic attack and said I don't want to be here and then this morning I woke up and I was like what am I doing, I don't want to be here either, (laughing) I don't want to get up and go in, but I've plucked up the courage and I'm here so ...

N   Tell you what my nightmare scenario which was when I was at Birmingham University which was many years ago I was doing a trainee teacher course and the first day of my teaching practice I was at a school in Solihull which I didn't know. And I got up at 6 o'clock to go into Birmingham and catch a train there and I pulled back the curtains at half six to leave and it was dark and there was about a foot of snow and I remember trudging all the way down this long road in Birmingham, I didn't know hardly, and try to catch a bus into New Street station, then get a train to Solihull. I thought oh God, what am I doing here. I was about twenty two at the time, still it was still a pretty ghastly experience so we all go through that; I know I'm repeating what people have said to you but it is true. Well that's interesting that, has your first day been OK generally, I know you haven't got on with some of the

R   I much preferred Saturday and Sunday, I mean obviously I was allowed to do what I wanted and all the rest of it.

N   Makes a difference, doesn't it.

R   It is a difference, but today I didn't really feel inspired to be like yes! I'm on this course, yes and I'm really excited, Paul seems very sort of friendly but I think he was a bit flustered today as well, he's bound to be so.

N   All the staff are running round like headless chickens.

R   He really seemed not quite with it, he did and he didn't. I was a bit like how
        do I fill this form in, its like Oh-Oh, I don't know how to fill it in.

N   And the last one, anything else you want to say I haven't talked to you about
        so far.

R   I think the nightlife is fantastic!

N   Is it, that's really good it's all the pubs and clubs.

R   Yes everyone is really friendly and there's no like, of sort I haven't seen, well
        I saw a little scuffle the other night, but it was literally a little scuffle and I
        wasn't really worried, and I'm not worried about walking through the park I
        know I shouldn't but I've got four other girls with me and we take up the
        whole path so if anyone tried to do anything we'd all have them on the floor
        probably but I feel quite same walking through Newtown.

Appendix 4.4 Pen portrait of staff interviewees

Thesis name of tutor	Initials	Subject area	Pen portrait
Mark Alexander	MA	Marketing & Leisure (M&L)	Teaches mainly Level 2 and Level 3 M&L units but also some Level 1. Thoughtful and rather quiet. Respected by fellow colleagues. Over 45 years of age. Has limited course administrative responsibilities but good links with local businesses; feels at odds with some students he teaches.
Peter Matthews	PM	M&L	Teaches a range of M&L units. A thoughtful tutor who reflects carefully on his teaching and student learning. Has considerable previous M&L industry experience. Under 45 years of age.
Paul Naylor	PN	M&L	Course leader. Very hard working and conscientious. Leads a small M&L course and is very popular with his students. Anxious to provide the best learning experience for them at all times. Under 45 years of age.
Suzi Bowyer	SB	Business Analysis (BA)	Previously worked in FE, now teaches several business subjects in UWBS. A keen researcher who leads units on Matt Taylor's course and also has admin duties on another BA course; over 45 years of age.
James Keaton	JK	BA	Teaches on undergraduate courses and is also a course leader. Very confident and popular with students for his sense of humour and excellent teaching style. Has strong opinions; under 45 years of age.
Matt Taylor	MT	BA	Considerable background in business over many years; entered HE as a lecturer several years ago. Now leads a BA course. Over 45 years of age.
Yong Weng	YW	BA	Teaches on a full range of business courses from HND to Masters; has worked in higher education for ten years. Also an intermittent researcher. Leads some large units and has course administrative responsibilities. Under 45 years of age.

N   This is really just a follow up to where we're at in September Suzi, and just to check, I sent you a transcript didn't I?

S   Yes.

N   And that was OK was it?

S   Yes its fine.

N   And I also sent you a summary?

S   Yes, bullet points, yes.

N   Yes, was that OK?

S   Yes, that's fine.

N   Good, because that's obviously for verification purposes. Ok, so if we've gone through the questions, number three and if you want me to distinguish between course and units that's fine and I know you teach both on the Marketing & Leisure courses and you teach on the business courses as well, don't you?

S   Yes, indeed.

N   Quite a wide range. Now in September we talked about student expectations regarding them being students in the Business School, are you aware of any student expectations last term, did you come across any sort of student feedback to you their expectations or did you become aware of those you were teaching or any other aspect of your job?

S   I've come across where their expectations have not come up to quite what their expected, we talked about some of the disillusionment I suppose but they haven't talked to me about their prior expectations before they came but I have dealt with some issues.

N   Can you tell me about those.

S   Yes, one is to do with grading, I have some very, very keen young people on the [named course] or the [named course], and they were getting sixties, and didn't understand why they weren't getting seventies and eighties and nobody had really sat down and talked through the university grading systems with them and I explained that sixty/sixty fives which they were getting for presentations was really very good at this stage and went through the system with them so that was something that perhaps could be included in induction

167

week or something. So this was very new to them, and these were very kind of used to getting good grades, lack of feedback, some assignment assessments, they don't feel people sit down and go through things with them as much as they would like to.

N   It's like individual feedback almost.

S   Almost yes, almost like a tutorial system which I mean it is very difficult and they have had quite a few tests and things that just get handed back and they don't really feel they and they have been doing an awful lot of presentations and they don't feel the criteria for presentations are very well established. They are told to do a presentation and something, then they get a grade for it and sometimes they really don't know how they have been graded, was it content, was it skills, was it things like that established better.

N   So some sort of grid I suppose would be a lot more helpful.

S   Yes and I suppose we're all doing presentations and requiring different things from different students, like [named unit] presentations are very, very different to my [named unit] presentation, which is probably different to somebody else's so we could probably use some inter-degree grid, or showing what presentations are trying to establish.

N   When I talked to a couple of students who had quite, you know several marks back and they said they found that very helpful and reassuring.

S   Yes.

N   That's interesting because they didn't flag that up at all but on the other hand they also said that they hadn't had any written feedback yet as they had only just been submitting assignments and they found that a little bit difficult to sort of locate how well they were doing from that view point.

S   Yes, it is very difficult with large groups, and if you are doing some small tests things you really don't want to do a lot of feedback you just want to kind of well just establish a grade level really but they probably have higher expectations with what they want.

N   That's very helpful, I am a bit deaf today by the way Suzi.

S   (laughing) Have you been swimming?

N   It is, I feel really terrible. Right, so those are things where they are clearly their expectations are fallen short. Is there anywhere else where they told you that the course or the units they study or even being a student here has not been what they expected?

S   No, not really, I think generally except for those issues, they've been pretty much what they expected.

N   Right, a lot of them have told they've got friends you know in higher education who are ahead of them and so that's been very useful; and I think a lot of them say their parents, their fathers, have been interested. Their fathers have been to university and not the mums in most case so the fathers given them some sort of guidance as well. A lot of them seem to have reasonable expectations when they come here. Any other issues at all relating to the student expectations that we haven't mentioned?

S   I don't think so....

N   Right.

S   That I can think of.

N   OK, so if we go on to staff expectations, then Suzi, have you had any new expectations about student learning including skills during this year?

S   New expectations, I am sure they were expectations. I have a strange timetable. I have some very late hours and I have had to deal differently with the group with late hours and so my expectations of that group are less than my earlier group which is strange because I have a three o'clock group and six o'clock group and do the same things but the six o'clock group are really tired and don't really want to discuss things and need a bit more spoon feeding somehow and I make allowances for that and obviously I'm teaching them differently and I suppose I am a bit more harder on the three o'clock group and I allow my six o'clock group to be a little bit dozier, so its timetables, that the only kind of...

N   Have they had a hard day do you know?

S   Mmmm, they have a very long day, they have a five o'clock lecture and then they have me straight afterwards and they are a bit, and it's a very discussion-sort of subject and they run out of discussion.

N   Is that for another hour on top of this?

S   Yes, it's quite a young group, they're quite, it's first years and most of them are young. There are not many mature students in there and they're very, very tired so discussing ethics and things is a bit hard.

N   Mmmm, it would be for me actually.

S   (laughing).

N   OK, have you had any expectations of students that haven't materialised this year, or quite surprised you that something hasn't cropped up?

S   I expect tolerance from my students and there's been quite considerable intolerance this year which has surprised me, in all my years of teaching, I have young versus mature students intolerance which I think is very sad.

N   That's right.

S   I've got some lovely mature students, they're a bit opinionated, they've been out in the world and they like to tell people what they know and it just annoys the youngsters and they show it and I think that's a bit sad, so that's an expectation that kind of. I expected them to listen to each other and value each other and usually the mature students lead the young ones. In past years they've kind of brought them up to their level whereas actually the young people are trying to bring the mature students down to their level, which ... it's a bit sad.

N   Are the mature students, you know I've talked about this with students I've been interviewing, are the mature students, sort of do they shoot their mouth off a lot, are they dominating?

S   Well yes, they can be, they can be quite dominating and the youngsters are trying to re-establishing a balance.

N   Right, do you think it's anger the younger students feel or just overawed or what?

S   It's anger, yes and I try to use some of the knowledge that the older people are telling us, because they are trying to extend some of our lessons, because some of the first year lessons are not very you know extended and they want to add to it and I try to use that, show that it is valuable, useful but the youngsters seem to want to stick to the course and do what it says in the programme only... this, you know, not go off on tangents.

N   That's interesting because I know in Matt's talk, and I think you did a bit as well Suzi, is very much about the vocational nature of the course and about bringing and relating the course to the real world and the business environment.

S   Yes, absolutely and they can gain from each other but they are more intolerant than I expected.

N   One member of staff I interviewed talked about mature students as never ever letting him and always been beacons in a sense that you navigated towards.

S   Normally, I've got some lovely mature ladies on the second year who definitely lead the group, wonderful but we have problems with the first year that I've not really come across before.

N   This is not just one mature student and some younger ones, is there more than one mature student?

S   Yes.

N   And it's levelled against all the mature students?

S   Yes, there's a general...

N   How interesting, right, thanks. Any other sort of expectations about students or their learning that have failed to materialise?

S   No, not really. It's been quite a general year. I teach ethics and, as expected, they couldn't care less about ethics.

N   (Laughing)

S   As long as they are making money, they're very much Maggie's children. I was trying to unpick Enron and some scandals and things, so yes pretty much par for the course I think.

N   Right, they're very content focussed aren't they, from the message I've seemed to have got from two rounds of interviews now, it is very much strategic learning, its very much what's the benefit to me on this course or as part of the course.

S   Yes, and they want you to be structured and stick to the material.

N   Yes.

S   That's presumably why they are aggressive towards the mature students.

N   Because leading away from the structure you are trying to provide...

S   And they don't see it as valuable and they see it as interfering with their time.

N   Interesting that, normally it's the opposite. OK, so there are no other sort of staff expectations at all that you want to flag up Suzi?

S   No, I had to teach skills that I was expecting to have to and help them with presentations as such which you'll go on to later on.

N   Yes.

S   Pretty much as I expected and I didn't expect them to be ethical, it's a shame (laughing).

N   (Laughing) Good, I know you've stressed very much in the first interview about the importance of tolerance and clearly that's something you are feeling is not happening, is that just with one group or is it generally?

S   It's two groups.

N   Right.

S   Two first year groups and actually one of my second year groups as well, yes it's a bit general and I have to actually stop and teach tolerance and help the groups to jell a bit more than usual and ensure the group dynamics are working, swap people round.

N   Yes, that's interesting, because another Course Leader was telling me that a group is not jelling at all this year whereas normally they all go off together socially, this year it's just a the number of disparate groups.....

S   Yes.

N   And it's just down to personalities you think is the main reason, a clash of personalities that don't get on?

S   Yes, it is personalities, its not racial, they are quite well mixed multi-racially and the girls and boys, it's not gender.

N   Right, it's age.

S   It's age.

N   I'd better not go into that class then. Right, OK. In terms of your experiences I think probably we have covered this therefore, I was going to say, particularly with first year students, are there any particular issues relating to level one student learning or your teaching your students, or assessments, but I think you've covered all those fairly well actually.

S   I've had to help a bit more with research than I would normally, mainly because of this keenness they want to do more research. I have a case study and usually I take the case study in and just kind of answer the questions but they want to go further.

N   This is Level one students?

S   Yes, so I've done a bit of more kind of research in economics and statistics and where to find them than normal.

N   That's good isn't it?

S   Mmmm, it is good.

N   Because in some ways that's like reading round the subject which most of the students tell me they don't do but on the other hand if they are focussed in terms of trying to get the best possible marks...

S   Yes, there's no exam in this subject, it is an end of year piece of coursework. We do a presentation mid year, which they have just done and they kind of see where they are after the presentation, what they don't know and what they

need to find out and they know it's instead of an exam and they wanted to find out where they should be going, what they should be looking at.

N   So it's probably, it is assessment driven.

S   It is assessment driven.

N   Right. Any untypical students, we've talked very much about sort of trying to generalize, are there any odd ones that stand out as untypical of the rest, deviant cases?

S   Deviant cases, we have some unusual mature students, mature students usually come with high skills, very committed. We have some quite low-skilled mature students with large amounts of general knowledge but poor skills. For instance presentations tend to be read and long-winded without the bullet points that the youngsters are used to using so yes we have some untypical mature students.

N   Right.

S   I don't know if that's the way we have been recruiting this year.

N   Do you know what their background is, as a matter of interest, the ones without the skills?

S   They vary, I think one's a salesman, a car salesman I think and one seems to have been a student doing all sorts of philosophy and stuff.

N   Oh, right.

S   Country, I think he is in farming and we have a young lad from NZ, who is over here, found a girlfriend over here, it's entrepreneurial, they want to go into business particular, its raising strange young people, strange mature people ...not strange, different.

N   One of the things a lot of staff have said to me was about adapting fairly quickly to any student feedback, you know rather than leave until next year, people try and make changes fairly promptly. Have you made any changes since we last talked in September?

S   Yes, student feedback; I'm very conscious since talking to them (laughing) on giving them feedback on their assessment and I write criteria for my presentations now, well I make sure they know what presentations are all about having talked to them before Christmas yes, I changed it straight away.

N   They flagged it up in some way.

S   Yes.

N   Right.

S   They weren't particularly talking about my presentations, but presentations generally you know that I changed mine to suit.

N   Yes, good idea. Right, thanks, that's helpful. OK, let's go on to skills development now Suzi if we may. We talked a lot about skills before if you remember the ones ...I'll get the paper out ...those were the ones we were looking at back in September. Have you noticed any development in students with skills since they have been here?

S   Well it's an onward thing, isn't it. We've been slowly developing, we do lots of presentation work and try and develop you know and say what we expect from the presentation and I make them follow up the presentation so they both evaluate each other and they do a follow up session so a group follows up somebody's presentation what they learnt from it, what they would have wanted to learn from it, how they would have done it differently, so they criticise each other. Reading an article, that's an ever hopeful area of mine, I use a lot of articles and try and get them to read them critically but it's an onward development slowly. We're opening up, they are getting to know each through other discussions and they do that themselves because of the follow up sessions after the presentations then they have to get others involved and add their ideas so they actually do that. Working in groups, working on their essays and reports so we are working on all of those areas and using their time and it's developing.

N   So there was genuine progress you can see.

S   Yes, yes, some individuals are doing really well. I've got, yes, some really good groups; some need further work.

N   I know we can't generalise on the basis this is sort of a limited number of interviews, that would be very dangerous, but because you teach on the Marketing & Leisure courses where they have this undergraduate skills unit, I mean you teach on [names of specific Marketing & Leisure courses]

N   But on the other hand there's [names of specific Business courses] where they don't have the skills unit. This is really a subjective evaluation, are you aware of any sort of differences between the skills particularly across the groups?

S   The [name of specific Business Analysis course] groups are much higher skill developed than the [names of specific Marketing and Leisure courses] groups; they work harder.

N   Is that before they came here Suzi?

S   Yes, probably came in with better skills.

N   OK.

S   They are much more varied and they look at their assessment and they see what's required and work at it. The [names of specific Marketing and Leisure courses] students have a lower level of skills and quite often don't see the benefits to themselves of developing themselves and resist. Unless it's a test in class or something they resist being helped. It has to be really, really course specific, that's quite difficult for them; they're very different. So I would think they need their skills unit running alongside definitely to pick up on those areas but very difficult to do it in seminars with them.

N   Again this is really unfair but I mean if you were to try and sort of look at the balance, would you say the [specific Marketing and Leisure course] students are still sort of below in general, below the other, the [specific Business course]?

S   Yes.

N   Even now?

S   Yes and much less academically committed. I mean I try to teach them [name of specific unit], which is hard going.

N   Sure, and I think they come here sort of, although there's a business bit, they tend to still think of it very much as a [name of specific Marketing and Leisure course] don't they?

S   Yes and they want the [name of specific Marketing and Leisure course] bits and not the rest of it.

N   Right, that's very interesting that Suzi, thanks. The other thing I was asked, I have asked people is whether, do you ever talk to other unit tutors on any of the courses at level one about their, how they develop skills?

S   No, not really, be nice to, a thought crossed my mind that the group dynamics is much better in the Marketing and Leisure course, they're much more a group than the Business ....who are much more individuals

N   Right, are they more gregarious, the [name of specific Marketing and Leisure course] people?

S   Yes and they all know each other really well and know each other's strengths and weaknesses; and you know, if I want a diagram on the board or something, they will say so and so will do it. They know who does what and there virtually a group as opposed to very much individuals.

N   Are students generally supportive of each other or, I just wondered, or is it a very competitive environment?

S   [Name of specific Marketing and Leisure courses] students are quite supportive, yes they are.

N   What about the [name of specific Business course] ones?

S   Less so, more in smaller groups, kind of you know their cliques but not as a whole group

N   I mean it sounds as though...

S   I think with the [name of specific Marketing and Leisure course] it's them against [name of unit Suzi teaches] (laughing) we as a group...

N   Yes.

S   Handle this subject.

N   They sound as they have integrated fairly well and be very comfortable with themselves as students at the moment.

S   Yes, yes I think they are.

N   Both with the [names of specific Business courses] they sound to be a bit more insecure still.

S   Mmmm, they've got their groups of friends but they're not a cohesive group as such.

N   What surprised me actually Suzi is a lot of them seem to be going home at weekends. It doesn't seem to be the social interaction of the weekend you'd expect from them being on a university course; lots of them go off to different places and the ones who stay behind seem to be a bit by themselves.

S   But grows over time doesn't it. I think with the first years they still need their mum and dad a bit, it's a slow process. By the second and third year I think you find they're social more.

N   A lot of them are going home on a fairly regular basis, every weekend, every two weekends something like that.

S   Go home to be fed by mother and stuff.

N   Yes (Laughing). OK, so you've tried to develop, you told me you tried to develop key skills and transferable skills during the last four months. Have many students particularly asked you for help at all Suzi, has anyone come to you and said look I'm really having trouble with this, can you help me or...?

S   I get lots of students asking about essays and showing me drafts and talking about how they are going to do their presentations, yep.

N   And with the essays, with the draft, I mean do you have a quick skim or do you say I'll read through it and tell you where you're missing or missing bits or what?

S   I take it away and read it through usually.

N   Right.

S   If they allow me the time.

N   It's quite a bit of extra work though isn't it?

S   Yes, I know most people don't like to do that, I don't mark it but I put comments on it and say you can move that around, or add to that. If they take the bother to give me a draft I'll look at it.

N   Right, OK, thanks. Are they any big deficiencies in skills at the moment that are glaring, either in the key skills or in the transferable skills that are really obvious?

S   They're not good at essay writing, they're much better at presentations than perhaps you would think. You know, 18, 19, they are very shy but they are actually very good on their feet most of them; not as good writing it down, they do need someone to look at their essays.

N   Yes.

S   Help them with them and mathematically well ugh!! It's non existent really. If I want them to do any maths and statistics we do it as a class as an exercise and go through it and go over it.

N   Right.

S   In my first years I want them to look at kind of general things about the world, I want them to look at [names of specific topics within her unit], and they look at the tables and go ugh! what's this? You know so we ... what is this showing and do it together.

N   It's quite a worry actually, particularly when you're teaching [named unit] and you really need these students to have these sort of skills.

S   It is a worry, yes, but I guess a lot of them have given up maths fairly early and specialised in areas that just don't include it, I guess.

N   Do you ever recommend anyone to study assistance Suzi?

S   I don't think I have had to this year, those with special needs know about it, it's quite well flagged up, with yellow stickers and stuff, yes I don't think I've had to send anybody down.

N   OK that's very helpful, thanks. Any other issues regarding learning and teaching and assessment or skills we haven't talked about at all, by course or unit level.

S   Don't think so.

N   OK, thanks. One of the things I found very interesting from what you've said ... I've been actually testing your ideas on students, this issue about whether Level one students are being challenged enough intellectually in terms of their workload and how difficult it is, what are your thoughts about that now Suzi? Do you think, I mean, have you been challenging them enough this year or do you think generally they are challenged enough?

S   Oh, that is a difficult one. I want them to be open to things that are happening and general issues. I don't want to tie them down with too much theory and academic sort of background too much. I want them to discuss; I want them to work in groups; I want them to develop their skills; I want them to know sufficient. So, I guess probably not challenging them terribly much intellectually but I give them the opportunity with assignments and presentations to add to the course work if they want to and give them merit for doing so; but in the actually syllabuses at Level one it is quite basic material, just opening their eyes to what is going on in the world and categorising it and getting the basic principles across.

N   Yes I remembered you used the phrase like gentle introduction.

S   Yes.

N   And I've tested other students and interesting they're responses have been well, um we thought initially it would be quite hard and demanding, harder than A level with lots of work and in some areas has been hard, in some areas it's been a doddle because we've done it before. Then, overall, I think what seems to be happening is their experience and their expectations seem to be converging whereas perhaps that's inevitable. Whereas at the beginning of the course in induction week I think their expectations were sort of up in the air, much higher.

S   Yes.

N   And I said to them that it has been argued that there is this idea that Level one is a gentle introduction, they seem to be quite supportive of that actually.

S   I think that's what they need, and then they can concentrate on their skills can't they and developing their discussions and presentations and without too much academic theorising; they can do that in year two. A lot of them come in with such different levels, so you need to bring that together don't you, try and use the people who know more but not make those who know very little feel terribly unable to cope, so you have to.

N   OK, thanks. When I asked you before about gender issues and that basically you were saying, I think you were saying there's no difference really between males and females particularly you're aware over the last few months, nor A level and GNVQ students you are not so aware of, it's mainly...

S   No they are a good mix this year actually, we've got hardworking boys and some not so hardworking girls and the other way round. I still think the girls are too passive but I'll shake them up. They will, if you got a class of girls, I teach the second years but [named UWBS course] they will just sit and listen if you let them. They do like to be, the boys are more opinionated but work-wise it's pretty well shared. Yeah, the difference is with mature students.

N   Ok that's good thanks. This issue again, with big and small groups, have you noticed any differences at all between the big courses like [names of specific Business and Marketing and Leisure courses] and the small ones like [names of specific Business and Marketing and Leisure courses], any difference in student behaviour or attitude or whatever?

S   It's not about small and large courses I don't think; it's types of students really.

N   Maketing and Leisure versus the Business type of courses?

S   I think so.

N   Personality driven mainly?

S   Yes.

N   Right OK, are you aware ... I think you have answered the next one really in terms of the integration of what you said that the [name of specific Marketing and Leisure course] students seem to have integrated quite well so you've got coherent groups of students and the Business ones have integrated a bit but tend to do their own thing a bit more.

S   Yes, yes I think that's right.

N   You're not an SSN Tutor are you Suzi?

S   No.

S   There was one I had on an earlier question, helping to cope with the course.

N   Yes.

S   Social interaction I've got some, no I've got a foreign student, who felt very isolated and couldn't join in with the social things. She felt that they didn't like her, really they just didn't understand her particularly, so I contacted [name of course leader] and asked if she could be involved in the social programme with some of the foreign students. So she's got a list of, she is going to go along to some of their social things, so that's a ...there must be more foreign students. She is just the one in a class of English, if we could publish the foreign programme and their social events a bit more, because they

do meet up quite, they go to pictures and meet at pubs and stuff, other foreign students might be quite happy to join

N   Sounds good, I might put my name forward actually.

S   Yes, a few Swedish girls you'll be away won't you (laughing).

N   (Laughing) Do you know of any students who've left at all?

S   We've lost a few first years, yes

N   Do you know why?

S   Finance has been the main one, I think, financial problems, yes the burden of debt seems to mount and then they try and go home and sort it out and can't quite manage. It's mainly financial.

N   Do you know when the pattern, I mean have a lot of them left at Christmas time or are they leaving consistently during the...

S   The ones I know it's kind of met a head about November, December.

N   Right.

S   And not reappeared.

N   Do you know of any of your students who are working at all

S   Aren't they all?(laughing) Pretty much I think.

N   A couple I know aren't actually, I was talking to one on the Friday who's been supported by his parents.

S   That's unusual I think to get that level of support, I think even with parental support most of them still work as well.

N   A lot of them seem to be working fifteen to twenty hours a week, which is a lot of work, certainly two to three working days a lot of them are doing.

S   Yes, just too much.

N   It must have an impact on your study, well I've lost, I'm interviewing ten students and I've lost two of my ten already, I'm trying to contact them at the moment.

S   Was that finance?

N   I don't know, I mean I can't get them to answer me, one of them just not answering on the mobile phone, probably a discomfort I would think having someone from where you left ringing up trying to talk to you so maybe I'll

give it a few months and try and get back to her, you know after Easter or something like that. Have any gap students talked to you, any gap year students talk to you about problems of integration or anything or getting back into academic life?

S   Not particularly gap years, just the mature students who come back after, different experiences but not the people who've taken a particular gap year, no.

N   You said about their quite pivotal roles in some ways, are you aware that they've been struggling at all, the mature students, have they indicated to you in any way that they've got any adjustment problems, by their behaviour I mean?

S   They expect more from the first year, they expect much hard more theoretical and they do find some of it a bit um

N   Low level?

S   Low level but having said that their skills are so poor that they need the time to sit back and work on their skills.

N   And they do realise they're skills are poor, do they?

S   Yes, yes

N   So that's a problem and they try to improve things and people won't acknowledge that there are difficulties. What about attendance Suzi, I mean I've asked people and I've asked students and all the students say yes we inttend to go into all classes...

S   (Laughing)

N   ... And I'm checking again, they're saying well some of them are saying ten percent some are saying twenty percent they've missed as is a maximum, what are you finding?

S   Not too bad really I mean I've got a 9 o'clock Monday morning and a six o'clock Monday night and both groups are reasonable, they do, you know I get about two thirds, I guess. I'm thinking about the other courses, the [name of Marketing and Leisure course] are not good attenders. They come back when their assessments are due for kind of a please could you go over everything, sort of session, but they float away generally in the middle. [Names of Business Analysis courses] have been pretty good this year actually, I think attendance is quite good.

N   Oh right. Have you been involved with any units that have been monitored at all?

S   Yes, my [name of unit] is monitored.

N   How's that working?

S   Yes, about two thirds. We chased up the ones that have left which have mainly been these ones with financial problems.

N   Yes.

S   A letter is quite good, because it makes them do something and at least you know why they are floating away.

N   Does it bring them back for just a couple of weeks and they float off again or does that change their behaviour more generally?

S   It makes you, I mean the foreign student was very lonely, she was missing classes and at least we were able to talk about some of her problems and try and deal with it, whether she'll float off again I'm not sure, she's still here at the moment and some with financial have disappeared.

N   Some of the debt they occur over three years is quite frightening isn't it.

S   I think it's useful for making contact with them, I am not that whole-heartedly in support of attendance monitoring as being kind of graded or in any way. I think, you know, students should be able to miss classes, if they don't, if they are writing an essay or something else seems more important. Certainly the way I operated as a student, you weigh up which bits are most important but I think sending them a letter at least gets them to come and talk to their tutors so at least you know why, so it keeps you on top of, especially without the SSN, with the SSN approach now with the lack of Personal Tutors at least makes them come and talk to somebody.

N   You felt that was a loss back in September, several other staff have flagged that up as well, is that still your feeling that Personal Tutoring is a loss to the student learning experience.

S   Yes, definitely, I mean a Personal Tutors who actually teaches is ideal, should be somebody who teaches them and they get to know them, you can know how they learn and what their problems are in class, that would be the ideal.

N   Any other things finally Suzi, anything else at all about like the first year student experience on your courses that I haven't mentioned I ought to have raised or anything like that?

S   I don't think we give as much credit to timetables as we should, I think students with bad timetables, it is more of a problem than we acknowledge, I mean the [name of specific Business course] group, Matt's three groups they have awful timetables, big gaps, they've got one hour on a Friday, they've got a nine o'clock Monday and a six o'clock Monday night and big gaps and they are an unhappy group and I think having a condensed timetable not having lots

of big gaps and waiting around and coming in for odd hours actually makes a difference.

N   It's back to that thing, they tend not to go into the library and do reading in between do they?

S   No, well not in the first year, maybe for the third year when they've got dissertations and things but the first years no.

N   A lot of them said they either go back to their Halls of Residence and I say what do you do, and they're well, mooch around, listen to the radio or, play records or they'll wander around the shops for a while but they won't think, well I've got four hours to kill, I'll go into the library and do some reading now, that's not part of their mind set.

S   But you see between September and November, the first few weeks, how much reading do we need them to do?

N   Probably not a vast amount.

S   And then they've already got them disillusioned right when it matters, we need to structure them, they are children.. you need a good structure when they come in.

N   A lot of them grumble about the induction actually, well some of them, they found it was you know too thin, like thin margarine spread over a piece of bread you could have had it all concentrated in two days and use your time more effectively.

S   Yes, that's probably a good idea, they like it concentrated, not so many gaps, give them gaps later on.

N   Yes, when they've got the skills to be independent learners more, so I mean that's what you're really saying at the moment they are not really independent learners.

S   No they're not, like a good structure, I mean if you are going to give them gaps, we probably ought to tell them what to do in the gaps, give them something to go away and work on and they probably would.

N   Ok Suzi that's brilliant. Thank you; let's stop there.

Appendix 4.6 Summary of Induction Interview with Ruth Young

- M&L course Level 1; from Wiltshire; aged 21 (Mature student); Has a National Diploma in appropriate subject. Also interested in Health and Fitness industry. Keen sports woman – not team sports, but not a loner.
- Chose University of Wessex because it is easy to get home; also a friend came here and really enjoyed it. Also, quality of the course looked good. Didn't attend an Open Day but came down separately with father to look around, liked the look of the place. Also lived here many years ago.
- Going to live in Halls of Residence – nice and clean.
- Expects to do class contact (16 hours) and 2 hours a day private study but may actually be necessary to do a lot more; also expects to do 10 – 12 hours part time work (1 evening + Saturday or Sunday).
- Expects workload to be 'quite arduous' – Ruth expects to be struggling because she doesn't feel quite ready for the course. However, all units to be studied look interesting – expected more units than she actually will study.
- Re expectations about students, ones that R has met do not look like her kind of people – not very forthcoming – R not very comfortable with them. R normally confident and outgoing but not at present.
- Re tutors, hopes they will be helpful and forthcoming with advice and nice.
- Expects a varied social life – concern that people she befriends this week may not speak to her / her to them next week. Concern that she has made friends with a small group not on her course; but did not see anyone she liked / got on with on her course. Problems of balancing academic / p/t job / social life – main aim is to get a degree; being a mature student, won't go out drinking every night.
- Expects to attend every class – and happy for attendance to be monitored – doesn't miss lessons unless ill.
- R's father paying the fees – more pressure on her to do well – if she drops out he loses the money. (R's father investing in her).
- Other course expectations – hopes it won't be geared to much gym work
- Doesn't want to be a gym instructor – more interested in the people side.
- Father went to university – told her not to worry about if she doesn't get 1st class honours ('a freak degree') – wants her to enjoy university life and meet as many people as she can – won't stay friends with all of them. Mother also went but left after a month – very homesick – never went back. Strongly urged R to stay! No matter how depressed you get!
- Friends who have now completed their degrees advised R to go to university, or she'd regret not going – influenced R's expectations by warning her that first month will be 'horrendous' – you'll miss your parents and cry. Also, the media pushes the need to get a degree – influence on R. However, today (23.09.02) R feels she regrets coming to University of Wessex – also running out of money (at 18 rejected university – didn't want to be broke for 3 years more – wanted to go out into the world / do things / make a difference). At 21, R felt she'd be missing out if she didn't go to university –felt this was her last chance (also has younger sister in year 2 elsewhere)
- Re staff expectations about students' ability to cope with the course, the Course Leader seems worried some students will drop out – wants commitment / enthusiasm from all students. Hopes staff have high expectations of students and will urge them on if they fall behind.

- Re Key skills, R knew them all unprompted. Reasonable I.T. knowledge but expects to learn more. Hopes there won't be too much Maths and Statistics; feels fairly comfortable in communications / class presentations – expects to have to do them.
- Re transferable skills, certainly expects to need to use the library effectively. Understands concept of critical reading. Re group work, ok with it if she doesn't understand something; otherwise happy to work alone – expects course will require team work – doesn't like fellow students plagiarising her work, as happened at previous college. Expects to have to write reports but has never done so to university standard. Expects to need to be an independent learner, although not familiar with term. Vital for R to sort out her time management skills. Expects to need to be quite assertive.
- Re skills development, hopes the staff will tell her what to do re assignments. Also expects to use student support (Study Assistance) quite a lot re I.T. skills development – thinks student support is a good idea – widely used it at her last college. R feels she has the needed skills to some extent but needs help on others, especially I.T. and Statistics. R not afraid to ask for help in class – "they can think I'm stupid if they want to."
- Tutors at previous college did not push R very hard.
- Expected fellow students to be smiling ("all in the same boat") but lots of people have really moody faces. R thinks her expectations about fellow students have been 'really wrong'. Has teamed up with 4 other girls in the same hall.
- Has already thought about leaving course – called mother at 2am asking her to come and get R – also phoned all her friends and had a massive panic attack. But has forced herself to get up and come in today. Yet doesn't feel inspired to be on the course (preferred weekend, when she could do as she wished – Newtown nightlife is fantastic).

Appendix 4.7 Summary of interview with Suzi Bowyer, 21 January 2003

- Suzi teaches on both M&L and B courses.
- S. has spoken with some students where their experiences have not come up to what they expected e.g. students on B courses getting mid-60s but thinking not very good as in past got 70s-80s (didn't understand degree class system); also believe they get insufficient assignment feedback sometimes – would like staff to sit down and go through things with them individually e.g. have done lots of tests with little feedback; re presentations, student belief that assessment criteria not well established and differ between units – did mark relate to content, skills or what? Suzi now writes assessment criteria for all her presentations as a response to this general criticism re a number of units (and talks through before Christmas what they are about and gives feedback) – an example of adapting quickly to student feedback this year.
- With tests, academics may just want to establish a grade level, not give a lot of feedback. Other than these examples, S. thinks student experiences pretty much as expected.
- Re whether S has any new expectations, S expects less from 6pm class compared with 3pm task as the latter are really tired / want less discussion (no interest re ethics etc - *'they're very much Maggie's children'*) and more spoon-feeding. S. also expects tolerance from her students which has been lacking this year in 2 first year groups and one second year group - **young vs mature intolerance**: – mature students opinionated / – have seen the world / like to tell people what they know – try to extend the lessons [S. tries to use that] – mature student input annoys the youngsters. Normally, mature students lead the young ones / bring them up to their level but this year, young ones have tried to bring mature ones down to their level. Mature students can be over-dominating – young ones are angry and trying to re-establish a balance – don't like classes going off at a tangent because of mature student intervention – want to stick to what it says in the programme. (on 2nd year of course S, has some very good female mature students). S. will stop a class / teach tolerance and swap students around to help group dynamics. Discord is not on racial or gender grounds but on age grounds.
- From a number of interviews, **students v. much strategic learners** – want material to be structured and stick to the material – hence aggression to mature students whom they see as leading them away from the material / wasting their time.
- S. also has had to teach skills / provide help with presentations, which she was expecting to have to do. Pages 6-7: example of assessment-driven use of research skills by Level 1 students. Also, interesting but untypical example of low-skilled mature students with large amounts of general knowledge e.g. long-winded presentations read out, with no bullet points (unlike younger students*)* - *'mature students usually come with high skills, very committed'*. The BA Hons Business courses attracting strange mature people.
- Re transferable skills development, this is a gradual process. Linked to 2nd bullet point above, after each presentation S. gets the group to critique it to learn from each other. Re reading articles critically, S. tries to develop this skill by use of a lot of articles with students – so they learn from each other's comments and from critiquing the presentations above. Also working in groups and working on their essays and reports are ways S. seeks to develop these skills.

- In comparing skills on B and M&L courses, S. believes the former have much higher skills levels [entering with these] and work harder. Business students *'look at their assessment and they see what's required and work at it'*. M&L students often don't see the benefit of developing themselves unless it is *'really really course specific'* - resist unless it is a class test. S. believes, therefore, that they really need the Undergraduate Skills unit running alongside other units as skills development is hard to do within other units for reasons just stated. In late Jan03, S. perceives M&L students' skills development still to be below that of B students, and they are much less academically committed M&L students want the sports/leisure but not the business bits. However, the group dynamics of M&L is much better / they know each other's strengths and weakness much better than the Business Analysis students who are much more individuals or in small cliques.
- Lots of students talk to C. about their essays / show her drafts and talk about how they are going to do their presentations. With essay drafts, S will read through and make comments, which is untypical of staff.
- S. perceives students to be weak at essay writing but much better at presentations than one would think, albeit shy at 18-19. Their maths / stats skills are terribly weak / non-existent. S. has not recommended anyone to Study Assistance this year.
- Re the intellectual challenge of Level 1, S wants students to be open to things that are happening and general issues / doesn't want to tie them down too much with academic theory / wants them to work in groups / wants them to develop their skills / wants them to know sufficient – so not challenging them a lot intellectually - Level 1 is quite basic material – *'getting the basic principles across'* - *'opening their eyes to what is going on in the world and categorising it'* - but they have the opportunity to add to the course work in essays and assignments and are rewarded for this (page 12 of transcript). S. sees Level 1 for skills development – developing their discussions / presentations (all students entering with different skills levels) - with theorising kicking in at Level 2.
- No real differences between male and female students or A level and GNVQ – main difference is mature students. Also no distinction between small and large courses – distinction is between M&L and B students (personality driven).
- Re SSN, S thinks it is not working well – students bypass SSN tutors and go directly to level tutors and unit leaders, or to course leader – whom they know and can talk to; whereas SSN tutors are seen to be strangers. Ending the personal tutor system is a loss to the student learning experience [useful example of S. getting a foreign student on the Business programme feeling isolated [she was very lonely and missing classes] – via, course leader, S got her involved with the foreign students social programme.
- When students have left, S. believes it is mainly for financial reasons – thinks nearly all students have p/t jobs. Students who left went before Christmas.
- No particular problems with gap year students returning – just the mature students. These 'expect more from the first' – they expect the work to be much harder and more theoretical and find it, in reality, to be a bit low level. However, their skills are weak so they need to the time to sit back and work on these – they do realise their skills are weak.
- Re attendance, S. finds this not to be too bad. B quite good – M&L less so – come back when they need help before assignments are due in. S. has had her unit monitored – a letter makes students do something.

- S. believes that students with bad timetables is more of a problem than we realise. Better to have a condensed timetable than having to wait for hours for one class. Level 1 students tend not to go to library to work – and in first 6-8 weeks they don't need to read a lot (although they may still be given it) as no assignments due in – 'so they've already got them disillusioned right when it matters'; because they are not yet independent learners – whereas, at Level 3, with dissertations they can be and so can use time gaps more effectively. (also Level 1 students complain if induction being spread too thin). So if we give Level 1 students gaps we need to tell them to go away and do things (but not read around the subject presumably which happens already – yet students are assessment driven – Neil to think about).

Appendix 4.8 Case Studies of Jenny Rivers and Ruth Young

This appendix presents two brief case studies of mature students, both of whom left during Level 1. Since they are untypical of the majority of students, yet represent an interesting subset, they are presented here in anonymised non-traceable format as exceptional cases.

A4.8.1 Jenny Rivers

Jenny is a single mother not in contact with her parents; her father had gone to university late in life having been sponsored by his employer. Having failed to complete her A levels she worked for an international corporation for several years. Although she was highly thought of she perceived a glass ceiling inhibiting her future promotion, due to only having GCSEs and also having a young child to support.

In mid September 2002 Jenny was talking to a male friend over 21 who announced that he was going to university. When Jenny said how she wished she had gone to university he suggested that she also resign and join a degree course. After quickly thinking about it, she was persuaded that it was now or never, particularly as she was earning a good salary that would increase in future making it even harder to give up work; also she felt she was young enough to make the break at present but, if she left it much longer, she would be too old. So she resigned and enrolled on a business degree at the University of Wessex. The company told her that there was still a job for her if she wished to return, which touched her.

She chose the University of Wessex because she had friends here, whom she had visited. She also knew the city and it was relatively easy to travel home to visit her daughter at weekends, whom other people were looking after.

When I spoke to Jenny during induction week she was quite apprehensive about what was involved. Socially, she was aware of the age gap between her and school leavers and was concerned that she would be thought of as an 'older woman or mother figure' by her peers. She had secured accommodation in a hall, but spoke of needing eight hours sleep per night and coming to 'uni' to work, having got socialising out of her system. She observed that many new school-leaver students were very anxious about developing a good social life. During induction week, people coming in late and fire alarms going off at 4 a.m. were regularly waking her up. In that context, Jenny would probably have been better going into lodgings with more of a family atmosphere.

Although Jenny talked a lot of when she was doing her A levels, she had never completed them. Regarding her course, she expected lots of reading, research and essay writing but, unlike students who had completed A levels, had nothing academic against which to calibrate her expectations except the film 'Dead Poets' Society', which she found inspirational. Consequently she was totally uncertain of what was expected of her. She was worried about whether she was clever enough to read for a degree and also stressed several times that she was 100% happy with her job, this latter being the main yardstick against which she was calibrating her new student experiences. This extended to our discussions of her skills where she distinguished between skills she had acquired, mainly at work, and development areas where she currently lacked skills or had them too much e.g. assertiveness with people perceiving

her to be over-assertive, a factor other mature students were anxious to avoid demonstrating through fear of alienating their peers.

Ominously, when we discussed her academic work she said that '*I think academic is very much about having the brain power to sit down and actually read through things that on a day to day basis you would not touch with a barge pole to be perfectly honest, you know you see these huge textbooks, you're hardly going to go out and buy them...*'; she later referred again to '*big, big books*'. She contrasted this with business which is about people and communication skills, with which she clearly felt much more comfortable. Hence, when a tutor failed to turn up during induction to talk about an option unit she was running, Jenny was shocked. Jenny also expected tutors to be aware of students prioritising social life and, reminiscent of school, to need to push them to get them to do the work they should do. She also felt she would not be comfortable asking tutors for help.

Jenny left during the Autumn term 2002. Later, I tried to contact her for a final discussion but her phone number had changed so I never spoke to her again.

In summary, Jenny's problems seem to have been:

- Deciding to resign from her job and start a degree course on the basis of a friend's persuasion with very limited thought, only a vague feeling that she needed a degree to get promotion
- Work experience which had moulded her mind to a business orientation so that everything at UW was judged against this, and often adversely
- An age gap, reinforced by living in hall with school-leavers whose main aim was staying up late and socialising
- A lack of understanding of what a degree course is all about, particularly that it involves significant reading.
- Possibly a loss of income, as Jenny was concerned as to how she would juggle studying and working part-time.

A4.8.2 Ruth Young

Ruth is a mature student who had taken until the age of 23 to get the qualifications to enrol on a degree course, having failed her A levels first time around and taken various time periods out. She felt that this was her last chance to obtain a degree. Her younger sister was already taking a degree course but did not want Ruth to join her saying that there was not room for two Youngs at the same university. Her father had completed university but her mother had only lasted a month and then left, having spent the entire time in her room crying. Moulding her expectations, Ruth was warned by mother and friends that the first month would be horrendous and that she would be lonely and depressed, but once she got through that she would be OK. After two days Ruth had rung home at 2 a.m. telling her parents to come and get her but they had refused; she had also phoned her friends at home due to a massive panic attack [although interestingly Ruth later speaks of using her time at Newtown to shake off some of her friends at home who are 'dead-weights']. Ruth's father also told her that a first class honours degree was a 'freak degree' and that it was more important to make friends than worrying about getting a first.

At induction, Ruth was already reinforcing these pre-conceptions, saying that the students she had met did not seem 'my kind of people' and that everyone had 'really moody faces' whereas she had expected them all to be friendly and smiling as they were all in the same boat; consequently she was not going to put herself out to smile at them. She has made some friends, although not on her course which caused her more anxiety; also, as she revealed in the February discussions, she felt unable to refuse any social invites in case she was not asked again; this soon started impacting on her academic work.

Ruth certainly had more accurate expectations of the academic work involved that had Jenny, including regarding skills development. However, both of them expressed real concerns about fellow students plagiarising their work when they worked in groups. Whereas Jenny was reluctant to ask tutors, Ruth is more than willing commenting 'they can think I'm stupid if they want to'. In fact Ruth subsequently proved to be very demanding to her course leader and Student Support.

As the Autumn term progresses, echoing her mother's experiences, Ruth becomes more remote from her course, staying in her room more and more and suffering growing depression. Having let her peers down through missing several group presentations she believes that, when she attends class, they ignore her perceiving her to be a dropout; this echoes her previous experiences at FE college - *'I feel so far behind now and so removed from everyone'*. Consequently, she has to ask a friend to walk with her into the University when she does come in otherwise she cannot summons up the will power to come in alone. Ruth knows she is slipping behind with her academic work so is reassured when she sees fellow students also not working. However, when she questions them and finds that they have 'secretly' done the assignments this increases her stress levels even further. This is reinforced by Ruth adopting, with friends, a nocturnal life style with her going to bed at 5-6am and getting up at 4-5pm – *'I feel like a vampire'*. When staff exhort students to work she sees this as additional pressures.

Parental relationships remain strained with Ruth admitting, after Christmas, that she exhausted them emotionally while she was home with them. They remain supportive in spite of everything, including when Ruth refuses to return her mother's phone calls. However, when Ruth decides in February 2003 that she wishes to suspend studies and return the next October, she is very apprehensive of her parents, talking of whether they will let her leave. Ruth not securing part-time work reinforces this, although she had talked of this during induction, hence becoming more dependent financially on her father.

Interestingly, in February, although Ruth admits that being a student has been a 'complete culture shock' she confesses to being happy at the University of Wessex, loving Newtown, its social life and her room in hall, which she has personalised. She feels, paradoxically, that she has settled in and grown as a person.

Postscript

Ruth left her course in February 2003 but returned to start Level 1 again in October 2003. Feedback from the course leader and a chance meeting with Ruth in a corridor that turned into a long chat over a cup of coffee revealed that she had settled in well,

taking up a position of responsibility within the Students' Union [like her younger sister], and was a leading light within her cohort. She was also completing all her work on time.

Appendix 4.9 Number of classes missed thorough socialising and its after-effects: questionnaire respondents

Number of classes missed	Frequency	Percentage
> 10	3	7.5
6-10	15	37.5
1-5	20	50
0	2	5
Total	**40**	**100**

Appendix 4.10   Student and staff key skills expectations: September 2002

Key skill expectation	Student expectations: interview students (IS) and questionnaire respondents*	Staff expectations
Computers / software	• 95% of questionnaire-respondents expect to use this skill; 70% believe they have it, although unfamiliarity with some packages e.g. PowerPoint • No difference in perceived skills between different courses	• General expectation that students have reasonable knowledge of CIT skills
Maths / stats	• 86% of questionnaire-respondents expect to use these, but only 55% believe they have them • Considerable concerns re ability to do so – recognised as a development area • Small business course has least students thinking they have these skills	• Students will be weak re maths/stats • Have fear of these
Communication skills	• 97% of questionnaire-respondents expect to use communication skills; 70% believe they have them • IR concerned re his tendency to woffle	• Expect spoken communication skills to be OK • Weak re written ones

Appendix 4.11Student and staff transferable skills expectations: September 2002

Transferable skills / expectations	Student expectations: interview students (IS) and questionnaire respondents*	Staff expectations
Library usage / information Searching	• All expect heavy library usage; 38% say they have skill • 35% believe they don't have it; 27% don't know • Some have identified key shelves; JR daunted by 'big big textbooks'	• Staff expect students to need library / information searching skills, but students lack them
Presentations	• Nearly all expect to need skill; only 48% have it and 35% think they don't • 2 interview-students nervous of these; one had presented in past; didn't enjoy it • Mature students distinguish work-based and student presentations	• Presentation skills needed; developed during L.1 in US skills (Leisure) / other units (business) • Students weak / lack confidence at first
Critical reading	• Most students expect this to be important at Level 1; only 35% think they have it • 45% don't know if they have it + 20% say they don't	• Most staff expect students to need / develop critical reading skills at L.1 • If not, at least need to take a view – yet accept at face value
Putting forward thoughts in class	• Nearly all students expect to have to speak out in class / express thoughts / ask questions • 53% believe they have the skill; 35% don't know + 12% don't have the skill	• Important but often students have no views to put forward / only think superficially – US unit encourages Leisure students
Group work	• All expect group work to be important; 93% believe they have this skill • JR and RY believe they work better alone. • Some believe their skills will transfer from work (NB; IR; BM); others see it as a work pre-requisite (DA)	• Staff expect students to need to work in groups – industry requirement • Students very socially aware so OK re group work • Student confidence built up in group work
Individual work / independent learning	• Almost all see this as an important learning skill • 93% believe they have it • 3 identify it without being asked	• Students don't have these through lack of motivation • Need guidance to develop these through the course
Structured essay / report writing	• Almost all expect need to demonstrate this; 67% believe they have it • 40% of IS want help through rustiness / weaknesses; 22% of questionnaire-respondents don't know + 11% don't think they have. • MH expected longer than FE college	• An important / necessary skill that students think they have, or won't admit is lacking but, in reality, don't have
Time management	• All believe this skill to be important • Approx. 50% believe they are weak; 30% think they don't have it; 18% don't know • Others believe this will transfer from previous work	• Staff expect student time management skills to be very weak • Before HE, time was managed for them
Assertiveness	• 89% expect to use skill; only 50% believe they can be assertive while 25% each haves / don't knows • Links with independent learning yet if too much deters peers • some mature students believe they are too assertive; others not enough	• Students are over-assertive (MA); don't need more of this • Business staff think assertiveness lacking, or not important

Appendix 4.12   Student and staff key skills experiences: January 2003

Key skill expectation	Student experiences: interview respondents	Student experiences: questionnaire respondents	Staff experiences
Computers / software	• All have used IT skills a lot; majority note improvements • One with good IT skills noted no improvements	• Almost half students have not developed IT skills • 70% previously believed they had these - may explain no development for many	• Students generally comfortable re IT skills, although a few weak ones.
Maths / stats	• No use of maths / stats skills by M&L students – not needed • Business students develop these through Business Methods unit	• 57% believe skill has developed • M&L students don't cover this until January: contributes to low figure • Large business course shows greatest development – tutor? • Females are majority needing further development	• Maths/stats remain very weak. • Staff expect students to be poor; teaching them has to be reduced to a basic level.
Communication skills	• Communications skills have improved for all students, developed formally and informally	• 76% believe skills development has occurred • much greater with females (93%) than males (65%)	• Students more confident re this skill but lack vocabulary / weak written skills

Appendix 4.13   Student and staff key skills experiences: May 2003

Key skill expectation	Student experiences: interview respondents	Student experiences: questionnaire respondents	Staff experiences
Computers / software	• 43% of respondents believe no progress since January • PowerPoint the main package learned since January	• Major increase in number who think IT skills have improved • no significant age, gender or course differences.	• Students generally comfortable re IT • Some mature students have battled a phobia
Maths / stats	• Large improvements for M&L since Jan03 through US unit • 2 Business students believe skill has improved; others had these previously	• 83% of student believe skills development • Nearly all females believe development; more mature students think no gain compared with those seeing a gain	• General improvement in maths / stats • still a number of weak students
Communication skills	• Most believe significant skills improvement during level 1 • 2 cite limited improvement (had skills already)	• 89% believe skill development • Students admitting further development needs are all M&L	• Student spoken communication skills better • Written skills weak / poor vocabulary

Transferable skills / experience	Student experiences [interview-students + questionnaire-respondents +telephone-interviewees]*	Staff experiences
Library / information searching	• 85% believe major skills development [71% of telephone-interviewees]	• 2 staff (MA; MT) believe still weak library / referencing skills; others believe skills developing
Presentations	• 90%+ believe skills development • M&L students cite benefits of US unit • 80% of those needing further development are females < 21	• Student skills quite good by now but students still worry about them
Critical reading	• A developing skill re reading own assignments (interview-respondents) • 44% of questionnaire-respondents and 57% of telephone-interviewees think skill not developed • All questionnaire-respondents identify this as needing more development	• Students still weak but M&L students encouraged through US unit • Concerns over students reading *The Sun*
Putting forward thoughts in class	• 71% of questionnaire-respondents and telephone-interviewees believe skill has developed + improved confidence gained • Interview-students comfortable with this; IR has to hold back; NB, BM and OC more reticent (first two, mature)	• Students very nervous – don't want to look foolish in front of peers • Students have no views to put forward (JK)
Group work	• 90% of questionnaire-respondents and telephone-interviewees students believe skills development • Least development on large business class • Most interview-students comfortable / think development has occurred but stress importance of fellow group members pulling weight	• Students more confident / comfortable in groups • Some use groups as a cloak for *idleness* (JK)
Individual work / indep- learning	• 85% of students (questionnaire-respondents +telephone-interviewees) + most interview-students believe development occurring • Only RY of interview-students thinks her skills weak	• Students are not acquiring independent learning skills
Structured essay/report writing	• 78% of questionnaire-respondents believe this skill developing, but substantial number need more help (almost all male < 21) • 57% of telephone-interviewees do not have this skill • M&L interview-students comfortable with this skill but complain over late coverage in US unit • Business interview-students have not had essay feedback yet so can't judge	• Staff perceive students to be weak re this
Time management	• Only 69% of questionnaire-respondents believe this has developed, compared with 50% of interview-students and 86% of telephone-interviewees • All questionnaire-respondents identify extra help needed	• Most staff think students still weak re short-term time mngt. especially assignments (tactical) • MT argues students must be good since juggling study / work / social (strategic)

Assertiveness	• 74% of questionnaire-respondents believe they have become more assertive (43% of telephone-interviewees) • Interview-students don't perceive this to be an issue i.e. have it or don't need it • 2 Interview-students have problems – one too laid back; other lacks confidence	• MA believes students assertive enough • Others encourage by getting students to speak in class
Inter-personal	• 74% of questionnaire-respondents believe development (100% of telephone-interviewees) – partial development outside classroom • Iinterview-respondents believe development – linked to growing confidence in new environment	• Staff perceive growing student confidence • Some student clashes through lack of small courses social cohesion
Research	• 82% of questionnaire-respondents believe development (57% of telephone-interviewees); also interview-students – linked to library skills	• This skill is weak

Appendix 4.15   Student and staff transferable skills experiences: May 2003

Transferable skill expectation	Student experiences: [Interview-students + questionnaire-respondents]	Staff experiences
Library usage	• 94% of questionnaire-respondents and almost all IS believe skills improvement since January and during year • no course, gender or age differences	• Some development but students still not effective in the library
Presentations	• All students believe presentation skills have improved a lot - brings increased confidence • Those needing further help all on M&L courses	• Presentation skills remain quite good but spoiled by poor preparation at times
Critical reading	• The lowest % of students identifying this skill development (66%); 44% need further help • Most interview-students say they have not had to critique an article; contradicts their January assertion - may be due to my emphasis on articles specifically • One student has had to criticise business theories	• This skill still perceived to be weak • Mature students much more willing to criticise
Putting forward thoughts in class	• 77% of questionnaire-respondents believe skills development has occurred • Nearly all interview-students now comfortable with speaking out in class, having gained confidence • Only BM still needs supportive staff after bad individual experience	• Student skill has improved since Jan 03 • Mature students more forthcoming but need managing to avoid dominating
Group work	• 94% of questionnaire-respondents believe skills development • No gender or age differences; only 3 M&L students identify further development • IS perceive this skill to have improved (including listening says MH) • Group work has helped social integration of mature students • Students very aware of which group members deliver, or not	• Remains a student area of strength • Students are now thinking strategically re who will deliver in a group
Individual work / independent learning	• 86% of questionnaire-respondents believe they have developed this; however, a relatively high number (14) need more help • All interview-students believe they have developed this skill to some extent, although some more than others	• Students perceived to be weak • Paul: 'you hope without actually giving them the skills'
Structured essay / report writing	• 89% of questionnaire-respondents believe they have developed this skill; 14 questionnaire-respondents still need help • Interview-students do not perceive big improvement; identify different problems e.g. word limit; lack of feedback; tendency to write reports not essays	• Some improvement but still problems at time
Time management	• One of the lower questionnaire-respondents percentages for skills development (79%); highest number of students still needing help (18) • 50% of interview-students think this skill has improved; other 50% still identify problems	• This skill remains weak – but need to avoid hand holding by training re this (Paul)

Assertiveness	• Second lowest % of questionnaire-respondents identifying skills development (77%); probably through concerns over peer relations • Most interview-students believe that their assertiveness has improved during Level 1; two say not an issue	• Considerable gain in confidence • mature students have higher level but choose not to use it
Inter-personal	• 90% of questionnaire-respondents believe development has occurred; Lowest student numbers identifying further help • All interview-students support skills development	• Staff believe development but identify small course problems
Research	• 83% identify skills development • no course, age or gender differences	• This skill still perceived to be weak
Problem solving	• 89% believe skills development; mainly males under 21 need further help	• Not identified to a great extent as a needed skill

Student / Issue	Course expectations	Tutor expectations	Thoughts of what tutors expect	Fellow students / social life
Dorothy Browne	Wants intellectually challenging / demanding course. Expects it to be more difficult than 'A' Levels; also more independent learning whereas 'A' levels were a bit 'spoon-feeding'. CL explained the range of units - acquiring 'one big knowledge bank about sports and business'. 'I kind of knew what to expect'.	Expects tutors to be 'similar to jolly PE teachers you had through school ...bubbly and enthusiastic'. Her course leader (PN) has been excellent help – fits these characteristics.	Thinks staff will have hopes as much as expectations – thinks staff hope students are not just here to waste their time but to give it a real go.	Expected lots of sporty males - best not to expect too much re fellow students. 'I expect it to be fun ... tap in while you can'.
Ian Roach	No real expectations but does expect demanding and interesting course: 'I would say you need to put it [hard work] in at least' - much more motivated / excited now than with GNVQs which were boring. Surprised at wide range of units to be studied.	No expectations of tutors [but very impressed with their passion for work, although he expected motivated people].	Joining course 'very much hinged on...what they expected of me... that they felt I would be able to satisfy their expectations'.	No expectations of fellow students except they will be in tune with HE. Will socialise occasionally but has it out of his system.
Barry Michaels	No clear expectations re course workload but expects to study 9–5, five days per week [wants a 1st]. Expects much to learn / work to be different and hence hard. Expected / happy with range of units – did Gateway course. Expects with course to 'come out a better person': [knowledge + career direction].	Expects tutors to be approachable / fair and to give positive / constructive feedback on his work, and contribute to the nice relaxed atmosphere of UW – very important.	Doesn't have any as 'I was quite shocked actually when I got offered the place...I am not the most confident about what I'm capable of'.	Not sure what to expect re fellow student: 'young at heart'; gives and expects back 100% from students / tutors. Will cut back on social life a bit.
Ann Townsend	Expects continuous but not heavy workload. Higher intellectual demands than FE. Course leader said Level 1 is for getting up to speed so all start Level 2 at same standard. Expected range of units. Course a personal progression / help decide career. See how it goes.	No previous expectations of tutors – but now expects tutors to be older and wiser / know what they are doing / professional– probably based on her mother [Sixth Form college teacher]	Thinks tutors will expect most new students to be able to cope with course, but that some will struggle – will be prepared for all types.	No expectations re fellow students – has targeted ones with similar interests. Old friends must realise she will make new ones.
Ruth Young	Expects workload to be 'quite arduous'. Expects to struggle since she feels she is not ready for the course. Expected more units than she is studying – all look interesting; hopes not too geared to gym work.	Hopes / expects that tutors will be helpful and forthcoming with advice, and nice. 'I hope they'll be there to sort of if I don't understand something, they'll be there to explain it for me'.	Hopes staff will have high expectations of students and will urge them on if they fall behind. Course leader worried that some students will drop out – wants commitment and enthusiasm from all students and expects them to do well.	Expectations re fellow students 'really wrong' - not comfortable with ones met so far including those on her course – not forthcoming / smiling – not 'my kind of people'. Also worried that social life continues next week.

Appendix 5.1 Summary of leisure students' expectations: September 2002

Student / Issue	Dorothy Browne	Ian Roach	Barry Michaels	Ann Townsend	Ruth Young
Being a student	Glad has come to UWI; new level 1 boyfriend replaced old Level 2 one. Has gained in maturity and confidence. Has become a 'flat mum' in Hall but can still be immature.	Leaving job + big changes in emotional relationships + problems understanding course structure + being course rep made Autumn very stressful – sport compensated.	Comfortable with course / UWBS / fellow students.	Going well – has developed a routine – fits in all competing demands. Comfortable with course / tutors / UWI.	Culture shock of being a student. Has regularly asked mother to come and get her. Yet really happy with UW / the city; feels she has grown as a person. Aware of age gap with fellow students.
Match with expectations	Expectations have proved realistic except for class attendance; 'amazingly good fun so far'.	Expectations of course topics exceeded – has gained under-standing of how the world works e.g. economics (had often wondered about it). Hasn't studied as much as initially anticipated through personal difficulties at first.	Gateway course gave him expectations, which have helped adjust to being a student. Workload has changed his expectations re his capability [poor time management skills].	No major shocks that she didn't expect when she started. Her expectations were fairly realistic – 'didn't have too higher ones to then fall back, you just takes it as it goes really'.	Warned by friends that first month would be 'horrendous' and she would cry all the time (mother left uni after 1 month). This appears self-fulfilling for much of her time.
Retention	No thoughts of leaving UWBS but 'if you don't feel right you should get out of the course and start again'.	Leaving has entered his mind but he has not seriously considered it. Possible switch to another course in L2 (more subject focused)	Did consider switching to another course but not considered changing course [CL contradicted this]	Has not thought of leaving UW or her course.	Considering leaving: personal problems + workload. Very poor time mngt / social life difficulties / medication. Will parents let her defer a year?
Soci+al integration	Former boyfriend a big help; induction useful. Hardly going home unlike many [but major support of mum on phone]; importance of chatting over cup of coffee in hall at weekend. Currently too much time socialising + sports / church. 6-10 close course friends. Important to join clubs / societies – can see 'some very very quiet / lonely people'.	Concerns with being a mature student / course rep - initial polarisation within class into 2 groups – but now socially integrated [and back with original long time girl friend]. Importance of family support + integrating with peers to combat initial stress; not being in hall didn't help. Expects really good friendships to grow in L2 & 3.	Has not integrated as much socially as anticipated Sept02; prefers to do own thing. Others in class respect him / come to him for help.	Has made friends with her group [group work helps]. Goes to UWSU after classes – redresses potential socially isolating problem of not being in hall. Has own social life at home – doesn't go out all the time. Many students at UW more for social than academic life.	Has made new friends but concerned about distancing herself from them if she stays in working – but misses class group work so alienating course peers – they 'tended to class me as a 'dropout'; same thing happened at FE college. Has developed a nocturnal lifestyle – 'I started to feel like a vampire'.

Student / Issue	Dorothy Browne	Ian Roach	Barry Michaels	Ann Townsend	Ruth Young
Academic Staff	30-40% staff supportive /open door – rest not inviting (but acknowledges they have much on their plate)	Certain tutors very good / supportive but problems with one p/ter with a track record.	Comfortable with course staff.	Staff and UW resources very good / very helpful, especially re sports demands.	UW staff very supportive – likes course and tutors.
Learning & Teaching	Self-motivation / time management hard. Importance of interesting tutors to motivate class. Not reading outside of classes / studying hard enough (40% rule).	Failure to think though implications of information initially given; consequently poor time-management of work to meet assessment deadlines.	Used Christmas to reflect on how he might have done better during Autumn term.	Coping with workload including assignment hand-ins bunching. Insufficient feedback so far makes it hard to judge progress. No time to read round subject.	Missing classes has created extra pressures on Ruth – behind on course work.
Intellectual challenge	Level 1 doesn't count, so students aim for 40%. Reinforced by staff who don't push students particularly - but consistent with independent learning / not being spoon-fed. Course is not difficult intellectually – agrees with staff that it is 'a gentle introductory year'.	Course workload fine – time management is the problem. Work is hard intellectually as was expected. Academic staff / course do challenge him intellectually – reinforced by self-reflection on his work. Still motivated.	Course looked relatively easy – now realises how demanding it is, but not too hard. Not intimidated by it. Students need to be spoon-fed early on. Agrees this year is a gentle introduction.	Not harder than A levels. L.1 Emphasis on pass/fail but Ann wants help on 'how to work to a higher level'. Taking her studies seriously but pass/fail has reduced the pressure. Students just do enough to pass; not working as hard as they could. Expects harder L.2.	Gentle intro to course but now big build-up of work. Staff pressures – 'you're studying for a degree'. Finds it very hard to study. Thinks fellow students pretend to be drunks but secretly are working hard as well.
Finances	Not a problem due to previous savings after leaving previous uni.	Hasn't budgeted carefully enough. Rejected p/t bouncer work to focus on his studies – also implications for fellow-student relationships of bouncing them.	Hard struggle to adjust to lower income after working full-time.	No problems with finances – helped by p/t job and living at home. But pressure on her since fees come from the family income. Also parking in Newtown expensive.	Has no p/t job – filled in forms then threw them away – dependent on parents for support
Other	Has settled in well – Level 1 has been useful. Looking forward to Level 2 house share and more choice / better motivation. Most students idle / leave things until the last minute – social life dominates.	Enjoying being a student – 'I wouldn't change my decision at all' about joining his course.	Frittered away time before Christmas through poor time management. Many students having HE adjustment problems.	Plenty of support overall from a variety of different sources. Tutors have got L.1 right re intellectual challenge since different students find different units easy / hard.	Very worried about parents' attitude to her problems. Severe mood swings / depression – feels a failure compared with friends / sister elsewhere.

Appendix 5.2 M&L student experiences: January 2003

Student / Issue	Dorothy Browne	Ian Roach	Barry Michaels	Ann Townsend	Ruth Young
Being a student	Level 1 has been 'a lot of fun'. Good work / life / studying balance. Likes having a city campus – downside is local animosity sometimes re students. Did right thing leaving previous unit to come here	Did not attend third meeting due to personal pressures	Has learned to develop an open mind to all life's aspects – I am a much better person I believe' [now]. Realises many different approaches to issues, not just as learned at work. NB Major intellectual / perceptual change since Jan03	Still glad she is a student here. Has enjoyed meeting new people from different backgrounds, then seeing what their personalities are like.	Has suspended studies; will return to start Level 1 again October 2003.
Match with expectations	Expectations before she started largely realistic with what has happened during the year. Has not worked as hard as expected (her fault); L.1 is step-up from A levels [against which calibrated initially] but in terms of independent learning / using more info. sources		Barry says our discussions this year have made him reflect on his learning experiences and have shaped his expectations as to his own behaviour (viz Berman Brown (1998). Apart from 2 units he doesn't like + social life poorer mid year, expectations have largely mapped out to reality.	Doesn't think she had many initial expectations – taking things as they come. See intellectual challenge below changing her expectations through rest of year (and for others). Didn't know what tutors expecting but now has a good idea re assessments. L.1 a valuable adjustment year; if higher grades needed more would drop out.	
Academic staff	Tutors respond to issues – some better than others [need to show more enthusiasm]. Sympathy for one nice tutor who can't control rowdy students.		Most lecturers have been v. helpful – but one with personal problems brought them to class and upset Barry – consequently he missed next 2 weeks (felt quite intimidated). Humour vital + inspiration + variety.	Tutors very supportive – lectures / seminars 'good, very informative' – lots of activities – lectures don't cram in lots of information as expected. Lots of assessed group work (not expected) – not happy when her grades depend on others; could do better alone – deciding who to work with in L.2 groups.	
Social integration	Gets on well with people in the restaurant where she works – also quite well with a lot on course. Plays lots of sports + church life. Really enjoyed meeting new people – has made loads of good friends.		Since Jan03 has learned to develop more socially. Grown into being a student / integration with course peers when they reassured him re his age – he was one of them [unlike female mature student].	Has enjoyed living at home – had thought of L.2 house share but others (in halls) have all teamed up. Socialises between classes with course peers. Also good social life in Southampton suburb where she lives.	

Student / Issue	Dorothy Browne	Ian Roach	Barry Michaels	Ann Townsend	Ruth Young
Mature students	Some self-contained with lives outside, so don't get involved (also applies to students living at home)- 'don't speak so much'. Could be natural leaders but most just go with crowd. Bring different angle on things in class but don't cite work examples – names Ian Roach ['really nice guy'] as instance.	Did not attend third meeting due to personal pressures	Being a mature student, it's harder to adjust than if 18; expected to adjust more quickly that he has. As well as an open mind Barry has also gained much more confidence – used Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory to relate theory to practice. Re being a mature student 'the issue was with me' (p.3).	Mature students much more determined. On her course, others look up to / respect them for their age and understanding. Mix well with others – do background reading before classes but don't dominate them. Well organised. One loud student asks questions – others in class like that. Mature students can be set in their ways but, over the year, have loosened up.	Has suspended studies; will return to start Level 1 again October 2003.
Learning & Teaching	Very bad re time management – works better under pressure e.g. all night; assignments finished 8am for 9am hand-in. Has stayed much the same all year re work effort. Others do little work yet still pass course.		Course aims / learning outcomes understood & how to meet these in assessments. Not enough reading done. Concerns re group work grading (passengers) – strategic re who to work with in L.2	Course content is what expected and has fitted in well with sports activities. Thinks some students are putting no work in yet still pass; do they let anyone onto course? High post-Xmas attrition for personal reasons/course not what expected.	
Intellectual challenge	Told early that L.1 doesn't count, so students don't push themselves hard. Most leave everything until last minute; organised ones do best. Course is 'reasonably challenging'. Main challenge is to motivate / organise yourself. Some want to do well but most adopt minimalist assignment strategy.		L.1 very much developmental. Intellectual challenge about right or students would leave. Need time to adjust to being a student / integrating socially / independence / p/t work. Aware of 40% rule – 'I've taken a back seat as far as my grades go'. L.1 focus is just getting through the year.	L1 not counting to degree classification + 40% rule has made a more relaxed year [p.2 'kind of a put-downer'] – but course has been sufficiently demanding. Has put 80% into L.1; expects 110% L.2 effort. Unhappy re assignment bunching around Xmas (but Barry + Nick argue this is part of L.1 challenge – working under stress to tight timescales).	
Finances	No debts or loans – parents pay accommodation + fees.		Has worked very long hours since Jan03 – at times over 30 hours per week – but adjusted to lower income compared with previously	No financial problems through living at home. No L.1 student loans but will get one next year.	
Other	Clear re course aims / learning outcomes. Would work harder if starting again. Doesn't use timetable gaps to study; expects harder L.2.		'I just feel I've changed so much as a person since I've been here'…and next year I'm just going to keep improving'. L2: hall.	No clear understanding re course aims / learning outcomes – doesn't know what she will do as career (teach?). Strategic use of 'saved' time re marketing classes.	

Appendix 5.3 M&L student experiences May 2003

Student / Issue	David Andrews	Nick Barr	Jenny Rivers	Oliver Cooper	Mohammed Hassan
KEY SKILLS: computers/ software; maths/stats; communicate effectively	Expects to use IT; OK but wants to learn more [taking e-commerce option]. Very weak re finance - expects maths /stats re this – will need much help. Expects communications.to be important, to be a manager) – good re this.	Expects to use all key skills at Level 1. Computers / software; important + knowledge from work & A level. Maths/stats – 'pretty handy with it'; OK with communications from A level Business Studies [one of the modules].	Knows of key skills and expects to use them all. OK with IT but weak re databases/spreadsheets. Hates maths through father when young but needs to develop it. Has good communication skills at work but finds it hard socially.	Knew what these are- expects to use them all at L.1. Believes he is OK with all of them (did A level Maths so OK re maths/stats). OK communicating in groups – might be nervous at first doing a presentation (CL said they had to).	Expects to have to use all key skills: strong with IT and communications but will need to do top-up work with maths/stats.
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: library; presentation; read article critically; put forward thoughts in class; effective group/individual worker	Expects spending much time in library; confident. Expects presentations; has done some but nervous in front of new peers. Hadn't thought about critical reading. Expects group work and speaking out in class: important if a working as a manager, as is being assertive (weak re latter).	Expects to use library for assignments; OK after induction tour. Expected presentations from unit docs; never done but confident Expects critical reading to be important; comfortable re this. Expects to speak out and has skill from work. Also applies to group working [but concerns if one member does not pull weight].	Expects to use library but daunted by 'big big textbooks'. Didn't expect presentations but not worried; part of previous job. Expected to read articles critically; at work has always put forward her thoughts. Expects to work in groups but better working on own; considered a leader; needs to take care what she says.	Expects to use library – has spent 2 days in there already looking for key refs. Expects critical reading – has done in a bit past but needs to develop this. Expects speaking out in class and OK re this although girlfriend says he is too laid back. Happy to work in groups but not if some members don't pull their weight.	Expects to use library; has identified key shelves needed. Expects presentations; did some in past; quite confident backed up by research & planning. Expects to read articles critically but only limited experience. Expects to speak up in class in case he gets stuck. Has done much group work /expects it here.
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS; write structured essay/report; independent learner; time management; assertiveness	Expects structured essays but weak – needs to practice after gap year. Expected indep. learning – has skills from FE college (unlike 6th form college). OK with time management except mornings.	Expects well-structured essay; done at A level. Expects independent learning to be important. Good re time mngt – don't produce best work if rushing. Thinks he is reasonably assertive – will need it to some extent.	Worries re writing essays – no clear idea what expected. OK re independent learning + time mngt (arrives chronically early due to father) – expected these. Has been thought too assertive – needs to take care re this.	Expects structured essay writing; OK re this. Likes independent learning; nice to get away from the girlfriend sometimes [good quote p.22]. Good time manager; Needs to develop assertiveness, girlfriend says.	Has written structured essays; expects longer ones here. OK re time man -agement but lazy over summer. OK with assert- iveness but needs to improve both these. Expects to be an independ -ent learner and has the skills re this.

Student/ Issue	David Andrews	Nick Barr	Jenny Rivers	Oliver Cooper	Mohammed Hassan
Expectations re how skills will be developed	A specialist skills unit would be a good idea. Study Assistance will be really important for him, David thinks. Skills development within units also important.	'I know it sounds a bit silly but I don't really have any expectations for this, it's just kind of turn up and see what happens'.	Hopes skills will be developed through lectures / tutorials.	Expects skills to be developed normally in classes.	Expects skills to be developed within units; but students must do this for themselves since tutors won't know who is good at what.
Additional skills to possess	Communication skills are the most important ones to have.	Doesn't think he lacks any necessary skills.	None – but maths and assertiveness main concerns	Thinks inter-personal skills is an important one to possess. Oliver willing to help people.	Inter-personal skills are also important
Help from previous study	Studied key skills at FE college	GCSE and A level skills development – Business Studies and Computing,	Has acquired many skills from work. 6th form college was little help re skills development.	Did A level General Studies; A/S key skills introduced the next year.	Opportunities to develop skills at 6th Form college but never emphasised.
Induction skills audit?	Thinks an initial skills audit would be useful but put students off.	No	No - hopes tutors will identify her development needs.	Expects to undertake his own skills needs once classes start	No
Where to get extra help	Knows of Study Assistance. Dad (accountant) will help with maths/stats/finance.	Knows of Study Assistance as a fallback.	Study Assistance for essay writing / acquiring research skills. Also will ask peers as at 6th form college	Knows of Student Support / One Stop.	Knows of Study Assistance but will ask tutors and friends.

Appendix 5.4 Business students skills expectations: Induction 2002

Student / Issue	David Andrews	Nick Barr	Jenny Rivers	Oliver Cooper	Mohammed Hassan
KEY SKILLS: Computers/soft-ware; maths/ stats; communications used since Sept. 02. Any problems help?	Has used all key skills since Sept02. Learned PowerPoint through a friend in a group showing him. Is doing Business Methods so using Maths & Stats. Which he doesn't enjoy (high praise for tutor) – believes he has progressed in this. Develop-ing communication skills OK.	Re key skills, N. has used them all so far. Has had no problems with any of them. OK with IT before; maths/stats developing through Business Methods; has not had heavy emphasis on communications yet.	Left course, Autumn 2002	Has used all 3 key skills on course, IT and maths/stats in Business Methods and communications in a number of units writing assignments + presentation. Making progress with all three.	Has used IT skills and maths/stats a lot on course. Latter through Business Methods; found maths more difficult. Has also developed communication skills e.g. doing presentation for 4 when other 3 did not attend.
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: library; presentation; read article critically; put forward thoughts in class; effective group / individual worker; used since Sept. 02. Any problems / help?	Library use fine. Comfortable with presentations. Not asked to criticise articles [whereas US develops this at L.I]. Has put forward his thoughts in economics; D is willing to speak out in class. However, normally told 'this is how it is'. Has done group work – setting up own company in Business Methods.	Re transferable skills, has used the library; has not done any presentations yet. N has had to use critical thinking skills in assignments but not in class. N speaks up in class from time to time. Group work started yesterday but N worked in groups during his 3 years at work.		Has used most transferable skills. Has developed library usage skills. Also presentation skills have developed (never used at school). Needs to put forward thoughts in class more; lets others say what they want even if not agreeing. Group working skills are developing thanks to rest of group being hard workers / pulling their weight.	M has been using the library a lot. Has had to use presentation skills (see above). Has had to read articles critically and has put forward own thoughts in class (a confident person). OK with group and working individually (see above).
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: Write structured essay / report; independent learner; time management; assertiveness: any problems / help?	Needs to distinguish between essays and reports (did early essays half as reports). Re independent learning, only told to read some pages as they left the room. D. only goes to library to read around subject for assignments. Time management not too bad; tries to finish essays a week before deadline. Assertiveness not an issue.	Re structured essay, no work returned yet, but sister is a teacher; critiqued N's first assignment. N. has undertaken indep. learning in library although not reading widely enough. Self-motivation to study hard at times. Good time mngt. skills; starts assignment 4 weeks before due in. Assrtness not needed.		Structured essay: awaiting first feedback re this. Units do encourage students to undertake indep. learning; he is doing this. Initially motivation was difficult after a year working. Has good time-management skills due to heavy p/t job workload. Assertiveness not developing – too laid back .	Is OK with writing structured essays / reports – gets people to read them before handing them in. M. is comfortable with independent learning / believes he is doing that – time management skills need some work on them. Also can be assertive – 'not an issue'.

Student/ Issue	David Andrews	Nick Barr	Jenny Rivers	Oliver Cooper	Mohammed Hassan
How have these skills been developed so far?	Mainly through units but also Business Methods for key skills. Also uses father (accountant) for help with finance unit . A unit tutor has given D. advice re essay writing. Also peer students used.	Through units; use of sister to review assignments. Business Methods develops key skills.	Left course, Autumn 2002	O. believes he has developed his key and transferable skills since being at UWI. Course does gently develop basic skills. Has asked a unit tutor for advice re assignment writing skills.	People on his course are quite supportive.
Study Assistance	Has not used this	Not used		Not used	Not used
Any other issues?	Believes that his skills have developed since Sept.02 through a variety of sources. Business methods the source of key skills; some transferable not yet developed so much.	Skills have developed since joining course, although some e.g. communications, group work not required yet. Other skills brought from work or being developed independently.		Issue re Business Methods IT – taught to follow a series of steps to create a web page but didn't know why he was doing things – so taught himself before the test using the handout sheet he had been given.	Feels he has developed since being here e.g. presentations – was confident before – now even more so. Says what he thinks – easier because all the students are new people.

Appendix 5.5 Business student skills experiences: January 2003

Student / Issue	David Andrews	Nick Barr	Jenny Rivers	Oliver Cooper	Mohammed Hassan
KEY SKILLS: Computers/soft-ware; maths/ stats; communications used since Sept. 02. Any problems help?	Had Word/Excel before; now has PowerPoint and Access data-base a bit. No IT improvement. Has had to use Maths and Stats; didn't expect that. However, has developed significantly albeit really hard. Communication skills have improved this year; more presentations than expected but now OK with them.	IT/software has stayed the same (had skills already) – but has learned PowerPoint. Maths / Stats: always good re this so has not improved; communication: P has got better / more confident in every presentation he has done and in talking with class peers.	Left course, Autumn 2002	Has improved all key skills over L. 1. Re IT skills can do a lot more. Re maths/Stats, did A level maths so L.1 all recap. Communication skills: only feedback on 2 essays so far. Comfortable with written communication skills; e.g. improved referencing and writing more concisely.	IT/software packages: has improved a bit but not much (knew it before coming here). Re maths / stats was worried about this initially but has passed all his tests OK. Re communications, no problems re communicating with other people. 'Has improved slightly a bit'.
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: library; presentation; read article critically; put forward thoughts in class; effective group / individual worker; used since Sept. 02. Any problems / help?	Had library / info. searching skills from before. Has not had to criticise articles but has had to criticise business theories in assignments. OK with putting forward his thoughts in class and with group work although had never done any before. Very aware of getting in groups with people who deliver, not with passengers, even if your friends.	Library / info. searching: has developed these skills during L.1; presentations covered above. Has not had to read an article critically, nor critique his own work. N has had no problems re putting forward thoughts in class: skills much the same at end of L1. Has integrated better in class / working comfortably in groups since Jan03.		Improved library / info searching skills. Presentation skills/ confidence developed a lot during L.1 through doing many (more than expected); did few at A level. Has also gained confidence to put forward thoughts in class; now holding back to stop dominating. Strategic group working skills developed: will only work with right people, who work hard / deliver.	OK re library/research skills; using it often & has improved re this. Presentations: skills have improved here and now can use PowerPoint. Has not had to read an article critically; Putting forward thoughts in class has improved a bit but always OK re this. Group work skills have improved during the year (have to listen to what others say); strategic membership.
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: Write structured essay / report; independent learner; time management; assertiveness: any problems / help?	Has written structured reports in group work. Working less hard re essays due to social life. Weak re time management; needs to improve over L2&3. Has had to develop assertiveness this year, especially fellow students don't pull their weight. Has developed problem-solving skills through Essentials of Management unit.	Re writing structured essay, has had good feedback but overall no improvement he thinks. Independent learning has developed during L.1. Time management is fine; previously acquired in work. Assertiveness not needed apart from one group member. Has not had to problem solve.		Essay writing skills good but limited feedback still. Time mngt skills good through O's busy life ('they were naturally placed on me'). Re problem solving: has appeared in terms of O planning assignment time-scheduling. 'If I have a problem I tend to sort it out' [independent learning].	Has definitely improved re writing a well-structured essay / report. Independent learning has improved a bit; time management still weak; being assertive has not been needed.

Student/ Issue	David Andrews	Nick Barr	Jenny Rivers	Oliver Cooper	Mohammed Hassan
How have these skills been developed so far?	Through units (Economics; Finance; Essentials of Management; Business Methods); working with fellow students and taking more responsibility for own learning. IT skills have not developed since Jan03.	Believes he has had to use his key / transferable skills to complete L.1 successfully. Assessed in a lot of his skills but tutors never discussed skills development with him – assume he is picking them up as he goes along. Has had feedback on skills used in presentations but not written.	Left course, Autumn 2002	Skills developed through units, working in groups and gaining confidence to do things that previously he would not do e.g. speaking out in class.	Skills developed across units. Tutors' feedback has helped.
Study Assistance	Not used	Not used		Not used	Not used
Any other issues?	More assertive / self-confident now [parents noticed]. Has had to develop inter-personal / negotiating skills, especially when working in groups with peers who don't want to work.	N has not largely improved his skills he believes – rather *'I've been more sort of like remembering how to do it all, so I am sort of like getting back to the level where I remembered how to do it'.* Re the skills P has brought from his work into his learning, time management is the main one. Used it at work to prioritise workloads when working to tight deadlines.		Believes considerable improvement in key skills during L.1. Has also developed his transferable skills significantly, including gaining confidence.	Overall, believes there has been some skills improvement but not a lot as he brought many skills with him (*'a lot of common sense'*). Did A/S Level Key Skills before joining UW. Has been assessed in these skills during the year and believes these skills have helped him in his L.1 studying.

Appendix 5.6 Business student skills experiences: May 2003

Issue/ Tutor	Mark Alexander	Peter Matthews	Paul Naylor
Enjoying teaching?	Very much, but social class / interests differences; students abrupt / give harder time.	Enjoys workshops / small group teaching: creates connections with students / bridges gap between their experiences and staff knowledge of their needs - gives them relevant skills / tools to cope with new learning environment	Yes, especially on course he developed / leads. Enjoys other course teaching but motivation levels less.
Why do students choose SBS?	Not addressed	Students on small courses usually want to be here – highly motivated. Ones on large course often join by default e.g. don't know what to do / parental pressure. But also normal distribution curve argument.	Students choose course not UWBS – new title / growing area / popular with mature students + students want to stay local + word of mouth from friends re Newtown which is thought attractive + Paul can sell the course at Open Days). Majority of his course's units have external qualifications attached to them → higher workloads and more motivated students.
Staff expectations of student expectations re course demands / realism of these	Expects have changed over time; previously positive student attitude to HE but now drift into it; want degree but not the work. Many lack self-motivation [fashionable], some leave; but also many mature / young hard workers. Tutors have to reverse negative L.1 student expectations. Students have correct expects re how hard L.1 is intellectually/ re workload, but, once here, delude themselves they are working hard enough; hence their experiences don't match their expectations [p.12].	Re US unit, students think they know how to learn so see it as waste of time. P. seeks to change their expectations to realise HE a different learning environment. Students have a variety of different expectations. Some expect hard course and want to be led to a higher level rather than do so independently. Students don't expect to do broad-based subjects and grumble about them; hence a mismatch between what they expect and what they get (p.11). Tutors need to contextualise learning to address this since students not interested if a unit not immediately relevant to them.	Difference in course expects. between school leavers and mature students; latter expect to do more work/highly motivated . School leavers expect more spoon -feeding [danger of staff giving too much info to students due to wanting them to pass]. Students want highly focused units; also think they can cope with units whose content they have covered previously – hence don't attend classes; subject areas not covered before they find challenging.
Do student expectations matter?	Very important to meet student expectations	Yes – continually tries to meet student expectations – see below	Yes – see box above.

213

Issue/ Tutor	Mark Alexander	Peter Matthews	Paul Naylor
Age / Gender differences	High praise of mature students. Females more mature, harder-working, more open/friendly.	Females better communicators and at team work, but less willing to talk in bigger classes. Re group dynamics, school leavers and mature cluster in different groups (once mature speak, end of arguments). Some mature want lots of help, some have superiority complex (p.6).	Females take presentations more seriously; males use humour content. Females more forthcoming in class; also report writing / essays better quality. Mature students normally have better skills, but varies with background (ex-army versus ex-bus driver).Mature students highly motivated; tie group together well / create expectations of hard work; however if too motivated / enthusiastic can alienate rest of group.
Staff expectations of students' prior knowledge	Expects them to write / reason clearly / know basic laws of debate but knows they can't at L.1. Also, do staff patronise L.1 students? (p.28) or expect too much of them re assessments (p.26) causing student assessment fear?	Distinct expectations re background skills / aptitudes of A level [won't have skills]; GNVQ [will have produced a portfolio]; and mature students [depends]. Students will have a highly developed individual participant view as a consumer of the product i.e. leisure (p.15) but won't be able to consider it from a business perspective.	In past, didn't consider student expectations; rather, made assumptions about student base knowledge which student feedback shows they don't have. Also, P's knowledge / experience grows each year but students still have same entry knowledge each year; may even be declining . Large course background students find (new) business subjects hard, and vice-versa. So staff-student gap widening each year – P needs, therefore, to rethink his L.1 approach. P's expectations re assessments too high – gives unit specs / assessment criteria / guidance re structure and expects decent answers.
Expected student hrs study / ideal hrs study	Argues 30-36 hours / week. Students accept this but don't do it [some do < 12 hrs contact], aggravated by hurried assignments.	Would like 20 hrs / week – in reality they do 14-15 + p/t job 1-2 days per week + sports + social life – life coping skills of students juggling many things [link with P wanting students to be fun but many are not?] – most students take their studies seriously but pretend they don't.	Would like students to do 2 hrs/week for every hour class contact (includes assignment working) i.e. about 35 hrs per week in total to succeed.

Issue/ Tutor	Mark Alexander	Peter Matthews	Paul Naylor
Expected student class attendance	Expects full attendance but often poor; continued monitoring important.	Would like 100% class attendance but get 80-85% - student preferences within unit teams for different tutors. Also varies with when assignments due in; uses attendance registers (some students comment it shows we care).	Wants 100% attendance all classes, especially practicals [yet Tues. a.m. 2X as many attend as Thurs. a.m. through Wed. evening post-sports socials]. Students who don't regularly attend, drop out / fail - attendance linked to strategic learning unless continuous assessments employed (p.12). Also, attendance monitoring works short term but, longer term beneficial effects reduce.
Undertake expectations audit?	Would be very useful in M's units	Formative assessment tools used in skills unit to look at a skills audit.	Expectations audit could be useful – in past never asked students what they expected on units, just told them what they will do. Will ask them their expects this year (2002-03) -then explain why not covering some areas, or spend more time on areas in which they're interested. Can't change course structure because each student has different expectations but options / pathways / external qualifications give more flexibility.
Do student fees affect relations with students?	No, has always regarded students as customers.	Has always perceived of the student as customer, regardless of paying fees	No change in P's perceptions; thinks students don't yet consider themselves as customers. Parents often pay.

Issue/ Tutor	Mark Alexander	Peter Matthews	Paul Naylor
Modify course or student expectations initially?*	Students want vocational relevance / less theory but staff don't always have up-to-date expertise so don't quite meet LI. student expects. [M uses his consultancy work]. Better to influence student expectations than change course (if former wrong?) but maybe hybrid model needed. M. responds quickly to student feedback e.g. visiting speakers (p.10). If student experiences = expects. could argue quality learning even if staff don't agree with student expectations.	P continuously adjusts quickly to student feedback in learning and teaching (delivery), within syllabus constraints, adjusting course to student expectations rather than vice-versa; but with (fixed) content also seeks to influence student expectations.	P gives students full info. / influences expectations before they start [including Open Days] so they have correct expectations i.e. they're management courses, not 12 hrs per week in gym. Re course he leads, students left through wish / need to work – would have liked to do p/t. Student feedback via personal tutor meetings; informal contact in class – so pre-empts any problems before unit / SI questionnaires delivered.
Do students take their studies seriously?	At L.1 many students lack maturity, self-motivation, discipline - want a degree but not the work. L.1 a very steep learning curve for them.	Generally, if not summative assessments, students don't consider them important.	Variations from year to year in how seriously students take work – depends on group dynamics of course e.g. key role of mature.
Level 1 intellectual challenge	Not specifically discussed here	Perception that students expect L.1 to be hard, but they expect to study a very focused / narrow range of units specifically relevant to their degree [dissonance / lack of motivation if not] – whereas staff believe in need for broader range of subjects when courses designed [and seek to contextualise them when delivering the broader units to make them more realistic / vocational]; some students already have this knowledge in detail. Also staff may have low expectations of students causing us to challenge them less than we might / they expect. P. thinks L.1 students need to be challenged more [p.10 + 31].PBL project needed early on.	Importance of enthusiastic teacher inspiring his/her students. Also good social scene helps group dynamics / retention – starts from controlled social interaction from day 1.

Appendix 5.7 M&L staff expectations September 2002

216

Staff / Issue	Suzi Bowyer	Matt Taylor	Yong Weng
KEY SKILLS: computers/ software; maths/stats; communicate effectively	Assume only very basic maths [assume nothing re their knowledge]; poor essay writing skills; limited presentational skills - which S seeks to build up in units taught reinforced by formative assessments. S starts with a 'blank sheet of paper'. Re key skills, expects them to be able to demonstrate / use them by end of L1 / L2 but they need help during L1 to develop these.	Students now have a better understanding of key / transferable skills than they used to – doing these at A level – but perhaps not of their importance. Students do Business Methods at L1 and BRM at L2, which addresses their deficiencies. Re key skills, students are OK for IT; weak on maths/stats, and communication skills need developing, as most students are very nervous. In last couple of years students have done well, especially re communication skills (meeting M's expectations of them).	Re key skills, expects students to have some idea of software packages, some maths (graphs, working out trends) and be able to communicate effectively – hard to generalise re students possessing these key skills – about 30% lack confidence and need quite a lot of support re key skills.
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS: library; presentation; read article critically; put forward thoughts in class; effective group/individual worker	Re transferable skills, not much emphasis on research skills at L1 [more L2]; at L1, more on presentations to give confidence; expect students to take possession of their learning / be independent fairly soon - yet 'fed' by FE tutors previously so need help to acquire this skill, that S gives. Also seeks to develop ability to make comments about articles read, even if not being critical and have some confidence (assertiveness) to speak out in class [S develops this in small group work]. Also, benefits of long thin year in helping students know each other in cohesive groups / gain confidence.	Re transferable skills, research skills & group skills developed from induction with the project (mentioned by students in their interviews) – would expect them to be able to use the library but they are terrible at referencing. Re critical reading of papers, build up from simple case studies at L1 to complex ones at L3 [Suzi especially] – linked to L3 [regular focus of course] and build up of independent learning. Use of group exercises at Level 1 requiring students to write a structured report.	Re transferable skills, expects them to use a li effectively; presentations not needed in Busin Economics; expects students to read a book / work out what is said / have view [the beginn criticality] re this but critical reading comes a 2&3 – however, often students have no views them to be able to put forward ideas in class [them what they think in class]; probably stude already have the basics of group work.

Staff / Issue	Suzi Bowler	Matt Taylor	Yong
TRANSFERABLE SKILLS; write structured essay/report; independent learner; time management; assertiveness	Time management skills are very weak. S thinks if students have skills to cope with course, will contribute to their motivation → achievement → improved retention.	Lack time management skills [previously time managed for them]. Belief in need for a bridging / transition to H.E. course for new students in first 4 -5 weeks at college, covering time management, attendance etc with them engaged from day 1 – to help them learn to be students.	Y would expect them, by end of Level 1, to go away and write up a piece of work without too much difficulty. They lack time management skills in spite of reminders e.g. count down weeks until assignment hand-in; also not very assertive. Students acquire a lot of these skills by experience during L1, helped by little prompts / prods by tutors.
How will skills be developed	Expects these to be developed in all L1 units + in Business Methods unit [IT / maths & stats / communications] running in parallel across L1.	Skills developed through Business Methods + within units. Re skills development, unitisation makes unit leaders work in isolation for each other; M uses his L1 unit in a sweeper role to cover all skills as well in case any omitted in other units. Can get problems with individual students' skills development e.g. big hands for typing; stutter – M talks to them and sees how it goes. See p.5 critique of US unit.	H. thinks that a unit which develops these critical skills would be useful, perhaps just offered during the first 6 weeks.
Mature students' skills	Mature students much better than school leavers / more committed / work harder. Like to get higher grades.	No gender differences re skills abilities; mature students better than school leavers with certain skills as they have already used them in work to a higher level.	Mature students do all the work before it is due on; always turn up / ask questions. The hit the ground running when they start in L1. Also have more transferable skills. – more assertive / make it clear what they want; but are not independent learners.
Induction skills audit?	Not in favour of a skills audit – better to assume their skills are not very good from beginning [blanks sheet] and 'lead them towards where we want them to go; could audit them at end of L.1 to see if any improvements / further work needed in L.2. Mature students better with skills – also much more committed and wanting higher grades.	M not convinced about the value of an initial skills audit for students – however, in part, the induction group project exercise seeks to do this, except not as a formal audit. M argues student reaction to the exercise an important aspect of their learning (seeing their peers using these skills). Also promotes go away and gather information, then informally report findings skills, and social integration [on-going build-up to Level 3 double dissertation unit]. At level 1, role of confidence building for students.	Thinks a skills or expectations audit initially, to identify students' wrong expectations would be useful;

Staff / Issue	Suzi Bowyer	Matt Taylor	Yong Weng
Where to get extra help	Concerns re ending the personal tutoring system – loss of support to students – better for personal tutors to teach their students. S does recommend students to Study Assistance.	In time, M perceives most students as growing into taking their studies seriously. He will refer students to Study Assistance if they need help and subsequently check they did go to get help.	Recommends Study Assistance to students lacking skills [1-2 p.a.]; will look over student work before submission but staff should not read over students' work in detail or it ceases to be their own work. Y. tries to get students to tell him how they might take their work further.
Other issues	Re key / transferable skills, students with GNVQ background likely to have more knowledge than A level students [but latter slightly changing]	Retention not always related to skills: parental pressures + less academic students important in explaining student attrition.	N/A

Appendix 5.8 Business staff skills expectations: September 2002

Expectations / Time	Sept02	Jan03	May03
COURSE EXPECTATIONS & MATCH			
Leisure students	(i) IR & BM have no clear expectations (ii) All expect challenging / demanding course; higher intellectual demands than GNVQ / A levels / FE. (iii) DB refers to independent learning. (iv) Different expectations re no.of units	(i) Experiences largely what expected but BM has re-evaluated expectations re his capability; DB wrong re class attendance. (ii) RY's expectations of horrendous first month confirmed. IR's exceeded	(i) Expectations largely realistic (DB; BM) but not worked as hard / attended classes as much as expected (DB) (ii) NH discussions → shaped experiences and hence expectations BM (iii)
Business students	(i) DA has no expectations (ii) 3 expect more / harder work than A levels; other 2 hope will be same level (iii) DA, OC & MH refer to independent learning	(i) For NB, OC experiences as expected (ii) DA surprised re assessment workload; otherwise open mind (iii) MH: course not as easy as expected; expected no work outside lectures. JR left.	(i) Experiences as expected (NB; MH)- latter confirms easy relaxing year as expected A levels recap year (ii) OC expected more independent research (iii) more exams / tests than expected (DA)
TUTOR EXPECTATIONS & EXPERIENCES			
Leisure Students	(i) IR and AT have no expectations of tutors but hope motivated/wise; DA wants bubbly enthusiastic tutors; others want approachable/ friendly/helpful	(i) 4 students generally very satisfied with tutors (ii) problems with 1 p/t tutor'; DB says 30-40% open door; rest helpful but not inviting	(i) tutors generally very helpful / supportive (ii) BM's difficulties with tutor with marriage problems (iii) DB's sympathy for one tutor with class control problems
Business Students	(i) NB & JR have no expectations of tutors except latter expects less help than at school (ii) 4 students hope they will be approachable / friendly / helpful (iii) MH: they need high expectations of students to motivate them	(i) all students say tutors helpful / friendly – but problems with one p/t tutor; also difficult to track down p/t staff	(i) Most tutors helpful / supportive / motivated – tutors need to be interested in subject (ii) problem accessing p/t tutors (iii) tutors all need to use Learnwise

Expectations / Time	Sept02		
STUDENT THOUGHTS RE STAFF EXPECTATIONS		**STAFF THOUGHTS RE STUDENT COURSE EXPECTATIONS**	
Leisure students	(i) Most expect that staff will want students to cope with their curse and to work to succeed, and will urge them on, but that some will fail / leave (ii) desire by mature students to satisfy staff expectations	**Leisure tutors**	(i) tutors believe no clear pattern of expectations by students; some expect hard work but, once here, delude themselves re their effort (MA); others want to be led to higher level but few expect broad-based subjects so expectations / experience mismatch (PM) (ii) Mature students expect more work; school-leavers expect spoon-feeding; expect highly focused units / find subjects not covered before challenging (PN)
Business students	(i) Most don't have any thoughts re tutors' expectations / don't think tutors will have any (ii) David / Jenny think staff will expect students to take time to adjust to being away from home / have a good social life / not to work too hard	**Business tutors**	(i) no clear pattern of thoughts by tutors re student expectations; students may expect more work than staff but don't encourage under-achievement – gentle introduction; probably expect narrower range of subjects (SB) (ii) students under-estimate amount of work / transition to HE / often have low expectation of what they can achieve – so M tries to influence their expectations (MT); (iii) students don't have any expectations re workload; may expect difficulty to be greater than A levels. May not have clear expectations re how different a uni is compared with FE college or re range of units studied.

Appendix 5.9 Summary matrix of Business and M&L students' expectations and experiences 2002-3

I think staff perceptions of student learning (Question 1) emerge through the other categories (whereas I have a discrete category from the student viewpoint).

1. **FIRST YEAR EXPERIENCE:** this is the parent node from which all others develop

$$\downarrow$$

1.1 STAFF INTERVIEWS: this node defines subsequent staff interview nodes

$$\downarrow$$

1.1.1   **BUSINESS STAFF:** this node is the parent for all subsequent Business staff nodes (the control group). It deals with general Business staff perceptions of students. It also includes A level / GNVQ distinctions.

1.1.1.1   **Staff enjoying teaching:** staff enjoyment of teaching
1.1.1.2   **Student course choices:** staff expectations re student entry qualifications; influences on students prior to HE; student reasons for course choice [all these are staff perceptions of]

1.1.1.2.1   'A' level / GNVQ / other qualifications – student differences

1.1.1.3   **Mature students:** thoughts about mature students, including gap year
1.1.1.4   **Gender differences:** gender differences both generally and related to skills
1.1.1.5   **Student motivation:** discussions re student motivation and factors for withdrawal (links?); total work hours of student; social life; p/t job [NB might include some refs to attrition]
1.1.1.6   **Student as customer / consumer:** staff perceptions of students when paying fees

1.1.1.7   **Small and large courses:** exploration of differences between small and large courses

1.1.1.8   **Social / group integration:** social integration / group dynamics [including induction]; **student confidence** (academic and social) – including within academic department / school

1.1.1.9   **Influencing student expectations**

1.1.1.9.1   **Student course demand expectations:** this relates to what staff think are student expectations of the demands their course will place on them – both before the start of the course and during Level 1
1.1.1.9.2   **Closeness of fit:** this relates to how closely the reality (perceptions) of a course fits prior student expectations

1.1.1.9.3	**Expectations audit:** This relates to whether staff think there should be an expectations audit when students first join UWBS
1.1.1.9.4	**Models monitoring / responding to student expectations:** this examines staff attitudes regarding whether to respond to student expectations or to modify them
1.1.1.9.5	**Staff monitoring / adapting:** How staff monitor student perceptions and adapt to them
1.1.1.10	**Attendance:** staff expectations of student attendance; attendance monitoring
1.1.1.11	**Pastoral/student support:** staff thoughts regarding pastoral and other student support e.g. by academic staff, or by Molly Wight, for example
1.1.1.12	**Skills unit / audit:** staff perceptions of skills unit and possible use of a skills audit; also other types of skills development e.g. Business Methods; SSN
1.1.1.13	**Key skills:** staff perceptions of student needs and abilities, and growth during Level 1
1.1.1.14	**Transferable skills:** staff perceptions of student needs and abilities, and growth during Level 1
1.1.1.15	**Assessment:** assessment including summative and formative feedback
1.1.1.16	**Learning and teaching:** expectations and perceptions of students (issues) arising from learning & teaching
1.1.1.17	**Student expectations:** general staff expectations of students, including knowledge but excluding skills
1.1.1.18	**Retention** i.e. how do we keep students
1.1.1.19	**Vocationalism of courses, including student employability arising from the course**
1.1.1.20	**Disabled students**
1.1.1.21	**Level 2 and Level 3 student expectations and experiences**

↓

1.1.2	**LEISURE STAFF:** this node is the parent for all subsequent Leisure staff nodes (the sample group). It deals with general Leisure staff perceptions of students. It also includes A level / GNVQ distinctions.
1.1.2.1	**Staff enjoying teaching:** staff enjoyment of teaching
1.1.2.2	**Student course choices:** staff expectations re student entry qualifications; influences on students prior to HE; student reasons for course choice [all these are staff perceptions of]
1.2.2.2.1	'A' level / GNVQ / other qualifications – student differences
1.1.2.3	**Mature students:** thoughts about mature students, including gap year
1.1.2.4	**Gender differences:** gender differences both generally and related to skills
1.1.2.5	**Student motivation / attrition:** discussions re student motivation and factors for withdrawal (links?); total work hours of student; social life; p/t job
1.1.2.6	**Student as customer / consumer:** staff perceptions of students when paying fees
1.1.2.7	**Small and large courses:** exploration of differences between small and large courses
1.1.2.8	**Social / group integration:** social integration / group dynamics [including induction]; student confidence (academic and social) – including within the academic department/school
1.1.2.9	**Influencing student expectations**
1.1.2.9.1	**Student course demand expectations:** this relates to what staff think are student expectations of the demands their course will place on them – both before the start of the course and during Level 1
1.1.2.9.2	**Closeness of fit:** this relates to how closely the reality (perceptions) of a course fits prior student expectations
1.1.2.9.3	**Expectations audit:** This relates to whether staff think there should be an expectations audit when students first join UWBS
1.1.2.9.4	**Models monitoring / responding to student expectations:** this examines staff attitudes regarding whether to respond to student expectations or to modify them
1.1.2.9.5	**Staff monitoring / adapting:** How staff monitor student perceptions and adapt to them
1.1.2.10	**Attendance:** staff expectations of student attendance; attendance Monitoring
1.1.2.11	**Pastoral/student support:** staff thoughts regarding pastoral and other student support e.g. by academic staff, or by Molly Wight for example
1.1.2.12	**Skills unit / audit:** staff perceptions of skills unit and possible use of a skills audit
1.1.2.13	**Key skills:** staff expectations and perceptions of student needs and abilities, and growth during Level 1
1.1.2.14	**Transferable skills:** staff expectations and perceptions of student needs and abilities, and growth during Level 1

1.1.2.15	**Assessment**: assessment including summative and formative feedback
1.1.2.16	**Learning and teaching**: expectations and perceptions of students arising from learning & teaching
1.1.2.17	**Student expectations**: general staff expectations of students, including knowledge but excluding skills
1.1.2.18	**Retention** i.e. how do we keep students?
1.1.2.19	**Vocationalism of courses, including student employability arising from the course**
1.1.2.20	**Disabled students**
1.1.2.21	**Level 2 and Level 3 student expectations and experiences**

1.2   LEISURE STUDENT INTERVIEWS

1.2.1   **Time allocation**: student time allocation between study, p/t work, training, social etc

1.2.2   **Social / emotional:** current social life; relationships with pre-university friends; relationships with 'emotional' partners / parents; homesickness

1.2.3   **Course expectations**: student expectations relating to the course

        1.2.3.1 Gap year: including concerns about coping with academic work

1.2.4   **Staff expectations**: student expectations about the staff who teach them; also what expectations do they think staff have of them

        1.2.4.1 Pastoral / student support e.g. SSN; academic tutors; Study Assistance **[NB Overlap with F2]**

1.2.5   **Fellow student expectations:** student expectations about their fellow students

1.2.6   **Confidence / self-motivation:** how confident or insecure students are; do students feel they are in control of their experience as a student? Includes social integration as a student

        1.2.6.1 Being a mature student

1.2.7   **Attendance:** student expectations of their own attendance; views on attendance monitoring

1.2.8   **Influences prior to entering HE**: this identifies influences on student choice prior to entering the Institute

        1.2.8.1 Did FE staff push the student previously?

1.2.9   **Students as customers:** this explores the perceptions of the student as customer

1.2.10   **Induction**: this node explores the student induction process, September 2002

1.2.11   **Student key skills expectations**: this explores student key skills expectations **and perceptions**

1.2.11.1   Key skills acquired before UWBS

1.2.12   **Student transferable skills expectations:** this explores student transferable skills expectations and perceptions –see also 1.2.16 and 1.2.17

1.2.12.1   transferable skills acquired before UWBS
1.2.12.2   how **key skills and transferable skills** might be developed
1.2.12.3   potential use of skills audit

1.2.13   **Student perceptions of course experience: experience in general of being a student and how far they match with previous expectations.** This explores student perceptions during their course [there may be some overlap with sub-categories below]

1.2.13.1 Student experiences of learning and teaching
1.2.13.2 Student experiences of assessment
1.2.13.3 Student experiences of subject areas studied
1.2.13.4 Student's belief in his / her integration in the faculty
1.2.13.5 Student's experiences re academic staff
1.2.13.6 Halls of residence / other accommodation

1.2.14 Student focus on future careers
1.2.15 Retention
1.2.16 Student experiences of developing and using key skills
1.2.17 Student experiences of using and developing transferable skills, including current (post-Christmas) experiences of time management
    1.2.17.1 Experiences of the Undergraduate Skills unit
1.2.18 Liking university of Wessex buildings / location
1.2.19 Liking Newtown as a city

1.2.20 Student expectations about Level 2 of their course
1.2.21 Student experiences of Level 2 of their course
1.2.22 Student expectations about the rest of Level 1

NB In some cases, I have put experiences [as determined by post-Christmas interviews], under the same heading as expectations – so need to be aware of this at the analysis stage.

1.3   BASE DATA

1.3.1   **Leisure staff base data:** this provides base data relating to Leisure staff teaching on sample group courses
1.3.2   **Business staff base data:** this provides base data relating to Business staff teaching on control group courses
1.3.3   **Leisure student base data:** this relates to base data of students on leisure courses (the sample group)
1.3.4   **Business student base data:** this relates to base data of students on business courses (the control group)

1.4 BUSINESS STUDENTS INTERVIEWS

1.4.1 **Time allocation**: student time allocation between study, p/t work, training, social etc

1.4.2 **Social / emotional:** current social life; relationships with pre-university friends; relationships with 'emotional' partners / parents; homesickness

1.4.3 **Course expectations**: student expectations relating to the course

1.4.3.1 Gap year: including concerns about coping with academic work

1.4.4 **Staff expectations**: student expectations about the staff who teach them; also what expectations do they think staff have of them

1.4.4.1 Pastoral / student support e.g. SSN; academic tutors; Study Assistance **[NB overlap with F2]**

1.4.5 **Fellow student expectations:** student expectations about their fellow students

1.4.6 **Confidence / self-motivation:** how confident or insecure students are; do students feel they are in control of their experience as a student? Includes social integration as a student

1.4.6.1 Being a mature student

1.4.7 **Attendance:** student expectations of their own attendance; views on attendance monitoring

1.4.8 **Influences prior to entering HE**: this identifies influences on student choice prior to entering the University

1.4.8.1 Did FE staff push the student previously?

1.4.9 **Students as customers:** this explores the perceptions of the student as customer

1.4.10 **Induction**: this node explores the student induction process, September 2002

1.4.11 **Student key skills expectations**: this explores student key skills expectations and perceptions

1.4.11.1   key skills acquired before UWBS

1.4.12 **Student transferable skills expectations:** this explores student transferable skills expectations – *see also 1.4.16 & 1.4.17*

1.4.12.1   transferable skills acquired before UWBS
1.4.12.2   how **key skills and transferable skills** might be developed
1.4.12.3   potential use of skills audit

1.4.13 **Student perceptions of course experience: and experiences in general of being a student and how far they match with previous expectations.** This explores student perceptions during their course [there may be some overlap with sub-categories below]

1.4.13.1   Student experiences of learning and teaching
1.4.13.2   Student experiences of assessment
1.4.13.3   Student experience of subject areas studied
1.4.13.4   Student's belief in his/her integration in the Faculty
1.4.13.5   Student's experiences re academic staff
1.4.13.6   Halls of residence / other accommodation

1.4.14   **Student focus on future careers**
1.4.15   **Retention**
1.4.16   **Student experiences of developing and using key skills**
1.4.17   **Student experiences of developing and using transferable skills, including current (post-Christmas) experience of time management**
1.4.18   **Liking University of Wessex buildings / location**
1.4.19   **Liking Newtown as a city**

1.4.20   **Student expectations about Level 2 of their course**
1.4.21   **Student experiences of Level 2 of their course**
1.4.22   **Student expectations of the rest of level 1**

NB In some cases, I have put experiences [as determined by post-Christmas interviews], under the same heading as expectations – so need to be aware of this at the analysis stage.

Name of student	Type and size of course	July 2003 assessment results	September 2003 assessment results	Other comments
Dorothy Browne	Large M&L course	Refer all modes of one unit's assessment: proceed with deficit	Passed resit assessments: proceeded to Level 2 with 120 CATS points	
Ian Roach	Large M&L course	Refer two units' examinations: Cannot proceed until deficit reduced	Passed one examination; failed to attend the other. Proceeded to Level 2 with 20 CATS deficit	Final attempt at failed assessment in June 2003 but failed it. Proceeding to Level 3 with irretrievable deficit
Barry Michaels	Small M&L course	Fail one unit's coursework: Proceed with deficit	Did not return to take the resit coursework	Has returned home to the Midlands
Ann Townsend	Small M&L course	Passed all units: Proceed to Level 2 with 120 CATS	N/A	
Ruth Young	Small M&L course	Left course in February 2003 with intention to return in September 2003	N/A	Returned to course in September 2003; has integrated well
David Andrews	Large Business	Refer one unit's examination: Proceed with Deficit	Passed resit examination: proceeded to Level 2 with 120 CATS	
Nick Barr	Large Business	Refer one unit's examination: Proceed with Deficit	Passed resit examination: proceeded to Level 2 with 120 CATS	
Jenny Rivers	Large Business	Left course before taking any assessments	N/A	
Oliver Cooper	Small Business	Passed all units: Proceed to Level 2 with 120 CATS	N/A	
Mohammed Hassan	Small Business	Refer one unit's coursework and another unit's examination. Cannot proceed until deficit reduced	Passed the coursework resit; failed the examination resit. Proceeded to Level 2 with 20 CATS deficit	

Appendix 5.11 Level 1 assessment results for interview students