

## Student experience of transition from FE to HEI

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Articulation from Further Education (FE) to Higher Education (HE) has been a key area of work for the University of the West of Scotland (UWS), School of Health Nursing and Midwifery. This is viewed as a mechanism to acknowledge students prior learning and facilitate entry into year two of an undergraduate pre-registration nursing programme. Harvey et al (2006) recognises that as a result of widening participation the student population is more diverse, calling for an increased need to support this heterogeneous student group. Gallacher (2006) also advocates that close partnership working between FE and HE institutions is required to adequately prepare students to articulate into 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Bradbury-Jones et al (2010) concur and further add that empowerment supports the academic and clinical transition and mentors and peers play a key role in their socialisation. Close collaboration with NHS providers and FE Colleges has been central to the development of this programme and the evaluation of the student experience.

**Method:** This qualitative study captures the student's transition from FE to 2<sup>nd</sup> year following completion of a bespoke module. Focus groups and questionnaires were utilised to describe and understand the student's experience. Ethical approval was granted by UWS University Ethics Committee.

**Findings:** Knowledge, preparation and confidence emerged as key themes that support the student's transition and articulation to 2<sup>nd</sup> year. Peer and Mentor support are pivotal to the student's experience and sense of identity as they transition. The findings add to the growing body of evidence around student experience of articulation and provide a deeper insight into the student's experiences of academic, clinical and social transition.

**Conclusions:** The student experience is positive and the evaluation highlights that to sustain this articulation route partnership working, preparation; and peer and mentor support are factors that require further development and evaluation.

**Keywords:** Articulation, Student experience, Empowerment

### Biography:

Louise Johnston is a lecturer in Adult Health at the University of the West of Scotland. After 20 years of clinical practice Louise moved into Higher Education in 2008 and successfully completed an MSc in Healthcare Education in 2011 which focused on student transition. Louise is the module coordinator of the bespoke summer module which facilitates the transition of HNC students directly into second year. Louise is a part time PhD student at Edinburgh University where she is researching Adult and Mental Health student nurses' articulation journey from Further Education to Higher Education, Graduation and Employment via an Extended Practice Learning Experience (EPL) transitional module.