### Transition and equity

Literature Review

In the context of pathways and equity, the term ‘transition’ (to describe both the phenomena and the discourses of educational movements) is used as synonymous with pathways, although its use often refers to specific pathways (for example, transitions from TAFE to university). In this section, the literature that offers a theoretical discussion of the term transition is discussed. Gale & Parker (2011, 2014) explored 24 Australian Learning and Teaching Council (ALTC)-funded projects (research and fellowships) to develop a better understanding of what transition means/ is taken to mean in Australian educational research. From their research, they note that transition is often undefined to taken to be commonsensical, leading to diverse positioning of provision and students within transition-related activities funded by the ALTC. From this exploration, they offer a three-part typology of transition:

1. As *induction*: sequentially defined periods of adjustment involving pathways of inculcation, from one institutional and/or disciplinary context to another (*T1*);

2. As *development*: qualitatively distinct stages of maturation involving trajectories of transformation, from one student and/or career identity to another (*T2*); or

3. As *becoming*: a perpetual series of fragmented movements involving whole-of-life fluctuations in lived reality or subjective experience, from birth to death (*T3*).

Gale & Parker (2014) proclaim they have the ‘most sympathy’ for T3 (*transition as becoming*) because it “has the most potential for new thinking about transitions in HE in socially inclusive ways” (p.735). They argue that as a result of policy and practice on transition being disconnected from broader literature on youth and whole-of-life transitions, work and theorisations of transition-related activities are limited in scope and potential for transformation. They also contend that the dominant conceptions of transition found in the 24 projects they explored (primarily *transition as induction,* then *transition as development*) are system-driven and system serving, meaning they require students to change but not institutions’ systems or structures. In order to develop more student-focused and responsive pathways, educators and researchers need to be more aware of students’ lived realities rather than focusing on institutional/ systemic self-interest.

This last point is picked up in Stirling & Rossetto’s (2015) discussion of transition in the context of providing academic support to equity students in their first year of undergraduate study, specifically in the context of blended learning and digital literacies. They argue that normative assumptions about what students bring and what lecturers can offer lead to “competing realities”, which place “important differences and the politics of identity inherent in diversity and social inclusion under erasure” (p.17). Stirling & Rossetto argue that there are core tensions between teachers, equity students and academic literacies advisors when it comes to facilitating students’: “We argue that too often subject lecturers, equity students and, indeed, ALL teachers, become entangled in the sometimes competing imperatives of teaching directives and equity policy implementation” (p.11), which requires a radical change (‘recalibration’) of what transition means in context of widening participation and technological change. The issue of normative assumptions regarding students’ transition is also evident in Gravett, Kinchin and Winstone’s (2020) study, which investigated the transition conceptions held by academic and professional staff who support students’ learning into and through higher education. Findings from the study revealed the academic and professional staff draw heavily on the normative concepts of transitions, where students are viewed in deficit (Gravett et al., 2020). However, evidence from the concept maps drawn by participants also highlight a divergence from the main narrative, where the staff acknowledged the complex, multiple, individual, and heterogenous nature of students’ transitions into higher education. Gravett et al. (2020) thus contend that the deviation from the normative understandings of student transition suggests that staff are becoming increasingly aware of students’ heterogenous experiences of transitions, which points towards ‘pedagogic frailty’ (p. 11), as relevant support for students is still lacking. On the other hand, Baker and Irwin’s (2019) study highlights how institutional assumptions create ‘stuck places’ for refugee students’ transition into HE. Their investigation of the experiences of culturally and linguistically diverse refugee students (CALDM/R) who moved from a TAFE context into a regional Australian university revealed that despite the common experiences of forced migration experienced by all students, significant individual differences were also observed in terms of ‘level of language and literacy proficiency, familiarity with Australia’s education system and obligations falling outside of the traditionally held boundaries of study’ (Baker & Irwin, 2009,p. 9). Baker & Irwin (2009) therefore contend that despite their good intentions and opportunities to access higher education, many CALDM/R students are often ‘stuck’ due to the ‘monolithic assumptions of what students bring with them and can do, and unrealistic expectations of individuals’ capacity to help themselves without targeted and responsive supports’ (p. 17). Hence, the authors suggest that higher education institutions should ‘understand and value the rich heterogeneity of students experiences, and develop more nuanced and flexible approaches’ (Baker & Irwin, 2009, p. 17) in supporting students’ transition.

There is also scholarly interest on the factors that influence the transition experiences of students into higher education. Meuleman et al.’s (2015) study of non-traditional students’ experiences of their first year of university draws on Bourdieu’s notion of cultural capital to understand ‘field expectations’ of higher education study. They assert that receiving grades, forced independence and disconnection from other students are key contributors to feeling emotionally and academically isolated in their first year, leading to “non-traditional students not [being] well positioned in relation to cultural and social capital to negotiate transition to university” (p.513) and as a result they are constructed as ‘other’. Meuleman et al. (2015) call for a broadened perspective in the moral purpose of universities and a shared belief in wanting to make the transition to university smoother and accessible for all student groups”, with more focus on “the interconnectedness of academic and social experience of university and the importance of strong social support” (p.514-5). Similarly, findings from Wilcox, Winn and Fybie-Gauld’s (2005) study of 22 students in Applied Social Sciences at the University of Brighton indicate students’ anxieties about making friends as a significant aspect of students’ transitions, therefore highlighting the importance of social support to facilitate students’ transition in Year 1 of university. The importance of social support is also emphasised by Wrench, Garrett and King’s (2013) study, which explored the factors impacting the health and wellbeing of students transitioning into HE. Findings from the study revealed the importance of a sense of community for students, therefore highlighting the need for universities to develop programs that promote social networks and supportive peer relationships (Wrench et al., 2013). On the other hand, findings from Brinkworth, McCann, Matthews and Nordstrom’s (2009) study, which investigated how the expectations of first year students were met in universities, indicate that feedback was a significant issue where a mismatch between the expectations and realities of students and the perceptions of students and teachers (Brinkworth et al., 2009). The authors therefore argue for “more proactive and earlier intervention strategies to facilitate students’ transitions” (Brinkworth et al., 2009, p. 170).

Power & Hibbert (2016) on the other hand advocate for a “collective, multidimensional learning experience” for facilitating becoming, identity negotiation and transformations, meaning making, pushing forward alternative ways of doing, being, knowing (and feeling) by “disrupt[ing] the imposition of White values onto students of diverse backgrounds, while still enabling them to develop strategies to succeed in relation to it” (p.A45). They offer an example of such transition approaches in an elective undergraduate Education module that centres on peer mentoring called ‘Experiential Learning in Communities’ at Western Sydney University. Based on principles of reflexive praxis and student-led communities of practice, the course is designed to facilitate Gale & Parker’s ‘transition as becoming’ conceptualisation, so to “provide a generative space for the creation of a new integrative melding of multiple sources of cultural and social capital” (p.A41).

**References**:

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**Equity and Higher Education Annotated Bibliography Series**

**Transition into, through, out of Higher Education**

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| **Citation** | **Annotation** |
| Alder, E. (2018). [Becoming a student of English: Students’ experiences of transition into the first year](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1474022216628303), *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education,* 17(2), 185–203.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Academic literacies, English literature, first year, identity, transition* | **Context:** UK/ Scottish higher education/ English Literature studies context. Identifies first year of UG study as ‘critical time’ [who doesn’t??] – examines academic socialisation and academic literacies. Scopes UK literature on transition into university in discipline area of English  **Aim:** To discuss investigation of students’ experience of transition into an English literature degree and their formation of student identities; “to understand more about some of the factors affecting English literature students’ successful transitions” (p.6)  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Phenomenographic approach: series of (two) interviews with Year 1 students (n=8) and Year 2 students (n=4)  **Findings:** Similarities with data reported in other studies: students = negotiating “new circumstances relating to their subject, institution, peers, and tutors to form their student identity” (p.8). Challenges = written assessments, note taking, reading, volume/ difficulty of work  ‘Pull factors’ = enjoyment of subject, sometimes related to feelings of pleasure at school and sometimes with long-term connection to subject  Academic socialisation (students changing to meet demands of university) = discussion of shifting academic identities  Academic literacies (ref to Lillis & Scott, 2008) = potential transformative effects of contextual approaches to studying literature and film – connected to sense of confidence, shifting notions of what English literature ‘is’ (a ‘threshold revelation’: Gourlay, 2009)  **Core argument:** Need to develop pedagogies to support academic socialisation and academic literacies: “Both the struggles and positive experiences of these participants support adopting academic literacies approaches to pedagogy: that respect individual student agency and identity formation; in which academic practices and discourses are made explicit (rather than demanding a passive learning and following of the rules), creating a learning space in which students can actively form and articulate their own identity as academic; and in which as autonomous carriers of practices they have the potential to transform both outwardly and inwardly (the constitution of their academic world as well as their self)” p.15. |
| Anderson, M.; Goodman, J. & Schlossberg, N. (2012). [*Counseling Adults in Transition: Linking Schlossberg’s Theory with Practice in a Diverse World* (4th ed.).](https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/books/15/) Springer: New York.  US  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Schlossberg’s theory of transition/ transition model:** = systematic framework for counsellors, social workers etc. Opens view of individual difference, but offers stable structure. Three major parts:   1. Approaching transitions: identification (what kind of transition/ how much change is anticipated) and processes (locates where person is in transition) 2. The 4 S system: situation, self, support, strategies 3. Taking charge/ strengthening resources (use of strategies)   Definition of transition: “a transition is an event or nonevent that results in changed relationships, routines, assumptions, and roles. Transitions have been placed conceptually within a developmental framework, described as *turning* points or as a period between two periods of stability” (p.39).  For some people, transition = crisis (makes reference to Chinese word for crisis (literal translation = *opportunity riding a dangerous wind*, p.39) = metaphor “for the unsettled yet perhaps excited feelings clients may be experiencing when they approach a transition” (p.39-40).  Transition requires coping: letting go of aspects of the self; letting go of former roles and learning new ones (p.40)  Cites Parkes (1971) = ‘psychosocial transition” = a change that necessitates abandoning one set of assumptions and development of fresh set (see p.40)  “A transition is not so much a matter of change as of the individual’s own perception of the change” (p.40).  **Typology of transitions:**  Anticipated transitions (e.g. birth of first child, getting married, child leaving home)  Unanticipated transitions (death of family member, divorce)  Nonevent transitions – when transition = anticipated but does not occur: “the realisation that the expected transition did not and will likely never occur alters the way they see themselves and might also alter the way they behave” (p.43)  “Many theoretical perspectives about transitions make assumptions that individuals are making transitions in optimal circumstances and that people have the capabilities and resources to make the transition” (p.42), but not always the case.  Perspective, context and impact (to everyday life) = significant factors; need to remember that difference is norm: “There is differentiation in the opportunities and obstacles that shape people’s potential, across backgrounds, locations, birth eras, and countries” (p.44).  **Transition as process**  Developmental approach = series of stages, “with each stage relating to the next for adaptation and successful adjustment” (p.48).  Note Brammer’s (1991) offers stages of transition (defined as ‘journey through’): *adaptation, renewal, transformation, transcendence* (see p.50)  Bridges (2004) describes transitions as ‘endings, neutral zones, beginnings  Hudson (1991, 1999) viewed transitions as normal and inevitable; a “natural process of disorientation and reorientation that alters the perception of self and world and demands changes in assumptions and behaviour” (1991: 96). In later work, he describes transitions as ‘cycles of renewal’, characterised by 4 phases: *getting ready, launching, plateauing, sorting things out.*  Lorenz (1993): chaos theory – disorder, unpredictability and lack of control = normal parts of transition [chaos theory = “is the fascinating idea that order and chaos are not always diametrically opposed. Chaotic systems are an intimate mix of the two: from the outside they display unpredictable and chaotic behaviour, but expose the inner workings and you discover a perfectly deterministic set of equations ticking like clockwork” : http://theconversation.com/explainer-what-is-chaos-theory-10620] = small differences have big effects. Bright & Pryor (2008) built a theory of ‘shiftwork’ on chaos theory (all activities for individuals to reinvent themselves continually, identify opportunities, recover from setbacks, find meaning, capitalize on chance opportunities) – in counseling context, clients = helped to see patterns in their complexity; important to be open and flexible as opposed to setting rigid/ fixed goals.  Brought together, authors developed integrative model of transition process (see p.56)    Moving out = “ending one series of transitions and beginning to ask what comes next” (p.57)  **Transition framework**  Adults = continuously experience transitions  Adults’ reactions depend on type of transition/ perceptions to/ context within which/ its impact  Transitions have no end point = “process over time that includes phases of assimilation and continuous appraisal as people move in, through and out of it” (p.59) |
| Anderson, C. & McCune, V. (2013). [Fostering meaning: fostering community](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-012-9604-6), *Higher Education,* 66(3), 283–296.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Communities of practice; Undergraduate learning and teaching; Student trajectories; Theorising communication* | **Context:** Connects transitions/ trajectories and communities of practice. Following Lea (2005), they argue that CoP = useful heuristic, but only if it is extended to account for particularities of higher education teaching and learning communities. Lave & Wenger’s original work on CoP highlighted relational view of learning between learner and wider sociocultural environment, which avoids reification of knowledge and ‘its commodified exchange’. However, critiques have been levelled at CoP because of its tendency towards homogeneity and consensus, and others have argued that more attention needs to be given to individual agency and life histories. Others argue that there is a lack of attention to power dynamics (e.g. lecturers = assessors). Wenger’s later (2009) work is more encompassing of ‘multimembership’ and permeable boundaries. Authors argue that relationship with language and literacies is under-explored in CoP scholarship.  **Aim:** To explore “the particular kinds of trajectories, commitments and intentions displayed by the participants in undergraduate courses; the knowledge practices and distinctive stances in relation to knowledge around which these ‘communities’ centre and the conceptualisation of the nature of communication and the particular challenges for the creation of meaning within higher education learning communities” (abstract); “to develop the heuristic value of the communities of practice framework for  researching HE learning and teaching by closely examining these areas of trajectories, knowledge practices and the nature of communication in order to bring out key matters that need to be taken into account in conceptualising HE learning communities” (p.284).  **Theoretical frame:** CoP  **Methodology:** Essay  **Findings:** Shape and positionality of HE (inc. purpose and orientation) = impede students’ participation in their disciplinary CoPs:  “Rather than students developing trajectories in relation to a specific community within which they will remain, undergraduate programmes involve time-limited engagement in learning communities which overlap with, and/or serve as preparation for, participation in diverse future workplace communities. This is important as it renders more complex the interplay between what is learned through participation and the identification with the practices of a particular future workplace community which would make this learning meaningful. Fostering outward trajectories from undergraduate programmes can be problematic” (p.287).  Authors note arguments by Barnett (2007) on “the value of students and staff working together to engage with the uncertainties and limitations of academic understanding in a spirit of humility, criticality and resilience” (p.287); Nussbaum (1997) on developing capacity to take reasoned stance and training students’ ‘narrative imagination’; Walker (2010) on developing discursive pedagogies that help to discuss issues of social justice; hooks (1994) on theorization beyond disciplinary boundaries and use of theorization for wider social change.  For students to become proficient in their disciplinary CoP, they need to participate effectively in ways of thinking and practising (WTP), which “encompass the tacit norms and practices of academic communities as well as their histories of debate and perspectives on knowledge” (p.289). Students also need to be encouraged to take an epistemological orientation that views “knowledge [as] problematised rather than seen as reified and established content to be learned” (p.290) – therefore encouraging students to ask questions of, rather than reifying disciplinary knowledge.  Critique of assumption of transparency of language in Wenger’s notion of spaces of negotiation of meaning; the task = “to assist [students] to unpack these ‘situated decontextualizing practices’ and to participate to a degree in the discursive repertoires of particular academic domains” (p.291) by developing ‘hybrid discourses’ (taking expertise of lecturer, rephrasing in way students will understand with everyday lexis).  Need to develop space for shared meaning between lecturer and student: “Achieving a sufficient sharing of meaning between lecturers and students requires newcomers to a domain to enter into the frames of knowledge within which topics are to be construed, to begin to gain a sense of the context of meaning-making within a particular disciplinary or professional community” (p.292).  Law’s (2004) ‘ontology of the in-between’ (partial connections) = useful framing |
| Anderson, D.; Wason, H. & Southall, J. (2016). [Supporting business students’ transition into higher education: the case of marketing downloads](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2016.1207625), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 21(8), 978–989.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transitions; teaching initiatives; student-centred learning* | **Context:** UK higher education/ business school and student-centred approach to facilitating transition via ‘Marketing Downloads’ initiative. Set in context of diversified student body (e.g. Archer 2007). Transition = challenging, especially for non-traditional and FinF students, with respect to learning (develop into autonomous learners/ independent learning skills), confidence and security in themselves, fear of isolation and need for belonging and ‘friendsickness’  **Aim:** To present evaluation of ‘Marketing Downloads’ (where students work in self-selected pairs to choose an example of marketing practice to present to their colleagues during the class and previous year students come in to discuss experiences and present their downloads); to show how it facilitated ‘smoother’ transitions.  **Theoretical frame:** Self-efficacy  **Methodology:** Qualitative evaluation: focus groups. Students from Marketing Principles class (n=25/ 5 x focus groups)  **Findings:**  ‘Marketing Downloads’ helped as ice-breaker to learning environment; no ‘right answer’ and good interaction between peers. Lower levels of guidance helped to illuminate differences between pre- and undergraduate learning: “this growing realisation of the difference between secondary and tertiary education with the deliberate withdrawal of explicit instruction became apparent in several of the groups” (p.6).  Helped with reciprocity and peer support  Helped students develop ‘presentation skills’ and feel confident to speak publicly and critique others  Helped develop understandings between theory and world  **Core argument:** Student-centred design = crucial’ “the important elements appear to have been the inclusion of student choice and the requirement to stimulate a discussion which ensured that students began to think about possible questions that they could pose, or alternatively to consider what questions they might be asked” (p.10). Makes 4 recommendations:  “(1) Provide a safe classroom environment where students are able to speak freely without fear of getting something wrong.  (2) Develop exercises which require students to engage with the whole class as well as smaller sub-groups. In this way they can increase their social networks and build relationships to support them through their course.  (3) Ensure the approach is student-centred to enable students to take responsibility for their learning and begin the journey to independent learners, in other words to make the transition from secondary to tertiary education….  (4) Link activities to the outside world so that students can see the relevance of their studies” (p.10). |
| Baik, C.; Naylor, R.; Arkoudis, S. & Dabrowski, A. (2017). [Examining the experiences of first-year students with low tertiary admission scores in Australian universities](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2017.1383376?journalCode=cshe20), *Studies in Higher Education,* 44(3), 526–538.  AUS  Keyword: *First-year experience; transition to university; engagement; attrition; Australian higher education* | **Context:** First year experience/ transitions and coping with the first year of undergraduate study for students who enter with low ATARs. Article set against argument about financial cost of attrition for students and institutions. Students entering with low admission scores = result of widening participation agenda; these students are understood to be a particular risk and less likely to complete their studies [without recognitive supports]. Authors argue that there is little known about the transitional/ study experiences of students who enter with low ATARs  **Aim:** To examine “the perceptions and experiences of first-year students who entered university with a low ATAR” (p.527); “to extend focus beyond statistics around attrition and completion to explore what institutions and university educators could do to better support low ATAR learners in their first years of university study” (p.528)  **Methodology:** Online survey of first-year (5th wave in 2014); 8 institutions participated (see p.529 for full details of the diversity of participating universities and students). 1739 surveys returned  **Findings:** Overall, students in 2014 were generally more positive: “Most students were clear about their reasons for going to university, had a strong sense of purpose and identity, and were satisfied with their course experience so far” (p.530):   * Better prepared to choose a course * Feel that school prepared them for their transition * More encouraged to go to university * Clear reasons for why they had chosen university (90%), which “means that students are more likely to be committed and engaged in their studies and persist when the work becomes challenging” (p.530). * Most knew which profession they were aiming for * Over a third indicated they found it difficult to be motivated (lower than 42% in 1994), which is concerning when it comes to predicting drop out. * More students reported asking for help (from 29% in 2009 to 37% in 2014) * Views of the quality of teaching = increased from 66% in 1994 to 89% in 2014 * Most believed their teachers = enthusiastic about topic, available to help, give useful feedback * Survey data suggest that students = less connected/ making fewer friends and lower reported sense of belonging to university community: “The groups of students less likely to feel that they belong to their university community were part-time students; mature age students over 25 years, and full-time students in paid work 16 or more hours per week” (p.532).   *Experience of low ATAR students (lower than 70)*  “Of the 774 school leavers who had entered university with an ATAR score, 134 (17.3%) were in the ‘low ATAR group’, with 60 students (or 7.7%) entering with ATAR scores under 60” (p.532). Average ATAR in this group = 59  Low ATAR students = more likely to belong to number of equity groups/ categories:   * 9% = students with a disability * 45% = from rural areas (compared to 19% of high ATAR students) * More likely to be from low SES backgrounds (57% compared to 30% using parental education as measure) * More likely to be first in family (45% compared to 22%) * Students = less prepared; enjoyed their studies less; lower levels of academic engagement; more likely to have difficulties; more likely to consider deferring or withdrawing (26% to 17%). * Less likely to engage in orientation activities/ feel prepared by orientation * 40% of low ATAR students had not expected to get an offer, more so for students with an ATAR of less than 60   No significant difference in terms of considering change of course between low and higher ATAR   * Lower ATAR students got lower marks, but outperformed own expectations.. * Lower ATAR students = less academically engaged: * More likely to find content challenging * Less likely to feel confident in managing workload/ time/ schedules * More likely to consider deferring because of a fear of failure.   **Core argument:** Lower ATAR students = “more likely to be disillusioned with their course and are at greater risk of attrition” (p.535). Need for universities to do more to support these students as a whole-of-curriculum approach, such as considering pre-bachelor/ preparatory courses. Overall, authors argue “it will be essential for institutions to monitor the experience of distinctive student subgroups and develop research-based strategies to ensure that students with diverse educational backgrounds are given fair opportunities and support to achieve academic success” (p.536). |
| Baker, S. (2018). [Shifts in the treatment of knowledge in academic reading and writing: Adding complexity to students’ transitions between A-levels and university in the UK](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1474022217722433), *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education,* 17(4), 388–409.  UK  Annotation by Anna Xavier  Keywords: *Transitions; students’ writing; academic literacies; A-levels; academic reading; higher education; knowledge* | **Context:** Although ‘‘transition’’ is highly researched area in education, there has been limited empirical study on how shifts in the ways that knowledge is packaged and valued impact on students’ reading and writing as they transition into HE.  **Aim:** ‘To explore the impact of particular ways of packaging disciplinary knowledge on students’ reading and writing transitions as they move from school (A-levels in this case) to undergraduate study’ (p. 19).  **Theoretical frame:** Not specified in study.  **Methodology:** Longitudinal ethnographic approach; Research design: Foregrounded the contexts of production of the participants’ reading & writing, as well as participants “emic” view on literacies; Participants: A-levels students (final year- Year 13, into their second year of undergraduate studies) (n=11); Data collected: Interview talk, students’ texts, Facebook status updates, literacy logs & key curriculum documents from both educational levels; Research setting: Three different A-level providers – 1. Rural comprehensive secondary state school (Site 1), 2. Independent boys’ school (Site 2), 3. Further Education (FE) college (Site 3).  **Findings:** 1) A-level reading: Pre-packaged sources and limited forms of knowledge – all participants utilised limited sources to support A-level learning; Textbooks - principal reading material; Sustained focus on assessment in textbooks – constraints students’ developing literacies (overtly privileges ‘an epistemology of recycling content in “correct” and narrow forms over process’ – students are discouraged from experimenting with their thinking, reading & writing (p. 10); 2) A-level wider reading – Most participants (8) did not read beyond the textbook or materials assigned by teachers; 3 participants utilised school-endorsed publications (to support A-level learning); 3) A-level writing: Texts, practices and assessment – A-level curricula & assessment are ‘largely uniform’ (p. 12): similar genres of writing observed across institutions (5 categories: ‘essays (for Humanities/Social Science subjects); short-answers and calculations (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics—STEM subjects); course- work assignments (English Literature, English Language, History, Chemistry, Biology); translation (Modern Foreign Languages—MFL); and exam-practice questions (all subjects)’ (p. 12); significant difference in writing practices observed in Site 2: in-text citation & referencing was a regular aspect of school-writing practices for two boys; 4)University reading: Broader forms of knowledge written for “expert” audiences – participants were required to read beyond “core material” provided & utilise “new” texts, including academic books, academic journals, & disciplinary websites (p. 13); academic journals – particularly challenging for participants to adapt to, as they were ‘substantially different’ (p. 13) from types of reading material participants engaged with during their A-levels; participants utilised a range of “new” resources besides journal articles, including disciplinary websites, which presented challenges in types of knowledge students needed to adapt to; 5)University writing: Texts, practices and assessment – More varied than those experienced during A-levels; Types of writing at university described by participants: “The essay”, laboratory reports, “textual analysis”, collaboratively produced academic posters, reflective writing \**writing varies according to courses.*; the “essay” was the most common type of writing reported by students (10/11); all participants engaged with writing previously not experienced during their A-levels, especially for subjects not studied previously; changes to writing is also observed ‘in terms of “increase”’: number of assignments, word count, number of references and citations, level of independent engagement (p. 16); differences also observed in assessment: in terms of ‘expectations around how knowledge should be constructed, presented and consumed’ (p. 16).  **Discussion:** 1) Students’ literacies in transition: The formality level & procedures around the production & submission of texts were ‘markedly different’ (p. 17) at the university level, compared to A-level institutions; Participants found the need to adapt their ‘habitual writing practices’ & ‘learning conventions’ (p. 17) very challenging; Epistemological level – university writing requires a varying engagement with knowledge, where students develop their own comprehension & ideas, and learn to take risks and be creative; A-levels writing is often treated as a ‘vehicle for content, rather than an epistemological practice that carries meaning, power & identity (Lea & Street, 1998; Lillis & Scott, 2007) (p. 17). 2) Packaging, accessing & privileging different knowledges: Tricky epistemological transitions – stark differences observed in the treatment & knowledge of participants at A-level and at university; reading was a ‘largely invisible’ aspect of A-level writing, while at university level, reading is significantly more valuable, and is made ‘a visible component’ of the writing process via inclusion as an assessment criterion (p. 18); These differences therefore form the ‘core of disconnections between school and university learning’, therefore framing “transition-related” issues as ‘essentially epistemological’ (p. 18).  **Core argument:** ‘Knowledge—as packaged in examination-board produced textbooks and magazines—is treated as a given at A-levels, yet it is treated as something to be located and constructed at university’ (p. 18).However, ‘limited attention has been paid to the underpinning elements of academic writing, namely practices of reading and sources of knowledge, particularly in the context of students’ moving between educational levels. Examination of students’ literacy practices in transition and in real time illustrates how some of the practices that are often overlooked in discussions of ‘‘student writing’’—such as locating, evaluating, synthesising and adapting to new forms of knowledge—fuel the challenges some students face when they enter HE’ (p. 19). |
| Baker, S., Due, C. & Rose, M. (2019). [Transitions from education to employment for culturally and linguistically diverse migrants and refugees in settlement contexts: what do we know?](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/0158037X.2019.1683533), *Studies in Continuing Education*, 1 - 15, http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0158037X.2019.1683533  AUS  Annotation by Anna Xavier  Keywords: *CALD migrants and refugees; transitions out; tertiary education; higher education; pathways to employment; pathways to further study* | **Context:** Although the literature highlights new CALDM/Rs’ desire to work and meaningfully contribute to their new country, many remain under employed despite holding multiple tertiary qualifications. In addition, there is limited research which focuses exclusively on transitions from higher education and into employment for CALDM/R students.  **Aim:** To ‘provide an interpretive review of existing research concerning CALDM/Rs’ experiences of employment and education, so as to argue for a research agenda that makes explicit the kinds of pathways needed to support this group of students to gain meaningful employment related to the discipline of their tertiary education studies’ (p. 2).  **Theoretical frame:** Not specified in study.  **Methodology:** Interpretive literature review – qualitative synthesis of selected literature addressing issues of transition, HE and employment; Sampled from a database of more than 350 annotations of literature related to refugees (curated by Baker, 2019); Keywords employed – cultural/linguist/diverse; refugee; migrant; employ; education; Articles selected: 110 (related to Australian context); Questions employed in reviewing selected literature: ‘1)  What do we know about CALD migrants and refugees’ employment patterns in Australia? 2)  What do we know about CALD migrants and refugees’ transitions out of higher education/ transitions into employment? 3)  What do we know about CALD migrants and refugees’ access to and participation in tertiary education in Australia?’ (p. 5)  **Findings:** Q1: Access to education is a critical issue, especially in forced migration settings; Nevertheless, this access improves upon resettlement; Barriers for CALDM/R who have accessed HE: Often created by structures and priorities of universities; Challenges in participating in HE for CALDM/R students: Lack of navigational knowledge of the education system (Bajwa et al., 2017; Fozdar & Hartley, 2013b) & an absence of responsive supports (Baker et al., 2018; Gately, 2014, 2015). Q2: There is a ‘silence in literature with regards to students’ transitions out of education and into professional employment’ (p. 6); Patterns of under- or unemployment are higher than average for CALDM/R (Hugo 2011; Li et al. 2016; Mestan and Harvey 2014; Richardson, Bennett, and Roberts 2016). Q3: CALDM/R often struggle to find employment in settlement countries (Crawford et al. 2016; Fozdar and Hartley 2013a, 2013b; Hugo 2011) – often despite greater proportions of higher education qualifications (although some are not recognised; Colic-Peisker & Tilbury, 2006); systemic challenges that CALDM/R face in securing ongoing and meaningful work: ‘limited English language proficiency, a lack of Australian (or host country) employment experience and references, lack of qualifications and/or difficulties with recognition of qualifications, skills and experience, as well as the impact of trauma and torture’ (Fozdar and Hartley 2013b; Humpage and Marston 2005; Pittaway, Muli, and Shteir 2009) (p. 8); Importance of different forms of capital is a consistent theme in literature: human capital (linguistic proficiency, qualifications, employment histories); social capital (networks, bonds, familiarity); Another common theme: Failure of potential employers to recognise these forms of capital; Significance of English language proficiency in influencing CALDM/R’s employment opportunities in Australia (Hugo, 2011); Insufficient support (time & space) for CALDM/R to develop their language & literacy proficiency before seeking employment (Baker & Irwin, 2019; Losoncz, 2017a, 2017b); Other factors influencing employment of CALDM/Rs – ‘racialised prejudice’ (Hebbani & Colic-Peisker, 2012) (p.9); location of settlement (regional areas) (Curry, Smedley & Lenette, 2018; McDonald-Wilmsen et al., 2009; Schech, 2014); Gender gap is also highly evident in the employment of CALDM/Rs.  **Discussion:** Two key barriers identified – 1) ‘structural issues within the employment sector’; 2) ‘A lack of support within the university sector’ (p. 10)  **Core argument: ‘**To promote positive integration and settlement outcomes, we need greater and more nuanced understandings of intersecting nature of identities in spaces of education and employment.’ (p. 11). |
| Baker, S. & Irwin, E. (2019). [Disrupting the dominance of ‘linear pathways’: how institutional assumptions create ‘stuck places’ for refugee students’ transitions into higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/02671522.2019.1633561), *Research Papers in Education*, DOI: [10.1080/02671522.2019.1633561](https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2019.1633561)  AUS  Annotation by Anna Xavier  Keywords: *Australia; transitions; higher education; adult students; students from refugee backgrounds; liminality; stuck places; linguistic and cultural diversity* | **Context:** Although transition into and through HE can be challenging for all learners, SfRBs often face specific difficulties due to their ‘culturally and linguistically diverse (CALD) backgrounds, and pre-settlement experiences of instability, insecurity, likely trauma and interrupted education’ (abstract). The authors note that despite the recognition of these challenges in the literature, ‘scant empirical attention’ is given to how ‘SfRBs experience the adaptations necessary for (a) transitioning into the ‘home’ culture(s) and language(s) of the settlement country, and (b) the expectations and practices of the academy’ (p. 2).  **Aim:** To offer a detailed account of the transition journeys (through, out of, and back into HE) of CALDM/R participants who moved from a TAFE context into a regional Australian university, and investigate the systematic, structural and individual opportunities and limitations experienced by the student-participants.  **Theoretical frame:** 1)Notion of ‘liminality’ – refers to the ‘ambiguous, unstable middle ground of a ritual where the individual has moved from one state but is yet to navigate the changes to move into the next state, or the ‘in-between period where one is no longer who previously existed, nor has yet developed into’ (Keefer 2015, xx); Liminality theories: ‘View movements between states (rites of passage) as composed of three stages: pre-liminal, liminal and post-liminal’ (p. 5) (Turner 1969). 2) ‘Turning points’ and ‘stuck places’ – ‘Turning Points’ – when an ‘individual identifies and negotiates the changes needed for transformation to be successfully achieved and alternative subject positions become available’ (p. 6); ‘Stuck places’ – ‘antithetical concept to turning points’ (p. 6); ‘the places of misunderstandings and confusion, with oscillation between states of knowledge’ (Heading & Loughlin, 2018, p. 658), which are often due to ‘a reluctance or inability of the learner to move from common sense or old knowledge to theoretical or new knowledge’ (p. 664).  **Methodology:** Longitudinal, ethnographic study; Repeat interaction methodology; Participants: Newly arrived adult SfRBs from a middle Eastern war-plagued country transitioning from TAFE to university (n=7); Sampling strategy: Purposeful sampling; Data collection methods: One-on-one interviews (5);Focus groups (3).  **Findings:** 1)Common experiences of all students: ‘having to leave their home country abruptly, moving to a country with different values, cultural practices, educational systems and language, and being the primary translator and organiser of the family’ (p. 9); 2)Significant individual differences: ‘level of language and literacy proficiency, familiarity with Australia’s education system, and obligations falling outside of traditionally held boundaries of study’ (p. 9); Three participants (Khan, John & Nilofer) – relatively ‘linear’ transition from AMEP studies, into enabling program and consequently into their chosen undergraduate programs; Four participants (Ahmad, Andy, Rahman & Modaser) – did not complete enabling studies, and therefore failed to gain access into their desired undergraduate programs. These students returned to TAFE & worked to fit studies around jobs and family responsibilities. 3)Key point of difference among participants: ‘balancing of competing demands on their time’ (p. 10); Khan, John & Nilofer- able to study full time throughout the semester without working; Ahmad, Andy, Rahman & Modaser – working was ‘essential’ (p. 10). 4)Academic and cultural ‘threshold practices’ and stuck places – based on experiences of two participants (John & Rahman): John - Most significant challenge: Expected level of vocabulary and linguistic knowledge; Second challenge: having to ‘learn how to learn’ (p. 12); Other challenges: Lack of access to technology; Inflexibility of the program design; heavy linguistic load of translation; and allure of a full-time wage. Rahman – Much more complex and complicated pathway to HE than John; Significant challenges: ‘English language proficiency, academic literacies, and familiarity with academic systems and conventions’ (p. 14), balancing family & study responsibilities.  **Discussion:** Transition challenges faced by participants are fuelled by several structural issues – 1) ‘macro understandings of transition as linear are built upon middle class ideals and assumptions about who is moving into higher education, and how, and ‘ideas about “fitting in” rest on the notion that the “middle-class” way of being a student is privileged and privileging’ (Christie, Day and Wager 2005, p. 6); 2) ‘Conceptualisations of transition as having fixed entry and exit points deny the need for many students to hit the pause button and wait for life to recalibrate in ways that offer better conditions for study’ (p. 16); 3) Institutional assumptions about who students are, what they know and how they do things play out at the micro (individual) level, particularly with regard to the kinds of academic practices and navigational knowledge that students are assumed to have/bring to their studies. Implications: 1) Universities should ‘resist the complacency and assumed linearity that underpins many transition-focused initiatives by designing ongoing transition programs and activities that are people-rich, and which can better capture and respond to the needs of ‘non-traditional’ students like refugees’ (p. 16); 2) ‘Universities should develop and adopt strategies that recognise and emerge from students’ ‘interim literacies’ (Paxton 2007) – hybrid, emergent and intertextual practices, which build on the varying discourses and languages that students bring with them to their studies’ (p. 16).  **Core argument:** In reality, transition is complex, and despite good intentions and opportunities to access university, many students are ‘stuck’ due to ‘monolithic assumptions about what students bring with them and can do, and unrealistic expectations of individuals’ capacity to help themselves without targeted and responsive supports’ (p. 17). HEIs should therefore do more to ‘understand and value the rich heterogeneity of students’ experiences, and develop more nuanced and flexible teaching and learning approaches to support’ (p. 17). |
| Baker, S. & Stirling, E. (2016). [Liminal spaces, resources and networks: Facebook as a shaping force for students’ transitions into higher education](https://www.berghahnjournals.com/view/journals/latiss/9/2/latiss090203.xml), *Learning and Teaching: The International Journal of Higher Education in the Social Sciences,* 9(2), 42–65.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *ethnography, Facebook, higher education, liminality, transitions* | **Context:** UK context of students transitioning into higher education and value of social networking sites, specifically Facebook. Draws on two PhD studies into transition. Notes increased attention to student attrition in neoliberal/ marketised higher education sector = guided partly by economic imperatives. Technology = important context because it “is now pervasive and ubiquitous in the lives of undergraduate students” (p.43)  **Aim:** To explore how social-networking sites (SNS) influence students’ experiences as they transition into university; “to explore the ‘betwixt and between’ spaces that students inhabit as they make their status transformations from school/college students to university students” (p.44); to “explore the role that Facebook has in shaping students’ experiences of moving into higher education, focusing the lens on both social and academic dimensions of transition and how Facebook opens liminal spaces and acts as a liminal tool for facilitating their transitions” (p.44). Scopes literature on digital university, Facebook in higher education. Offers a Facebook grammar  **Theoretical frame:** Liminality  **Methodology:** Longitudinal/qualitative: 2 x case studies. Case Study 1 = Eve’s research on students’ use of Facebook to negotiate their transitions into university; Case Study 2 = Sally’s research on students’ transitions and engaged with Facebook methodologically, as a research tool, a research site and as research data. Notes complexities of representing Facebook data.  **Findings:**  *Facebook is the social fabric of university life:* students in CS1 used FB to ‘meet’ students before semester started; students used FB events to socialize/ organize social events and lives. Notes how, although belonging = key part of higher education literature, in these data “the belonging is not institutionally led; instead it is local, organic and public” (p.53). Tagging = also important for public declarations of belonging (‘networked public activities’, boyd 2007)  *Facebook in the academic domain:* CS2 = demonstrates use of FB for ‘crowdsourcing’ support to organize and seek peer support with academic work, “and to seek validation (acceptance and acknowl­edgment) of their emerging, liminal university identities and practices” (p.55). Students also use FB “to position themselves as particular types of students, and their shifting attitudes over time suggest they experienced oscillating levels of confidence in their academic practices and identities” (p.57). Following students into Year 2 suggests liminal phase = extends beyond end of Year 1.  “Facebook is used not only for dynamic participation in the social fabric of university life, Facebook is the go-to space to organise their academic and social lives, using it as a hybrid space to negotiate between home and university” (abstract). **Core argument:** Facebook can function as equitable space for students to engage in: “Facebook can offer a ‘levelling platform’ for students: an open, free and accessible space from which to engage in liminal activities that foster belonging and access to resources and networks” (p.59).  “Facebook offers student-users a ‘liminal tool’ for negotiating and facilitating resources and networks within the first year at university” (abstract). |
| Ballantyne, J. (2012). [Valuing students’ voices: Experiences of first year students at a new campus](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.5172/ijpl.2012.7.1.41), *International Journal of Pedagogies and Learning,* 7(1), 41–50.  AUS  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *first year experience, higher education, mature-aged students* | **Context:** The move of first year experience (FYE) studies from prioritising local issues to developing widespread approaches, and the overall improvement of FYE while also maintaining student diversity. This paper focuses specifically on the experience of mostly mature-aged students at a satellite campus in Queensland.  **Aim:** To ‘provide insights for universities in better understanding what it means to provide a supportive, connected and challenging environment for first year students’ (41).  **Theoretical frame:** Creswell’s (2005) stages of content analysis were applied to focus group transcripts to elicit key themes emerging from discussions in response to research questions.  **Methodology:** Qualitative – findings taken from a larger mixed-method study which explored the perceptions of students enrolled in their first year of study and also draws on data from focus group interviews involving 14 first year students and guided by an interview schedule asking about work/home/school life and the relationships between them.  **Findings:** Themes of *commitment*, *engagement in dialogue*, and *sense of ownership* emerged from the interviews. Students expected universities to reciprocate the commitment and effort students devoted, and to make the students ‘feel valued’. Students also seem to understand that those of them with ‘career-driven goals’ and a willingness to sacrifice will fare better in university than those without and acknowledge a divide that for them, indicates commitment/seriousness levels. With regards to dialoguing, ‘focus group participants saw themselves as ‘customers’ accessing services with a clear purpose in mind, rather than as ‘students’ being taught’ (46).  **Core argument:** ‘Dialogue’, ‘commitment’ and ‘sense of ownership’ are core to a successful first year (48) and ‘students may expect to take a greater degree of ownership over the process and be positioned as valued consumers’ (49). |
| Bangeni, B. & Kapp, R. (2005). [Identities in Transition: Shifting Conceptions of Home among ‘Black’ South African University Students](https://www.jstor.org/stable/20065137), *African Studies Review,* 48(3), 1–19.  SA  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Written at time of social transition in South Africa and increasing diversity of ‘traditionally white’ universities like the University of Cape Town. Authors examine intersection between language and literacies (attitudes, practices)/ identity and home/ university discourses. Generally research does not track students’ experiences over time  **Aim:** To “trace two first-generation university students' changing constructions of who they are and the concomitant changes in their relationship to home and university over the course of three years” (abstract); to explore how students mediate home and academic discourses over time.  **Theoretical frame:** Gee’s (1990) notion of discourse (“accepted ways of "saying-doing-being-valuing-believing", p.3); postmodern notion of identity as fluid and multiple  **Methodology:** Longitudinal case study, tracking 20 (mostly ESL/ working class) students in undergraduate study at UCT. Two participants – Sisanda and Andrew - profiled  **Findings:** Students’ shifts in transition are not linear (p.3): “Students' relationships with, and levels of attachment to, both the university and home are characterized by fluidity, ambivalence, and change” (p.3). **Core argument:** Students “are always responding to multiple and often conflicting expectations of who they are and who they should be” (p.16) – conflicts arise from individual desire to succeed, home lives and desire to socially belong. Loss of ‘home’ (through adoption of new identities, subjectivities and location through university study/life); for many students “the conception of "home" narrows from being their neighboring community to being just their family” (p.17), but university does not replace this loss. Longitudinal nature of study = enabled authors to dismiss linear notions of transition in students’ identity shifts: “our data nevertheless are significant in illustrating students' transitions and the complexities of their struggles to work out who they are and where they belong in relation to U.C.T. and home” (p.17). |
| Bathmaker, A. & Thomas, W. (2009). [Positioning themselves: an exploration of the nature and meaning of transitions in the context of dual sector FE/HE institutions in England](https://doi-org.wwwproxy1.library.unsw.edu.au/10.1080/03098770902856652), *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 33(2), 119–130.  UK  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *transitions; higher education; further education* | **Context:** Inherent structural inequalities of higher education within the UK educational system with a specific focus on higher education provision by ‘dual’ sector or ‘hybrid’ institutions. Bourdieu’s work on concepts of field, habitus and capital inform the authors’ analysis, which focuses on transitions; the authors identify and consider these transitions at three different, but interrelated levels: institutions in transition, transitions in institutions, and students’ experience of transition. Article draws on the qualitative strand of the FurtherHigher Project – which uses qualitative and quantitative methods to ‘investigate the changing shape and experience of higher education (HE) in England’ – specifically the case study focused on East Heath College which implemented a formal separation of East Heath College into two separate organisations – one HE and one FE – in 2007.  **Aim:** To uncover how higher education in dual sector/hybrid institutions may be shaped, and also in how it will affect higher ed institutions moving forward.  **Theoretical frame:** ‘Transition’ works at different levels to shape and construct meanings and identities in higher education. Current higher ed system incorporates ‘elite, mass and universal features all at the same time, with different parts of the system functioning in different ways, and serving different purposes’ (121). ‘Habitus’ as a way of conceptualising institutional cultures and embodies structures in the wider field, but is ‘also a process of mutual shaping and reshaping – an interplay of structure and agency, though always within the context of the power of the field’ (121). Bourdieu and Passeron’s theory that higher education system contributes to reproducing and legitimating the social structure and ‘selects students according to a social classification which is implicit and reproduces them according to an academic classification’ (121).  **Findings:** The division of FE and HE at East Heath College has had a negative effect on transitions within the institution. ‘Communication between FE and HE tutors within the same subject area is limited: there is no formal facility such as a subject area group for sharing information’ (125). ‘East Heath College may be characterised as displaying two different cultures or habituses: one of FE study, and one of HE study’ (126 which has ultimately resulted in students rarely progressing from FE to HE. **Core argument:** Higher ed institutions are not just *placed* within the field of HE, but have to diligently and intentionally work to construct a place for themselves within the field, which more and more resembles a market. Senior managers of these institutions fail to align strategic positioning and operation with student expectation. Currently, transition creates further nuance for stratification and inequalities that are already in the system. |
| Bathmaker, A.; Brooks, G.; Parry, G. & Smith, D. (2008). [Dual-sector further and higher education: policies, organisations and students in transition](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02671520802048646), *Research Papers in Education,* 23(2), 125–137.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *further education; higher education; participation; policy; organisation; sector; transition* | **Context:** Reports on ESRC/ TLRP- funded project (‘The FurtherHigher Project’) which examines dual-sector (FE and HE) institutions in the UK. Argues = relatively under-explored context/ space. Makes connection between wider discourses about unified system - discourses and policy – “connect with larger debates about how governments structure their tertiary arrangements to achieve a shift from mass to near-universal levels of participation, and how to reconcile pressures for diversification and greater differentiation with demands for access and equity” (p.126). Who takes responsibility (“the bulk of expansion”) = directed by policy and funding decisions. Creates “more complex and changing forms of differentiation” (p.126). Scopes evolution of ‘policy contours’ that collapsed binary higher education (HE, polytechnics) into binary (HE and FE) system, although qualifications = remain stratified. FE = supposed to help bear some of the load of the New Labour WP targets (50% of population) but “no consistent or coherent policy for dual-sector further and higher education has emerged in the post-Dearing period” (p.128)  **Aim:** To unpack questions related to dual-sector institutions, probing why some institutions have chosen to bring further and higher education inside the organisations and to consciously develop different identities to rest of organisational field: why, how does this impact on WP, is the goal = WP or something else? (p.130)  **Theoretical frame:** Scopes a theorised definition of boundary: distinction made between physical, social and cognitive (see p.134). Discusses ‘boundary-marking’ and ‘boundary-crossing’ in context of transition  **Methodology:** Interviewed former senior government officials (n=20 from 8 different institutions/ case studies of 4 models of education = Model A = dual sector; Model B = specialist college transferring to FE into HE; Model C= FE college with small offering of HE; Model D = FE college offering lot of HE… definitions offered p.131-2). Interviews with students (n=82) from 4 models (A-D) at two points of transition (moving from FE to HE or completing foundation degree and moving to bachelor degree) + 45 x lecturers. Also interviewed people tasked with leading new sector bodies/ documentary analysis  **Findings:** Of the 4 case study institutions, only 1 = evidence of ‘seamlessness’ progression at institution which branded itself a dual-sector. One = specialisation translates into progression into vocational/ academic areas; one case study = strategic alliance with one HEI; other case study =had expanded UG provision and progression = students moving on to other HEIs.  Disciplinary/ course differences: some foundation degrees and higher diplomas = “highly articulated” with programs above and below level = “ladder of progression”, although higher level courses = centred on teaching in workplace (employment focused) **Core argument:** In English HE, FE colleges are on one end of spectrum and Russell Group universities (Oxbridge) are on other end; dual-sector institutions = in middle. As teaching-only institutions with no power to accredit own qualifications, dual-sector = rely on other institutions for funding and validation. “In these circumstances, duality is associated with dependence and difficulty. In other respects, dual regimes have been permissive” (p.135). At policy level, duality suggest permeable boundaries: “These arrangements continue, as do strategies for widening participation that look to integration rather than elimination of sector regimes and territories” (p.135). |
| Beaumont, C.; Moscrop, C. & Canning, S. (2016). [Easing the transition from school to HE: scaffolding the development of self-regulated learning through a dialogic approach to feedback](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2014.953460), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 40(3), 331–350.  UK  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *feedback; feed-forward; dialogical feedback cycle (DFC); assessment; self-regulated learning; transition; computing* | **Context:** High quality feedback as essential to learning but a problem area in the UK; the divide between highly-structured guidance systems in schools and colleges and the promotion of ‘independent learning’ in higher education as a major contributor to student difficulties with transition.  **Aim:** “To improve the transition for first-year undergraduates by providing a structured set of guidance activities (scaffolding) as a means of an extended induction into the assessment processes in higher education” (331) by reporting research.  **Theoretical frame:** Constructive feedback is essential for improving performance: Laurillard’s claim that ‘action without feedback is completely unproductive for a learner’ and it has been shown that ‘high quality feedback is the most powerful single influence on student achievement’ (2002, 55; see also Black and Wiliam 1998; Hattie 1987)” (332). Molloy and Boud’s (2013) conceptualization of feedback that holds “students should not be passive recipients of teachers’ comments (transmission model); instead, they should be central to the feedback process, taking an active role” (333). The dialogic feedback cycle:    **Methodology:** Four-stage AR model: planning the intervention using the DFC; implementing it; collecting data (questionnaire and semi-structured focus groups); and evaluating/reflecting on the results  **Findings:** Statistically significant improvements in students’ perceptions of their understanding of assessment tasks and criteria and increased confidence in terms of completing assessment tasks and self-regulated learning. **Core argument:** Incorporation of principles from the DFC into other first-year modules, increasing the emphasis on stage 1 and 2 activities will provide improved consistency of experience and reinforce the principles of self-regulated learning, helping students develop, through practice, essential self-assessment capabilities. |
| Bowles, A.; Fisher, R.; McPhail, R.; Rosenstreich, D.; & Dobson, A. (2014). [Staying the distance: students’ perceptions of enablers of transition to higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2013.832157), *Higher Education Research & Development,* 33(2), 212–225.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *enablers; first-year experience; higher education; retention; student-centred; transition; university-led* | **Context:** Attrition and retention in large first year course in Australian higher education context. First semester = constructed as critical for students making decisions about whether to stay or not – makes the case that students’ perceptions of what helps make a successful transition = underexplored. Scopes literature on reasons for attrition  **Aim:** To examine students’ perceptions of what factors enable successful transition to university x  **Theoretical frame:** No theorisation of transition  **Methodology:** Qualitative/ mixed methods/ ‘pragmatic’: in-depth interviews (n=8) and focus groups (n=22) – themes led to development of questionnaire for measuring existing students against new students (n=771). Analysis of quant data = interval scales/ factor analysis  **Findings:**  Themes from interviews:  Administration, Attachment, Classes, Effort, Expectations, Facilities, Learning at university, Motivation, Orientation, Qualifications, Resources, Staff, Social, Study, Work (see p.217)  Seven of these factors = perceived factors that impact on successful transition:   * Study * Effort * Orientation * Learning@Uni * Culture * Facilities * Social   These factors fell into two categories: student-centred enablers and university-led enablers  Study, Effort & Culture = endogenous [intrinsic] = STUDENT-CENTRED  Orientation, Learning@Uni, Facilities and Social = exogenous [extrinsic] = UNIVERSITY-LED **Core argument:** There are two types of enablers (as perceived by students, as categorised by researchers): student-centred and university-led. These warrant further exploration: how do these types interact, how important are each type/ each factor etc. |
| Breeze, M., Johnson, K. & Uytman, C. (2018). [What (and who) works in widening participation? Supporting direct entrant student transitions to higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2018.1536042?journalCode=cthe20), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 25(1), 18–35.  UK (SCO)  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Higher education; widening access and participation; student transitions; direct entrants* | **Context:** Support programs for direct entrant (DE) students [students transitioning from Further Education directly into Year 2 of the following undergraduate programs: Psychology, Public Sociology, and Psychology  and Sociology (joint honours)] in Scotland. Authors evaluate an induction and support program, using focus group data to assess *what* works and *who* works. Authors cite work that recognises the non-linear/ complex journeys that constitute students’ transitions, especially for DE students. Because of the cohort, the authors argue that this article sits at the intersection of transitions and widening participation research/ practice/ policy. Authors note other work that has considered DE students’ transitions, and the challenges that are caused particularly by the need to become/ shift to being independent. Authors also note the myriad other challenges that DE students face mean “it is unsurprising that existing research highlights the barriers encountered by DE students, and reveals that on-going transition support is required, rather than the simple provision of places and funding” (p.3–4). Challenges include: adapting to a new culture, unfamiliar systems and staff, impact of subordinated FE sector to HE, risk of individualizing DE transitions (rational choice model)  **Aim:** To ask “how universities can better adapt to the needs of DE students in transition” while avoiding an individualised view (p.5)  **Methodology:** Project based around DE Transition (DET) intervention, which has two components: welcome quiz/ bespoke workshops. Data for evaluation collected via focus groups with DE students (n=4: 1m, 3f/ 1 mature age)  **Findings:** Four key themes: (1) academic skills and independent learning (2) complicating relationships with staff (3) complicating peer support (4) everyday logistics of higher education.  Students repeated issue of difference between FE and HE – particularly with regard to academic literacies and conventions, lower than expected grades, less guidance for assessments. Students suggested more experience prior to transition (e.g. summer school)  Students also repeated concerns about different relationships with staff – characterized by unwillingness to ask for help at university and fear of being seen as not coping.  With regard to peer mentoring support, the participants reported some surprising misinformation, suggesting that this activity needs more careful consideration, particularly with regard to the recruiting of mentors.  Authors claim that participants reporting of procedural/ logistical issues (e.g. navigating campus, room numbering) are not really reported in the literature. Participants in this study found adapting to the geographic layout of their new environments as challenging. This shifted what the authors viewed as a WP issue.  Which students? Participants reported that they often couldn’t attend the workshops because of other competing demands on their time: “Participants had little free time outside of their compulsory credit-bearing university study, and this was compounded by the time that adjusting to university life took up in their schedules” (p.12) – which led the authors to wonder if the people who needed the transition support the most had been tacitly excluded, and whether marking DE students as a distinct group was a useful/ wise strategy as it could ‘other’ these students.  Which staff? Authors note how the funding they received (internal WP funds) made the project possible, that it would not have happened without that funding, and that the short-term nature of the funding hinders sustainability: “While some support mechanisms are codified in job role descriptions and workload  allocations and included in the remit of widening participation committees, others take place in the informal spaces between classes, in inboxes at evenings and weekends. Informal support can be contingent upon the availability and ‘goodwill’ of individual staff; unevenly distributed and institutionally unrewarded academic ‘housework’ (Heijstra, Steinthorsdóttir, and Einarsdóttir 2017)” (p.13). **Core argument:** Transitions supports should be embedded throughout the institution:  “(1) improved training and compensation for student volunteers and peer mentors, in order to reduce the spread of inaccurate and worrying information;  (2) improved awareness among lecturers about DE needs, including unfamiliarity with first-year course content;  (3) standardized, and sustainably funded, transitions support, to address the common concerns of DE and continuing students;  (4) consider institutional policies to ‘mainstream’ widening participation, mandating the consideration of the WP implications of all aspects of the university as institution, in order to reduce the exclusionary effects of the logistics of university life” (p.14). |
| Briggs, A.; Clark, J. & Hall, I. (2012). [Building bridges: understanding student transition to university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13538322.2011.614468), *Quality in Higher Education,* 18(1), 3–21.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *student transition; school; university; effectiveness; organisational processes; learner identity* | **Context:** Set in context of UK higher education transitions. Makes case that transition = underexplored  **Aim:** To explore challenges faced ‘in ensuring effective student transition’; to offer a model of process of transition; “to enhance institutional learning across the transition ‘bridge’, to provide conceptual thinking and to offer guidelines for university personnel seeking optimal conditions for effective transition and learner success” (p.4). Scopes literature on transition (e.g. Tinto, 1987) and on student expectations, encouraging potential students, student diversity, learner identity, university support systems, learning and teaching in higher education  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Draws on two sources of data: international literature and data collected from two studies at University of Newcastle (UK): ‘Bridging the Gap’ project (Briggs et al., 2009) = case studies of 4 transition programs and interviews with students and staff at school, FE colleges and HE students + questionnaire/ ‘Exploring Transition’ (Clark & Hall, 2010) – online questionnaire of all first year students (n=1222) + focus groups  **Findings:**  Themes: Early and up-to-date information = influences student aspiration for university positively. Good communication needed. 3 main types of preparation/outreach program: generic, focused, pedagogical [discipline-oriented]. Support needs to be targeted for students who could not attend visits, individual attention, consistency in staffing and support, enthusiasm and encouragement.  Conceptualisation of transition through modelling (focuses on factors under university control) – relating to learner identity formation. Model = non-sequential - some elements “may reinforce each other and some processes may need to be repeated” (p.15). Factors =   * personal contact; * multiple opportunities; * clarity of structure; * apposite information; * accessibility of people and curriculum; * purposeful liaison; * awareness of the individual within the process       **Implications for practice:** While students are in school, they benefit from receiving information, encouragement and one-to-one support. This necessitates close contact and communication via educational levels.  **Core argument:** Development of learner identity = central to successful transition into higher education. Individual attention = important: “Even within the organisational web of school, college and university liaison which is necessary for student transition to higher education, both primary and secondary data in this study have shown that this human touch is possible: the challenge to those managing university systems is how to achieve it” (p.18) |
| Brinkworth, R.; McCann, B.; Matthews, C. & Nordström, K. (2009). [First year expectations and experiences: student and teacher perspectives](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-008-9188-3), *Higher Education,* 58, 157–173.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Tertiary education; transition; mismatch; feedback* | **Context:** Explores transitions into higher education in Australia, based in part of argument by McInnis (2001) that states that a ‘sizeable minority’ struggle to acclimatise to higher education study – connection made to students being ‘inadequately prepared’ for university/ the ‘falling standards’ argument – impact on attrition and funding made explicit. Notes American literature that links challenges with transition to low income/ ethnic minority students (also makes contrast with Russian study). Scopes Australian literature (particularly FYE literature) and transition strategies. Notes how University of Adelaide surveyed commencing students in 2007 to examine expectations – this paper draws on this by following up two of the student groups.  **Aim:** To investigate “the extent to which these first year students’ expectations were met and considered their responses alongside their teachers’ views, with particular focus on feedback” (p.159) – to “gain a  deeper understanding of the relationship between the expectations of students entering university, the experience of first year students, and their teachers’ perceptions” (p.160) and to compare Science and Humanities students.  **Theoretical frame:** None explicit  **Methodology:** Quantitative/ survey design. Two groups of students asked to retake survey in Y1S2 or Y2 (allowing separation of experience and reflection on experience); Year 1 tutors from multiple disciplines also asked to take survey. Surveys= likert scales (see p.161-2 for detail on survey instruments). Participants =  “111 first year Humanities (French and History) students  • 122 first year Science (Biology and Geology) students  • 86 second year Humanities (Classics, French, German, History, Media and Politics) students  • 103 second year Science (Biology and Physics) students  • 11 teachers of first year Humanities (Classics, French, German, History and Media)  • 17 teachers of first year Science (Biology, Chemistry, Geology and Physics)” (p.163)  **Findings:**  90% students expected university to be different from school  Almost all participants (students and teachers) agreed/strongly agreed that studying at uni = different from high school  Students had big differences in expectations of / realities of workload, assessment and feedback.  89% Science students expected ready access to teachers (largely un-met) – similar patterns with Humanities  94% Science teachers ranked themselves as available; 64% Humanities teachers thought they were available  Both Y1 groups thought = important to attend lectures [see contrast with findings in Keane, 2011)  Students generally perceived collaborative learning (working with other students) as good for learning  Both groups = perceived they learnt more from enthusiastic teachers  Both groups expressed preference for images and diagrams  More humanities students likely to seek extra information (70-75% compared to 50-60% Science students)  Humanities students in general chose/stuck with course because of creativity, while Science = due to work prospects.  Mismatch between teachers’ expectations of/ students’ realities regarding outside commitments (ie. Teachers underestimated students’ outside commitments)  Big mismatches regarding feedback – commencing students had high expectations of good feedback on drafts – none of these expectations met for Humanities students and only 22% of Science students (7% in Yr1; 26% in Y2)  20% of Humanities students reported getting feedback compared with 0% of teachers saying they provided such feedback on drafts97% of commencing expected feedback on submitted work: 66% agreement with Humanities/ 37% with Science students  100% Humanities teachers said they gave such feedback/ 59% of Science teachers agreed.  Discrepancies also in expectations of time taken to return work  **Core argument:** Feedback = significant issue where there is mismatch between expectations and realities for students and perceptions between students and teachers. Expectations and realities relating to outside commitments between students and teachers = also significant. Authors argue for “more proactive and earlier interventionist strategies” to facilitate students’ transitions (p.170) |
| Brooman, S. & Darwent, S. (2014). [Measuring the beginning: a quantitative study of the transition to higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2013.801428), *Studies in Higher Education,* 39(9), 1523–1541.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords*: first-year student experience; induction; quantitative research; teaching and learning strategies; transition* | **Context:** Examines transition in first year of study (Law) and measures change in influencing factors: *self-efficacy, autonomous learning, social integration*. Makes case that transition is complex, needs multilayered approaches and is often explored in evaluative or qualitative approaches – beyond induction models. Authors developed ‘Independent Learning in Law’ (ILL) = core module for active agents in transition  **Aim:** “to gain a better understanding of the effect of our early interventions by measuring changes in those key factors…self-efficacy, learner autonomy and social integration” (p.1525)  **Analytic frame:** Self-efficacy (e.g. Bandura, 1997), autonomous learning (e.g. Macaskill and Taylor, 2010), social integration  **Methodology:** Quantitative. Measurement from Week 1, day 2 (T1) to Week 5, Day 1 (T2), with ‘collateral elements’: group-work poster + lectures and tutorials. Questionnaires: first year law students (n=195) administered at two points (T1 + T2). Measures: Self-efficacy scale (Bosscher & Smit, 1998). College Academic Self-efficacy scale (Owen & Froman, 1988), Autonomous Learning scale (Macaskill & Taylor, 2010). Developed social integration scale (3 subscales: sense of belonging, relationship with staff, old friends). Multivariate analysis (one and three-way ANOVAs) and correlational + cluster analysis.  **Findings:**  70% of participants = direct transition from school; 6.7% from Access course; rest = break in education  Over time: self-efficacy and study habits did not change from T1 to T2  Learning beliefs changed to the opposite of hypothesis: “students reported *lower* learning beliefs at the ened of the task than at the beginning” (p.1536).  Old friends (social integration scale) did not change but sense of belonging and relationship with staff did change positively over the time period.  Students who received greater support from staff = higher self-reported self-efficacy, autonomous learning beliefs and study habits.  Gender, work and accommodation = significant  Scopes limitations (e.g. other student groups and discipline areas)  **Core argument:** Authors expectations of how interventions play out on were not met.  Poster project = coincides with developing social integration  Students who maintained old relationships = more likely to feel sense of belonging and supported by staff |
| Bussell, H. & Mulcahy, L. (2011). [Preparation for higher education (HE): a study of collaborative partnerships in easing the transition to HE](https://journal.aldinhe.ac.uk/index.php/jldhe/article/view/66), *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education,* 3,1–17.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Widening participation; partnership; collaboration; transition to HE; access.* | **Context:** Post-Dearing Report in UK – widening participation agenda and New Labour WP targets. Massification of HE = increase in provision of HE in FE colleges. Examines partnerships/ successful collaboration between further education and higher education. Paper based on collaboration between Teesdale University and FE colleges and creation of ‘Preparation for Higher Education’ 20 credit Level 4 module – main focus = enhance coursework and research skills and to remove perceived barriers to entering HE. By Sep 2009, PHE = offered in 5 FE colleges.  **Aim:** To present findings from second stage of longitudinal project (evaluation) examining collaborative project; to present challenges in the collaboration; “to gain an understanding of key issues and identify practices which require further development to enable the partnership to progress and highlight to other institutions how they might proceed with similar activities” (p.5)  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Second stage of evaluation = interviewing colleges involved and following students who moved to HE: 6 x focus groups with students (n=63) studying the module – comparison between groups from different colleges. In-depth interviews conducted with 3x students who had moved into HE  **Findings:** PHE = successful in terms of partner uptake and partnerships, and useful tool for recruitment for Teesdale University. Colleges = consensus that module works best when embedded into programs and attendance on university campus. Flexibility = driver for growth and its perception as contributing to WP agenda (esp. non-traditional students). Perceived multiple benefits to students. However, also disparity in views between university and college lecturers: university sees it as collaborative but it more resembles a franchise – assumption that university practices are superior = complex relationship |
| Cebulla, A. and Whetton, S. (2017) [All roads leading to Rome? The medium term outcomes of Australian youth’s transition pathways from education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13676261.2017.1373754?journalCode=cjys20), *Journal of Youth Studies*, 21(3), 304–323.  AUS  Annotation written by Dr Megan Rose  Keywords: *Transitions; Australia; Youth, Education; Employment; Salaries; Job Satisfaction* | **Context:**Post-education pathways taken by youth aged 15-24 years of age compared to pathways of youth aged 29-38.  **Aim:**To explore the links between transition from education to employment pathways and graduate earnings, perception of employment opportunities, job satisfaction and debt.  **Methodology:**Applied sequence analysis of Household Income and Labour Dynamics in Australia (HILDA) survey (2001-2014); built on Fry and Boulton’s (2013) study, extending to include 14 years of data; n=20,000 households.  **Findings:**   * Fry and Boulton (2013) found that across all pathways, earnings and employment converged over time, however the most rewarding pathway was a combination of earning and work. * 24% of the sample of the HILDA survey in 2014 pursued a work and study to work pathway, where participants engaged in work and study equally. * 15% of the sample in 2014 pursued the work, with and without study, pathway, whereby study is the primary focus for the first 2-3 years followed by increased work and study. * 10% partook in the not in the labour force pathway, whereby they were not employed or in the labour work force. * 39% were in the “churning with work” pathway, where work was the primary focus. * The work, with and without study and churning with work pathways produced the highest 4 year average earnings 2009-2013. * The work and study to work pathway, whereby a higher educational qualification was obtained, did not enable them to match the earnings of work, with and without study group. This suggests that the returns of participating in higher education are in decline, where this group is “sandwiched” between a prioritised pool of top-graduates, post-graduates and the churning with work group, and then the HSC educated group moving from education to work.   **Core argument:**  Earnings for those churning with work or studying with an increasing amount of work were the highest among all 5 pathways. While transition pathways provide different earnings in the medium term, this difference does not impact on young peoples perception of employment opportunities or ability to pay bills. In the medium term, pathways that combined study and work (either with a strategy in mind, or as part of a work/study balance) appeared to be the most rewarding.  “Currently being in work, higher education qualifications, good health and living in a coupled household without children most consistently ‘explained’ more positive outcomes, alongside having parents with higher  occupational background and (in the case of unpaid bills) the absence of unpaid bills when last asked.” (11) |
| Chester, A.; Burton, L.; Xenos, S.; Elgar, K. & Denny, B. (2013). [Transition in, Transition out: A sustainable model to engage first year students in learning](https://fyhejournal.com/article/view/174.html). A Practice Report, *The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education,* 4(2), 125–130.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: peer mentoring; first year experience; transition; peer mentoring evaluation; learning approaches | **Context:** Discusses the ‘Transition in, Transition out’ peer mentoring program at USQ for supporting students’ transitioning into Australian higher education – particularly development of sustainable and scalable models. TiTo addresses psychological and academic dimensions of transition = embedded into curriculum  **Aim:** To describe evaluation of ‘Transition in, Transition out’ (TiTo) in on-campus and offline modes  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Describes evaluation of TiTo – data collected using ASSIST inventory (Entwistle, 2000) = measures three levels of learning: surface, strategic and deep + academic performance results + survey of students (Psychology undergraduate course = one on-campus, one offline). Students (n=  **Findings:** ASSIST scores suggest students developed strategic and deep learning strategies over the course (one semester). Final marks (compared with previous cohort) appeared to show that more students achieved grades over 60%, although a similar percentage failed.  The majority (70%) enjoyed the program  Poses three questions at end for others considering implementing a transition program:   * To what extent can these outcomes, described within the discipline of psychology, be generalised to other programs? * What would be required to embed TiTo in your program?   Are there any specific aspects that might constrain the implementation of TiTo in your program/School/University? |
| Choi, T. (2017). [Narratives of educational transition and learner identity](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01425692.2015.1073101?journalCode=cbse20), *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 38(2), 164–183.  HK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *class; habitus; field; capital; identity; transition* | **Context:** Higher education in Hong Kong, expanded access (HK gov’t = 60% of HK population to have access to HE in 2001) and English language. Disparity in numbers of rich and poor students (rich = 4 times more likely to gain access than poor counterparts); access to English language post-1997 Chinese take over is significant: “viable language for academically able students, and is perceived as a marker of competence, confidence, success, and status, which gives access to alternative realities in educational progressions in its highly visible academic hierarchy, through its post-colonial times” (p.168). English = “educationally profitable linguistic capital” (p.168).  Scopes literature on working class students and educational biographies  **Aim:** To argue that transitions = classed processes and practices with implications for identity; to “explore how academically able students from humble origins negotiate a new phase of learning and grapple with the class-coded culture of the new environment, in which relationships change, power is redistributed, and differing capital is prized” (p.168). To respond to two RQs:   * How are educational transitions concurrently classed processes and practices in Hong Kong? * How is learner identity developed and negotiated in an education system that prizes English as capital? (p.168)   **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu = habitus, field, capital; author notes the dichotomies that often accompany habitus (reproduction/transformation; structure/agency; institutional/individual; resistance/change) = see p.165, but also notes Mills’ (2008) contention that habitus can be both reproductive and transformative (see also Davey, 2009; Lehmann, 2012). Habitus also understood as collective and individual  **Methodology:** Narrative approach/ 3 student autobiographies: “life stories can provide insights into how individuals develop their identities through negotiating the social contexts in which they are situated” (p.169). Autobiographies = in written English; project yielded 10 distinct trajectories from 20 participants  **Findings:**  All 3 profiled participants = foregrounded impact of families’ limited ‘educational inheritance’, but parents had high aspirations for their children – this provoked feelings of guilt for the students if they did not achieve top grades (see p.171). Desire/ pride in being top = “related to the instrumental order of schooling  seen as the acquisition of specific skills and knowledge (Bernstein, 1966) and to the demands of performativity in the highly visible academic hierarchy of Hong Kong” (p.172). 2 students expressed feelings of not belonging in prestigious schools (domain of rich where students spoke seemingly perfect English), reinforcing sense of difference/ subordination/ inferior/ embarrassment **Core argument:** [doesn’t say much about transition as phenomenon or discourse – is more about students’ classed experiences of their educational journeys] |
| Christie, H. (2009). [Emotional journeys: young people and transitions to university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01425690802700123), *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 30(2), 123–136.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: e*motions; identities; restructuring; youth transitions* | **Context:** Non-traditional students’ transitions into elite higher education, specifically the role of emotions in choice-making process. Notes neo-liberal shifts producing “a fundamental shift in the way universities go about the business of educating (young) people to degree level” (p.124) – resulting in policy directives that contributed to massification of system due to push for individual investment and arguments about national knowledge economies. Such ideological/political change has shifted the way that transition is viewed – moving from notion of transition as linear to a focus on capturing multiplicity: “Indeed it is now de rigeur to claim that there is a discernible shift to more complex life-patterns and a balancing of a range of personal  priorities and interests in explaining comparative youth transitions” (p.124). Briefly scopes literature (scant) on emotions and summarises that for non-traditional students, “the transition to university is an intensely emotional process, because it brings with it conflicting and paradoxical feelings of ambivalence and contradiction about ‘fitting in’ to student life, and their aged, classed and gendered identities” (p.125).  **Aim:** To “investigate the powerful emotional component underpinning the transitions that young people make to university” (p.123).  **Methodology:** Paper draws from study on experiences of 12 x young (25 or younger) non-traditional students in two pre-1992 universities in Scotland in mid-2000s (2nd and 3rd year students, n=27). All students had previously attended an access course, none had parents who had attended university, all had attended schools where university was not a given, one = ethnic minority) = significant because “the students’ unfamiliarity with the landscape of higher education rendered them more likely to convey the complex emotions that underpin the transition to university” (p.126). Semi-structured interviews conducted.  **Findings:**  Place = significant (all participants lived at home which constrained pathways, but had access to 4 universities in local city)  *Becoming a student: infrastructure, agency and emotion*: Decision-making = in different ‘transition infrastructure’ than that experience by previous generations (i.e. leaving school and going to work is no longer the norm). Middle class discourses about value and ritual aspect of going to higher education = pervasive. Emotions play out in two ways: 1) in trust in transitions infrastructure; 2) anxiety about making wrong choices  Trust in transitions infrastructure – students expressed strong belief in relationship between HE studies and future employment (beyond ‘ordinary jobs’) and a ‘head start’, but this excitement/ belief = matched with anxiety (‘fear and nervousness’) about consequences of passing over opportunity to go to university or getting trapped in ‘dead end jobs’ (p.128)  *Agency and infrastructure: fear of failure***:** needto craft personal sales pitches/ awareness of the risks of going to university: “this individual responsibility weighed heavily on the students’ minds and making the ‘right’ choice, whether about going to university or about leaving home, was fraught with worries and anxieties. Although they had bought into the discourse of labour-market fulfilment, they were conscious of the risks they took in going to university” (p.129). Students’ anxieties = both risk (money, choices made, future currency of studies) and losing connections with home and family/friends. Interesting comments from participants about perceptions of going to post-1992 university and wasting time/ lacking value (see p.130).  Experiences of non-traditional students (compared with accounts of middle class students) suggests  “discrepancies between the idealised model of student life and the reality of the lives of the ‘new students’” (p.131) and emotional dislocation – viewing themselves as ‘day students’ (see also Christie, Munro & Wager, 2005), whereby studying = modification to existing life (rather than transforming lives wholesale) = doing not being  Hidden injuries of class: students’ narratives suggested that they feared the students who could ‘be’ students: “University was experienced as a space of difference where patterns of consumption were central to the process of othering” (p.133) = clothes, cars, lifestyle. Students typically adjusted for class injuries by positioning themselves as morally superior to richer peers  **Core argument:** Emotions = classed and important for students’ success and transitions. Going to university = “emotional process” (p.135): “The capacity to ‘be’ a student is class specific, mapping out a landscape that the middle classes inhabit and from which the working classes feel excluded. The evidence presented here points to the real emotion work that many non-traditional students undertake to justify and defend their right to be at university even when their level of achievement entitles them to a place. While these conflicts and anxieties were experienced and managed on a personal level, it is important to be aware of the structural level at which they are produced and played out” (p.134). |
| Christie, H.; Barron, P. & D’Annunzio-Green. N. (2013). [Direct entrants in transition: becoming independent learners](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2011.588326), *Studies in Higher Education*, 38(4), 623-637. DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2011.588326  UK  Annotation by Anna Xavier  Keywords: *university transition; student learning; learning environment; first-year experience; academic success* | **Context:** Sits in the context of the government policy for HE in the UK, which encourages more students to take ‘direct entry’ into university. However, the article highlights that there is a paucity in research regarding the experiences of direct entrants in the UK. *\*Direct entrants: students who experience their first year at university in year two/three of their degree programme*  **Aim:** To offer information from ‘the direct entrants themselves about the transitions made from their year group within the university’ and the factors that helped them succeed at university, via an ‘interpretation of the students’ success which attends to their perceptions about, and experiences of learner autonomy, as they move between their previous and new learning environments’ (p. 624).  **Theoretical frame:** Not specified in study.  **Methodology:** Qualitative, longitudinal approach; Data collection methods: Semi-structured interviews Participants: Direct entrants who joined the university’s business school in 2006/07 (n=20); from low SES groups; 12 mature students; 16 women & 4 men, Data analysis: Inductive approach.  **Findings:** 1) Two key factors in negotiating students’ transition to university: a)’Perceptions of their ability to cope with, and succeed in, module assessments. b) ‘Good time management’ (p. 628) 2)Three groupings of students were identified in terms of their relative success in becoming independent learners: Group 1 (5 students) – ‘Successful independent learners’ (Smooth transition) (p. 628); Group 2 (11 students) - Working hard to adjust & conscious of need to develop as independent learners (‘High expectations, uneven transitions’) (p. 628); Group 3 (4 students) – ‘Struggling to become independent learners’ (Crisis in transition) (p. 28). 3); Group 1: Key characteristics – ‘ability to be flexible & adapt quickly to the new learning environment’ (p. 628), good time management; Group 2: ‘Limited awareness of practicalities of becoming an independent learner’ – indicated ‘real difficulties involved in ‘coming to know’ the rules & practices of their new learning community (Christie, 2009) (p. 628), less effective time management, limited awareness on the need to ‘self-study’ (p. 629), struggle in achieving balance between studies & other commitments; aware of need to improve on time management; Group 3 – Limited understanding on independent learning, expect to continue studies the same way they did in college, poor time management, difficulties balancing studies with employment & family responsibilities, found university to be a ‘lonely & unsupportive environment’ (p. 633), missed being directed by their lecturers on what to do and read.  **Discussion:** 1)Two factors distinguishing three groups of students in their successful transition to university: Motivation & agency; Group 1: Their willingness to act & actively seek assistance & information from staff when needed were factors impacting their successful transition; the ‘lack of explicit mention of challenges’ in being direct entrants also highlight their ‘recognition of the need to adjust quickly to the learning environment’; Group 3 (and some in Group 2): Key sociocultural competence lacking – commitment to seek assistance & information proactively; More aware of struggles of taking direct entry; disadvantaged by limited availability of time to adapt to their new environment.  **Core argument:** Direct entrants do not make ‘seamless transitions to university’ (p. 635), which should be acknowledged within articulation frameworks. Universities should also ‘question the form and nature of the support available to direct entrants, as well as to students entering first year, throughout their time at university’ (p. 635). |
| Christie, H.; Munro, M. & Wager, F. (2005). [‘Day Students’ in Higher Education: widening access students and successful transitions to university life](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09620210500200129), *International Studies in Sociology of Education,* 15(1), 3–29.  SCOT  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** ‘Widening access’ to ‘day students’ in /to elite university in Scotland. Scopes the policy concern with widening participation at the time. Scottish universities = devolved from central higher education policy (to charge students for partial costs of their studies) and had abolished tuition fees in 2001 for Scottish students + bursaries for students in need. Students still took out student loans for living costs. Attrition = major driver for continued policy attention; authors note almost double lowest quartile SES students dropping out (9% compared with 5% of highest SES students), leading to pathologising of working class students as ‘problematic’ and more likely to drop out. Discusses construction of ‘new’ student (aka, non-traditional; see Leathwood & O’Connell, 2003), resulting in more diversity of transitions into higher education.  **Aim:** To “unpack what factors help or hinder non-traditional students in making a successful transition to university life” (p.6)  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Research undertaken at two universities in Edinburgh: University of Edinburgh and Heriot-Watt; participants were recruited via two WP programs (one= school-based outreach, the other = adult outreach/ access course). Interviews conducted with students from both WP pathways (n=27) in 2003. Most Uni of Edinburgh participants were female; Heriot-Watt = more male participants. All students had completed at least 2 years of study and all lived at home (hence ‘day students’) and commuted to university. Finances were tight for all students and all students viewed themselves as ‘financially independent’. Reasons for staying at home = partially about economic rationality, partly about sustaining jome networks (local work/ social groups/ childcare support). Authors categorise these participants into 3 groups:   * *Absorbed* students: “firmly committed to the normative ideal of student life despite circumstances which meant they could not achieve this fully in practice”, meaning that they felt they were missing out on ‘being a student’ (p.12). They privileged time/ relations at university over other aspects (e.g. prioritizing going out with uni friends over other friends). * *Pragmatists*: “university was only one facet of their lives and could not be all-absorbing, whether because of work commitments or family responsibilities”- being a ‘day student’ = pragmatic response to competing demands on their time. None of these participants had children and priority = balancing work and study * *Separate worlds*: mature students who distanced themselves from ideas about ‘traditional’ student and sought active separation between student life and home worlds. All females in this group had children (men did not disclose family responsibilities): “What divided the group was gender: women’s role as mothers limited their access both to the academic structure of the universities and to the social side of student life, to the extent that aspiring to the normative ideal of student life was not on their agenda. In contrast, the men’s evident displacement was manifest in their strong rejection of the normative model of student life and their consequent marginalisation within the university” (p.17). Particular tensions existed around the collection of children from childcare. Most students experienced ‘deleterious effects’ on their studies – due to tiredness/ time constraints/ lack of preparedness for study/ individualised. All these women = studying Arts (authors speculate that it would not be possible for these women to undertake full-time lab-based course). Many of these students did not feel the institution recognized the pressures on their lives/ time (see p.20).   **Findings:  Core argument:** Middle class “ideas about ‘fitting in’ rest on the notion that the ‘middle-class’ way of being a student is privileged and privileging” (p.6). Ideas about normative student experience and associated lifestyle discourses = challenged: “In many instances there is a conscious rejection of the assumed norms of a middle-class student life and a clear sense that they should have a right to establish a different way of being a student in the 21st century – and that the institution should provide more support for [‘day students’] to do this” (p.23). |
| Christie, H.; Tett, L.; Cree, V.; Hounsell, J. & McCune, V. (2008). [‘A real rollercoaster of confidence and emotions’: learning to be a university student](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075070802373040), *Studies in Higher Education,* 33(5), 567–581.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *emotions; transition; further education; higher education; non-traditional students* | **Context:** Non-traditional students’ transitions into elite higher education from further education, specifically the role of emotions. Learning at university = “a profoundly reflexive and emotional construct, that entails the undoing of earlier learning as students enter a new environment with different subjects, learning approaches and teaching styles” (p.567). In policy discourse = assumption/ dominance of idea of learning as cognitive process – leading to/ fuelling deficit notion of students (failing because of individual attributes/ deficiencies). Literature has little to say about affective dimensions of learning. Links to literature on learning identities: “biographical studies suggest that learners have inherently ‘fragile’ identities: they follow ‘fractured’ and ‘disrupted’ pathways though formal education; their engagement with new learning environments is often uncertain; and their disposition to learning, and eventual success (or failure), is affected by a range of psychological factors” (p.569)  **Aim:** To illustrate how becoming a university student = emotional process  **Theoretical frame:** Communities of Practice (Lave & Wenger) + culture shock for non-traditional students  **Methodology:** Draws on a longitudinal project examining teaching and learning experiences of non-trad students moving from FE to HE. Draws from interviews with Year 1 students studying humanities and social sciences who had entered directly from FE. Emotions = not explicit focus of interview schedule  **Findings:** Initial interviews = strong sense of excitement but followed by ‘learning shock’ – including loss of ‘secure identity’ built from FE studies. Second interviews = bewilderment and dislocating due to loss of past sureties, due to: lack of knowledge about university and lack of supportive relationships, resulting in loss of prior learning identities. Many students had anticipated differences in teaching and learning. Students’ security = threatened by lack of knowledge about university. Students also had insecurity about academic standards and not knowing what is expected (e.g. problems with deciphering reading lists). When students worked out that “learning was intrinsically related to the quality of communication and relationships in daily practice”, their confidence increased and the security of their identities developed. Study groups helped remove isolation, with emotional underpinnings. Discussion of emotional consequences of belonging and memberships **Core argument:** There are significant emotional gains, suggesting “that it is the emotional gains produced  through learning that helped students to form a (learning) relationship to the university, and enabled them to engage in the identity work necessary to become members of a new learning community” (p.573).  Main findings:   1. “many non-traditional students work with distinctive – and class-based – understandings of what it means to fully belong to a community of practice in an elite university” 2. “while learning how to be a university student was an emotionally demanding process for all of the students in this study, it was also bound up with the very particular nature of the pathways they had taken through higher education” (p.579) |
| Christie, H.; Tett, L.; Cree, V.; & McCune, V. (2016). [‘It all just clicked’: a longitudinal perspective on transitions within university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2014.942271), *Studies in Higher Education,* 41(3), 478–490.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transitions; longitudinal analysis; engagement; participation; learning communities* | **Context:** Examines experiences of students who entered HE from FE as part of WP initiative – looking at beyond first year and across the lifetime of their degrees + **approaches to independent learning**. Notes that the dominant focus on the first year = result of neoliberalisation of academy and reputational damage of high attrition rates  **Aim:** To report on project exploring students’ experiences over time; “to provide a longitudinal account of their experiences of engagement and participation at the university” (abstract); “a longitudinal analysis of the processes through which students become successful independent learners over the lifetime of their degree programme” (p.479); to examine the knowledge and skills needed ‘to survive’ – based on a comparison of first and last years.  **Theoretical frame:** Draws on concept of learning communities (Lave and Wenger)  **Methodology:** Longitudinal research. Students (n=20) who were asked to complete a standardised questionnaire each year of their degree and take part in in-depth interviews. 45 students started the project but only 20 completed the project (10 = 3 year degree; 10 = 4 year degree)  **Findings:** All 20 participants “had all come to know and understand how to operate effectively within the university’s teaching and learning environment” = successful transition (p.483).   1. They found the learning progressively more difficult but were ‘100% dedicated’ to finishing their degrees. Comments about skills “tended to centre” on writing (p.483) – data from students reflecting on adapting to academic writing – awareness of difficulties = retrospective. This “demonstrate[s] the importance of time to engage with the learning community, which enabled the students to move towards more secure learning identities in their third and fourth years of study. This was an important aspect of the process of ‘becoming’ students and of feeling they had gained membership of the university” (p.484). 2. Over time students develop critical thinking and get a better view of the ‘bigger picture’ and recognized the importance of the foundations built in first two years. Students able to take ‘intellectual risks’ (Saltmarsh & Saltmarsh, 2008), and “students grappled with the social construction of knowledge and came to realise that there are always competing versions of the truth” (p.485) – see example of student and writing year 1 v. year 3 on p.485. 3. Students also develop practical strategies to develop learning identities – feeling established and accepted: “Taking on an identity as a university student variously involved taking responsibility for managing their own learning, including finding their own learning materials as well as being proactive in creating time and space in which to study” (p.486)   **Core argument:** Learning = more than set of cognitive skills. Students (in this case from FE) have to work hard to make sense of and fit into new learning communities and “students have to learn, unlearn, and relearn the practices and conventions of the different learning communities they move through” (p.488). Learning = ontological process of becoming (see Hirst et al., 2004): “becoming an independent learner is a dynamic process that occurs within a pedagogical relationship that actively works (or not) to foster the dispositions and qualities that allow the student to engage meaningfully with the curriculum” (p.488). |
| Colley, H. (2007). [Understanding time in learning transitions through the lifecourse](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/09620210701667103), *International Studies in Sociology of Education,* 17(4), 427–443.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Increasing interest in educational transitions for UK/ European policy makers, as well as an important area of inquiry for sociologists of education. Colley argues that in studies of transition, notion of *change* has been prioritised over the notion of *time* – with much of the literature based on commonsensical ideas of time (linear, ‘natural flow’).  **Aim:** The paper is “an attempt both to make visible the social theories of time that tacitly inform much sociological study of learning transitions and to demonstrate the potential of alternative, feminist theories of time to inform radical sociological studies in this field” (p.428).  **Theoretical frame:** Feminist theory/ androcentric thinking/ sociological notions of time  Author argues that increased attention to transition = increasing individualisation/ neoliberal economic imperatives, resulting in linear thinking around transition. Dominant construction of transition = change over time“ (p.428).  Colley reports Ecclestone (2006), which outlines 4 different conceptions of transitions in policy/ academic literature:   1. Institutional transitions (dominant in policy and policy-related literature), which “promote[s] a highly teleological notion of ‘progression’ as a linear trajectory onward and upward, and [policy makers/ employers] increasingly deflect responsibility onto the individual for learning and furthering their own career development” (p.429). Punitive approach 2. Institutional/ layered transitions, where ‘contextual change’ may occur in same time frame; may involve changes in socially regulated identities (transitions = products of social institutions/ produced by social expectations – Ecclestone, 2006). Reparative approach 3. Individual and collective transitions: agency and structure at ‘turning points’ – shift in thinking from life cycle to lifecourse, with lifecourse analysis emphasising wider, messy interrelationships between family, home, study, work, and historical time. 4. Life-as-transition = ‘permanent state of becoming’ (Ecclestone, 2006); always ‘lost in transition’ as ‘a condition of our subjectivity’ (Quinn, 2006).   Conceptualisations of time: ‘dualistic binary’ of social and natural time: sequential, linear – interplay of memory and anticipation (Augustine) or a priori element of consciousness (Kant) v. natural/ observable/ physical sciences. Author notes how assumed natural elements of ‘clock time’ = socially constructed through timetables, schedules (see Foucault, 1991). Author notes work of Turetzky (1998), whose work “treats time as a triadic phenomenon: opening up the present to split the past from the future and, in doing so, allowing for ever-new becomings” (p.431). Biesta & Tedder (2006) make rare use of triadic flow-view of time, arguing that “human agency exists as series of changing orientations to its triadic elements:  - iterational orientations to influences from the past  - projective orientations to future possibilities  - practical-evaluative orientations to engagement with the present” (p.431).  Biesta & Tedder (2006) = argue, “that we need to understand how the flow of time and different temporal contexts support particular orientations and enable possible ways of acting” (p.432).  Bourdieu’s (1992) notion of practice = act of temporalisation: “Practice anticipates the regularities and tendencies that are immanent in our social world, the future inscribed in the immediacy of the present and implied by the past that has produced our habitus” (p.432). Field and habitus = modes of existence of history. Adams (e.g. 1995) = argues that perceptions/ experiences of time. Linear, irreversible view of time = patriarchal view of time; non-essentialist feminist theory of time is needed (see table on p.434)  **Methodology:** Applies theoretical lens to Mojab’s (2006) study of Kurdish women in Sweden  **Findings:**  Describes lack of recognition of prior learning, knowledges, skills. Learning for many women = low level, work-focused training = represents a form of “traumatic violence” (p.436). Women’s experiences of such symbolic and traumatic violence = compounded by deeply patriarchal Kurdish culture.  Mojab conceptualises the temporal aspect of these women’s experiences as ‘Closure-Opening-Closure’ dialectical cycle (see p.438), although author argues that the cyclical metaphor = too simplistic, and suggests that a rhizomatic movement could better depict the ‘web of contradictions’  Refugee specific question: “What might it mean to have been uprooted by war, to find one’s possibilities for action and one’s learning denied rather than renewed, in a context where one’s life has been dedicated to the struggle for a homeland that is occupied, partitioned and oppressed?” (p.438).  Colley analyses transitions at different scales of time and place: epochs, periods of time/ geographic locations, micro-individual level **Core argument:** Dualistic conceptions of time = unhelpful for describing the experiences of the women in Mojab’s study. Study makes contribution by foregrounding both aspects of time, and viewing them in relation to each other [in context of change]; a “more critical, feminist analysis might read these life histories by paraphrasing the terms of Marx: as women making history, but not in conditions of their own making, and only succeeding when they are able to be conscious of themselves as a gender and engage in collective struggle” (p.440)  Transitions “may then be viewed as a process of change in particular times, that is to say, in particular epochs,  periods or moments, and mediated by the gendered, racialised and classed practices which engender those times” (p.440). |
| Crafter, S. & Maunder, R. (2012). [Understanding transitions using a sociocultural framework](http://oro.open.ac.uk/33563/), *Educational and Child Psychology,* 29(1), 10–18.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Educational psychological. Argues that sociocultural framing can best help to develop understandings of transition – linking thought and agency to situatedness. Application of theoretical frameworks with transitions from primary to secondary education and beyond.  **Aim:** To explore transitions using sociocultural theory  **Theoretical frame:** Vygotksy’s sociocultural theory (participation in sociohistorical and cultural events = foundation for developing psychological processes) for 3 frameworks: 1) consequential transitions; 2) symbolic transitions; 3) communities of practice. Transition = more than change as product; it’s also process of changing (more than changing physical location/ developmental stages: “Transitions are complex and multi-faceted and invariably involve changes to self-identity born out of uncertainty in the social and cultural worlds of the individual” (p.10).  **Methodology:** Essay  **Discussion:**  *Transition as consequential* (Beach, 1999): transitions have consequences for sociocultural context [and = dialogic presumably]. Beach = typology of transitions = argues transition is reconstruction of self/ activities:   * Lateral transitions = occur when an individual moves between two historically related activities in a single direction; participation in one activity = replaced with participation in another activity (such as primary to secondary school; studying while working) * Collateral transitions = relatively simultaneous participation in two or more historically related activities (such as moving between classes) * Encompassing transitions = “occur within the boundaries of a social activity that is itself changing, and is often where an individual is adapting to existing or changing circumstances in order to continue participation in the activity e.g. teachers undertaking new education reform” (e.g. generational change) * Mediational transitions: “occur within education activities that project or simulate involvement in an activity yet to be fully experienced” (e.g. learning a skill, playing shops at school)   *Ruptures and uncertainty*: 3 types of rupture   * Change in cultural context * Change to ‘sphere of experience’ * Change in relationships   *Communities of Practice* = transition = process of joining and becoming members (from periphery to more central membership). Also communities change over time and are changed also by new members. CoP also permits gaze to focus on inter-relationships between members  **Core argument:** Transitions = ‘complex and multifaceted’ and involve change in self-identity born out of uncertainty. Transitions = inherently social. Through adopting sociocultural framing, transition “requires us to move beyond merely focusing on the functional changes that are taking place (i.e. the outcomes) when a pupil or student is moving into a new educational environment or learning situation, to also taking into account some of the inner shifts that individuals are experiencing (i.e. the process). The uncertainty and ‘newness’ associated with change will involve a search for meaning and a reconstruction of sense of self. As a result, individuals undergoing transitions of various forms will emerge with a reformed identity” . |
| Cousin, G. (2010). [Neither teacher-centred nor student-centred: threshold concepts and research partnerships](https://journal.aldinhe.ac.uk/index.php/jldhe/article/view/64), *Journal of Learning Development in Higher Education,* 2, 1–9.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *threshold concepts; partnerships with students; partnerships with subject specialists; research methods* | **Context:** Threshold concepts as a ‘fresh way’ of thinking about research collaboration with students, researchers and educational developers and tension about ‘student-centred’ teaching and learning. Author argues that “Many educational developers defensively package this suspicion [regarding ‘student-centred’ teaching] as learner resistance and ignorance, seeing their challenge to be that of leading academics to the true path of student-centred teaching and learning”  **Theoretical frame:** Threshold concepts (see Land & Meyer) are described as: 1) transformative; 2) irreversible; 3) integrative; 4) bounded; 5) troublesome; and liminal: “an unstable space in which the learner may oscillate between old and emergent understandings” (p.3), which is a “recursive process” but which often leads novices to mimic and quasi-plagiarise (p.4).  **Methodology:** Essay; argues for phenomenographic research  **Discussion:** Author argues that many academic teachers are uncomfortable using teaching and learning theory, which she argues “is understandable because subject specialists who are not social scientists are being asked to become informed amateurs in another discipline” (p.6). Author argues that threshold concepts and phenomenography is useful because it “is to share an inquiry into the difficulty of their subject **with** the academics and the students. It is student-focussed but not student-centred in ways that remove the academic from the stage” (p.7) |
| Davey, G. (2009). [Using Bourdieu’s Concept of Habitus to Explore Narratives of Transition](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.2304/eerj.2009.8.2.276), *European Educational Research Journal,* 8(2), 276–284.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords (Sally’s): *transition; A-levels; habitus; field; capital; Bourdieu* | **Context:** Young people’s decision-making about post-school futures/ higher education.  **Theoretical frame:** Habitus, cultural capital and field (Bourdieu). Author scopes critique of habitus (lack of definition; difficulty of cleaving from capital – scant examples of ‘practical application’). Author argues that habitus = relational concept: “Habitus is exposed through their attempts to understand the informal, unspoken rules of the new environment” and “In working with habitus alongside cultural capital, we can see too how individuals’ position in the field is understood dynamically through the matrices of time and space” (p.277).  **Methodology:** Longitudinal tracking methodology (two schools in UK: to independent from state sixth form) of 12 students, from starting A-levels to making decisions about post-school futures/ higher education. Article focuses on narratives of 3 participants. Used Wengraf’s (2006) biographic narrative technique – use of single question to elicit narrative response – participants interviewed in autumn (first) and summer (last) terms of first year of A-levels and again in second year  **Findings:** Reasons for doing A-levels = fear of being left behind by friends; for instances, Pam followed friend to independent sixth form which challenged her self-perception (as a bad student) and opened her mind to possibilities/ aspirations for higher education. Pam and Louise also demonstrated some resistance to the class-coded behaviours/ rules of the independent sixth form. Emotional transition for Pam = moving to new school and trying to maintain friendships with old friends who saw the new school as snobbish. She described a feeling of being pulled in two directions: “For Pam, a successful transition is understood in terms of the reconciliation of past and present friendship networks” (p.280). Louise = felt less keenly that she had to maintain old friendships and saw ‘no way back’ to her old life. Stephen = more emotionally/ socially detached from the transition. Initially he was preoccupied with the academic challenges of his studies/ chosen subjects. Later he develops a space to ‘be himself’/ engage in banter/ perform his preferred identity/ies (in contrast with last school where he was bullied) = creation of new educational subjectivities.  Relational elements played out in cultural arena – school privileged extra-curricula activities such as music or sport: “Class is embedded and implicit in the assumptions made about students’ ability to give time  to musical and sporting pursuits” (p.282) – not engaging in paid work. Pam resisted this and kept her weekend job; “However, it would be wrong to see Pam’s habitus as impermeable and unyielding to the time spent in the school. Her exposure to this place, its students and its doxa add a further layer to her habitus, with the potential for its effects to emerge over time” (p.282). Stephen, in contrast, = more frustrated about his positioning against others’ talents **Core argument:** Decision-making = classed practice; “individual habitus responds in harmony or discord with the field” (p.283). Change can come when there is a lack of ‘fit’ between an individual’s habitus and the field |
| Downes, P. (2019). [Transition as a displacement from more fundamental system concerns: Distinguishing four different meanings of transition in education](https://doi.org/10.1080/00131857.2018.1561366), *Educational Philosophy and Theory*, 51(14), 1465–1476.  IRE  Keywords: *Transition; systems; school climate; space; primary school; post-primary school; bullying* | **Context:** Educational transitions; author argues that the notion of transition is “conceptually fragmented in its understanding” (p.1466) — drawing on Wittgenstein, author notes how linguistic games can be reductive/ abstract meaning: “treating such ambitions as specious and reducing their scope to being truths that are socially and culturally conditioned simpliciter” (p.1466). Author argues that transition = dominantly understood in spatial/ ecological terms (drawing on Bronfenbrenner/ developmental psych), which “offers limited understanding of power in systems, of system blockage and inertia, as well as of system fragmentation” (p.1466). Focus on much transition research examines the individual as the object of study, without paying attention to the system/ structure/ context of the ‘site’  **Aims:** To “distinguish different conceptual understandings of transition, to empha- sise contextual specificity of its meaning and use for educational domains”  **Theoretical frame:** Spatial notions of transitions; critique of Bronfenbrenner  **Methodology:** Essay  **Findings:** Author argues that taking spatial view of transition that distinguishes between fore/backgrounded elements of the environment:   1. “System mismatch where at least one system needs reform—the transition bridge is not the problem. For example, environment A is the problem that becomes manifested in environment B, or environment B is the problem, not the transition per se. 2. System mismatch in expectations and conditions between environments A and B (where A and B are purportedly individually well-functioning systems considered apart from each other) 3. Lack of communication between environments A and B (where A and B are nevertheless individually well-functioning systems considered apart from each other) 4. Individual change to the foregrounded child through supports in moving from background environment A to B” (p.1467)   Author exemplifies proposition (i) thinking with reference to bullying + authoritarian teaching as systemic flaws in the environment; he also cites large scale findings of transition-related concerns in Australia/ Ireland as evidence of systemic rather than individual problem relating to creating safe environments.  Proposition (ii) relates to too much focus in Bronfenbrenner’s work on relations between levels, rather than attending to blockages: “lack of focus on system blockage and on change to background system structural and process conditions is due to a representation of the transition issue as *a problem of contrast rather than a problem of quality*” (p.1469). Author cites work that has examined mismatches between individuals and system/ teaching but he argues that examples of mismatches = “surface manifestation[s] of a more fundamental issue” (p.1470).  Proposition (iii) — Bronfenbrenner’s work foregrounds the dialogic links between systems/ levels as a two-way flow; however, author argues that educational transitions are usually monologic/ unidirectional and cites work that reports teachers feeling they need more communication between levels when preparing students for move between levels (and opens questions about whose responsibility it is to initiate and organise such communication). Author argues that in addition to the bidirectional spatial metaphor, a yo-yo metaphor is also useful for understanding transition, as it “accentuates the back and forth movement in life cycle transitions such as of young people between adolescence and adulthood” (p.1471).  Proposition (iv) based on idea that it is necessary to shift focus to students’ needs if student is at forefront of conception of transition: “A differentiated strategy for individuals regarding transition needs to distinguish system strategic supports at universal prevention and promotion levels for all, from selected prevention for some, groups of moderate risk, as well as indicated prevention for individuals with intensive, complex, multifaceted, chronic needs” (p.1471). Temporal pauses in learning (e.g. through transition/ extended holidays) = adds to challenges and lower academic attainment, especially for those with equity backgrounds or special educational needs.  Spatial-relational unpacking of environmental/ contextual impacts on transition need a diametrical dimension (see Lévi-Strauss) to help identify and respond to system blockages. Author translates his propositions into 4 different understandings of transition:   1. “Transition as a Derivative Problem from a More Fundamental Problematic System Area of School Climate or Environment 2. Transition Represented as System Mismatch or Imbalance between Two Purportedly Well- Functioning Areas which Displaces the Problem as being one of Contrast rather than Confronting the More Fundamental Problem of System Quality 3. Transition as a System Blockage and Fragmentation in Communication between Transition Environments 4. The Need for a Differentiated Strategy in Place for Meeting Individual Needs at Different Levels of Need/Risk as Part of a Wider Prevention and Early Intervention Focus Typically Prior to a Transitions Strategy” (p.1474). |
| Ecclestone, K.; Biesta, G. & Hughes, M. (2010). [Transitions in the lifecourse: The role of identity, agency and structure.](https://orbilu.uni.lu/handle/10993/12916) In Ecclestone, K.; G. Biesta & M. Hughes (Eds.) *Transitions and Learning through the Lifecourse,* pp.1–15*.* Routledge: Abingdon.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | Transitions in higher education:   * Transitions for ‘non-traditional participants between further and higher education * Progression through a subject discipline * Progression from programmes into higher education and to work (p.3)   Transition = serious political investment  Transitions = “not only the product of social institutions but are also produced by social expectations” (p.5)  Transitions discussed as ‘navigating pathways, structures and systems’, navigating cognition, emotion and sense of self’, ‘becoming somebody’, and ‘life-as-transition’  “The idea of social expectations suggests that every society has a system of social expectations regarding age-appropriate behaviour” (p.5) |
| Egea, K.; Griffiths, N. & McKenzie, J. (2014). [An evolving approach to developing academics’ understandings of transition for first year students. A Practice Report](https://fyhejournal.com/article/view/235.html), *The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education,* 5(2), 103–109.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *First Year Experience, academics’ understandings, transition, learning community* | **Context:** Australian higher education context – FYE program based on Kift’s transition pedagogy. Describes UTS FYE project: activities, forums, coordinator, grants “to design curriculum based activities linked to one or two of the First Year Curriculum Principles” (p.105)  **Aim:** To describe an FYE program at UTS to “engage and support academics”  **Theoretical frame:** Transition pedagogy (Kift, Nelson & Clarke, 2010)  **Methodology:** Description  **Findings:** Since 2011, 75 grants have been given. Also, a learning community (CoP) has developed: “staff perceptions of transition and transition pedagogies have evolved as part of growing conversations on transition at the university” (p.104), **Core argument:** Offers example of approach “to building academic engagement in transition and transition pedagogies, through a supportive process of evolving and growing conversations on transition” (p.107) |
| Ellery, K. (2017). [Framing of transitional pedagogic practices in the sciences: enabling access](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2017.1319812?journalCode=cthe20), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 22(8), 908–924.  SA  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *Bernstein; framing; pedagogic modalities; science access; social justice* | **Context:** The underpinning of global education by norms, values and practices that favour middle-class over working-class students is echoed in South Africa, but with an added racial element; “because of the structuring policies of apartheid, the majority of African students that have entered the university system after democratic elections in 1994 are from working-class backgrounds and most whites are from middle-class backgrounds” (909) and overall retention and graduation rates are lower for African students than white students. Recent student-led protests and calls for decolonisation of higher ed reflect general dissatisfaction and “debates are currently focussed on appropriate content and context of knowledge as well as on transformative pedagogic practices” (909).  **Aim:** To contribute to a discussion about curriculum reform by answering: 1) What pedagogic practices underpin the science foundation course and, as a result, what are the implications for student learning? 2) What aspects of first-year mainstream pedagogic practices enable or constrain students in the transition from foundation to mainstream? (909)  **Theoretical frame:** Bernstein’s (Class, Codes and Control, Volume IV: The Structuring of Pedagogic Discourse [1990]; Pedagogy, Symbolic Control, and Identity: Theory, Research, Critique. Lanham [2000]) thesis that, through differential framing of pedagogicpractices, the curriculum has capacity to accommodate all groups of students; “pedagogy comprises two discourses: a discourse of moral and social order referred to as the regulative discourse and a discourse of skills and knowledge referred to as the instructional discourse. The regulative discourse is always dominant and the instructional discourse is embedded within the regulative discourse” (909). Also that stronger framing of evaluation criteria can promote access (Bernstein 2000; Morais, Neves, and Pires 2004; Neves, Morais, and Afonso 2004; Rose 2004).  **Methodology:** Data obtained in 2013/2014 from analysis of course documents (course and semester outlines, resource materials, handouts (lecture, practical and tutorial), assessment tasks, rubrics, written feedback, student evaluations, curriculum review report), semi-structured interviews of teaching staff (5 of 6) and BScF students (17 volunteers of 49) and an ‘external language of description’, as advocated by Bernstein (2000, 133), was developed, which forms a dialectic bridge between the theoretical concepts of framing of pedagogic modalities and the empirical data (911).  **Findings:** Being both an appropriate science knower and learner is in fact key for accessing the powerful science knowledge for which middle-class students are generally better socialised than working-class students. “Students who are permitted to proceed into mainstream have demonstrated some level of access in the academic context. Nonetheless, the transition to mainstream still proves difficult for many” (920). **Core argument:** “social justice perspective that holistic curriculum transformations that better enable epistemic transitions are an urgent imperative, and that consideration of differential framing of pedagogic modalities offer a close-up empirical means of conceptualising such reforms” (901). Different modalities of pedagogic practices have the potential to enable or constrain student access across transitions. |
| Evans, C. (2017). [Framing young people’s educational transitions: the role of local and contemporary economic contexts](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01425692.2016.1150154), *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 38(5), 656–670.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transitions; locality; education; youth* | **Context:** Set in context of WP in Wales, particularly social class inequalities impacting on transition from compulsory to post-compulsory education and the significance of locality. Draws from a project that examined young people’s educational decisions and transitions in Wales and impact of national economic landscapes and local employment opportunities. Author notes the reliance on theories of cultural reproduction (e.g. habitus and informational orientations/pathways/dispositions – Ball et al., 2002; Reay et al., 2001) and rationale choice/ action theory (Boudon, 1974; Goldthorpe, 1996) to develop understandings of inequities in youth transitions. Notes two dominant (and contradictory) explanations for relationship between local employment opportunities and participation in education: 1) young people remain in education for human capital reasons (personal investment in own economic futures) and 2) local employment opportunities are so scarce that they have to remain in education.  **Aim:** To “how young people’s decisions regarding participation in post-16 education and beyond are framed (i.e. often simultaneously facilitated and constrained) by the opportunities for employment in local contexts as well as the constraints that characterise the broader national economic landscape in which young people reside” (p.2); to “explore, in some detail, how local opportunities as well as contemporary economic landscapes configure particular opportunities and constraints, which together dominate young people’s understandings about the relationship between education and employment and frame their educational decision-making” (p.3). To add to theoretical discussions of the nature of youth transitions and to help move beyond using locality as a proxy for social class  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Qualitative study in two localities: Rhondda Valley and Newport (South Wales): “whilst these two Welsh localities could be described as similarly working class, sharing industrial heritages associated with manual labour and experiencing similarly high levels of present-day unemployment, they are characterised by local nuances which as we shall see have crucial importance for the decision-making processes underpinning the transitions of these young people” (p.4). Research with 57 young local people aged 16-18 (31 from Rhondda Valley – 6 = middle class; 26 from Newport – minority = had parents with professional/ managerial jobs; 8 = minority ethnic/LBOTE). Majority of participants = GCE AS/A2 level exams. Substantial minority had not received 5 GCSE A-C grades. At time of research (2010-2011) = global financial crisis.  **Findings:** Data suggests that “young people from similar social class backgrounds, but living in different localities, make very different sorts of transition from compulsory to post-compulsory education; in essence, they are either ‘pushed’ or they ‘jump’ into post-16 education” (abstract)  Austerity = significant context and were important for both sets of students and limited job opportunities (responding to narratives of crisis and job scarcity: “Entering post-16 education and progression to HE was rationalised not so much in terms of a desire to invest in human capital, but as a means of avoiding unemployment” (p.5) – although the ‘discouraged worker’ narrative is not sufficient to capture the complexity. Discourse of widening participation indexes a linear transition from higher education to employment. Data suggests that students view HE as offering positional advantage.  From local perspective, students from the Rhondda Valley = significantly hindered by poverty, poor infrastructure and transport; Newport is more prosperous and better connected. Students from Rhondda Valley = viewed difficulties in finding employment and affording to work; their interpretations of lack of employment opportunities often reflected experiences within their own families. This was not the majority experience of students in Newport, who were much more likely to reflect on availability of local work opportunities **Core argument:** Looking more at locality and local opportunity structures and nuanced differences = significant for understanding students’ transitions: “spatial differences in the structure of opportunities in local contexts and young people’s interpretations of them were reflected in subtle differences in the nature of their transitions from school to sixth form” (p.8). Author makes a distinction between those who are pushed and those who jump: “Where young people are ‘pushed’, their transitions may be more tenuous, fragmented and convoluted, and they themselves possibly more vulnerable to drop out and non-completion in further education or HE than those who ‘jump’. This in turn might make their pathways towards their hoped-for destinations more fractured and fragmented” (p.11). |
| Evans, S. (2016). [Making the transition to higher education in Hong Kong: a tale of two cohorts](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2016.1224327), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,*  HK  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *academic adjustment; first-year experience; Hong Kong; medium of instruction; school-to-university transition* | **Context:** Academic and social challenges in transition from school to university; Anglophone research with goals to identify and classify the various causes of student non-completion “in consequence of the increasing size and diversity of university intakes and the diminishing scale of government funding in recent decades (Longden 2006; Leese 2010; Gale and Parker 2014)” (2). Less research address transition experiences outside of the US, the UK, and Australasia, which in addition to including the “Western” challenges of academic and social adjustments, also often include language transitions, as university instruction is usually in a language different from students’ native languages. While “evidence suggests that Hong Kong students have traditionally risen to the challenges posed by English-medium university study (Kember, Hong, and Ho 2012) in that non-completion has never been a critical concern for policy-makers (University Grants Committee 2010)…students’ evident success in completing their degrees has at times been obscured by a discourse of dissatisfaction with their abilities emanating from the city’s influential business and professional communities (Evans and Green 2007) and by the findings of large- scale studies of their English-language skills, which indicate that many students experience considerable difficulties learning in a second language, particularly in their first term (Evans and Morrison 2011a)” (2). Over the past 25 years, university attendance in Hong Kong has moved from elite to mass. In the 2012/13 school year, Hong Kong universities implemented a new system that aimed to “reduce the pressure on students imposed by public examinations and thereby (it was hoped) encourage teachers to adopt a more inquiry-oriented, learner-centred classroom approach rather than the test-oriented, knowledge-transmission style which had characterised the education system during the colonial era (Morris and Adamson 2010)… The new generation of undergraduates are thus required to make the transition to university a year earlier than before and therefore with possibly more limited academic knowledge, study skills and English-language proficiency than graduates of the old system” (3).  **Aim:** To compare the perceptions and experiences of two Cantonese-speaking cohorts at a Hong Kong English-medium university (one cohort (3YC) enrolled in a system modeled on the British 3-year programme of initial disciplinary specialisation and one (4YC) modeled on the 4-year US system that includes an initial year of general education) on the challenging process of adjusting to the demands of university study.  **Theoretical frame:** “School-to-university transition, namely, the influence of previous educational attainment and experiences on students’ performance in their freshmen year (McKenzie and Schweitzer 2001; Wintre et al. 2011)…[which] encompasses studies of the influence of school background on university admission and progression (Birch and Miller 2007; Manley and Johnston 2014)” (4).  **Methodology:** A questionnaire that the author frames as a “‘curiosity-driven’ inquiry” (3); “The survey was one strand of a mixed-methods investigation which sought to identify and understand the challenges experienced by Hong Kong students when making the transition to university and to categorise the range of background factors that may hasten or hamper their adjustment to life and study in an English-medium learning environment. The qualitative dimension of the investigation – an interview-based longitudinal study – is not reported in this article” (4).  **Findings:** 3YC students found transition less problematic than 4YC students, but overall, all students reported satisfactory transition. Notable differences in adjustment mostly involved students transitioning from Chinese-medium schools to the English-medium universities. Data also suggested “that the greater depth and duration of the traditional senior-secondary curriculum (years 10–13), which included two public examinations, may have provided a more secure basis for English-medium university study than the HKDSE programme (years 10–12)” (10) and students particularly struggled with understanding and incorporating specialist language and terminology into their writing. **Core argument:** N/A |
| Farrell, O., Brunton, J. & Trevaskis, S. (2019). [‘If I had missed it I would have been the lost little sheep’: Exploring student narratives on orientation to first year](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2019.1614543?journalCode=cjfh20), *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2019.1614543  IRE  Keywords: *Student success; transition; induction; higher education; orientation; retention* | **Context:** Transition intervention in a private higher education institution in Ireland; set against context of retention/ attrition: authors cite HEA (2018) figure of 27% drop off in progression from Year 1 to Year 2 in Irish HE. Authors claim first year students’ narratives is a gap in the literature. Description of intervention (with component parts supported by reference to literature – see p.4)  **Aim:** To describe students’ narratives about participating in an orientation program (‘new on-entry’) in School of Arts; to respond to this RQ:  “How does an orientation intervention impact on student narratives of transition into higher education?” (p.4)  **Methodology:** Qualitative; post-orientation structured interviews with students (n=8; 6f, 2m)  **Findings:**  p.5  Findings discussed around: academic anxieties (orientiation program did not remove academic concerns), expectations of higher education (particularly with reference to a perceived ‘ideal student’), impact of studying on students’ lives, finding their way, fitting in and making friends, transitions from school **Core argument:** On-entry activities such as the one described can support students’ transitions. |
| Field, J. (2010). [Preface.](https://research-information.bris.ac.uk/en/publications/transitions-in-the-lifecourse-the-role-of-identity-agency-and-structure(94e2a5f0-4603-4b46-9555-0c324079bdd8).html) In Eccleston, K.; G. Biesta & M. Hughes (Eds.) *Transitions and Learning through the Lifecourse,* pp.xvii–xxiv*.* Routledge: Abingdon.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | “Transitions are widely held to be fundamental features of social life” (p.xvii) – theorising about transition = hallmark of contemporary social thinking (see Bauman, Giddens et al.) As a result, research into transitions = growing.  Individualisation and the lifecourse – “in Western countries, individuals’ lifecourses are characterised by increasing variety and range of transition routes” (p.xviii); however there is a paradox as “individual transition pathways have collective consequences” (p.xviii). Neoliberalism and choice = sustained (despite the obvious failings of individualism) because “People seem to value the existence of at least the potential for change, embracing the idea that who they are right now, what they are doing right now, is not how things always have been and always will be. Their future self is possibly an incomplete project…” (p.xix)  “In so far as transitions are seen as troubling, they are usually treated as personal troubles requiring individual responses” (p.xxi). “The collective dimension to transitions, and to the experience of transitions, has often been neglected in the literature” (p.xxii).  Linearity: “The idea of transition does not necessarily imply unilinear change, but that is how it has predominantly been studied” (p.xix). Late modernity = characterised by non-linearity.  Transition = multilevel, multifaceted and multidirectional. |
| Field, J. (2012). [Transitions in Lifelong Learning: Public Issues, Private Troubles, Liminal Identities](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Transitions-in-lifelong-learning%3A-public-issues%2C-Field/0938a026d582dd6bdf35074e2e0942f388c8136d), *Studies for the Learning Society,* (2-3), 4–11. ISSN 1736-7107.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *lifelong learning, educational transitions, liminal identities* | **Context:** [Post] modern society/ late modernity requires individuals to become comfortable with discomfort/ instability/ risk and to be adaptable and flexible. Broad ideas of transition are increasingly considered by policy makers, but are also increasingly individualised and therapeutic (see Ecclestone): “because transitions are predominantly conceived of as linear and uni-directional, support must be targeted at those who ‘fail’ to comply with these normative expectations, and who are therefore treated as vulnerable and disengaged (Ecclestone 2010), see p.6. Increased diversification of student body/ increased uptake of lifelong learning = results in transitions being more detached from specific ages/ stages of life (see work on standard v. elective biography from Glastra, Hake & Schedler, 2004). Resultingly, transition= common area of research  **Aim:** To recontextualise significance of transitions in adult learning; to consider how adult/ lifelong learning = absorbed into ‘policy mainstream’; to consider issues of identity within this context; to propose idea of liminal identity  **Theoretical frame:** ‘Transitional space’ (Winnicott, 1953) = liminality as ‘interstructural position’ (Turner, 1987)/ space to experiment with new identities; habitus (Bourdieu/ Biesta et al., 2011). Definition offered: *the ways in which people understand themselves as a ‘learning self ’, the ways in which they experience and interact with the social milieu of the university, and also the significance of these subjective identities and social milieu for their learning* (p.8; italics in original).  **Methodology:** Author argues that in adult learning, qualitative/biographical methods and approaches = most common (youth studies = broadly more ethnographic or = large scale projects measuring inequalities = more likely to be longitudinal surveys)  “The ‘biographical turn’ also allows us to engage with a broad conception of learning, one which does not restrict the meaning of learning to institutional definitions, but which includes the cognitive and reflexive dimensions of learning as much as the emotional, embodied, pre-reflexive and non-cognitive aspects of everyday learning processes and practices” (p.7) – leading to growth in ‘biographical learning’.  Author draws on RANLHE project (European study of retention/ access: HE), in particular the Scottish part of the project that looked at “the structural, cultural and personal interplay of learning and agency in non-traditional students’ lives” (p.8).  **Findings:**  Culture shock  Physical disorientation  Feeling conspicuous  Emancipatory possibilities of HE  ‘Proving yourself’  Disconnections with other selves (e.g. professional self as nurse on p.9) **Core argument:** Transitions = social and biographical  University = form of transitional space  Challenges classical version of liminality = notion of ‘end point’: “Given that such linear and unidirectional transitions are less and less the norm, there are important questions for practice arising from the normative assumptions that are embedded in many institutional practices and structures – and arguably in the underlying cultural ethos that characterises many educational institutions” (p.10). |
| Fisher, R., J. Cavanagh, and A. Bowles. (2011). [Assisting Transition to University: Using Assessment as a Formative Learning Tool](https://srhe.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02602930903308241), *Assessment & Evaluation in Higher Education,* 36(2), 225–237.  AUS  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *formative assessment; summative assessment; draft assessment; learning; transition* | **Context:** Transition to first-year university studies can be stressful for students and is generally when the risk is highest for students discontinuing study. Early intervention – particularly by enabling student participation in learning – from faculty and staff has been shown to greatly improve student experience and likelihood of remaining at uni.  **Aim:** To “present an approach that is designed to address issues of transition to university through the lens of engagement and formative assessment” (225).  **Theoretical frame: N/A**  **Methodology:** Multi-method approach of qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis undertaken as a case study.  **Findings:** Students who participated in the intervention achieved higher marks and grades (7.1% higher) than non-participating students in the first subject where the intervention was offered. Three main themes from the qualitative research designated as: (1) improving marks, (2) enabling understanding, and (3) utility of the intervention in transition. **Core argument:** Intervention facilitates significantly higher marks in assessments and grades, while assisting student learning overall. |
| Fragoso, A.; GonÇAlves, T.; Ribeiro, M.; Monteiro, R.; Quintas, H.; Bago, J.; Fonseca, H. & Santos, L. (2013). [The transition of mature students to higher education: Challenging traditional concepts](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02660830.2013.11661642)?, *Studies in the Education of Adults,* 45(1), 67–81.  PORTUGAL  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Higher education, transition, mature students, barriers to learning.*  SB’s additional keywords: first-in-family, working class, gender | **Context:** Post-Bologna Process/ Portuguese higher education – one change in law = mature age students (23+ in Portuagal; 25+ in Spain) = special access (taking account of professional experience and other information). Thus = increased numbers of ‘non-traditional’ students. Within conceptualisations of tradition, authors argue that ‘a traditional biography’ exists and remains the norm. Moreover, globalisation “also contributes to a transition model centring on reflexivity, a mediating link between structure and agency” (p.68). Authors cite Ecclestone (2009), who argues that focusing on identity, structure and agency runs the risk of ‘pathologising transitions’ as risky, disruptive, fraught, as well as reifying ‘the answer’  **Aim:** To “investigate the special circumstances of non-traditional students in our institutions and to provide recommendations that should improve their academic lives” (p.67). For Quinn (2010), transition is also a condition of our subjectivity (see p.69), making it an everyday phenomenon. Authors scope literature on mature students in HE (p,70-1). Describes Portuguese context on p.71  **Theoretical frame:** Alheit’s (1995) vision of biographical learning and biographicity: “Biographicity means that  we can redesign the contours of life within specific familiar contexts and that we experience these contexts as malleable” (p.69). Draws on deep/surface approaches to learning in analysis.  **Methodology:** Survey (n=334; 60%m + 40%f; majority 46%=25-34 yo)/ focus groups/ life history and biographical interviews with students and staff (n=130 in total) across two universities in Portugal  **Findings:**  Decision to go to university = “a careful and rational decision taking into a count the family circumstances” (p.72) in the main. Gender = significant: “Usually it is the woman who waits until the ‘right’ conditions are achieved, although we have also cases of men in this situation” (p.72).   * *Barrier 1: time management*= balancing studies and life outside of university (family/ work) = meaning less time for study [compared to??]: “only 32 per cent committed to more than four hours per week, 14 per cent dedicated 3–4 hours, 19 per cent dedicated 2–3 hours, 19 per cent dedicated 1–2 hours and 16 per cent less than 1 hour” (p.73). Challenges resulting from time management = intensify according to distance to travel and children at home. Students = ‘frustrated participants’ in HE (see Bowl, 2001) * *Barrier 2: lack of self-confidence and preparedness* (in Portugal mature students can apply whether they have completed high school or not): “Our data shows that only 46 per cent of mature students completed secondary education, 15 per cent did not complete the 12th grade, 24 per cent did not reach the 12th grade, 14 per cent completed the 9th grade but made no further, and one per cent did not reach the 9th grade” (p.73). 70% of participants reported they did not understand the content of their courses. Time away from formal education also presents barrier/ challenge to confidence levels. Authors argue the 70% figure must be understood as a failure of the system, not a failure of the individual. * *Barrier 3: guilt and ‘double transitions’* = while mature student experiences transitions, their children are experiencing their own transitions: “This transitional time requires more support from parents, thus feelings of guilt, despair and some family disorientation are always present in such cases, more often stressed by mothers than fathers during the focus group interviews” (p.74) * Barrier 4: pedagogy and feedback, which was generally perceived as “unclear, deceptive and not contributing to their learning processes” (p.75). * *Factors that did not impact on transitions* = discipline/ choice of degree, lack of motivation, lack of access to material resources and equipment. * *Factors that facilitate/ enable transition* = relationships with other students (particularly inter-age groups); online platforms (Moodle) and social networking (Facebook)   **Core argument:** We need to challenge traditional views of transition (see Quinn, 2010): “We should look for the factors that influence transition away from well-defined linear events in time and space, and also  to consider that positive effects can arise from overcoming difficulties” (p.79). Impacts of transition flow to family |
| Furlong, A; Cartmel, F. & Biggart, A. (2006). [Choice biographies and transitional linearity: Re-conceptualising modern youth transitions](https://papers.uab.cat/article/view/v79-furlong-cartmel-biggart/pdf-en), *Papers: Revista de Sociologia,* 79*,* 225–239.  SCO  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *youth transitions; choice biographies; youth employment; youth unemployment.* | **Context:** Youth transitions (school and work) set against time of ‘choice biographies’ with transitions understood as non-linear and unpredictable (compared to earlier time). Authors argue that the assumption that transitions are fragmented = problematic and assumed; “systematic analysis of the extent to which transitions have increased in complexity and lost their linearity nor of the implications for young people of following non-linear as opposed to linear routes” (p.226). Authors argue that complexity of contemporary youth transitions are understated, and that the level of complexity is overstated  **Aim:** To “contextualise these changes in an attempt to capture the degree of complexity characteristic of modern transitions and to explore the implications for patterns of labour market integration” (abstract); to describe a set of transition typologies  **Theoretical frame:** Choice biographies  Sets of transitions (education and work):  *Higher education*: long HE (full degree) and short HE (on average studied for less than two years): on average relatively similar patterns of gendered participation and reasonable advantaged young people  *Employment transitions*: leave school at 18 and directly into work; left school earlier and directly into work: on average, more women than men.  *Enhanced employment*: employment via further education: people tended to be slightly more advantaged (less likely to live in deprived areas/ have parents in lowest social class)  *Assisted/ unemployed*: government training schemes and not working. People in these groups spent much more time out of work or employment, tended to be poorer, tended to have low levels of qualifications, dominated by males.  *Domestic/ other*: very small percentage, mostly with poor health outcomes: mostly female, tend to come from lower social classes, more likely to live in deprived areas.  Authors analysis of participants in their study led to definitions of linear/ non-linear transitions (p.231)  Linearity = “a fairly smooth and straightforward transition in which there are no major breaks, divergences or reversals” (p.230), but this now normatively includes short periods of unemployment; non-linear transitions “involve breaks, changes of direction and unusual sequences of events” (p.231). Both definitions crafted in relation to unemployment.  **Methodology:** Longitudinal sociological inquiry (Youth Transitions: Patterns of Vulnerability and Processes of Social Inclusion — see p.226)  **Findings:**  Almost an equal proportion of linear and non-linear transitions observed  Men = more likely than women to experience non-linear transitions (55% compared to 42%)  For people making non-linear transitions, over a third of both m+f experienced a period of unemployment (+3m) following education, while 43%m and 48%f encountered their first period of unemployment after their first job or training program. 24%m and 15%f experienced no unemployment for a period of 3 years.  Some participants experienced chaotic trajectories (with max 17 status changes in the male participants and max 15 for women)  Max time spent unemployed = 7 years (men) and six years (women)  Cluster analysis:  Linear transitions = direct job transitions, long HE transitions and enhanced education transitions  Non-linear transitions = short HE/ assisted transitions.  Lots of complexity observed in non-linear transitions, and more disadvantaged young people observed in this group. These people:  Tended to have fewer qualifications  Were “less likely to have parents in the professional and managerial classes and more likely to have fathers who had been unemployed for over six months” (p.235).  Regression analysis suggests “both males and (particularly) females having made a non-linear transition was associated with a significant reduction in the chances of being in full-time employment at age 23 while for males having been expelled or suspended from school was also significant” (p.236). Being male and unemployed for over 12 months significantly reduces likelihood of employment by age 23; for women, the number of moves made = more significant  **Core argument:** It may not be true that transitions are getting more complex and the de-linearisation of youth transitions may “have been overstated” (p.238). There is a strong link between non-linear (complex) transitions and disadvantage. |
| Gale, T. & S. Parker. (2011). [*Student transition into higher education. ALTC Good Practice Report*](https://dro.deakin.edu.au/eserv/DU:30043256/gale-goodpractice-2011.pdf). Surry Hills, NSW: Australian Learning and Teaching Council.  AUS  Annotation written by Sally Baker | **Context:** ALTC-funded project to examine 19 funded projects, 5 fellowships on transition (between 2006-2010) so as to contribute to understandings of transition into HE. Projects/ fellowships = either under or postgraduate focus. Only 2 = specific focus on transition (one = Sally Kift’s fellowship). As explicit focus = transition is usually focused at UG level  **Methodology:** Review of 24 projects and fellowships; literature review  **Findings:**  Two key observations: 1) HE is distinctive cultural context; 2) HE = governed by (particular forms of) cultural capital.  Offers three-part typology of transition (p.25):  1. as *induction*: sequentially defined periods of adjustment involving pathways of inculcation, from one institutional and/or disciplinary context to another (*T1*);  2. as *development*: qualitatively distinct stages of maturation involving trajectories of transformation, from one student and/or career identity to another (*T2*); or  3. as *becoming*: a perpetual series of fragmented movements involving whole-of-life fluctuations in lived reality or subjective experience, from birth to death (*T3*).  **Recommendations:**   1. Declare how transition is defined (it is often undefined or taken to be commonsensical) 2. Draw on related fields and bodies of knowledge (e.g. youth and life transitions, social theory) 3. Foregrounds students’ lived experiences/ realities   Broaden the scope of investigation (include vertical and horizontal transitions) |
| Gale, T. & Parker, S. (2014). [Navigating student transition in higher education: induction, development, becoming.](http://dro.deakin.edu.au/eserv/DU:30051426/gale-navigatingstudent-2014.pdf) In B. Heather, F. Dean, M. Mick and M. Dee (Eds), *Universities in transition : foregrounding social contexts of knowledge in the first year experience*, (pp. 13-39). Adelaide: University of Adelaide Press.  AUS  Annotation written by Sally Baker | **Context:** The growing OECD trend to massification in higher education has led to an increased interest in methods and modes of student transition. During this time, ‘transition’ as a concept has mostly remained uncontested and one-dimensional.  **Aim:** The authors aim to problematise the notion of transition in higher education. They aim to better theorise the concept of transition, in ways that are sympathetic to the lived experiences of students.  **Findings:**  1) transition tends to be conceived of in three ways — as induction, transformation and becoming — each of which lead to different transition policies, programs and research endeavours.  2) much policy, research and practice in relation to student transition into HE is disconnected from the extensive research literature on youth and life transitions and from education and social theory.  3) the current dominant conception of student transition into HE tends to lead to policy, research and practice that are largely system-driven and system-serving.  4) interest in student transition into HE has focused narrowly on undergraduate students, particularly those in their first year, who are undertaking courses in a select cluster of disciplines.  **Relevance to PGCW/ equity:**  **Pedagogical intervention suggested?**  Reference to a 'transition pedagogy' approach rather than actual pedagogical interventions themselves. This approach would be to designing higher education that is “*coherent* (institution-wide policy, practice and governance structures), *integrated* (embedded across an entire institution and all of its disciplines, programs, and services), *co-ordinated* (a seamless FYE that is institution-wide, rather than separate, 'siloed' initiatives) and *intentional* (an awareness that curriculum is what students have in common and using curriculum to influence the experience of all students).” p.20  **Points to future research agenda?**  **“…**future research in the field needs to foreground students' lived realities and to broaden its theoretical and empirical base if students' capacities to navigate change are to be fully understood and resourced.” |
| Gale, T. & Parker, S. (2014). [Navigating change: a typology of student transition in higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2012.721351), *Studies in Higher Education,* 39(5), 734–753.  AUS  Annotation written by Sally Baker  Keywords: *student transition; widening participation; social inclusion; student equity* | **Context:** Examines the notion of ‘transition’ in context of students and higher education. Works from ‘Good Practice Report’ for ALTC (Gale & Parker 2011) which examined 25 (19 completed + 5 ongoing) ALTC-funded projects as examples (selected by ALTC) of good institutional practice around/on student transition. Set in post-Bradley/ OECD competitive context. Notes increased interest in first year experience. Draws on Eccleston, Biesta and Hughes (2010) to argue that many researchers are unaware of how they understand transition [undertheorised phenomenon and discourse]; different theorisations lead to different approaches to supporting and managing transition.  **Theoretical frame:** Scopes 3 sets of literature: accounts of transition programs; quant/qual analyses of HE students; theorisations of transition.  **Methodology:** Essay  **Findings:**  Three conceptions of transition emerged from analysis of 25 ALTC projects: T1: transition as induction; T2: transition as development; T3: transition as becoming – but no ‘absolute distinction’ between the three; they are “relatively permeable and fluid, reflecting the diversity of thought” (p.735).  T1: “sequentially defined periods of adjustment involving pathways of inculcation” (p.737) = focus on FYE, idea of fixed period (school-to-university). Authors argue that 1st/2nd generation approaches to transition pedagogy (see Kift) are limited. 3rd generation = includes ‘southern theory’: aka including different forms of knowledges and spaces of different ways of knowing (see p.741). T1 = generally fails to recognise ‘hidden curriculum’  T2: “stages of maturation involving trajectories or transformation” (p.737) = greater focus on identities and cumulative stages. Difference between T1 and T2 = organisational psychology v. social/developmental psychology. However, to allow for more (all?) student identities to be included, HE curriculum needs to better reflect the students in the class (e.g. working class knowledges)  T3: “a perpetual series of fragmented movements involving whole-of-life fluctuations in lived reality or subjective experience” (p.737) = connects with Bauman’s notion of liquid modernity (2000) – accept anxiety and risk as part of transition and that transition requires day-to-day negotiation (not moments of crisis). **Core argument:** Authors have ‘most sympathy’ for T3 because it “has the most potential for new thinking about transitions in HE in socially inclusive ways” (p.735). They come to 4 conclusions: 1) there is a 3-part typology of conceptions of transition evident in work around transition and research rarely explicates the underpinning view of transition (but should); 2) policy and practice on transition = disconnected from literature on youth transitions and thus limits the work and theorisations; 3) dominant conceptions of transition (T1, then T2) = system-driven and system-serving (aka require students to change but not institutions’ systems or structures) – be more aware of students’ lived realities rather than focusing on institutional/ systemic self-interest; make teaching and learning more flexible and responsive to students. Research should focus on both horizontal and vertical transitions. |
| Garcia-Aracil, A.; Monteiro, S. & Almeida, L. (2018). [Students’ perceptions of their preparedness for transition to work after graduation](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1469787418791026), *Active Learning in Higher Education,* online first  PORT  Annotation written by Dr Clemence Due  Keywords: *competencies, higher education, learning experiences, students’ perceptions, work transition* | **Context:** Debate in literature about role of higher education- “On the one hand, there is the perspective that universities should adopt an educational and human development approach in their curriculum development and quality assessment on the other hand, there is the functionalist perspective that considers higher education should use the terms, values and objectives of the general society, and so its effectiveness should be assessed in an instrumental way through the impact on the capacity to contribute to society and economy”. Overall, need to understand factors that contribute to students’ preparedness to transition to work from HE.  **Aim:** Tounderstand factors contributing to students’ perceptions of their preparedness to transition from HE to employment  **Theoretical frame:** No overarching frame but draws on models of employability, self perception and self efficacy.  **Methodology:** Questionnaire based quantitative study – convenience sample of 641 students enrolled in masters programs at a public university in Portugal. Descriptive statistics.  **Findings:** The results of the study show that students perceive that participation in lectures seems particularly beneficial for their transition to work, whereas regular attendance at lectures seems less important. Participation likely see as important in development of critical thinking skills. Both practical and theoretical work contributed positively to perceptions of preparedness to transition. Study areas that focus on competencies associated with employability have a positive impact. In terms of individual factors, gender didn’t affect outcomes, but age did (older students felt more prepared). Work experience did not influence preparedness.  **Core argument:** Universities need to provide opportunities for students to increase employability competencies during their studies. |
| Gibson, S.; Grace, A.; O’Sullivan, C. & Pritchard, C. (2019). [Exploring transitions into the undergraduate university world using a student-centred framework](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2018.1511538?journalCode=cthe20), *Teaching in Higher Education*, 24(7), 819–833.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Student experience; student transition; student success; student identity* | **Context:** Transitioning into higher education in England; students as consumers. Equity angle described in terms of “students from lower-class backgrounds lack the ability to draw on a discourse of entitlement, which their middle-class counterparts have” (p.820). Authors cite literature that describes the emotional and psychosocial impacts of the struggles created by transition. Authors argue against deficit view and promote using a student-centred perspective.  **Aim:** To examine students’ transitions with specific regard to “questions regarding the identity of student, academic writing, academic progression and what the university is remain ill-defined” (p.821) and to provide an opportunity for students to become co-researchers.  **Theoretical frame:** ‘Becoming’; reference to Bourdieu/ cultural capital  **Methodology:** Small-scale qualitative inquiry with students as co-researchers; “two-stage generic qualitative approach” (p.821): first stage = each researcher (4 academics, 4 students) “immers[ing] themselves in the methodology and epitomised the notion of making experiences visible and shared, by reflecting on difficult or significant events in their own transition into HE” (p.821). Second stage = repeat focus groups based on work from first stage (n=12; 11 of whom = ‘non-traditional’ students) — see p.822 for details.  **Findings:** Three themes: 1) resources; 2) networks; 3) external perceptions of ‘students’  *Resources:* time, cultural/ social capital, emotional energy, financial resources, physical space to study. Participants/ literature describes the investment of resources in terms of potential risk.  *Importance of student networks*: significant emphasis on networks/ relationships with tutors = “core in supporting their successful transition into university life and study” (p.825). Participants suggest list of benefits to having strong networks (mental health, confidence, motivation, reassurance — see p.825). Students = aware of being different to other students and a sense of being more dedicated than peers. Participants also noted benefits of spending extended periods of time (e.g. field trips) with fellow students to develop stronger bonds (but these opportunities are rare and potentially should be expanded).  *Perceptions of ‘a student’*: preconceptions of ‘becoming a student’ = important for understanding how transitions unfold and why. Some participants = excited; others = apprehensive. Authors found more negative ideas than positive about who/what a student is/ should be. These negative conceptions = partly generated by perceptions from external folks (not current students) about university students (e.g. avoiding getting a ‘proper job’). Other influences included school experiences (and feeling ill-prepared), awareness of a shift in identity and potential tensions with home/ family because of growing awareness/ knowledge.  Being on campus = strongly connected with ideas about being a student  **Core argument:** “…‘becoming student’ is not as straightforward or as easily understood a process as may be implied in the marketing literature and the general discourse around neoliberal society’s need for graduates” (p.831) |
| Goggins, T.; Rankin, S.; Geerlings, P. & Taggart, A. (2016). [Catching them before they fall: a Vygotskian approach to transitioning students from high school to university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2015.1137879), *Higher Education Research & Development,* 35(4), 698–711.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Access; enabling programs; first-year experience; Vygotsky; zone of proximal development* | **Context:** Examines transition from school to university in context of enabling program (Murdoch: TLC) in Australian higher education. TLC = for low SES school students (Year 12) who did not get ATAR needed – identifies students “ – achieved through ‘dynamic assessment’ based on progressive cognitive development (Vygotsky’s ZPD) = unique compared to other alternative entry pathways/ enabling programs due to use of ZPD and early recognition of Year 12 students: “the program is focused on catching students before they fall out of the educational system” (p.699). Scopes literature on study and career aspirations/ expectations for low SES communities. TLC = provides a ‘seamless transition’ (see p.701)- students study TLC alongside HSC subjects on local campus. TLC = tracks cognitive development: “In keeping with the concept of ZPD, the unit focuses on the identification of the transitional readiness of students and the facilitation of their capacity to move from borderline patterns of critical and academic thought towards established cognitive formations” (p.702).  **Aim:** To describe TLC  **Theoretical frame:** Vygotsky’s theorization of the zone of proximal development (ZPD)  **Methodology:** Description of program and links to theory of ZPD  **Findings:**  Describes TLC/ ZPD in detail (p.702-6). Success of students’ transitions measured by:  (i) enrolment at MU following successful completion of TLC, (ii) first-year retention at university and (iii) GPA for all units studied during their first year at MU [SB: very linear notion of transition]  89% of students who finished TLC demonstrated ‘critical and academic skills’  75% of students enrol at Murdoch [no note about whether students enrol in HE elsewhere]  TLC students record similar GPA to other students  “The successful transition measured by high retention and GPA is likely to be associated with positive attrition within TLC” (p.707). **Core argument:** TLC helps to ‘catch low SES students before they fall out of the system’ |
| Goodchild, A. (2019). [Part-time students in transition: supporting a successful start to higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1404560), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 43(6), 774–787  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transition; higher education; part-time; mature learners* | **Context:** Part-time students transitioning into higher education (because most of the literature focuses on full-time students) in England; author notes the diminishing number of part-time learners in English higher education, and laments the focus on full-time (young) students, which could hinder the achievement of WP targets by 2020. Author takes aim at the homogenising/ labelling fetish in higher education policy, particularly with regard to the ‘non-traditional’ label: “grouping students according to their dominant characteristic such as gender, ethnicity, cultural background or socio-economic group as a focus for widening participation policy discourse creates further marginalisation as such a process fails to recognise the multiple characteristics that an individual might possess (Morgan 2013)” (p.775). Author argues there is little scholarly literature that explores the transitional experiences of part-time students, but she makes a connection with the literature that explores the experiences of mature age students, noting several challenges (time away from studies, caring and work responsibilities, institutional constraints, ‘learning shock’ of returning to study; p.776)  **Aim:** To “investigate the initial experiences of a group of part-time undergraduates who have chosen to undertake a degree at a small study centre run by one university” (abstract)  **Methodology:** Mixed methods; students = studying in BA (Hons) Applied Education Studies program on a satellite campus. Questionnaire + interviews. Most participants (n=?) were working in school settings (as per entry requirements for the course); 90% = female; 49% had A-levels; 9% had GCSEs as highest qualification  **Findings:** Early transition = characterised [unsurprisingly] by sense of trepidation.  Questionnaire: main driver for studying on the course = opportunity to move into PGCE/ be able to eventually teach. Participants were motivated by praise from teachers in work settings, which continued as confidence-building motivation to persist (important because many suggested feelings of low self-efficacy/ fear of failure in 77% - see p.783). Time to study = most common positive/ relevant response for participants choosing this course/ part-time study; “The data also implies that, whatever the life circumstance, part-time undergraduates do not have the same opportunity afforded to full-time undergraduates to build their lives around the HE experience, rather they need to fit their studies around their other commitments” (p.781).  Students did not appear to find the induction offered very useful (less than 40% said it was ‘very beneficial’) in the questionnaire, although the participants spoke positively about it in interviews  Diversity evident not only in demographic details, but also in dispositions, personality traits and attitudes (p.783) **Core argument:** Part-time students are a diverse and heterogeneous group but there are benefits to recognizing some commonality in experience: “That said, while ‘pigeon-holing’ students into a few number of types has been shown to be a fallacious undertaking, this knowledge is useful when devising strategies to improve the transition process” (p.783). |
| Gourlay, L. (2009). [Threshold practices: becoming a student through academic literacies](https://www.ingentaconnect.com/contentone/ioep/clre/2009/00000007/00000002/art00008?crawler=true), *London Review of Education,* 7(2), 181–192.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *the first year; academic literacies; literacy practices; communities of practice; liminality; threshold concepts; transitions* | **Context:** Set in context of students’ transitions [note deliberate use of plural] into university with regard to identity/ies and challenges. Scopes literature on models of transition and writing; resists ‘apprenticeship’ from more traditional model of higher education and argues that with more diverse student body, “students cannot be assumed to learn practices and adopt new identities simply through exposure to the environment” (p.182). Notes literacies/ writing research and critiques ‘remedial, extra-curricular’ study skills support. Skirts literacy event/ practice. Also scopes Lave & Wenger’s community of practice – notes Mary Lea’s concern with application of CoP to student writing because students and staff do not necessarily share enterprises, and students = positioned ‘permanent novices’ (2005, 193). Scopes literature on emotion in transformation of identities and literature on language practices, writing and identities  **Aim:** To argue:  “(i) that commonly-applied models of transition, in particular the notion of ‘communities of practice’ do not adequately account for new students’ experiences of academic writing;  (ii) that confusion, indeterminacy and emotional destabilization may be seen as ‘normal’ features of the student transition; and that  (iii) writing plays an role in student identity formation.  It will then analyse first year journal and interview data focused on transition experiences and academic writing” and will argue for ‘liminality analysis’ and argue for academic literacies as ‘threshold practices’ (p.181).  **Theoretical frame:** Liminality and threshold practices; academic literacies; CoP  **Methodology:** Qualitative/ longitudinal: study of new students (n=9) in post-1992 university in UK. Methods = journaling, 3x semi-structured interviews in first year based on themes from journals  **Findings:**  *Indeterminacy and emotions around academic writing*: reactions to feedback, not knowing requirements: “all the students report worry, fear, anger or a combination of these as a result of their confusion surrounding academic writing requirements” (p.185)  *Status ambiguity*: all students described feeling “tentative and ambivalent” about student status in first semester + “fragile sense of legitimacy and a troubled ‘in-between’ status” evident in students’ journals and visual representations (see e.g. of Mico = low SES, first-in-family student, p.186-7)  *Turning points, thresholds and literacy practices*: friendships and social dimension emerged as significant for feeling of belonging; feeling more confident = connected to receiving good marks and getting good feedback on writing (p.187) – leading to idea that academic writing requirements = tantamount to ‘threshold practices’ - but not linear: “There is a danger that the metaphor can lead to an oversimplified notion of a clear transition point; unlike in social ritual where the theory was developed, the notion of the ‘threshold’ cannot stand here for a clear temporal moment or observable set of rites. Although the students in the data seemed to report a sense of breakthrough, they will face new challenges. Instead it may be more useful to use the notion as one means of understanding aspects of a messy and complex process of learning and transformation over time” (p.189). **Core argument:** Liminality and notion of academic literacies as ‘threshold practices’ = very useful for unpacking emotional dimension of becoming a student and “could open up discussion of tacit practices” (p.189). Ultimately, it could help to ‘normalise’ the messy, emotional struggle of transition and help to move away from deficit perspectives. |
| Gravett, K. (2019). [Troubling transitions and celebrating becomings: from pathway to rhizome](https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1691162), *Studies in Higher Education,*  UK  Keywords: *Transitions; higher education; becoming; rhizome; threshold concepts* | **Context:** Conceptualisations of student transitions; author navigates the literature according to different metaphors: building bridges/ minding gaps; ‘smooth’ transitions; pathways and journeys; ‘successful’ transitions. Within these conceptualisations, there are clear elements of thinking that helps to drive institutional responses to the challenges that students experience with their transitions, but the author notes how problems with deficit-laden, individualised notions of institutions’ roles with supporting student (which are diminished when the individual is pushed to/ assumes responsibility for their own navigation). Similarly, when transition is viewed as a system problem, it conceals personal/ experiential factors: “Transitions are conceptualised as attributes of systems, rather than individuals. Within this ‘process’ there is little room for individuality or diversity” (p.3). Moreover, when viewed as ritualized pathway, the complexity and messiness of individuals’ circumstances gets lost, and focusing on ‘successful’ transitions reflects dominant institutional ideas of ‘success’ (driven by metrics around retention and achievement) as opposed to what is considered meaningful by the individual.  **Aim:** To “re-examine our assumptions regarding both students’ transitions and the wider conception of transition and change within learning” and to suggest “that a new approach to conceptualising transition may be useful in enabling us to see the granularity of students’ experiences, and that individuals’ lived realities do not fit neatly into established linear grand-narratives of transition” (p.1). To respond to Gale & Parker’s (2014) lament about ‘conceptual silences’ in transition literature/ transition interventions and funded projects.  **Theoretical frame:** Threshold concepts (Meyer & Land, 2005) and the rhizome/ becoming (Deleuze & Gutarri, 1987)  **Methodology:** Essay  **Findings:** Reimagining transition  *Troublesome transitions:* works from Meyer & Land’s (2005) notion of threshold concepts, which describes students transitions (based on notion of liminality) through disciplinary concepts/ knowledge as potentially troublesome/ uncomfortable, but which can lead to transformation; “this viewpoint offers the potential to see the value of emotional destabilisation and indeterminacy, and the possibilities that risk, uncertainty and change can create” (p.5).  *Transition as rhizomatic*: works from Deleuze & Gutarri (1987) and their thinking on the rhizome as a critique of/ departure from reliance on ideas linear movement; “Seen through this lens, there are no uniform pathways: transitions are divergent, fluid and multiple” (p.6). From this perspective, the idea of transitions being normative or predictable is challenged.  *Transition as becoming:* works from Deleuze & Gutarri (1987) and their thinking on becoming — challenging the idea of beginning and end points, and seeing transitions as ongoing.  Taken together, these conceptions pull a new way of thinking about/ researching/ supporting educational transitions: “Notions of trouble- some knowledge and liminality illuminate the possibilities that risk, uncertainty and change can create. The concept of the rhizome symbolises the diversity and multiplicity of not just experiences but of the self, and the concept of becoming indicates the ongoing and evolving nature of transition” (p.7). This requires a radical shift away from existing/ dominant/ ‘traditional’ ways of thinking and doing with regard to students’ transitions. One implication is that institutions could move away from ‘managing’ students’ transitions to being clearer/ more honest in communications about the discomforting elements of moving into new ways of learning (and being, knowing and doing), and taking an ongoing rather than bounded approach to student support. Institutions could also shift to a strengths-based view of what students can do/ bring with them to their studies and support students to see how they can build on these, rather than tacitly imposing deficit views on students **Core argument:** Transitions research and practice should be guided by understandings that transitions are involve three interrelated conceptions: *transitions as rhizomatic, transitions as troublesome* and *transitions as becoming.* By reimagining transition, it may be possible to disrupt the status quo to improve students’ experiences and teaching and learning in higher education. |
| Gravett, K. & Winstone, N. (2019). [Storying students’ becomings into and through higher education](https://doi.org/10.1080/03075079.2019.1695112), *Studies in Higher Education*  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transitions; story completion; higher education; rhizome; becoming; timescapes* | **Context:** Student transitions; set against normative, linear/ homogenous notions/ understandings of transitions that reflect institutional timescapes that deny the complex lives that students bring with them to their studies; “Within student transition too, the intense focus on fixed time frames and outcomes can also be seen to alter the ‘timescapes’ of higher education, presenting a view of time and of transition that may exclude individual lived temporal rhythms” (p.2).  **Aim:** To offer student narratives of transition that foreground multiplicities of experiences; to highlight experiences that happen in the gaps and margins (p.2); to operationalise the conception of transition (as troublesome, rhizomatic, as becoming) put forward in Gravett, 2019; to respond to this RQ:  “what will these stories tell us about students’ understandings of transition and becoming within higher education, and how will these narratives compare to the pervasive grand-narratives of research, policy, practice?” (p.2)  **Theoretical frame:** See Gravett 2019  **Methodology:** Story completion and story-mediated interviews; project designed to explore students’ experiences of becoming university students. Story completion as “sense-making exercise” (p.3). Two story stems used (see p.4); authors speculate whether using gender-neutral names may have been more effective. Story completion used because 1) can help participants to “engage more readily and openly with the topic presented” (p.4) because it offers distance/ hypothetical situation to test out ideas; 2) opens space for discourses to emerge, rather than seeking ‘truth’; 3) it offers participants relative autonomy over research process. Analysis described as rhizomatic, which involved “actively look[ing] for ways of working with data in its nuances, differences, and singularities” (p.5), looking for ‘data hotspots’ that captured their interests and cross-reading/ interpreting.  **Findings:** Participants’ stories yielded “emotional and vivid” data (p.6), which often indexed conventional/ normative discourses about transition. Interview data suggests more individualised, divergent and diverse experiences.  *Unlearning/ learning in new context and environment:* dissonance between previous educational experiences and expectations of university, including epistemological shifts and shifts in academic practices; authors make connection with threshold concepts (Meyer & Land, 2005), which leads to discomfort for some students.  *Individual/ micro-experiences of transition:* students’ transitions were more than shifts in academic practices; they covered a range of aspects: “relationships, emotions, social, affective, material and spatial elements, and reached far beyond the acquisition of study skills, the development of subject knowledge, or adaptation to institutional norms” (p.7). Examples given include food shopping, fitting in socially without drinking alcohol, living away from home, having friends outside of ‘university bubble’ (see p.7).  *Fluidity and change:* data suggest students’ transitions = “ongoing series of becomings” (p.7), which are ill-reflected by institutional rhythms which chime against the “experiences of first year students, where the lived rhythms of learning do not fit neatly into ‘assimilationist pedagogies’” (Manathunga’s, 2019 term; on p.8).  Data also suggest that students’ experienced positive transitions (positive comparisons with school). However, students who commute [rather than moving to university town as is more common in UK] appeared to view themselves as different/ having a different experience compared with peers. **Core argument:** Transition is complicated, individually experienced and messy; “Rather than transition signifying a neat process where skills are acquired and students follow a linear pathway into and through university, transition changes with individual context, and can be better understood as students’ perpetual and ongoing becomings” (p.10). Institutions should/ could consider reorienting their approaches to supporting students so that this rich individuality and ongoing nature of transition is operationalised to better support students. |
| Gravett, K.; Kinchin, I. & Winstone, N. (2020). [Frailty in transition? Troubling the norms, boundaries and limitations of transition theory and practice](https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2020.1721442), *Higher Education Research & Development*  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Student transition; higher education; pedagogic frailty; concept mapping* | **Context:** Educators’ perceptions of transition; transition is “largely under-theorised, and underpinned by unquestioned and normative assumptions regarding what transition might mean” (p.1), which result in grand narratives that drive reductive and overly-simplistic policy and practice. Transitions commonly understood as best if ‘smooth’, with metaphors of bridging and gaps dominant in the literature. Other discourses that circulate around discussions of transition = deficit, resilience, homogeneity, ritual, linearity, journeys, stages, pathways  **Aim:** To “examine the conceptions of transition held by academic and professional staff, who work to support students’ learning into and through higher education” (p.1)  **Theoretical frame:**  Grand narrative (Lyotard, 1984): “a pervasive, embedded, cultural narrative which organises and totalises knowledge and experience” (p.2).  Pedagogic frailty (Kinchin & Winstone, 2017) = “a dis- connection between the practices of the discipline with the pedagogy that underpins the discipline, or tensions between the academic and decision-making bodies (locus of control) that regulate teaching” (p.4).  Unlearning (Land, Rattay & Vivian) = recalibration of existing ways of being, knowing and doing before learning new ways (see also Spivak, 1992).  **Methodology:** Concept map-mediated interviews “to surface and to unravel staff conceptions of learning, unlearning and transition and we seek to unsettle established and normative conceptions of transition to higher education” (p.2). Research in two research-intensive universities, one of which has higher-than-average intake of equity (BAME/ low SES/FinF) students. Methods: concept-map mediated interviews (CMMI) with staff (n=7; 2m, 5f; 3 academics, 4 professional staff). CMMI = unstructured; interview starts with one prompt question (‘from your perspective what knowledge, skills and practices do you perceive students must let go of, or develop, in order to transition into and through university?’; p.5); concepts mentioned = written on post-it notes so the interviewer can recount the interview back to participant, who is then asked to organise the concept post-its on a piece of A3 paper, “in order to interrogate the intended meaning and maximise the explanatory power of the links in the map” (p.6). After interview, concept map = recreated in PowerPoint and sent to participant for member validation. Maps = coded inductively using NVivo  **Findings:** Staff draw heavily on normative conceptions of transitions  *Students in deficit:* commonly indexed, using terms like ‘spoonfeeding’, lack of preparation  *Grey mindsets*: relating to epistemological shifts/ unlearning  *Changing relations between students and staff*: shifting perceptions about ‘teacher as expert’ and students’ role; also, students need to shift language (e.g. moving from calling educator ‘Miss’ to first name/ teacher to lecturer), and students recognising importance of support staff (and using them)  Participants also recognised the non-human actors that complicate students’ transitions, such as campus layout, curriculum design, finances, system v. values, neoliberal ideology and efficiency mechanisms.  Concept maps also highlight divergence from grand narrative, with participants recognising that students’ transitions are complex, multiple, individual/ heterogeneous **Core argument:** Although commonalities were observed in participants’ talk and concept mapping with regard to normative understandings of transition that foregrounded students’ deficits and need to assimilate to higher education, the deviations from this script also suggest that staff are aware of more heterogeneous experiences of transition, which points to pedagogic frailty:  “Tensions within these landscapes can be viewed as a signifier of pedagogic frailty within the system, as opposed to an individual vulnerability or deficit. Frailty may occur where an individual’s views conflict with other views in the institution or where the values espoused within institutions jostle uncomfortably with environmental or systemic constraints” (p.10–11) |
| Green, A. (2007). [A Matter of Expectation: The Transition from School to University English](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/13586840701442927), *Changing English: Studies in Culture and Education,* 14(2), 121–133.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** ‘Managing’ transitions from school to undergraduate English studies; author argues for centrality of subject construct, pedagogical assumptions, and expectations between students and teachers for understanding educational transitions. Themes from the literature foreground engagement with reading (particularly in terms of shifts in volume and difficulty of texts); mismatches in practices/ approaches to reading; secondary (wider) reading. Further challenges = shift to independent study, influence of assessment from A-levels, nature of contact with teaching staff  **Aim:**  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu’s notions of habitus and reproduction  **Methodology:** Surveys and interviews conducted with sixth-form students, sixth-form teachers and lecturers, first-year undergraduate students and university lecturers  **Findings:**  A-level students broadly have an idea that undergraduate English will be different; 75% reported feeling confident or very confident with A-level students but only 37% reported feeling confident about doing English at university, which “makes clear that many sixth-form students have a distinct, but unformed sense, of how sixth-form and university studies differ” (p.123). Some students described a sense of anxiety about studying without the structured guidance of A-level assessment objectives (AO codes; see Baker, 2017). Moreover, the focus on set texts, rather than ‘literary study’ at A-levels = constraining; “This atomistic approach to the teaching of English, and of literature in particular, inevitably exacerbates the difficulty of moving into the faster-paced, more broadly based and theorised literary study expected at university” (p.125).  Discussion of shifts between two levels of study and habitus; author notes that Bourdieu’s notion of habitus is somewhat deterministic, with change enacted through external ‘sanctioned’ (pedagogic) action; however, author argues that rather than a uni-directional shift, this is actually dialogic, as students use their prior experience to make sense of their future/ current experience **Core argument:** English A-levels creates sets of habitus that are incongruent with the practices, conventions and expectations (dispositions etc.) for undergraduate study; “It leads us towards the conclusion that post-16 study, alongside a range of other societal influences, builds a set of limitations within students, which are likely to prove determining factors in their ability to engage effectively with higher-level English studies” (p.125).  Limitations of A-levels = “remain limitations only if they are perceived as the end rather than as the beginning of students’ further learning” (p.126)  Assessment objectives = form of reproduction |
| Harris, M. & Barnett, T. (2014). [*Thriving in transition: A model for student support in the transition to Australian higher education: Final Repor*t](https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Thriving-in-transition%3A-A-model-for-student-support-Harris-Barnett/f1859023272cf42a47de8909fb3b7871f4a6356f). Sydney: Office for Learning and Teaching.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Transition to higher education in English HE. Argues that most literature focuses on full time students  **Aim:** To describe “an innovative, staged and cyclic approach to the transition to tertiary study”  **Theoretical frame:** 5 major themes around transition identified by authors:  1) Transition is cyclical  2) Support should be provided over Year 1 and then the duration of their course  3) Early interventions are preferable to crisis support  4) ‘Front-loading’ (giving information to students before they have started) is not effective because it “provides material not needed (or recognised as needed) by students at that point of time” (p.5)  5) Successful transition programs are embedded into courses/ disciplines, rather than add-on  **Methodology:** Mixed methods  **Findings:**  From observations of students participating in workshops (all p.5­–6):  1) Students who need help the most are least likely to seek support  2) High-achieving students may eschew institutional supports for fear of being seen as a failure  3) Students need to be coached on support-seeking  4) Early signs of potential issues = not submitting assessable work, not attending classes, declining grades. These need to be identified by algorithms and follow-up automated  5) Teaching and learning activities need to adjust in order to support students with transition via curricula (essentially, more contact —either in person or via the phone —is needed)  6) Informal supports are potentially as useful as institutional/ formal supports  7) Students are likely to face crises at several points and support should be available on an individual basis/ organisational responses need to be clearly communicated  8) Certain ‘trigger points’ can be identified and responses pre-designed  9) Universities should develop supports for throughout the lifecourse of a degree (pre-entry to post-graduation)  10) Pastoral work of support should be recognised as work: “Such work can be difficult to measure and can exert a greater demand on time than the amount (often notionally) allocated” (p.6).  11) Common first year approaches may better facilitate transition-related activities  12) Generic notion of first year fails to recognise students’ biographies/ backgrounds: “ Finer filters are required to better understand the commonalities that certain groups possess to allow timely and effective interventions to be applied” (p.6) |
| Heading, D. & Loughlin, E. (2017). [Lonergan’s insight and threshold concepts: students in the liminal space](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2017.1414792), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 23(6), 657-667. DOI: 10.1080/13562517.2017.1414792  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Threshold concepts; Lonergan; learning; cognition* | **Context:** Threshold concepts, notion of liminality and ‘stuckness’. Offers review of threshold concepts (Land & Meyer, 2003; Cousin, 2006): “within the idea of a threshold concept is one of a liminal space, where learners may oscillate between old and new understandings. In this space, students often find learning challenging, and may get ‘stuck’. Such regions are the places of misunderstandings and confusion, with oscillation  between states of knowledge” (p.2). Authors note use of metaphor of ‘travelling through a tunnel’ for liminal space (see Land, Rattay & Vivian, 2014). Note 5 properties of threshold concept = transformative, irreversible, integrative, bounded and troublesome, but not all necessary conditions to be defined as threshold concept. Teachers (not students) = responsible for identifying threshold concepts in a discipline/ subject/ topic, but teacher observation cannot account for individual difference in progressing through a threshold concept/ practising/ learning: “Teaching, therefore, is not a simple task of laying out an accepted path to the portal. It may describe a path or paths to the portal, but it cannot ensure that the student passes along it” (p.4).  **Aim:** To add to understandings of threshold concepts; to argue for more developed understanding of threshold concepts using work of Lonergan.  **Theoretical frame:** Cognitive theory of Lonergan: process of dynamic process of learning and coming to understand. Authors attempt to define steps of learning based on Lonergan’s theory that teaching = encouragement to learn/ development of understanding. Step 1 = experience (focus on experiences that are interesting/ important: questions of meaning will arise from desire to know. Step 2: once question = articulated, attempt to answer, gain insight. Step 3: concept formation = articulate insight, go beyond it, generalise from insight. Step 4 = ask ‘is it so?’.  Insights = interconnected; can occur in clusters; can be wrong; can be inverse  **Methodology:** Essay  **Discussion:**  Lonergan’s insight + threshold concepts = “Insight, and the model of cognitive development it proposes, allows us to view the learning process as a dynamic, personal one, and it is here proposed that this can serve to elucidate some of the static and hard to define aspects of threshold concepts, as well as serving to prompt revaluation of the teacher’s role” (p.7).  Addressing lack of individualism in identification of threshold concepts by teachers = “can be addressed by moving the focus from a position of identifying a single moment of understanding (the crossing of a threshold), to, instead, recognising the potential for multiple and varied insights” (p.7) **Core argument:** Threshold concepts positions liminal space as ‘single, discrete moment’ [I’m not sure this is the case], “The liminal space can therefore be equated with the period when the student is obtaining insights, most of which are discarded, and a few of which enable them, incrementally, to approach the threshold of understanding. Each accepted insight is a step along the way of grasping a whole concept. This process may,  indeed, be extended and troublesome, but passage through a threshold portal should not be seen as a single process, but one consisting of smaller steps” (p.8).  Getting stuck = due to “a reluctance or inability of the learner to move from common sense or old knowledge to theoretical or new knowledge” (p.8) |
| Hebdon, S. (2015). [Embedding support for students transitioning into higher education: Evaluation of a new model](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14480220.2015.1082926), *International Journal of Training Research*, 13(2), 119–131.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *articulation; pathways; transitioning students; embedded support; progression rates; retention rates* | **Context:** Students readiness for transitioning from vocational education to Bachelor of Hospitality Management at Holmesglen Institute (dual sector; in partnership with Uni Canberra) and need for academic support. Students transitioning into BA with Diploma or Advanced Diploma of Hospitality. Large number of students = CALD or international; decision was made to develop ‘just-in-time’ support. LASS program designed as partnership between BHM course leader, academics, academic from academic skills unit and a librarian, and also consulted with counsellors to check the LASS met students’ needs. LASS = 2-hour, weekly class, linked to other content in the BHM  **Aim:** To analyse the effectiveness of the Learning Academic Skills Support (LASS) program, designed to support students into undergraduate level study.  **Methodology:** Evaluation (survey completed by 61% of LASS students)  **Findings:** Majority of students (70%) = international students; most had completed lower level qualifications at Holmesglen Institute.  LASS introduced students to plagiarism software but 37.5% still thought it was OK to cut and paste directly from sources into assignment.  37.5% of students thought they would have a chance to resubmit assignments until competent (not the case in BHM)  LASS students underestimated the amount of time/ effort needed to complete BHM studies. In terms of differences/ difficulties:  59% reported challenges with level/quality of work  40% reported difficulties with assessment tasks  30% reported challenges with level of research required  Overall, students rated the LASS course positively. Biggest improvements self-reported = academic writing (81%), research (52%), referencing (50%) and reading (40%)  **Core argument:** “The underlying objective of the LASS program is to support and empower students as independent learners within the HE space, strongly scaffolding articulating students during their first semester, but its long-term success depends on those same students going on to succeed autonomously in successive semesters. So too, building research capabilities amongst practitioners helps to develop a culture of questioning and knowledge sharing that pushes tertiary education forward, enriching a body of knowledge that comes from its heart” (p.127) |
| Holliman, A.; Sheriston, L.; Martin, A.; Collie, R. & Sayer, D. (2018). [Adaptability: does students’ adjustment to university predict their mid-course academic achievement and satisfaction?,](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1491957?journalCode=cjfh20) *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* DOI: 10.1080/0309877X.2018.1491957  UK/ AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Adaptability; buoyancy; motivation; achievement; satisfaction; university* | **Context:** Students’ adaptability, academic buoyancy (“ability to successfully navigate ‘everyday’ or  low-level academic setbacks, challenges, adversities, and pressures”, p.2), and academic motivation as predictors for mid-course achievement. Majority of research on adaptability has focused on school age children; authors thus identify higher education as a gap, with no research on whether adaptability being predictive of course satisfaction.  **Aim:** To “examine the extent to which first-year university students’ adaptability predicts their mid-course academic achievement and course satisfaction” (p.2). Two RQs presented on p.4:  (1) What is the relationship between university students’ adaptability, academic buoyancy, academic motivation, and their academic outcomes (mid-course academic achievement and satisfaction)?  (2) Is university students’ adaptability uniquely associated with their academic outcomes (mid-course academic achievement and satisfaction) beyond the influences of academic buoyancy and academic motivation?  **Theoretical frame:** Psychological notion of ‘adaptability’: impact of adapting on achievement (e.g. Martin et al., 2013). “Adaptability focuses on the extent to which students are able to make the appropriate cognitive, behavioural, and emotional adjustments required to successfully navigate changing, novel, and uncertain circumstances or situations” (p.3)  **Methodology:** Questionnaire using Adaptability scale (Martin et al., 2013); first-year Psychology students (n=90: 80%f, aged between 18–48).  **Findings:**  No significant results with regard to age, but some suggestion that women are less likely to feel able to cope with setbacks.  Adaptability and motivation positively correlate with academic achievement and course satisfaction  Predictors: adaptability = “a significant unique predictor of students’ university academic achievement, such that beyond the effects of buoyancy and motivation, adaptability was a unique predictor of academic achievement” (p.7)  Buoyancy and motivation = significant predictors for course satisfaction **Core argument:** “university students’ adaptability was found to positively predict academic achievement, beyond the effects of academic buoyancy and academic motivation” (p.8)  Implications: universities should “engage their students in a dialogue to help them understand all that university life brings” (p.8), with regard to the full gamut of experiences that students will need to adapt to. Martin et al. (2015) suggest 3 steps:  “(a) help students first identify and recognise situations of change, uncertainty, and novelty that might require an appropriate regulatory response,  (b) show students how to adjust their cognition, behaviour, and emotions to the demands of the situation, and  (c) help students to recognise the importance of these regulatory responses with a view to sustaining them for future occasions when adaptability is required” (p.8). |
| Hussey, T. & Smith, P. (2010). [Transitions in higher education](https://srhe.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14703291003718893#.XggGTC2Q1QI), *Innovations in Education and Training International*, 47(2), 155–164.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transitions; diversity; mass education; student drop-out; student-centred; education* | **Context:** Widening participation/ massification of higher education and the ‘problems’ that arise from increased diversity of student body. This plays out in the diversity of experiences of/ transitions. “It is the chief task of an institution to ensure that the desirable transitions are achieved and the undesirable ones avoided, while allowing some flexibility about which of these are to accommodate different values” (p.156).  **Aim:** To argue that design/delivery of higher education should be based on major transitions/ changes that [all??] students undertake/ designed around ‘individual development’.  **Theoretical frame:** Transition as change –some planned, some expected, some unexpected  **Methodology:** Essay  **Discussion:**  Authors make the case that there are different types of transitions that students undertake:  Transitions in knowledge, understanding and skills (from novice to ‘skilled participant’ of discipline)  Autonomy (from passive to autonomous student)  Approaches to learning (from surface to deep learning)  Social and cultural integration, which “involves identifying, understanding and assimilating a complex range of assumptions, behaviours and practices often tacitly represented by the range of disciplines, or fields, they are studying; and the demands persist throughout their studies” (p.159)  Students’ self-concept – including self-esteem and self-efficacy [taking a psychological view] **Core argument:** Need to identify ‘worthwhile’ transitions that students undertake and design/ deliver higher education in disciplinary-dependent ways. |
| Jackson, C. (2003). [Transition into Higher Education: gendered implications for academic self-concept](https://www-jstor-org.wwwproxy1.library.unsw.edu.au/stable/3595445?seq=1#metadata_info_tab_contents), *Oxford Review of Education*, 29(3), 331–346.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords (Sally’s): gender, academic self-concept, transition, school to university | **Context:** Secondary school to university transitions into English higher education; students’ perceptions of their academic competence. Author argues that at the time of writing, the dominant focus in transitions research was on compulsory schooling; therefore the optional nature of higher education (and students’ right/ choice to withdraw) makes it a compelling area to examine.  **Aim:** To examine the impact of transitioning into higher education on students’ self-concept, with a particular focus on gender, responding to these questions: “does moving from a relatively small pond (sixth form or college) where many students are likely to feel like fairly ‘big fish’, to a larger pond (university) where most students are likely to feel like much ‘smaller fish’, affect self-concept? (p.332)  **Theoretical frame:** Self-concept = “multifaceted and hierarchical; it comprises a general self-concept facet at the apex, which is then divided into academic and non-academic components of self-concept” (p.332).  **Methodology:** Questionnaire, which used four sub-scales of the Self-Description Questionnaire-III (SDQ-III, Marsh, 1990) with students from three different universities (see p.334 for details) at two points: 1) freshers week (n=508) and end of first semester (n=268). In total, 147 questionnaires for both survey points were usable (87f, 60m). Interviews also conducted with Year 2 students (n=5; 3f, 2m)  **Findings:** Significant gender differences appeared with regard to self-concept  Overall, men = display higher self-concept than women in terms of 1) problem solving and 2) general self-concept  Over time, women experienced a drop in self-concept for verbal and general academic, with verbal dropping markedly.  Males = more likely to rank themselves highly against peers at both points of the survey. Both sexes are likely to experience a drop in perceived ability, but women are more likely to perceive a profound drop in ability **Core argument:** Perceptions of academic competence = “perhaps the aspect of identity that is the most vulnerable over the transition to university” (p.342). For women, the ‘big fish little pond effect’ appears to explain the significant drop in perceived position and competence. |
| Jansen, E. & van der Meer, J. (2012). [Ready for university? A cross-national study of students’ perceived preparedness for university](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s13384-011-0044-6), *Australian Educational Researcher,* 39(1), 1–16.  NZ/ NETHERLANDS  Annotation written by Evonne Irwin  Keywords: *Readiness; transition; first-year experience; cross-national comparisons* | **Context:** Cross-national study involving New Zealand and the Netherlands measuring students’ perceived preparedness for university before entering higher education. Framed in terms of demands for a ‘highly educated workforce’ and widening participation policy contexts which aim to improve access to higher education but do not necessarily lead to increased completions of degree programs. Focuses on attrition, transitions, academic preparedness and the first-year experience.  **Aim:** Research questions addressed: “Do students from the two countries differ in their overall self-perceived preparedness and in their self-estimated chances of success?” “Can we establish differences on aspects of readiness between the two groups of students?” “To what extent can we explain the perceived preparedness by readiness and self-estimated chances of success? Which factors differ and which factors can be considered to have a similar effect on perceived preparedness in the two countries?” (p. 4)  **Methodology:** Uses a survey instrument developed by the authors: The Readiness and Expectations Questionnaire (REQ) (2007; 2008) administered online and/or by hardcopy prior to the start of the academic year in each country. The survey was initially trialled in both countries, analysed and modified. The results reported in this paper are from the first iteration of the survey. Survey responses were statistically analysed. Responses: NZ, *n* = 458; Netherlands, *n* = 1490; Total, *n* = 1948.  **Findings:** RQ1: The study found significant differences in perceptions of preparedness between students in the two countries (the NS students had been in a non-differentiated school system, whereas the Dutch students were from a differentiated system and had completed schooling in a school with a curriculum designed specifically for students who seek entry to university). However, the NZ students expressed greater confidence in their future university success than the Dutch students.  RQ2: Differences were also found between the two groups in perceptions of their time management, information processing, written communication (where the Dutch students scored higher), and group work (where the NZ students scored higher).  RQ3: All aspects of readiness tested in the study except ICT skills were found to be significant contributors to students’ perceptions of their preparedness for university.  **Core Argument:** While there were significant differences between the two cohorts studied and the high school systems they came from, many of those differences were not either not remarkable or not very significant. The university preparedness high schools in the Netherlands have not produced the desired effects. Therefore, the authors suggest greater attention be paid by universities to Transition Pedagogy (Kift 2008) and contextualised, embedded academic skills to better prepare students for university study. |
| Jones, S. (2018). [Expectation vs experience: might transition gaps predict undergraduate students’ outcome gaps?,](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1323195?journalCode=cjfh20) *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 42(7), 908–921.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Student experience; university transition; outcome differentials; widening participation; metrics* | **Context:** English higher education; social class, expectations and experiences of transitioning into higher education. Starts by scoping the notion of ‘the gap’ and its take up in the literature (mind the gap, bridging the gap, the achievement gap), and the idea of prior attainment/ predictor of attainment. Transition gaps = exist in ways that universities perceive/receive students, in motivation, cultural assimilation. Literature suggests that universities’ awareness of students prior experiences = scant (p.2). Outcome gaps = attainment/ students’ backgrounds. University = site of research does not distinguish WP students/ offer targeted supports.  **Aim:** To explore “(in)congruence between students’ expectations of higher education and their experience  while at university, tracking how recalled pre-arrival expectations correlate with socio-economic status and school type” or access program for WP students (abstract)  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Exploratory and mixed methods – transition gaps = qualitatively explored; outcome gaps = quantitatively explored;one-to-one interviews with young university students (n=85), categorised into four types: intervention/ non-intervention WP students; state school/ independent school students. All WP = f-in-f and from low-income households (not mature). Intervention = pre-arrival access program. Questions included ‘is the content of your course what you expected it to be like (if not, why not?)’, ‘how does the way you’re assessed at university differ from the way you were assessed at school/college?’ and ‘are the social aspects of being a student what you expected?’ (p.4). Data = thematically analysed.  **Findings:** Quantitative analysis: non-intervention school students = most satisfied with support and teaching (non-intervention WP = least). Qualitative analysis suggests 4 codes:  (a) Being Helped: transitioning from fear of academics to co-production of knowledge;  (b) Being Taught: transitioning from explicit instruction to implicit assumption;  (c) Being Assessed: transitioning from ‘not knowing the jump’ to embracing assessment practices;  (d) Being Confident: transitioning from ‘not knowing the language’ to fluency in university-speak. (p.5)  *Being helped*: school students = more positive; WP students = recurring theme of under-confidence to approach academics/ ask for help and they found the independence/ larger class sizes challenging. Independent school students = knew how to ask for help (and some used this to ‘game the assessment system’) but data suggest that some felt there was not enough help. Author speculates that the non-WP students had expectations that aligned most closely with the experiences of university, helping them to ‘close their gaps’ better than WP students.  *Being taught:* data suggests that students’ expectations of teaching = incongruent with reality and the academic demands were higher than expected. Experiences of teaching appeared to be characterised as separation, disorientation and disaffection: “Many found it challenging to be in an environment regarded  as less learner-focused (‘getting the information you need is definitely harder’) and more austere (‘some  of the rooms / they don’t seem much like they were made for students’)” (p.8). It was markedly (seemingly) easier for independent school students. The intervention appeared to make a positive difference for the WP students who attended – offering a kind of insider knowledge and self-reliance. Notion of preparedness = key: “Students from non-WP backgrounds benefited from a more accurate and nuanced understanding of how universities operate; they were forewarned about the different and new academic environment that they would encounter. In many cases, this was not ‘unspoken’ cultural capital so much as the end product of systematic coaching in how to succeed at university” (p.8).  *Being assessed:* students generally experienced a ‘jump’ in assessment. WP students = highest level of satisfaction; independent school students = lowest satisfaction (adjusting to academic conventions/ level of feedback/ assessment practices).  *Being confident*: system = particularly challenging (disorienting) for WP students + technical challenges + academic terminology **Core argument:** “Those who transition successfully report greater confidence, a stronger sense of academic fit, and better professional relationships with university staff. Those who transition unsuccessfully report having to play ‘catch-up’ and a creeping sense of academic disaffection” (p.10). |
| Kahu, E.; Stephens, C.; Leach, L. & Zepke, N. (2015). [Linking academic emotions and student engagement: mature-aged distance students’ transition to university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2014.895305), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 39(4), 481–497.  NZ  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *student engagement; academic emotions; transition; mature-aged; distance* | **Context:** Intersection between student experience and mature age students’ emotions in distance higher education with mature age (over 24) students. Scopes literature on emotions/ emotions and engagement (in learning)/ mature age students in NZ  **Aim:** To explore relationships between academic emotions and student engagement  **Theoretical frame:** Pekrun’s taxonomy of academic emotions and Kahu’s conceptual framework of student engagement  **Methodology:** Mixed methods. Participants = first-year students (n=19) – mix of disciplines, all mature age, mix of modes. Data collection = interviews with participants and families (on preparation, motivations, expectations). Participants recorded weekly video diaries/ written diaries (n=2). Data = thematically analysed. Authors note difficulties of capturing participants’ emotions due to the many possible descriptors  **Findings:** Data illustrate complex relations between academic emotions (separate from emotions relating to other aspects of their lifeworlds) and academic engagement. Data supports Christie et al. (2008) = ‘emotional rollercoaster’. Overall, “enjoyment and anxiety, were common, while others such as hopelessness and relief were rare” (p.486).  *Emotional engagement* = interest and enjoyment (related to a sense of love for learning), which both “positively influenced both behavioural and cognitive engagement” (p.488). Interest triggered engagement (sustained) = resulting in more understanding/ harder work, which in turn triggers satisfaction  *Emotional inhibitors*: boredom, frustration, worry. Boredom = triggered by difficulty of topic, lack of relevance and results in lowered cognitive engagement. Frustration = result of teaching practices/ university processes (especially poorly designed materials/ high workloads). Anxiety = peaks at different times of semester, connected with assignments and related to time management/ participating in tasks like discussion forums/ going on campus – related to student’s self-efficacy. Contact with other students = also provoked anxiety for some students. These emotions can both inhibit and prompt academic engagement.  *Emotional outcomes*: pride/ disappointment, largely from grades/ achieving milestones (especially first grade) – but for one student, getting good first grade made her complacent for the next (authors remind us of subjective nature of emotional experiences; p.492) **Core argument:** |
| Kapp, R. & Bangeni, B. (2009). [Positioning (in) the disciplines: undergraduate students’ negotiations of disciplinary discourses](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562510903314988), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 14(6), 587–596.  SA  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *discourses; identity; language; literacy; longitudinal study* | **Context:** Widening participation in South African higher education (students from ‘disadvantaged educational backgrounds’ in traditionally ‘white’ university); transitions, academic literacies, identities, which are all particularly challenging for “‘black ’ South African students from working-class communities who are not fully proficient in English, and who come from print-impoverished home backgrounds and schools which have not facilitated close, critical engagement with texts” (p.588)  **Aim:** To examine “how students position themselves in relation to their disciplines and by analysing how they position themselves in their writing” (p.589)  **Theoretical frame:** Post-structuralism/ post-colonial theory; Clark & Ivanič’s (1997) theory of writer identity (former selves to becoming selves) and authorial presence in texts  **Methodology:** Longitudinal case study (repeat individual interviews, focus groups, students’ writing, students’ reflections on writing)  **Findings:** Students had little experience of extended writing before starting their studies. The findings suggest that over time, they developed “a high degree of meta-awareness about their writing” (p.590).  Students’ reflections suggest that they invested in their disciplines as they progressed through their studies, expressing “a growing allegiance to the values and culture of the discipline” (p.591); findings suggest that students also experienced an ontological expansion/ shift in their worldviews and values/ assumptions. This was not a linear process; rather, the authors write that the “students both absorbed and resisted the new discourses and inhabited multiple subject positions as they attempted to reconcile conflicting home and institutional discourse practices” (p.592). Students’ shifting relationship with developing identities/ becoming selves = relationship and awareness of audience **Core argument:** Authors note complex and nuanced components of transition related specifically to the development of authorial/ discipline-specific identities and positioning, which extend beyond the first semester/ year of university study. Consequently, they argue that universities “still have a long way to go in  terms of recognising and providing support for both the academic and affective dimensions of their transition and in terms of engaging critically with the effects of our own discourses” (p.595). |
| Keane, E. (2011). [Dependence-deconstruction: widening participation and traditional-entry students transitioning from school to higher education in Ireland](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2011.570437), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 16(6), 707–718.  IRE  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *widening participation; student experience; falling standards; social class* | **Context:** Transitions into higher education in Ireland, in context of WP agenda/ massification of higher education. Examines the juxtaposition of equality and quality (dropping standards argument with expansion of HE) by following the transitions of non-traditional/access students and traditional students as they move into an Irish university. Notes popular fears about dumbing down of HE because of WP and critiques of the Irish school system (‘assembly-line model of education’; O’Kelly, 2009). Notes literature on ‘gap’ between school and HE. Argues there is a dearth of empirical work on post-entry experiences of students  **Aim:**  **Theoretical frame:** None explicit.  **Methodology:** Constructivist/ grounded theory. Two groups of students: 1) = ‘non-traditional’: accessed higher education via Access course (called SLAs; n=23 mix of Year 1-3/ mix of disciplines) and all from lower social class groups; 2) matched group of ‘traditional’ students = articulated directly from school (TEs) and all from higher social class groups (n=22). Majority of participants = female (32/45) and doing Arts-based courses (34/45). Data collection = demographic questionnaire, 2 x interviews + email follow-up  **Findings:** 3 themes.  Transitioning from dependence to independence: more SLAs experienced issues with school (many ‘hated’ it – they perceived their teachers as having low expectations of them); broadly the TEs had positive experiences and were generally expected to go on to further education. Both SLAs and TEs described learning at school as dependent (one student = “‘read, remember, regurgitate’”, p.710) and spoon-feeding = dominant metaphor used by participants. University learning = stark contrast  Figuring out/ enacting academic practice: both groups = patterns in academic experiences: poor attendance in Year 1, both groups considered dropping out (largely due to social/ work-related issues). Attendance improved for both groups in Years 2 and 3. Participants in both groups = failed modules and had to repeat; issues largely related to maths/statistical requirements of course, stress, workload, writing. TEs struggled more with transition to independence more than SLAs initially and needed process deconstructed. 3 phases identified: regurgitating, experimental enacting, and stable enacting. SLAs experienced some of phase 1 (regurgitation) and moved directly to phase 2. TEs’ talk suggests the restricted code of schooling = difficult to replace with independent code/ practices. Second phase generally happened at end of Year 1/ Year 2 for TEs. Partly students (TEs in particular) struggled with this shift because it involved risk (incorporating own reading/ opinions in). Overall both groups received similar results (most achieving 2:1 degrees). Most of both groups = postgrad study or planning to go on to do so.  Impacting factors: similarity in results = explained by ‘balancing out’ of dis/advantages. SLAs’ previous poor school experiences = balanced out by explicit preparation and scaffolding offered in Access course; in contrast, TEs = initially lost because gap between school and university = larger and they needed to do more deconstruction of prior learning than the SLA group (who had largely disengaged from ways of schooling). However, SLAs = lower academic self-confidence **Core argument:** Findings challenge deficit views of WP students (actually SLAs were further along the 3-part transferral process due to attending Access course). Author suggests there is a “need for significant system-wide change, including assessment (particularly in terms of the current points system, due to its backwash  effect on pedagogy), and teacher and academic staff development” (p.715). |
| Kift, S. (2015). [A decade of Transition Pedagogy: A quantum leap in conceptualising first year experience](https://www.herdsa.org.au/herdsa-review-higher-education-vol-2/51-86), *HERDSA Review of Higher Education,* 2, 51–86  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transition pedagogy; first year experience; curriculum design; whole-of-institution; whole-of-student; academic and professional partnerships.* | **Context:** Set in context of increasing student numbers, increased numbers of equity students (ref to Martin indicators). Discusses attrition rates and cost of drop out. Set in bounded context of first year experience (FYE)- notes how this is diverse and individually experienced and outlined as collection of challenges: “Consequently, the FYE bears a heavy burden if it is to cut through and mediate these complexities. It may be trite to say, but the first year must be foundational. It must lay down the learning platform for an end clearly in sight. It should foster a critical sense of belonging and student identity, through involvement and connectedness with the student’s university and discipline experiences. It should facilitate the delivery of just-in-time, just-for-me tailored support, especially for time-poor students whose differing social and cultural capital on entry demands the equitable unpacking of the ‘hidden’ rules and expectations of and for learning success” (p.54).  **Aim:** To review transition pedagogy (TP) framework  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Review essay  **Findings:**  TP = developed out of UniMelb’s FYE longitudinal reporting, starting in 1995, + inaugural FYinHE conference. Curriculum had not been a focus of much of FYE-focused reviews/ research, leading to predominant deficit approach [assimilationist]; most = “disparate and siloed co-curricular, or “first generation”, approaches” (p.57). Sally Kift was awarded ALTC fellowship in 2016 to explore whole-of-institution, whole-student framework for first year curriculum design and transition support under organizing framework of TP (p.57). TP = three features:   1. Intentional curriculum focus for commencing students 2. Whole-of-institution philosophy 3. Enabling capacity of academic and professional staff partnerships   Scopesreviews that have validated TP (p.61-2)  Notes growth in research on ‘second year slump’  Claims TP was right time-right place work; it “hit a sweet spot in the sector” (p.64)  Notes complexity created by deregulation (p.65), equity, and technological developments/ virtual environments (p.66)  **Core argument:** “The FYE bears the burden of being many things to many stakeholders but, at its core, its remit is student learning and success. In the spirit of social inclusion and widening participation, the FYE also speaks to social justice, equality and equity” (p.69). |
| Knox, H. (2005). [Making the transition from further to higher education: the impact of a preparatory module on retention, progression and performance](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03098770500103135), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 29(2), 103–110.  SCO  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Transition from FE to HE = ‘vital importance’ for WP agenda. Describes ‘Next steps..’ on p.105-6.  **Aim:** To discuss evaluation of intervention/ preparation module ‘Next steps at university’ (voluntary/ credit bearing), which is delivered pre-semester (summer programme); to provide quantitative evidence of impact  **Theoretical frame:** None explicated  **Methodology:** Evaluation of programme (exploring student data; n=103)  **Findings:** On p.106-8.  **Core argument:** Evaluation data suggest that ‘Next steps’ = “greatly facilitates” transition from FE to HE. |
| Land, R. (2011). [There could be trouble ahead: using threshold concepts as a tool of analysis](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1360144X.2011.568747), *International Journal of Academic Development,* 16(2),175–178.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Opinion piece**  **Argument:** Context = increased ‘domestication of higher education’ in relation to neoliberal regimes of truth and logics in contemporary academy. A resulting trend = towards ‘enhancement’ of learning because of of increased accountability. Approaches = risky; “Change can be, and arguably should be, troublesome” (p.175). Threshold concepts/ troublesome knowledge sometimes used: “A threshold concept can be seen as a crossing into new conceptual space where things formerly not within view are perceived, much like a portal opening up a new and previously inaccessible way of thinking about something” (p.176). Transformations resulting from crossing threshold can be disconcerting: “There is often double trouble, in that the letting go of a prevailing familiar view frequently involves an uncomfortable ontological shift or a change in subjectivity, which, while advancing understanding, can paradoxically be experienced as a sense of loss” (p.176). Transformations can be protracted and partial. |
| Land, R.; Rattray, J. & Vivian, P. (2014). [Learning in the liminal space: a semiotic approach to threshold concepts](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-013-9705-x), *Higher Education,* 67, 199–217.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Threshold concepts, Troublesome knowledge, Transformative learning, Liminality, Subjectivity, Semiotics, Signification* | **Context:** To examine what constitutes liminal space drawing on semiotic theory. Liminality defined as “a space of transformation in which the transition from an earlier understanding (or practice) to that which is required is effected” (p.200). Meyer & Land originally conceived of liminality as a ‘liquid space’, “simultaneously transforming and being transformed by the learner as he or she moves through it” (2005: 380). Liminality can be experienced as “unsettling, experienced often as a sense of loss, as prevailing earlier conceptual views, and earlier states of subjectivity, and are relinquished” (p.201) – and is oscillative: slipping in and out. Messy and fluid nature = described as ‘heterotopic’ (Bailie et al., 2012) = ‘non-linear and recursive’  **Aim:** To explore the spatial metaphor of liminality “to gain further purchase on the nature of this transformative space” (p.201)  **Theoretical frame:** Threshold concepts and liminality |
| Leese, M. (2010). [Bridging the gap: supporting student transitions into higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03098771003695494), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 34(2), 239–251.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transition; higher education; new student* | **Context:** Experience of students transitioning into HE (post-1992 university with WP commitment) in the UK in the early moments (first weeks) of their studies. In particular, study considers working lives of students and impact of workload on their experiences of transition. Scopes literature on ‘new student’ (Leathwood & O’Connell, 2003; Haggis, 2006) and issues with transition (FYE and transition literature)  **Aim:** To consider whether = ‘new student’ in modern UK HE (see Haggis, 2006)  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu’s habitus and cultural capital – based on assumption that if student’s cultural capital = recognised, they will transition more easily  **Methodology:** Mixed methods – mainly qualitative. Online questionnaire for snapshot of first 6 weeks (n=180) – thematically analysed for interview schedule for focus groups (n=25)  **Findings:**  70% of students= working while studying and spent minimal time on campus (only 30% spending 15 hours+ on campus)  27% reported difficulties finding time to study  18% = academic language = challenge  53% spend free time with friends from outside university  Students’ expectations: data from questionnaire and focus groups = concern with not having academic language (p.244-5)  Many students = uni not what they expected (fears not realised)  A number of students needed help with computers bc expectation that they would be confident with technology  Anxiety at highest when students feel they cannot ask questions **Core argument:** Higher education needs to view induction/ transition as a process and a shift is needed in perception of ‘appropriate student support’ for diverse student body |
| MacFarlane, K. (2016). [Transition through immersion in HE: An evaluation of how a transition and immersion programme for school pupils embeds a culture of the university experience for key stakeholders](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/316040114_Transition_through_immersion_in_HE_An_evaluation_of_how_a_transition_and_immersion_programme_for_school_pupils_embeds_a_culture_of_the_university_experience_for_key_stakeholders), *Widening Participation and Lifelong Learning,* 18(3), 63–73.  UK (SCOT)  Annotation by Sally Baker  Key words: *access, transition, immersion, engagement, acculturation, learner identity, evaluation, impact* | **Context:** Examines how to embed a culture of university experience by teaching Scottish Advanced Highers at university. In Scotland, students can go to university at the end of Senior 5, but it is more common for students to remain in school until Senior 6 (age 17/18) = similar to A-levels. Advanced Highers can lead directly to Year 2 of UG study. University (Glasgow Caledonian) works with 17 feeder schools (outreach and community engagement work), which have lower than national average progression rate (19%, compared to 37% in Scotland). Transition initiative (to teach Advanced Highers in university) = piloted with all 17 so as to 1) widen access; 2) target students who are least likely to attend university; 3) provide year-long immersion/ transition program to support progression and retention in HE study.  **Aim:** To explore how students felt about participating in the program, and whether participation increased their knowledge of higher education  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Evaluation: uses Kirkpatrick’s (1994) 4-stage evaluation model: “Level 1 (Reaction) evaluates how participants respond to the training. Level 2 (Learning) measures whether participants actually learned the material. Level 3 (Behaviour) considers if they are using what they learned in the workplace and Level 4 (Results) evaluates if the training positively impacted the organization” (see p.65). Paper focuses on ‘Reaction’ and ‘Learning’ stages. Evaluation data collected via semi-structured interviews – questions about expecations, experiences, successes, challenges.  **Findings:**  *Reaction*: Partner schools = keen to participate because it widened course options available and increased uptake and eased classing issues (e.g. combining levels 5 and 6 and staffing of classes). For pupils, the possibility of studying a subject they wanted at university = big draw card.  *Learning*: Students asked whether expectations had been met and compared with school. Students reported that they enjoyed:   * being treated more like adults * feeling more independent * feeling like students * having to do research * not being ‘spoonfed’ all the time * and making new friends * feeling prepared for university (p.69)   Schools reported enjoying the provision of better facilities and equipment.  Theme emerging from data:   acculturation;   engagement;   learner identity;   being treated like adults;   self-confidence;   sense of belonging.  **Core argument:** Immersion within university culture = permits students “to see the other side of [‘the academic borderlands’ Green (2006)] and to experience life as a university student” (p.70). |
| Maunder, R.; Cunliffe, M.; Galvin, J.; Mjali, S. & Rogers, J. (2013). [Listening to student voices: student researchers exploring undergraduate experiences of university transition](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-012-9595-3), *Higher Education,* 66, 139–152.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transition; University; Sociocultural; Student researchers; Staff-student partnership; Student voice* | **Context:** Examines students’ transitions into university using students as researchers. Notes dominance of focus on FYE.  **Aim:** To focus on transition experiences of students, using a ‘students as collaborators’ approach  **Theoretical frame:** Adopts a ‘sociocultural perspective’  **Methodology:** Takes ‘students as collaborators’ approach – first author = supervisor, co-authors of paper were Year 2 Psychology students and part of ‘Undergraduate Research Bursaries at Northampton’ scheme. Participant students were also Psychology students (Years 1 & 2; n=9). All data collected by student researchers. Thematic analysis  **Findings:** 3 main themes: Internalised images about university; Expectations versus reality; and Developmental changes to self   1. Internalised images about university = students held relational views of transition, based on “beliefs about university life and ‘normal’ students, rooted in their cultural surroundings, which were used to compare and interpret their own transition experiences” (p.143). Many viewed higher education as a ritual; part of “predicted life course, with participation in university being a cultural norm” (p.144). For some students, university = seen as elite/ superior [compared to A-levels??]. Students made comments about ‘normal’/ traditional students compared to ‘others’. There was tension between these two groups: “when the two groups were forced to mix through assigned group work, the perceived clash of study attitudes created frustration” (p.145) and in development of social relationships – active social life = perception of ‘normal’ experience. One student had clearly internalised views about university that she had been exposed to at school. Expectations = transition would be process rather than static experience. 2. Discussion of development of self = shifts in personal identity “showing that transitions to university are progressive and not limited to the start of first year” (p.150) 3. Transition = unique and personal, with some common elements   **Core argument:** Student-researchers are “able to establish a unique relationship with participants – challenging traditional researcher-participant dynamics” (p.148). The challenges students face are not always negative: “Successfully negotiating transitions served particular functions by contributing to students’ personal development, indicating that hurdles experienced during transition may have unanticipated benefits” (p.150) – so resist trying to create smooth transitions and one-size-fits-all approaches. |
| McCune, V.; Hounsell, J.; Christie, H.; Cree, V. & Tett, L. (2010). [Mature and younger students’ reasons for making the transition from further education into higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2010.507303), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 15(6), 691–702.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *higher education; further education; widening participation; transition; age* | **Context:** Explores the experiences of students transitioning from FE to ‘ancient’ university, comparing older and younger students’ reasons for studying at university – makes it clear that these are not homogenous groups. Works from supposition that “mature students are likely to have had more varied and fragmented learning careers shaping their relationships with higher education” (p.691). Based on data collected from a questionnaire conducted as part of ESRC-TLRP funded project.  **Aim:** To answer these RQs:  (1) What differences are there between the younger and older students’ scores on questionnaire items relating to their reasons for HE study?  (2) What similarities and differences are there between the younger and older students’ interview accounts of their reasons for HE study?  (3) Does the notion of ‘learning trajectories’ provide an effective theoretical framework for making sense of the meanings the students attribute to their studies? (p.693)  **Theoretical frame:** Wenger’s notion of ‘learning trajectories’: a “learner’s sense of how they are placed in relation to a particular community of practice and how they see their future in relation to that community” (p.692)  **Methodology:** Mixed methods and longitudinal (4-year) project: quantitative data collected via questionnaire (learning orientations; likert scale); qualitative data collected through semi-structured interviews (students’ perceptions of their participation). Participants = students who entered university with HNC/ HND qualifications (n=45), split into 3 age groups: 17-20, 21-30 and 31 or older (all students over 30 = female). Analysis of quant data = Spearman’s rank correlations  **Findings:**  *Questionnaire*: almost all students in each age group = keen to gain knowledge/ skills useful for career; less mainly interested in getting qualification. More than 80% of each group = hoping to become more independent and self-confident. Only youngest group strongly interested in social activities. Older group = most interested in making a difference in the world. Significant correlations: age + proving ability; age + wanting to study subject in-depth; age + progression from doing well in HN studies; age – (negatively correlated) with developing social life. No analysis of gender correlations possible because low number of male participants.  *Interviews***: Older students** = mostly doing vocationally-oriented courses: “Students in this group spoke of a rich sense of the relationship between their studies and their trajectories in relation to the communities of practice in which they had worked and in which they often planned to continue working once their studies were complete” (p.696) – but not all had clear ideas for future. Many of older group = had critical turning points in own life (e.g divorce, death in family) that provided impetus for higher education study. **Mid-age** group: career = often cited as driving motivation but fewer already working in field of study. This group gave more social reasons that oldest group (meeting new people, meeting people in same field); some talked of personal development and interest in subject. **Youngest group**: driven by desire to develop careers, but responses = generally less detailed, for some college had helped to spark interest in subject. Some talked about wanting to widen horizons by meeting broader group of people/ expanding career opportunities. This group = more likely to see socialising as key part of university  **Core argument:** Value in working with Wenger’s notion of learning trajectories to make sense of differing motivations according to age and experience; offers focus on mature students; many reasons for studying = age-dependent. |
| McKendry, S.; Wright, M.; & Stevenson, K. (2014). [Why here and why stay? Students’ voices on the retention strategies of a widening participation university](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0260691713003365), *Nurse Education Today*, 34, 872–877.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Retention, Support, Expectations, Identity* | **Context:** Attrition/ retention of nursing and midwifery students. Attrition is particular concern because of impact on future workforce of nurses and midwives. Cites Tinto’s work on retention (1975) and other work (e.g. Liz Thomas’ work). Examines literature relating to experiences of students who are educationally disadvantage  **Aim:** “to explore student motivations, experiences and support requirements during their first year to determine the efficacy of institutional retention initiatives” (abstract). Other aims =  “Collect reflections from students about their motivations for joining the nursing and midwifery professions.  Determine what type of support available in first year had helped make nursing and midwifery students feel part of their programme  Agree on improvements that could be made to support students during the challenges faced in their first year of university study” (p.872-3)  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** Qualitative study in large Scottish university with ‘a reputation for widening participation’ (73% = FinF; 25% of students in School of Health and Life Sciences = experience multiple deprivations). Focus groups conducted to ‘capture authentic student voice’ (p.873). Pilot focus groups (n=57) with Year 1 students in May 2011. Data collected in two phases: Sep 2011 (n=44; 6 focus groups) and Jan 2012 (n=22; 3 focus groups). 42 participants = female. Analysis = grounded theory (thematic analysis)  **Findings:**  Phase 1 focus group data: motivation for enrolling = largely due to reputation of course (reputation passed via friends, family, college staff + observations from open days) + keen to get clinical experience/ placement.  Biggest challenges with transition = due to logistical issues – accessing VLE/ timetables. Most negative expectations = not met.  Role models = important for inspiring and motivating students – particularly lecturing staff and other students  Phase 2 focus group data: Expectations = largely met (positive) or unmet (negative)  Juggling multiple/ competing demands = challenging  Academic staff = still significant for providing support.  Independent learning = challenging **Core argument:** Three major sources of support: role models (inspiration for profession), staff and peers. Students’ expectations = significant for retention |
| McMillan, W. (2013). [Transition to university: the role played by emotion](https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/62634135.pdf), *European Journal of Dental Education,* 17(2), 169–176.  SA  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *undergraduate students; school to university transition; emotions; professional identity development; peer mentoring.* | **Context:** First year dentistry course in South African university. Argues that transition to university = generally challenging for most students. Takes a view of transition as transformative for personhood/identity – transition is not a purely cognitive change; it has emotional dimensions: “The new learning context, and transition into it, is integral to successful learning, and emotion is implicated in this process” (p.169; positive = exhilaration, anticipation, excitement; negative = anxiety, vulnerability, insecurity)  **Aim:** To “the role of emotion in transition [which] can inform mechanisms for student support” (abstract)  **Theoretical frame:** None explicit  **Methodology:** Qualitative pilot study with first-year dentistry students – students recruited from core ‘Academic Literacy’ module that the author teachers (n=15). Focus group interviews conducted in year 1, followed by individual interview in year 2. Grounded theory = analytic approach  **Findings:** Author offers 11 ‘descriptive tags’ around 4 themes: *academic challenges* (knowing what to expect, feeling familiar, knowing what’s going on, relationship with lecturers), *friends and family* (family support, making friends, anonymity), *outside constraints* (home responsibilities, finances), *identity* (language, becoming a dentist/ oral hygienist) **Core argument:** Author suggests use of Heathcote & Taylor’s (2007) framework for change management to frame transition interventions; students need someone to ‘travel’ with as they make their transitions (author suggests peer mentoring) |
| McMillan, W. (2014). [They Have Different Information about What Is Going On: Emotion in the Transition to University](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2014.911250?journalCode=cher20), *Higher Education Research & Development,* 33(6), 1123–1135.  SA  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *first-year experience; higher education; professional education; student diversity; student experience* | **Context:** First year dentistry course in South African university. Argues that ‘non-traditional’ students = most vulnerable in transitioning to higher education  **Aim:** To examine intersections of “emotional commentary and classed locations”, and to identify “aspects of the university’s material and cultural environments which shape students’ emotional responses and which  consequently are implicated in the perpetuation of class-based differential life chances. (p. 1123)  **Theoretical frame:** Archer’s (2002) concept of realism and agency: emotions = commentaries about ‘competing concerns’ (2002: 16; cited on p.1124). Archer argues that emotions emerge from 3 competing concerns: physical, performative, self-worth. These competing concerns = hierarchy and what is privileged by an individual = identity. Capital, including ‘emotional capital’ (Reay, 2000) = classed: middle class students are more tempered because there is less risk, fear, shame and guilt (see p.1124). Reay (2005) argues that f-in-f students in particular pay a higher ‘emotional cost’  **Methodology:** [Presumably qualitative]. Study = focus groups with first year dentistry class with students in Academic Literacy core module [n=15] to explore experiences of transition. Author notes ‘classed post-apartheid social reality’; categorized students into broad middle class (Group 1) and working class (Group 2) groups plus a third group comprising friends who elected to participate together (mostly working class). Interviews = 3rd month of Year 1. Two broad questions asked: ‘What was it like coming to university’ and ‘What does being a dentist/oral hygienist mean to you?’. Emotions = not apriori theme but emerged in process of transcription = signaled either paralinguistically or through word choice + grounded theory. All 15 students = re-interviewed in Year 2  **Findings:**  *Funding* – managing finances = common theme but differences noted between ‘classes’; middle class students= more about staying within budget/ not overspending (with parents’ anger the factor to be avoided) = project of ‘becoming an adult’. For working class students, ‘managing finances’ = about making enough money to keep studying (impacting on when, what and where students studied). Travelling = major cost: “The working-class students, thus, experienced the emotional cost of being different (Reay, 2005) – of not being able to produce, financially, that which universities assume to be in place” (p.1128).  *Access*– sense of inevitability about going to university for middle class students; no data to suggest emotional element to choice of whether to attend university. Analysis = middle class students had emotional capital to weather the risk: “middle-class students had access to resources which potentially alleviated feelings of risk and fear” (p.1128). For working class students = desire to go to university = impacted by assumptions about what was possible (relating to cultural capital/ familiarity with system and norms. Argues that middle class students’ data suggest that they had access to more information about university because of parents’ capital, whereas working class students did not have parents’ grapevine/ archive of experience to draw on [no ref to Ball & Vincent, 1998], resulting in emotional responses: “Bewilderment and frustration were evident for these students. In a tone of desperation, Siviwe declared, ‘I didn’t know what to do!’” (p.1130).  *Academic preparedness ­*–middle class students’ talk suggests that they had been primed/ prepared at home for the idea of university (e.g. prep for independent study) and purchase of equipment and school explicated expectations/ standards: “Success in the academic challenges of school, and recognition that the challenges at university were similar, allowed these students to assume that they had the resources to meet the challenges of university and to perform successfully” (p.1130). Working class students = less likely to develop same set of resources and dispositions, and as a consequence they were less prepared for the academic environment of higher education. Author cites one student who described “university as a ‘new world’” (p.1131). Emotions evident in phrasing such as ‘feeling lost’, ‘foreignness’, and perception of others having ‘insider information’. “Disappointment and grief at not being able to perform the tasks pre-requisite for university success – tasks that other students appeared to perform so effortlessly that they gave the impression of having insider information – was implicit in accounts that constructed the self as ‘nothing’” (p.1131).  *Becoming a dentist –* Role performance = emotional because of projection onto future = saturated with hopes and fears. Middle class students more likely to talk about course in terms of personal project and active choice. Less likely to be talked about as active choice by working class students; rather = framed as giving back to community. “Privileging the project of university student, rather than that of dentist/oral hygienist, suggests an emotional and energy investment related to ‘getting into’ university” (p.1133). **Core argument:** Differences in ways that middle and working class students experience transition to university and analysis of their emotional responses = explores students’ inner worlds. |
| McMurray, I.; Rafferty, C.; Sutton, C. & Patel, S. (2017) [Using dissertation projects to facilitate transitions to university and employment: an exploratory case study](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2015.1100712?scroll=top&needAccess=true&journalCode=cjfh20), *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 41(3), 273–285.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transitions; higher education; peer-tutoring; dissertation; employability* | **Context:** Challenges of transition, especially in the context of widening participation; school and university partnership to support students with their transitions into post-compulsory study and employment. Partnership between school (A-level) psychology teachers and psychology lecturers in post-1992 university in England. Review of literature focuses on common narrative of students’ under-preparation. Authors also note the call from the British Psychological Society to strengthen the connections between A-levels and undergraduate to help support students’ transitions. Challenges with reduction of employment opportunities mean that university teaching needs to prepare students for a wide range of ‘transferrable skills’.  Research dissertation = core element of the initiative described in the article.  **Aim:** To explore “how undergraduate dissertation students can work with AS and A Level students on their dissertation projects to enhance the skills and development of both” (p.273). Stated objectives of the project:  “(1) To detail an exploratory case study in which staff and students from a school and university work together to support the learning of the AS and A Level students and psychology undergraduates as part of their dissertation with school students.  (2) To explore how supporting dissertation students with their dissertation research project impacted upon AS and A level students’ learning and perceptions of higher education.  (3) To explore how taking part in applied research and mentoring of AS and A Level students enhanced dissertation students’ learning” (p.277).  **Theoretical frame:** Social constructivism (Vygotksy) and zone of proximal development  **Methodology:** Exploratory case study; six undergraduate students who were undertaking their research dissertation expressed an interest in researching with younger people (Author 1 = dissertation supervisor; Author 2 = A-level teacher; Authors 3&4 = students). Information on dissertation projects on p.278.  **Findings:** Findings from students’ dissertation projects = on p.280.  Reflections from participants/ authors  A-level students = asked for their opinions on participating in the dissertation projects; “They stated that they enjoyed the applied nature of the research as they could see how ‘real research at uni’ is conducted and that it was ‘better than just listening and reading about it’” (p.280).  Dissertation students = described how “meeting with the schools in the preparation stage improved their confidence, and increased their understanding of the ethical implications of taking part in applied research” (p.280) and they enjoyed mentoring the A-level students.  Teachers/ authors: reflected on the opportunities for both sets of students, and was likely to encourage schools students to consider studying psychology at university. However, authors note how challenging it can be to develop/sustain relationships between universities and schools (also the ethical issues) **Core argument:** A partnership such as the one described in this article can be useful for supporting university students to develop their own research practices, to support school students with their transitions and aspirations/ feel more prepared and aware of what is involved in undergraduate study. |
| McPhail, R. (2015). [Pre-university prepared students: a programme for facilitating the transition from secondary to tertiary education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2015.1062360?journalCode=cthe20), *Teaching in Higher Education*, 20(6),  652–665.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *first-year student experience; secondary; student expectations; student pathways; student transition* | **Context:** Supporting students to transition into higher education. Author argues that importance of pre-university programs has been underexplored/ under-discussed in the research literature. Literature review covers challenges identified with transition (isolation, emotions, dislocation, adaptation, mismatched expectations). Author notes research by James et al. (2010), which suggested that half of first year students felt that their experience at school had under-prepared them for higher education study  **Aim:** To describe a school-based pre-university programme designed to support school (Years 10–12) to university transitions; to “explore how ‘ pre-university prepared students’ (PUPS) expectations might be realigned to better meet the realities of tertiary studies and thereby assist with successful transition and potential retention in one Business outreach programme” (p.656).  **Theoretical frame:** Five senses model of successful transition (Lizzio, 2006), which conceptualises students’ needs as per five domains of success: Academic culture, Purpose, Capability, Connectedness and Resourcefulness  **Methodology:** Qualitative evaluation of PUPS program (details on p.657–8), created by a UQ academic and a high school Business teacher. Aim of PUPS program = “to improve the students’ transition by providing them with experiences that develop realistic and informed expectations, knowledge with which to make informed decisions, if tertiary studies are what they want to pursue, about which degree to enrol in what skills will be required to ensure their successful transition to tertiary education” (p.657). Data = PUPS enrolment data (participation and transition) + lexical analysis of students’ reflective narratives (n=127): lexical analysis using Leximancer (see p.659)  **Findings:** Lexical analysis of students’ reflective narratives identified 6 themes and 29 concepts, which have been categorised according to ‘more tangible’ (e.g. university, lectures), and ‘less tangible’ issues (e.g. feel, experience, institution and different). Strongest theme [frequency of word?] = university; second strongest = lectures.  **Core argument:** “PUPS appeared in many cases, to realise that they can achieve at university, were assisted by knowing how to do this and knowing who can help them building a sense of capability and connectedness” (p.662) |
| Meehan, C. & Howells, K. (2019). [In search of the feeling of](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1490702)  [‘belonging’ in higher education: undergraduate students transition into higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2018.1490702), *Journal of Further and Higher Education*, 43(10), 1376–1390.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Belonging; higher education; transition; student experience; undergraduate students* | **Context:** Students transitioning into higher education in year 1; importance of belonging; Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) as measurement framework that foregrounds importance of teaching/ transition  **Aim:** To “explore students’ experiences of belonging, what factors enable belonging and  create barriers to belonging in the following research questions underpinned this study:  ● What is ‘belonging’ in higher education?  ● What helps students to feel like they belong?  ● What are the barriers to belonging?  ● What are the lessons for tutor, managers, HEIs about belonging in higher education?” (p.1380)  **Theoretical frame:** Three-tiered model of being, becoming and belonging (Araujo et al., 2014) — process view of transitions over student lifecycle  **Methodology:** Draws on qualitative data gathered from larger project on transition, which asked new students/ freshers (n=530; details on p.1381) to complete a Student Experience Evaluation (SEE) — other findings are reported in Meehan & Howells, 2017). Data responding to particular questions (see list on p.1380) = inductively and thematically analysed  **Findings:**  *Belonging*: students’ responses indicate several perceived benefits for starting university (such as “making new friends, having new experiences, being in an environment in which they can learn, be challenged and leading to progression into a career which they aspire towards”, p.1382). Several wordclouds provided to support claims.  *How belonging is enabled*: students’ responses flag the important role played by academic staff and other pastoral staff members; also peer-to-peer interactions = noted as significant.  *Barriers to belonging*: shifting to academic study/workload = reported as most challenging; also, the change in circumstances (with many students moving away from home for the first time) was noted as difficult. Also: managing money and time, and a sense of not being good enough. **Core argument:** Transition is difficult; academic staff have an important role to play. |
| Meuleman, A.M.; Garrett, R.; Wrench, A.; & King, S. (2015). ‘[Some people say I’m thriving but…’: non-traditional students’ experiences of university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13603116.2014.945973), *International Journal of Inclusive Education,* 19(5), 503–517.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *higher education, non-traditional students, Bourdieu, capital, loneliness* | **Context:** Situated in expanding HE sector – explores the experiences of FiF, rural and international students as they transitioned into Year 1. Explains expansion as result of neoliberalism – increasing workforce/ ‘educated workforce’. Argues that neoliberal higher education system “contributes to processes of individualisation when young people detach from their family to become useful participants in society” (p.504) and encouraged to become self-entrepreneurs. Authors also draw on literature that explores affective dimension of transitioning/ starting higher education. Connects family/friends to habitus, capital and field. Draws on literature relating to loneliness. International students constructed as ‘non-traditional’  **Aim:**  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu – field, habitus and capital/ Weiss’ dimensions of loneliness  **Methodology:** Interpretive, critical qualitative approach. RQs: (1) What are the experiences of non-traditional students as they transition into the first year of university? (2) How do they experience the academic as well as social transition to university?  Online survey (n=285: 112 FiF/ 42 = rural/ 16 = international) + purposeful sampling for follow-up focus group interviews (3-5 students of same category in each focus group). A prior and post-hoc coding according to commonalities and differences (post-hoc = experiences of transition/ social experiences; a priori = habitus, field, capital; Weiss’ dimensions of loneliness)  **Findings:**  *Transition*  Non-traditional students do not have capital to understand ‘field expectations’ of higher education study. Grades/ performance are important signals of difference from prior educational experiences (and key triggers for loss of confidence)  *Forced independence*  For rural/ international students, forced independence = challenging – financial hardship/ responsibility for self/loss of emotional and social support  *Social experience*  1) disconnection, 2) lack of opportunity to meet other students: ‘after the lectures it’s like they’ve all gone’ (p.512) = emotional isolation **Core argument:** Facilitating transition for non-traditional students may necessitate/require cultural change in institution and move away from the notion that students need to adapt. “[N]on-traditional students are not well positioned in relation to cultural and social capital to negotiate transition to university” (p.513) and as a result they are constructed as ‘other’. Problems occur when there is a ‘mismatch’ between family and university habitus. Students “who experienced a sense of community adjusted more easily and enjoyed the process of transition” (p.514). “The research calls for a broadened perspective in the moral purpose of universities and a shared belief in wanting to make the transition to university smoother and accessible for all student groups. In order to facilitate the transition to university for non-traditional students, focus needs to be directed to the interconnectedness of academic and social experience of university and the importance of strong social support” (p.514-5). |
| Morgan, J. (2015). [Foundation degree to honours degree: the transition experiences of students on an early years programme](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2013.817005), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 39(1), 108–126.    UK  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *direct-entry student; foundation degree; honours degree study; progression; transition; widening participation* | **Context:** The introduction of foundation degrees by the British government in 2000 as a qualification that balanced academic and vocational skills, and emphasise ‘work-based learning, employer involvement, flexible delivery and a focus on widening participation’ (109). All students who pass their foundation degrees are afforded the opportunity to continue to a third year honours degree. This transition is required to be ‘smooth’ and is often ‘likened to the transition experiences of first-year students who are also new to studying at university level’ (109). Research identifies the particularly emotional components of transition that can cause fears, worries and doubts, including doubts about self-worth to surface (Gallacher et al. 2002; Christie et al. 2008).  **Aim:** ‘To understand the progression experiences of foundation degree students in order to enhance and strengthen the support offered before, during and after transition so that foundation degree students are integrated into their first and final year at university as quickly, sensitively and effectively as possible’ (111).  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu’s (1984, 1986, 1992) concepts of habitus and cultural capital that understands non-traditional students conceptualisation of the transition to university as ‘as a time of risk, including financial risk, risk to identity and self-concept, risk to family life/ children and the risk of failure as well as feelings of not being able to cope or make friends’ (110). Field and Morgan-Klein’s (2010), using Turner’s (1987) ideas of ‘liminity’ and ‘rites of passage’, discussion of how ‘student-hood itself can be conceptualised as a liminal position or a transitional status ‘betwixt and between’ other statuses or ‘betwixt and between’ their past and their ‘imagined’ future’ (110).  **Methodology:** Mixed-methods – including: online questionnaires and semi-structured in-depth interviews. The online questionnaire focussed on emotions and feelings, and was distributed as such in order to be as accessible as possible for students who were juggling multiple roles (student, worker, parent, carer, etc.) and perhaps did not have the time to commit to in-person or telephone interviews.  **Findings:** Three main themes: study at foundation degree level was different to honours degree level; non-traditional students were more likely than traditional students to construct their identity as a student as one of ‘emotional disorder and insecurity’, and ‘many students tended to construct themselves and their progression in terms of potential failure and not being good enough’ (118); and potential for the enhancement of student progression experience, which included developing relationships between students and lecturers and improving relationships between FE and HE providers.  **Core argument:** ‘Improving the progression experiences of students is not only important in terms of retention and student experience but also in light of recent changes to student fee structures which may make foundation degrees more attractive to students, [which] could potentially increase the numbers of students progressing to university for the final year of their degree’ (108). Authors suggest more information for students about progression and expectations and a focus by providers on relationship building. |
| Morosanu, L.; Handley, K. & O’Donovan, B. (2010). [Seeking support: researching first-year students’ experiences of coping with academic life](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2010.487200), *Higher Education Research & Development,* 29(6), 665–678.  UK  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords:*formal and informal support; social networks; student experience; transition to academia* | **Context:** Transition to higher ed includes both academic and socio-cultural challenges. While research recognises that there is a specific social dimension to learning and “despite sustained institutional efforts to foster or even ‘create’ community in its broader sense, with an aim to facilitate integration and learning, there is growing evidence of student confusion, dissatisfaction and disengagement” (666).  **Aim:** Proposal of a “social network agenda, starting ‘from below’, to examine students’ own use of formal and informal support in different academic contexts contained within or reaching beyond the university” (666) in response to failed efforts by institutions to create or manufacture communities.  **Theoretical frame:** Social network concepts, which emphasise the role of relationships among individuals or organisations as a complementary lens to “learning and community of practice perspectives, which emphasise *participation* as the driving force of learning and identity development (Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998)” (666). Bourdieu’s (1997) concept of social capital, defined as “‘the aggregate of the actual and potential resources which are linked to possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition or – in other words, to membership in a group’ (p. 51)” (667). Coleman’s (1997) discussion of social capital focuses on systematic functions, which distinguishes between resources and the ‘ability’ to gain them via membership in various networks (Portes, 1998, p. 5) and outlines three aspects of social capital: *obligations and expectations*, depending on the trust exercised in the networks; the *capacity of information to flow* through the network so as to generate action; and *norms and sanctions* that regulate relations (Harper, 2001, p. 8). And Putnam’s (2000) social capital theorisations which focus on larger structures, arguing that education is one area where the benefits of social capital can be felt at both the individual and collective level.  **Methodology:** Two vignettes from two university students taken from an exploratory research study on student experience, which included student audio diaries. The study tried to capture spontaneous, non-directive particularities of the students’ daily experience at university and the audio diary portion was optional participation.  **Findings:** First-year students’ transition to university is not an even, smooth process. In particular, students may find imposition of ‘forced socialisation’ intimidating and unhelpful.  **Core argument:** Exploring the communities and informal networks within which students are embedded requires a ‘from below’ consideration to fully understand students’ support needs. |
| Murtagh, L. (2010). [They give us homework! Transition to higher education: the case of initial teacher training](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2010.484057), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 34(3), 405–418.  UK  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *independent learning; assessment; transition; initial teacher training; case study* | **Context:** Many students who drop out of university do so within the first year, as it is generally understood as a time of substantial and significant change and adjustment. Often expectations for students to be self-regulatory and motivated produce feelings of anxiety and stress within students. This particular university emphasises ‘independent learning and learner autonomy. Learner autonomy is primarily concerned with decision-making on the part of the learner, with the locus of control and responsibility lying in their hands (Pierson 1996)’ (406). However, students are often underprepared with ‘little idea of what to expect and little understanding of how the university environment can affect their lives’ (406). The move to modularization programmes to aid students’ progress through credit accumulation has been implemented more widely since the 1990s, but the effect is a summative assessment that does not happen until the end of the module, leaving little room for tutoring and student engagement with formative assessment or feedback.  **Aim:** To examine the significance of ‘preparedness’ with specific reference to assessment and to ascertain any potential transitional issues and therefore any areas for development in Year 1 programmes at a modern university in England to aid student progress and enhance retention (retention was a particularly fraught topic at the time of the study due to a turbulent economic climate in the UK) (405). Specific research questions were: ‘How are our students prepared for study and, with particular reference to this article, for assessment in HE? And similarly, how prepared are we as lecturers and as assessors of our student body?’ (407).  **Theoretical frame: N/A**  **Methodology:** Qualitative –semi-structured questionnaires distributed to Year 1 initial teacher training students and their lecturers and focused conversations with a small group of students.  **Findings:** Independent study and assessment processes pose challenges for students in their first year at university, who generally consider independent study as akin to ‘homework’. Students indicated that they were insufficiently prepared for the independent aspects of HE study particularly because they were ‘hand-held’ in pre-uni educational venues. Lecturers noted lack of confidence and need for significant guidance with regards to composing independent assignments. Students generally believe it is the responsibility of pre-HE institutions to prepare them.  **Core argument:** Further consideration needs to be given to the notion of independent learning, particularly there is ‘a need for university lecturers to clarify the curriculum of their programmes such that requirements are made explicit and the teaching, learning and assessment strategies are used to build independent learning as students progress from Level 4 to Level 6. Furthermore, there is evidently a need for students to have a clear notion of what independent learning is and how they can manage this themselves prior to entry to programmes’ (414). Overall, the author suggests transparency in assignments – both in assessment and expectations – at the pre-programme stage. |
| Nallaya, S. (2018). [An exploration of how first year students are inducted into their discipline’s academic discourses](https://doi-org.wwwproxy1.library.unsw.edu.au/10.1016/j.ijer.2017.11.007), *International Journal of Educational Research*, 87, 57-66.  AUS  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *Induct; academic literacies; academic discourses; first year students; scaffolding* | **Context:** There is an existing variance in proficiency in academic literacies amongst ‘commencing students in HE as a consequence of the historical and social contexts of a discipline and academic abilities, language skills and cultural backgrounds of students’ (Elton, 2010; Goldingay et al., 2012), which is crucial because academic literacies play an important role in higher ed success, including participation and engagement. Academic literacies are typically in operation within ‘sites of discourse and power’, such as higher ed institutions and are generally understood by advocates at the level of epistemology and identities. However, a body of extant research suggests that in order for students to effectively ‘master’ academic literacies, they need to be made aware of what these practices are so that they are able to acquire and employ these conventions in their study program (58). An increase in diverse students within higher ed institutions has made this even more of an imperative. Further, data suggests that ‘both academic literacies and professional communication are important skills that need to be scaffolded and developed in study programs so that students will be proficient in their discipline’s literacies’ (58).  **Aim:** To examine how first year students are inducted into their disciplines by identifying lecturers and students’ insights free from prior assumptions about how the development of academic literacies occurs in a study program.  **Theoretical frame:** Academic literacies approach which are understood as distinct skills/practices (as opposed to texts) that students can master which are devoid of “language and communication...that are privileged, expected, cultivated, conventionalised or ritualised” (Duff, 2010, p. 175).  **Methodology:** Phenomenography (a qualitative approach that is used to identify the different ways a group of people experience and understand a phenomenon). The study participants were comprised of ‘students and lecturers from the Bachelor of Teaching (MBET) program in the research context. Open-ended questions were asked in the interviews and participants were encouraged to speak freely and give concrete examples about their experience of the phenomenon which was: how MBET students developed their disciplinary academic literacies’ (59). The main objective was to understand how the participants ‘made meaning’ from the phenomenon.  **Findings:** ‘1) there was disparity between different stakeholders’ expectations about the learning and teaching needs of students in Higher Education; 2) not all first year students had the expected academic literacies to engage in the discourses of their discipline; 3) scaffolding of disciplinary literacies was not being undertaken consistently; and 4) lecturers were uncertain about the level of scaffolding that should be provided to first year students’ (57).  **Core argument:** The development of academic literacies through scaffolding by students should be a deliberate goal of lecturers at higher ed institutions. |
| Nelson, K.; Smith, J. & Clarke, J. (2012). [Enhancing the transition of commencing students into university: an institution-wide approach](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/07294360.2011.556108), *Higher Education Research & Development,* 31(2), 185–199.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *engagement; first year experience; retention; transition* | **Context:** First Year Experience (FYE) in QUT: ‘Transitions in Project’ (TIP) – institution-wide program implementation = “premised on a holistic view of students and their university experience – specifically their FYE – and attempted to identify and embed good practice that focused on engaging students across an institution in a way that was sustainable beyond the life of the project” (p.186). Draws on literature from Krause et al. (2005), Lawrence (2005), Tinto (2005), Wylie (2005) to discuss the disconnected nature of transition approaches until Sally Kift’s transition pedagogy. Offers overview of QUT and TIP and its 4 aims  **Aim:** To describe TIP and report on its evaluations  **Theoretical frame:** Biggs 3P model (Presage-Process-Product), 1999  **Methodology:** Description  **Core argument:** Transition pedagogy and six curriculum design principles = useful for implementing whole-of-institution approach to FYE |
| Neve, H.; Llody, H. & Collett, T. (2016). [Understanding students’ experiences of professionalism learning: a ‘threshold’ approach](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2016.1221810?journalCode=cthe20), *Teaching in Higher Education,* DOI  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Threshold concepts; professionalism learning;*  *professional identity; small group learning; audio-diaries* | **Context:** Professional learning in UK higher education  **Aim:** To unpack the teaching of professionalism:  (1) explore threshold concepts associated with professionalism and  (2) identify factors that might enable students to ‘get’ such concepts (p.3).  **Theoretical frame:** Threshold concepts (Meyer and Land, 2003) = core concepts = transformative, changing learners’ ways of being and integrative, bringing different aspects of subject together making hidden connections visible = “‘aha’ moment” (p.2) and = irreversible. Also likely to include troublesome knowledge = can lead to students feeling “uncomfortable and unsettling, leading students to become stuck, avoid a topic or just give up” (p.2) – keeps students in liminal space, oscillating between old and new understandings = see Cousin 2006.  **Methodology:** Auto-diary methodology: audio diaries kept by 15 x students and 7 x tutors (Medical School) over 2 x terms. Data = qualitatively analysed for threshold concepts (where language indicated that learning was troublesome, integrative or transformative)  **Findings:** Seven potential threshold concepts identified relating to students’ professional identities:  *Threshold 1: there is a professional culture and i am becoming part of it*  *Threshold 2: consider the whole person*  *Threshold 3. I don’t need to know everything*  *Threshold 4: consider the bigger picture*  *Threshold 5: we have to work with uncertainty*  *Threshold 6: people have different expectations*  *Threshold 7: emotional intelligence* **Core argument:** None explicit. |
| O’Donnell, M.; Wallace, M.; Melano, A.; Lawson, R. & Leinonen, E. (2015). [Putting transition at the centre of whole-of-curriculum transformation](https://ro.uow.edu.au/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1534&context=asdpapers), *Student Success,* 6(2), 73–79.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Australian higher education/ University of Wollongong’s ‘Curriculum Transformation Project’ (CTP)  **Aim:** To describe UoW whole-of-curriculum transition intervention; to extend notion of transition pedagogy  **Theoretical frame:** Kift’s transition pedagogy  **Contribution:** Description  **Findings:**  UOW CTP = 3 design principles: *transition, synthesis, broadening,* with sub-principles of assessment (assisted by Chris Rust and David Boud), co-curricular award program, CPD*.*  **Proposed additions to transition pedagogy:**  1) Narratives of purpose – make relevance of particular curricula choices so students can see overarching narrative of degree/ higher education  2) Reflection  3) Assessment literacy – developmental view of assessment (beyond dichotomy of formative/ summative)  4) Capacity building .  Transition pedagogy = embedded in following ways at UOW (see p.78):  FYE  My Portfolio  Hybrid Learning  Connections Subjects  Capstone Experience **Core argument:** Updated version of transition pedagogy proposed by authors = p.77   * “recognises and facilitates the needs of diverse student cohorts; * is facilitated by focused capacity building opportunities for both staff and students; * introduces and develops knowledge, skills, and attitudes through a linked sequence of learning opportunities; * builds engagement and belonging through active and collaborative learning; * builds assessment literacy that develops student’s capacity to self assess and engage in sustainable lifelong learning; * establishes closure at key points of the learning journey to allow students to integrate and synthesise knowledge, skills, and attitudes; * facilitates reflection that allows students to recognise, assess and integrate their capabilities and performance; * creates transparent sense-making narratives through negotiating clear objectives and learning processes and making explicit links between a range of learning activities to build a sense of purpose ; * creates integrated pathways between curricular and co-curricular learning opportunities and supports; * integrates a variety of monitoring processes that include subject-based formative feedback and subject and * course-based data analytics to enable tracking of individual student experience and tailoring of appropriate support; and * engages in a rigorous cycle of evaluation and renewal that measures effectiveness of the curriculum and informs its iterative redesign”. |
| O’Donnell, V. & Tobbell, J. (2007). [The Transition of Adult Students To Higher Education: Legitimate Peripheral Participation In A Community Of Practice](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/0741713607302686), *Adult Education Quarterly,* 57(4), 312–328.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *educational transitions; communities of practice; higher education; adult learning; nontraditional students; identity; participation* | **Context:** Set in context of WP = increased participation of adult learners in HE – makes case that transition = relatively well researched but no so much for adult learners, who are “potentially more vulnerable to difficulties in the management of these transitions” (p.313)  **Aim:** To examine past experiences of adult learners (historical context) and current experiences in HE (present context) who were taking an access course; “to examine how adult students experience the transition to HE in terms of learning, participation in practices, and identity… to know about the extent to which they perceive themselves to have become participants in the community of HE, their thoughts on the practices which may serve to include and exclude them from participation, the ways in which they understand learning in the community, and reflections on participation, identity, and identity trajectories” (p.316)  **Theoretical frame:** Communities of practice and legitimate peripheral participation (Lave and Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998; Lave, 1997): rather than individual activity, learning = “becomes a process distributed across person, time, place, and activity” (p.315) = pushes responsibility onto institution to attend to wider practices at play, as well as attending to students’ prior experiences. Participation = “ontological imperative” (p.316)  **Methodology:** Qualitative: semi-structured interviews with 17 adults (12 = f, 5= m; aged 23-57) participating in alternative access course located in UK university (underpinned by epistemology = human beings = interpreters of own meaning). Data analysed using ‘constant comparative technique’ (see p.317)  **Findings:** Themes = informed by CoP theory  *Peripheral participation*: alternative/ adult access courses = by nature peripheral of mainstream = potential for contradiction (in uni but at arm’s length) – physical location = set away from main campus (experienced as both a positive and negative by participants); unable to access central services (producing feelings of being ‘lepers’, see p.318) because not fully enrolled/ matriculated students of university  *Learning by doing*: students responded well to learning about studying at university through engagement with practices of HE (e.g. essay writing, note taking) = study skills (abstract, decontextualized) approach = not considered to be useful.  *Preparation for undergraduate academic practices*: developing independence and being ‘eased in’, learning a ‘new language’. Authors note that language = key to learning in CoP and “talking about practices is not the same as talking within those practices” (p.322).  Belonging: most students experienced feeling of not belonging at first; perceptions/ expectations of ‘who’ a uni student is created sense of being ‘outsiders’  Labelling and identity: some students wanted to take on the label of students (e.g. girl who preferred it to label of ‘unemployed’; other girl who went to student bar, p.324) but brevity of course (2 hours a week) = prevented some from feeling like a ‘proper’ student. Age = significant **Core argument:** Theory of CoP and peripheral participation = useful for understanding students’ historical and current contexts as they transition into HE: “adults in this course were peripheral participants in the institution’s HE community, that academic practices were an important part of their transition into HE and that learning of these occurred primarily through engagement in practice, and that identity changes were mediated by a sense of belonging” (p.326).  There is no shortcut to full participation in a community (p.327) – only happens through engagement in sociocultural practices |
| O’Donnell, V.; Tobbell, J.; Lawthom, R.; & Zammit, M. (2009). [Transition to postgraduate study: Practice, participation and the widening participation agenda](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1469787408100193?journalCode=alha), *Active Learning in Higher Education*, 10(1), 26–40.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Report on then ongoing Higher Education Academy- funded project on PG transition (aimed at exploring gap in the literature). Discusses WP/ offers definition p.27-8.  **Aim:** To explore transition in postgraduate (UK) context/ unpack assumptions  **Theoretical frame:** Located in Communities of Practice framework – expansive view of transition to include learning, identity and participation  **Methodology:** Qualitative ethnographic methodology within critical realist frame. Used semi-structured interviews with postgrad (Master/ PhD) students on commencement and then fortnightly email interviews for first term, then monthly emails. Also conducted interviews with 6 staff members responsible for PG teaching/supervision. Analysis: grounded theory/ CoP framework  **Findings:** 1) heterogeneity of PG students: implementation of WP agenda needs to recognise diversity of student body – often PG students are assumed to be relatively homogeneous: “*This inaccurate assumption may arise from the idea that having an undergraduate degree means that students are skilled in the practices necessary for success in HE, and thus that there is little (if any) further transition to be made by that stage…. For all of them, difficulties in the transition to postgraduate study were experienced as difficulties in*  *the mastery of key skills or academic practices, suggesting that postgraduate students do not come ‘equipped’ for their studies in higher education” (p.31*). Academic practices appear to be excluding some PG students. Discuss increasing student numbers in context of ‘credential inflation’ (Van de Werfhost & Anderson, 2005) – PG quals likely to become more popular. PG students could have gap between UG (if studied at all) and PG course. Struggles with tech also problematic. Also changing into different discipline area experienced as challenging.  2) teaching and learning at PG level: more independent learning (than for UG study) cited by students and staff but its translation into practice = unsatisfactory: “*Clearly it will be difficult for postgraduate students to engage in the level of independent study that is expected and required of them, when the academic practices which they encounter do not assist them in the development of such skills*” (p.37).  **Relevance to PGCW/ equity:** Makes case that PG study is underpinned by assumptions about a homogeneous student body who have studied UG degree in same discipline and who have technological practices and familiarity with academic practices. Teaching and learning practices do not appear to do much to support students to become more independent learners: “*At present, participation, and so success, is undermined by*  *university processes which do not account for individual knowledge and skill bases which serve to undermine successful postgraduate trajectories*” (p.38).  **Pedagogical intervention suggested?** Nothing specific  **Points to future research agenda?** No |
| O’Shea, S. (2013). [Transitions and turning points: exploring how first-in-family female students story their transition to university and student identity formation](file://localhost/doi/10.1080:09518398.2013.771226), *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, 1–24.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transition to university; first-in-family students; mature-age students* | **Context:** Transition into higher education study for female, mature age and first in family students, who are described as defining themselves as ‘imposters’ in O’Donnell & Tobbell’s (2007) study. Scopes gender divide in HE and scopes literature on women returners. Also navigates literature on identity/ies in HE (p.137-8). Transition = risky (see p.138). Social class also important frame  **Aim:** To offer insight into women’s perceptions of their social world of the university and negotiations with the university; how the participants managed their transitions and their identity positions  **Theoretical frame:** Learning identity (Johnston & Merrill, 2009) = complex/ contradictory (intersectional): “Learning identities may have been forged in previous educational environments and so entry into higher education may either confirm them or disrupt them, prompting a renegotiation” (p.138); ‘turning points’ (see Cappeliez, Beaupre, and Robitaille, 2008) and ‘becoming’  **Methodology:** Narrative inquiry/ repeat interviews with mature age, female and FinF students (n=17). Ontology = symbolic interactionism. Longitudinal nature (one year) allowed O’Shea to “journey with the participants in order to explore the various critical stages encountered as they themselves were experiencing them” (p.141). Age range of participants = 18-47 (average age = 32). 9/17 had finished HSC; 10/17 had completed some form of post-school education (VET/ Access to gain access). 4/17 completed STAT test.  Iterative process of analysis, a “circuitous process” (p.144)  **Findings:** Three themes: Coming to university, Persisting in the university environment, Changes in thinking  *Coming to university*: Decision to enrol at university = major, often with resistance from family members. Only 2/17 had experienced joy and excitement from partner. Turning points = varied between women but marked a point where university became a possibility/ necessity (e.g., an escape from dysfunction, possibility of getting more out of life, fulfilment, shift away from domestic space). Compromise =needed to manage dynamics with family.  Initial interactions with university = complicated and intimidating (p.148). Persistence = characterised as series of turning points.  P*ersisting in the university environment*: reflecting on ‘highs’ and ‘lows’, assessment featured prominently/ = significant turning points. At the beginning of Year 1, the idea of failing an assignment was the biggest fear (15/17 students); “This was related to both the financial implications of failure but also the personal and public repercussions such as diminished self-confidence as well as disappointment from self and others” (p.149).  Perception of transition = relational to prior educational experiences and perceptions of learning selves and knowledge of university and culture (‘culture shock’, p.150)  Changes in thinking: dramatic turning points in participants’ relational lives (including relationships at home). Their reasons for studying changed over the course of the year, “even those women who had initially described university in more instrumental terms talked more about self-fulfilment and changes in identity by the end of the year” (p.152) **Core argument:** Turning points = useful way of exploring students’ transitions in identities through process of entering and studying in Year 1 of university (relational, confidence as learner, confidence in self more generally): “University and the related turning points in self-identity also led some of the women to question the taken-for-granted aspects of their lives” (p.153) |
| O’Shea, S. & Vincent, H. (2011). [Uni-Start: A Peer-Led Orientation Activity Designed for the Early and Timely Engagement of Commencing University Students](https://ro.uow.edu.au/edupapers/1173/), *The Journal of Continuing Higher Education,* 59, 152–160.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords. *higher education; peer-led support; transition; orientation; student equity* | **Context:** Offers reflection on one approach to supporting diverse students in Australian university (presumably UOW), based on community of practice model. Notes need for students to be inculcated into university practices/ routines/ conventions etc. Discusses transition program = ‘Uni-Start’ (began in 2007) which drew “on the experiences of the experts within the university community to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for the “novice” or newcomer to cope with this new environment” (p.153). Set in context of increased participation in HE and in the marketised HE sector (student-as-client and brand establishment) – working towards call for need to understand importance of student-institution relationships and communication. Cites AUSSE statistics from 2010 that suggest students were unhappy with level of familiarity with staff – many had not received ‘timely’ feedback from teachers, and a decreasing number believe their teacher knows their name (“sense of isolation and disjuncture” (p.154)) – foregrounds need to attend to social dimension of transition/ learning  **Aim:**  **Theoretical frame:** Based on Lave and Wenger’s concept of communities of practice, which are ”built on the idea of shared understandings that characterize an environment, much of which is not taught formally” (p.154)  **Methodology:**  **Findings:** Uni-Start = 2-day program: systematic and individualised approach: students encouraged to learn in socially situated context. Program = led by student facilitators (students in higher years of study) who apply for the position and are trained in adult learning principles/ techniques for facilitation/ given book vouchers as incentive-payment: “This peer-led transition program utilizes experiential, situated learning activities, building on a constructivist approach that recognizes the need for learning to be situated within the environment where these new skills and knowledge will be used”  (p.155). Program content based on what student-facilitators view as ‘missing’ and engage new students in ‘meaningful dialogue’. New students encouraged to reflect on skills and knowledges they bring to university. Activities include: ice-breakers, orientation/ scavenger hunts/ trivia tests; also, sometimes = presentations on university terminology/ essay writing etc. (decided by student facilitators).  Discussion of evaluations and feedback gained: mostly satisfied and considered relevant. Follow up phone call data = all students would recommend attending the program. More discipline-specific focus desired  Opportunity for student-facilitators to ‘give back’ = “unexpected outcome” (p.157). ‘A number of’ facilitators expressed that they would be happy to do it in voluntary capacity |
| Pallas, A. (2003). [‘Educational transitions, trajectories, and pathways](https://link.springer.com/content/pdf/10.1007%2Fb100507.pdf)’. In Jeylan, M. & Shanahan, M. (Eds). *Handbook of the Life Course*. New York: Plenum, pp. 165–184.  US  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** American. Exploration of educational transitions, trajectories, pathways – seeking to conceptualise. Transition = phenomenon + “determinant of subsequent outcomes throughout the life course” (p.165). Notes sociology’s preoccupation with social mobility and shifts in thinking once scholars moved beyond fixed temporal notions of schooling and moved towards life course models = age/aging = analytic concepts.  **Aim:** To examine study of ‘well-travelled pathways’, pathways and trajectories  **Theoretical frame:** Sociology of education from dominant foci: time, age/aging, stratification + social mobility  **Methodology:** Essay  **Discussion:**  Pathways = related to careers: “well-traveled sequences of transitions that are shaped by cultural and structural forces” (p.168; cites Elder 1985). **Trajectory = “attribute of an individual, while a pathway is an attribute of a social system”** (p.168) = earlier work placed individual in foreground/ opportunity structure in background, this has now subverted. Pallas argues considering both individual agency + social structure = “more complete accounting of status attainment” (p.168) – school systems = sorting systems (connection to status attainment), which opens and closes particular pathways to particular people.  Identifies 8 features of educational pathways that structure educational trajectories (see p.169):   1. scope 2. selectivity 3. specificity 4. mobility 5. curricular differentiation 6. electivity 7. stigma 8. institutionalisation   Until recently, sociologists = interest = adolescence to adulthood, with normative markers (e.g. leaving school, getting married). Age= becoming less important in educational journeys (through sociological lens) = ‘non-traditional’ students. Lifecourse perspective = “implies that educational trajectories ought not to be studied in isolation from other social institutions and from other social roles associated with participation in those institutions, because such roles are intertwined in complex ways” (p.170), resulting from prolonged schooling, different modes of parenting, more accommodation of interruptions (also gender = significant)  Pallas problematizes ‘vertical differentiation of education status’ (e.g. 14 years of schooling = prepared for university when 2 year college degree nominally does the same; see p.171). Other systems rely more on horizontal differentiation (between institutions/ different locations in same institution).  Discusses CASMIN classification (p.171-2)  Offers overview of different analytic approaches on educational attainment + social mobility (ordered sequence based on binary choices) = critiqued and ‘multnominal logit model’ = suggested as better for more realistic models  Research into ‘shape’ of educational trajectories (and discussion of Matthew effect; see p.174)  Diverging pathways = see Kerckhoff (1993) = British tracking study of birth to 23 = able to measure individuals’ positions at multiple points [and in multiple spaces/ positions] |
| Palmer, M., P. O’Kane, and M. Owens. (2009). [Betwixt Spaces: Student Accounts of Turning Point Experiences in the First-Year Transition](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075070802601929), *Studies in Higher Education*, 34(1), 37–54.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords (Sally’s): *liminality, turning points, first year experience, coping strategies, transitional objects, anchors of continuance* | **Context:** Not belonging in first year experience/ transition studies. Scopes literature/ interest in first-year experience: “At the heart of the universities’ intervention strategies is the overriding concern with retention, in which they aim to ensure that students make ‘meaningful connections’ to the university” (p.38). Notes assumptions made in dominant FYE literature: students are *at* university (on campus) (which ignores idea of liminality); transition = limited to first year; much of literature does not attend to actual experiences/ limited attention given to students’ coping strategies  **Aim:** To “investigate how students navigate through this betwixt space to form a sense of belonging to university life” (p.38); to argue for a more active role for liminality in accounting for students’ transitions: betwixt spaces/ in-between-ness’ to “feeling like fully-fledged members of university life” (abstract); to consider ‘turning points’ associated with students’ transition, “which shapes, alters or indeed accentuates the ways in which they make meaningful connections with university life” (abstract). Their “starting premise is that often students do not immediately fit in at university but rather can be in a transient, betwixt space between home and university” (p.38).  **Theoretical frame:** Liminality and turning points: “a turning point within the context of the betwixt space is put forward; that is, an event(s) or an experience(s) within the first six to eight weeks at university that both stands out and also triggers and results in the student developing (or not) a sense of belonging to university life” (p.38). van Gennep (1909) ‘rites de passage’: 3 stages to transition = separation (divestiture), transition (liminality) and incorporation (investiture). People move through transition = critical inflection points/ “turning points at the heart of the betwixt condition”, p.41). For authors, a turning point = “defined as an event(s) or an experience(s) in the first six to eight weeks at university that stands out, and which triggers and results in the student developing (or not) a sense of belonging to university life” (p.41). Time period chosen because it is a common period for attrition  **Methodology:** Interpretive methodology with 3 stages: 1) paper dialogue, introducing students to concept of transition; 2) reflect on FYE and identify/ describe a turning point; 3) whiteboard consolidation = focus group/ open discussion. 18 students on Business course (Year 1, semester 1)  **Findings:**   * Turning points   *The first lecture* – students struggle with greater anonymity [implicit comparison with school??]; “the sheer size of the lecture theatre setting serves to alienate, even as its surroundings engulf the individual student” (p.44).  *The first feedback* – “the bottom line coursework mentality – that which focuses almost exclusively on the mark – alarms students” (p.45); authors question how useful large/ general modules are (on pedagogical terms).  The first doubt – “there is a period of doubt between the challenge and the adaptation to new learning approaches” (p.45); students viewed university as distant/ ‘hands off’.   * Thematic analysis (see Table 2 on p.46)   Temporal dimension of entry = exclusionary force (for example, enrolling late/ re-entry)  Some turning points = in control of students, some not.  “The starting point for many of the students’ turning point experiences was the tensions which arose from the pluralistic demands – competing and equally legitimate forces – within the betwixt space” (p.46)  Relationships (particularly familial) = significant for turning points  Coping mechanisms  Protectionism (not sharing/ burdening others)  Isolation  Take frustrations out on those closest  Relationships  For others, “coping was achieved through familiarity with objects symbolizing the homeland – a finding we termed continuity anchors” (p.48). **Core argument:**   * Turning points = useful for contextualising students’ feelings of (not) belonging at university: “the concept of a turning point(s) can further delineate the nature of when and how the transition takes place, as well as how the social and material experiences span multiple spheres of the student’s university life” and “turning point experiences simultaneously enrich and impoverish, liberate and constrain” (p.50). * Relationship between inclusion and exclusion = symbiotic * Transition = nonlinear; “Turning points are responded to in different ways, and that process is rarely smooth or linear; but rather more indeterministic rather than deterministic, and more discontinuous than continuous” and “can be subject to reversals and changes of direction; student anxieties and (mis)apprehensions resurface and are carried forward in different forms” (p.51). * Students talked about a metaphorical ‘critical thread’ which kept them in their studies; “Hanging to this critical thread, in the face of adverse turning point experiences, it seems, is a way of dealing with, belonging to, and making meaningful connections to, university life” (p.51). * Importance of symbolic objects (‘anchors of continuance’) |
| Paxton, M. (2007). [Students’ interim literacies as a dynamic resource for teaching and transformation](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.2989/16073610709486445), *Southern African Linguistics and Applied Language Studies,* 25(1), 45–55.  SA  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords (Sally’s): liminality, becoming, authorial identity, academic literacies | **Context:** Students’ experience of transitioning into university studies/ transitioning into academic writing  **Aim:** To explore the notion of ‘interim literacies’ in the context of transitioning into university studies/ writing; to examine the intersection of academic discourse and student voice in academic writing. Interim literacies = “very few students at first year university level could be said to have mastery over the new discourses they are acquiring and therefore I have used the construct of ‘interim literacies’ to describe first year student writing practices and to account for the heteroglossic nature of their texts” (p.46)  **Theoretical frame:** New Literacy Studies (Barton & Hamilton; Street); Bakhtin = intertextuality and voices (“a set of discourses that the writer brings to the act of writing” (p.46)); they are part of his/her social and historical formation and they weave their way intertextually through the writing.; d/Discourse (Gee); pluri-meaning making (Kress)  **Methodology:** Text analysis of students’ assignments (first year Economics; first and last essays) + interviews after each essay. Students = working class/ rural/ EAL. Critical Discourse Analysis used to analyse interim literacies  **Findings:** Characteristics of interim literacies  1) *Intertextuality = spoken discourses/ oracy*: evidence of secondary discourses (to primary western essayist discourse) developed through first language teaching (Xhosa and Zulu), for example use of non-embedded question-and-answer sequences in their writing, echoing praise poetry: “The examples from the students’ writing illustrate the way the students’ interests are reflected in their writing and how, in the process of transferring the traditional rhetorical form, they attempt to transform it so that it is appropriate to the new academic discourse” (p.49). Author argues that analysis of final essay demonstrated a more confident command/effective use of the q&a rhetorical device; “there was evidence of prior discourses being reworked and rearticulated so that they blended more appropriately in the new context” (p.50).  *2) Intertextuality**= associated meanings*: suggestion that students draw on existing conceptual/ situated, personal understandings to help them move forward with content/ concept development.  *3) Intertextuality = borrowing/ mimicking new discourses:* close to plagiarism, in that students used large chunks of published text to help develop their own voice, but inadvertently reproduce/ copy from existing texts.  *4) Avoiding terminology from discipline*: data suggest that students sought to avoid using new terminology, instead using “circuitous and long-winded explanations which make their writing confusing” (p.51), perhaps because the new terms are ‘alien’  *5) Lack of coherence*: (definition of coherence on p.51): “All the  students experienced difficulties in structuring their writing in a logical and coherent way and in their interviews they explained that essay-writing practices at school had encouraged them to get ‘the facts’ down as quickly as possible without paying attention to coherence or logical development of argument” (p.52). **Core argument:** Students in this study had difficulty in adapting/ mastering and “acquiring the complex discourses of academia” (p.52). Interim literacies = about making meaning in transition; “Therefore, the term interim must imply fluidity, a sense of movement and change” (p.52). Interim literacies are partly characterized by their hybridity, which “often provides us with insights into how past discourses and discourse models assist in concept formation” (p.52)  “The concept of interim literacies seems useful in a context of increasing cultural and linguistic diversity where students draw on a range of other discourses as they learn to make meaning in a new discourse” (p.46). Exploring students’ interim literacies helps to challenge dominant assumptions and conventions with regard to western essayist literacies |
| Peel, M. (2000). [‘Nobody cares’: The challenge of isolation in school to university transition](https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20100415091231/http://pandora.nla.gov.au/pan/122841/20161127-0002/www.aair.org.au/app/webroot/media/pdf/JIR/Journal+of+Institutional+Research+in+Australasia+and+JIR/Volume+9%2C+No.+1+May+2000/Peel.pdf)*, Journal of Institutional Research*, 9(1), 22–34.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Students transitioning from school (public, Catholic, independent) to university in Victoria (in 1997)  **Aim:** To explore “the important roles of university teachers and administrators and briefly describes programs under development in one institution which acknowledge the difficulties of isolation and attempt to tackle some of its causes and consequences” (p.22)  **Methodology:** Longitudinal (one cohort) tracking (survey + focus groups)  **Findings:**  *Pre-transition:* Students expected university to require them to be more independent, although this was viewed both as a benefit and a potential area for anxiety. Students = most worried about the workload but also being anonymous/ unknown and lost. “Overall, the perception of university study shared by almost all of these Year Twelve students dwelt upon ‘freedom’ and ‘isolation’ as two sides of the same transition coin” (p.23).  *Post-transition in*: “most did not describe themselves as completely isolated learners, and had found patchy, if important, support and interest among their lecturers and tutors” (p.24). Data gathered from students being asked about teaching quality suggest that ‘good teachers’ = “addressed and challenged the perception of the isolated learner which most of these students brought to the first year of university” (p.25). These teachers knew their students’ names and who they were.  Three different experiences of university teaching:  1) Some had better than expected levels of support (meaning the students did not need to be as independent as they had feared/ expected)  2) Some “students were able to identify good teaching but had also experienced what they described as poor teaching and lack of interest or care” (p.26)  3) Some students had their fears confirmed (‘dissatisfied school leavers’, McInnis & James, 1998); author argues his data “suggest that these students were particularly likely to focus on poor feedback, uninterested and unenthusiastic teachers, and the feeling that ‘no one cared’ or took any interest in their progress” (p.26). **Core argument:** “Only by recognising that challenge, and making the undergraduate student in general and the first-year student in particular the primary focus of institutional investment and institutional concern, will it become easier to tell each new cohort of final-year secondary students that whatever they might have heard, somebody will care” (p.32–3). |
| Penn-Edwards, S. & Donnison, S. (2014). [A fourth generation approach to transition in the first year in higher education: First year in higher education community of practice (FYHECoP)](https://fyhejournal.com/article/view/190.html), *The International Journal of the First Year in Higher Education,* 5(1), 31–41.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Students’ transitions into undergraduate study and ‘third generation’ transition pedagogy. Authors argue that a new approach is needed; “we contend that there is a need for a less insular approach which moves beyond the boundaries of the higher education institution” (p.32)  **Aim:** To argue that institutional approaches to transition move to a ‘fourth generation’ approach (characterised by university-community partnerships); to argue for a First Year in Higher Education Community of Practice (FYHECoP)  **Theoretical frame:** Higher education institutions as ‘of the people, for the people’ (p.32); community of practice (Lave & Wenger)  **Methodology:** Essay  **Discussion:** Authors discuss the typical approach to transition taken by universities, layering in examples of community partnerships:  Stage 1. Student pre-enrolment (Entry Programs situated predominantly in a community-school context in preparing students for entry; Access and Outreach Programs) — short discussion of enabling programs;  Stage 2. Enrolled student (situated in a higher education institute context, albeit some disciplines have necessary work experience - Work Integrated Learning - within the professional community context) — discussed around institutions solving community-based problems, and university students learning; working in community and collaboration between higher education and community; and  Stage 3. Graduate (who moves fully into the community-employment context) — e.g. careers fairs hosted by universities.  4th generation FYHECoP should be:   * Responsive * Respectful * Transparent |
| Pennington, C.; Bates, E.; Kaye, L. & Bolam, L. (2018). [Transitioning in higher education: an exploration of psychological and contextual factors affecting student satisfaction](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1302563?journalCode=cjfh20), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 42(5), 596–607.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transition; pre-entry programmes; academic*  *self-efficacy; social identity; satisfaction* | **Context:** UK higher education and WP, transition, increased anxiety and stress; disconnects between pre-entry expectations and realities, leading to increased attrition. Student satisfaction = cited as ‘key factor’ in successful transition/ retention. Little research has explored impact of pre-entry programmes on student satisfaction in context of transition  **Aim:** Two aims: 1) to explore whether pre-entry programmes foster successful transition to higher education, and (2) to examine longitudinally the factors associated with course satisfaction (abstract).  **Theoretical frame:** Self-efficacy (Bandura), social identity theory (SIT), student satisfaction (literature reviews on p.2-3)  **Methodology:** Psychological; survey of two groups of Year 1 Psychology students from 2 post-92 HEIs (n=88; convenience sample) at two points (mid-S1; mid-S2): control group (n=73) = no pre-entry programme; experiment group (n=15) = pre-entry programme. 81% of students = ‘traditional’; 16% = mature students. 15 of students had participated in pre-entry/ summer programme  **Analysis**: SIT = measured using Cameron’s (2004) Three-Dimensional Strength of Group Identification Scale (12 items; 3 sub-scales)  Academic Self-Efficacy scale also used  Adapted FYEQ (First Year Experience Questionnaire) used to measure satisfaction  **Findings:**  Students who had participated in pre-entry programme = rated as having higher academic self-efficacy, and satisfaction than other group. Social identity= no difference between groups.  Academic self-efficacy predicted satisfaction over time from beginning  Social identity (in-group affect) predicted satisfaction at end  “These findings therefore suggest that pre-entry programmes may foster positive educational experiences and demonstrate further that student satisfaction may be influenced by different factors across different time points” (p.6) **Core argument:** More research needed to know how much impact can be attributed to pre-entry programme. Pre-entry programme might “heighten satisfaction because they provide students with information about their course and university, which assists in the development of realistic expectations upon entering university” (p.7).  The finding that predictions of student satisfaction change over time is important, given that instruments like the NSS are static snapshots, often at end of year. |
| Polesel, J.; Leahy, M. & Gillis, S. (2017). [Educational inequality and transitions to university in Australia: aspirations, agency and constraints](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/01425692.2017.1409101), *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 39(6), 793–810.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *inequality; Bourdieu; post-school transitions; agency; aspirations; capabilities* | **Context:** Educational inequality and destinations and aspirations of school leavers in Australia (NSW), and their parents and teachers, in context of increasingly marketised education system. Study on which article is based found that 50% of secondary school students enter university/ bachelor-degree level study  **Aim:** To “examine the linkages between individual agency, teacher values, the role of student aspirations and motivations, SES and the importance of the differentiated curriculum and post-school transitions” (p.7).  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu (habitus and capital, where student’s cultural capital = mediated by teacher values and school/ subject hierarchies) habitus as : ; Boudon: (gains in educational opportunity must  be matched by gains in occupational opportunities to have any real effect on inequality, p.4); Nussbaum (adaptive preference formation for student aspirations)  **Methodology:** Quantitative; 4 data sources: students (n=5819), parents/guardians (n=2501), teaching staff (n=3098), BOSTES records.  **Findings:** Post-school destinations on p.8 (Figure 1); destinations = stratified and clear SES patterns (see Figure 2, p.9)  Teacher expectations for students to go to university = lower than student and parent expectations (irrespective of region, school sector or socio-economic quartile) – see also Marks et al., 2011. Gap between teacher expectation and student/parent = higher/ bigger gap for low SES  Also looks at ‘curriculum hierarchies’, exploring maths = highest/ upper middle SES = most likely to have taken highest maths (Maths Extension 1 and 2); students who took Maths Ext 1 and 2 = most likely to go to university = see p.13.  Boudon = rational choice argument; Nussbaum’s adaptive preference idea moves beyond rationalist analysis; Bourdieu = capital and habitus = in dialogue with/ mediated by teacher expectations **Core argument:**   * Strong links between post-school destinations and SES * Students’ capacity to construct own identity and pathways = “bound by their understanding of the hidden and informal rules which govern access to different spaces within the curriculum offered in their schools as well as access to the range of post-school destinations” (p.2) * “The task of navigating post-school transitions becomes more important as minimum education levels rise. It also becomes more complex with increasing reliance of education markets” (p.2). * Bourdieu (1966) argues “that if teachers treat all students in the same way – what we might call formal equality – we can end up justifying indifference to real inequalities in terms of what is required to address the problems. Similarly, market-based policies designed to realise individual preferences can simply entrench existing inequalities (Nussbaum, 2000)” (p.15). |
| Power, C. & Hibbert, E. (2016). [Student-facilitated transition: Fostering empowered collectives](https://journal.aall.org.au/index.php/jall/article/view/396), *Journal of Academic Language & Learning,* 10(1): A35-A47.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *student-led, communities of practice, transition, becoming, peer learning* | **Context:** Works from notion of transition as individually experienced (“unique, complex and dynamic”, abstract) and connected to belonging and identity. Connects with idea that peer networks are potential sites for critical pedgagogies. Discusses UG course ‘Experiential Learning in Communities’ (elective for Education students considering PG teaching studies and for Year 1 UG students) at WSU. “ELC aims to disrupt students‘ conception of education as a power directive from teacher to student and open the possibility of learning being perceived as a mutually beneficial interaction between all participants” (p.A36). ELC = designed to respond to student diversity. Course based on principles of reflexive praxis and student-led communities of practice to facilitate ‘transition as becoming’, so that students collaboratively explore meaning and practice of being a university student and negotiate expectations of university on own terms and “academics [deliberately] positioning themselves as White cultural brokers, students are given permission to explore and leverage the various capitals they bring to the learning context” (abstract). Scopes peer mentoring literature (benefits and challenges; notes the argument of Christie (2014), arguing that peer mentoring is a form of governmentality). Authors position work in ELC as ‘critical mentoring’ (citing Freire), with academics = interpreters. Mentees can enroll or not to participate in peer mentoring (but this means many unenrolled students do not continue, making it a challenge to match sustainable mentor-mentee pairs at the beginning). ELC designed to prioritise social relations (face-to-face, debriefing groups with student facilitator, weekly group meetings with academic tutor, tutorials run by academics. Reading is core part of tutorial learning and students write reflective piece and debriefing group presentation for assessment.  **Aim:** To describe ELC  **Theoretical frame:** Critical pedagogy (Kress, Degennaro, & Paugh, 2013; Giroux, 2011); experiential pedagogy = Kolb’s cycle of experiential learning; communities of practice = Lave & Wenger. Also uses theories of Whiteness (foregrounding notions of assumed/ tacit privilege and dominance)  **Methodology:**  **Discussion:** ELC CoP “provides a generative space for the creation of a new integrative melding of mul-tiple sources of cultural and social capital” (p.A41)  p.A42  Notes how sociocultural incongruence (Devlin & Mackay, 201?) is explicitly both attended to and ameliorated through this design. Notes how this model can promote and foster critical literacies and offers a space to ‘reclaim understanding of learning as practice’ (quote from Mary Lea, 2005; on p.A44)  Challenge = recruiting sufficient number of mentees **Core argument:** Foregrounds the potential of such a “collective, multidimensional learning experience” for facilitating becoming, identity negotiation and transformations, meaning making, pushing forward alternative ways of doing/being/knowing[and feeling] by “disrupt[ing] the imposition of White values onto students of diverse backgrounds, while still enabling them to develop strategies to succeed in relation to it” (p.A45). Also reimagines what teaching and learning are/ could be.  **Interesting fact:** Program developed as result of Vickers & Zammit’s OLT project on sfrb |
| Purdy, J. & Walker, J. (2012). [Liminal Spaces and Research Identity: The Construction of Introductory Compensation Students as Researchers](https://www.leetorda.com/uploads/2/3/2/5/23256940/84686335.pdf), *Pedagogy: Critical Approaches to Teaching Literature, Language, Composition, and Culture,* 13(1), 9–41.  USA  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Explores students-as-researchers’ identities and writing, Research identity = “confluence of skills, knowledge, attitudes, and practices that combine when an individual engages in research activities” (p.9). Notes that instructional texts = print-based and linear and this has a significant impact on students moving out of liminal space, requiring students to drop what they know and ‘abandon’ current practices (and leave identities behind). Connection made between liminality and Bartholomae’s (1985) essay on ‘Inventing the university’ = changing status – classrooms = spaces where people are in process of changing.  **Theoretical frame:** Liminality: “Liminality, coming from the Latin word for "threshold," is what anthropologist Arnold Van Gennep (1960: 10-11) presents as the transitional step in rites of passage (between separation and incorporation). He asserts that "to cross the threshold," that is, to literally or figuratively pass through a liminal space,"is to unite oneself with a new world" (20). Introductory composition classes serve as such a threshold into the "new world" of the academy” (p.11). Liminality = useful because “Viewing research skills instruction from the perspective of liminality is important because research practices are key activities through which disciplines construct, organize, and define themselves” (p.13).  Liminality = ambiguity/ students hold ambiguous positions: “*Victor Turner (1969) identifies the "initiand" as both defined by and existing in opposition to the structure of the dominant social order. Individuals experiencing this ambiguous state are then "often regarded as dangerous, inauspicious, or polluting to persons, objects, events, and relationships that have not been ritually incorporated into the liminal context" (109). For the purposes of the social order, then, the existing identity of the initiand must be destroyed in order to make room for the new identity. However, the initiand's lack of status can also serve, as Mark Dressman (1997:309) contends, to "hold a mirror up to the social order," and initiands can have the potential to "appropriate resources and make a space for themselves* within society on their own terms” (p.25).  **Methodology:** Content analysis of instructional materials  **Findings:** Textbooks/ instructional texts police what teachers can say and do in terms of students’ emergent researcher identities: “Instructional texts provide a focus for the institution's desire to control and direct students' movement into the established practices of research that academics (and academic disciplines) use to construct students' knowledge making, their learning spaces, and themselves” (p.12)  Students “are seen as both polluted and polluting because they represent knowledge and activities that travel between defined places (the academy and the world). This border crossing ties directly into the threat that students represent to the "normal" research patterns and routines for making knowledge that help academics (and academic institutions) maintain a unique status based on their production of knowledge in certain time-tested and intrinsically valuable ways” (p.26).  Linear assumptions about transition/ policing of teaching through narrow views of what counts as transition = damaging to potential and evolving student identities |
| Quinn, J. (2010). [‘Rethinking ‘failed transitions’ to higher education’.](https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/e/9780203867617/chapters/10.4324/9780203867617-16) In Ecclestone, K.; Biesta, G.; & Hughes, M. (Eds). *Transitions and Learning Through The Lifecourse*. Abingdon: Routledge, pp. 118–129.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** ‘Failed transitions’ of working class people who have ‘dropped out’ of university in context of widening participation to higher education in UK.  “Where notions of transition are inflexible and obdurate, failure follows soon behind for many young people”, although moving to a looser definition of transition is not the solution (p.118). Chapter = concerned with identity, structure and agency.  “The emphasis [of transition to higher education] has been on the pivotal moment of change, on making it to the gates and going through. Very little attention is paid to what students learn once they enter” (p.119)  “So transition to HE is formulated as getting in and getting on, the student is an actor, but the terms of the transition are set by others. Transition is not postulated as a creatuve and interactive process and most of all it should not be turbulent and fragmented” (p.119). For institutions, anything that threatens retention = “must be regulated and suppressed” (p.119).  Transition to university = classed, gendered and racialised. “Transition to HE is thus highly stratified and complex” (p.119)  Chapter based on Joseph Rowntree Foundation-funded research with working-class people under 25, living in disadvantaged areas of England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, first-in-family, and who dropped out of higher education (mostly white and male). All attended post-1992 institutions and lived in areas where traditional industries had died out.  Qualitative and participatory project, involving 120 participants/ stakeholders.  For the student-participants, transition narrative =not necessarily about change, but about stasis (staying in same town, same friends etc.)  Policy perspective = ‘failed transition’, but for participants “withdrawal was essentially part of an ongoing process of reassessment, of finding out what they did and didn’t want to do and that they were practically able to do, given constraints such as family financial problems. Significantly, they did not want this to be the end of their engagement with university, and all but one expressed a desire to return to higher education in the future” (p.121).  “Essentially, they needed a flexible system to accommodate what can be conceptualised as a fluid learning self. Sadly this flexibility did not exist” (p.121).  Quinn critiques both the fixed inflexibility of linear, ritualised notions of transition, and the more rhizomatic view of becoming, because both suggest “a unified humanist subject capable of being transformed by education” (p.122). Transition as ‘having a story to tell’ suggests that all stories/ experiences are speakable – Quinn argues that for those with lives that are “marginal”, it can be difficult to craft a coherent story of transition to ‘educated person’ – leading to silences in some populations: “I would argue that we are all always lost in transition, not just in moving from one task or context to another, but as a condition of our subjectivity” (p.123).  Policy makers need to recognise students’ agency to make meaningful decisions for themselves; to challenge the grand narrative of higher education being the best choice; “They should recognise the potential benefits to some students of leaving early. Student withdrawal must be placed within a lifelong learning framework which facilitates movement out of and into higher education throughout life” (p.126).  “HE policy perceives transition as fixed point on a path without deviation” (p.127). |
| Reay, D. (2018). [Working class educational transitions to university: The limits of success](file://localhost/DOI/%2010.1111:ejed.12298), *European Journal of Education,* 00, 1–13.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Transitions into ‘elite’ higher education for working class students in England. Set against a literature review that reminds us of the significant mismatch in expectations between students (particularly from working class backgrounds) and middle class institutions, meaning working class students’ transitions “are constructed by risk and chance as much as by calculation and rational choice‐making. Their habitus is characterised by uncertainty, lack of entitlement, and low confidence” (p.2)  **Aim:** To explore the transitions of ‘educationally successful’ working class students  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu (field, habitus, capital) — as a set of tools to expose the privilege and relational disadvantage that students have/ expose the ‘rules of the game’  **Methodology:** Literature review; reference to data collected in Reay, Crozier & Clayton (2009)  **Findings:** Themes from earlier study for ‘educationally successful’ students:  Disappointment/ disheartening experience of Freshers’ Week, often characterised by awkward interactions and which exposed the relational difference from other students and being positioned as ‘outside within’ (p.7) and not fitting in. With reference to other studies, the author writes “The habitus of working class students in both studies can be seen to be striated by dispositions of discomfort, ill‐ease, and self‐deprecation” (p.8). This results in ‘weak integration’ into university social life (p.8). Challenges of social life and belonging played out in the academic domain: “The interplay between incentives of the academic field and the disincentives of the social field, together with an already highly‐motivated academic habitus, meant that success in academic work became the individual’s main source of positive identity” (p.8).  Feeling lost/ unanchored and with no support = described by ‘Jim’ and interpreted as if he “were inhabiting a parallel universe, one that is infused with indiscernible mysteries, an esoteric inaccessible world that he still struggles to be part of” (p.9). Transition = experienced by many working class students (as per the literature review) as a ‘trial’ **Core argument:** “working class transitions to university reveal the failure of the English educational system to provide anything like a level playing field to support working class young people who are seen to be educational successes” (abstract).  “The fight for a successful academic identity often means forfeiting a successful social identity” (p.9)  Exclusion = “a consequence of the middle class and upper class institutional culture in Russell Group universities in the UK rather than being attributable to deficits or self‐exclusion in the individual working class student” (p.11). Universities must engage in ‘radical change’ but rather than imposing arbitrary quotas, author argues that universities need to invest in “A more egalitarian, democratic system with a fairer distribution of funds, less hierarchy both between and within universities and a recognition that higher education is both racist and classist, and has to transform both its values and culture, not simply policies and practices” (p.11). |
| Ribchester, C.; Ross, K. & Rees, E. (2014). [Examining the impact of pre-induction social networking on the student transition into higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/14703297.2013.778068?journalCode=riie20), *Innovations in Education and Teaching International,* 51(4), 355–365.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transition; social networking; pre-induction; Geography; English* | **Context:** UK higher education and students’ transitioning into higher education; use of social networking/ online activities prior to ‘on site’ formal induction [in disciplines of Geography and English]  **Aim:** To discuss eight factors identified as appearing to ease anxieties for students pre-transition as a result of using university social networking site (‘Ning’).  **Theoretical frame:**  **Methodology:** “Interpretivist and respondent-led” (p.357). Multi-method: student questionnaire (n=145 joined the pre-induction site, focus groups with students, tutor interviews, online content analysis. Only public messages on Ning = captured and thus = impossible to know how many conversations migrated to Facebook or took place in private messaging  **Findings:** Geography students/ tutors added more photographs than English (319 to 55) – difference in disciplinary orientation: Geography = more field-work related; English = more text-based interaction (English = 1438 messages compared to 219 Geography).  Academic course = main topic (20% of messages), followed by discussions about accommodation (17%)Data suggests students found the site relieved anxiety because they could put a name to a face (with both fellow students and tutors) and facilitated meetings between peers.  **Core argument:** Authors identify 8 key characteristics for staff to develop effective social networks:   1. High tutor membership and participation 2. Show your face 3. Give a little 4. Prompt responses 5. Encouragement and facilitation of discussions 6. Regular refreshing of content 7. Opportunity for program-specific information/ interactions 8. Prompt invitations to all potential participants (p.363) |
| Rhodes, C. & Nevill, A. (2004). [Academic and Social Integration in Higher Education: a survey of satisfaction and dissatisfaction within a first-year education studies cohort at a new university](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877042000206741), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 28(2), 179–193.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Transition for diversified cohort of undergraduate education students (traditional and non-traditional) in an English university. Justification for article set against retention/ support/ success of non-traditional students; student (dis)satisfaction  **Aim:** To explore students’ satisfaction/ dissatisfaction amongst first year university (education) students  **Methodology:** Focus groups with students (n=10; diverse cohort) to develop a questionnaire on student satisfaction, which was distributed during class (n=185). Q’naire had four sections: demographics, motivations for attending university, 25 facets of satisfaction, facets deemed deeply satisfying.  **Findings:**  142/185 = were in first choice university  Most reported ‘knowledge acquisition’ and improving employment chances as giving intrinsic motivation to study  Some students reported self-doubt for several reasons (see p.184)  Most important facet determining satisfaction = ‘Balance between study and personal life’  Least important = ‘friendliness of teaching staff’  Conversely, top 8 reasons for dissatisfaction =  “• balance between study and personal life;  • availability of learning resources;  • society’s views of students;  • feeling able to cope with workload;  • physical condition of the learning environment;  • feeling able to get financial advice;  • variety of assessment techniques;  • other students’ views of university life” (p.187)  Women = generally more positive than men about ‘intellectual challenge’; otherwise, little difference found according to demographic differences.  Facets most likely to retain students:   * “Chance to attain desired career/life progress * Good self-confidence resulting from success * Stimulating/interesting course * Support from family/peer group * Good teaching * Quality of the learning environment * Desire to act as a role model for others” (p.187)   Reasons that make students likely to drop out:  “Debt/money worries  Poor teaching  Not coping with the workload  Family/work commitments  Lack of self-confidence resulting from failure  Poor stimulation/interest in course  Travel difficulties  Alternative route to desired job/career  Unfriendliness of other students” (p.188)  **Core argument:** Although not all facets of student dis/satisfaction are under the control of universities, they can and should design interventions: “Intervention will have resonance with many institutions given that student non-completion is increasingly being viewed as an important institutional performance indicator. Whilst acknowledging that student retention must be viewed within institutions as a matter of financial expediency, it is also important to view student retention in terms of being an educational issue” (p.189). |
| Scanlon, L.; Rowling, L. & Weber, Z. (2007). [‘You don’t have like an identity… you are just lost in a crowd’](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13676260600983684), *Journal of Youth Studies*, 2(1), 223–241.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords (Sally’s): *identity; loss; transition; emotions* | **Context:** Transition as loss experience – student identity discontinuity as a result of ‘knowledge about’ rather than ‘knowledge of’ university. Scopes literature that has pointed to negative aspects of educational transition (lack of connection, dissatisfaction, loneliness and isolation, alienation), leading to attrition. Transition = “a process entailing the loss of taken-for-granted realities and associated identities” (p.224; see Milligan, 2003). Authors situate paper in context of neoliberal/ ‘lean and mean’ higher education system of ‘late modernity’. Scopes theories that help to explore transition (Tinto, Van Gennep, Bourdieu)  **Aim:**  **Theoretical frame:** Schutz (1964) – symbolic interactionist framework. Schutz’s argument = people use 3 sources of information (reference schema) to define situations: previous experience, present goals and interaction with others – leading to ‘knowledge about’ (outsider) rather than ‘knowledge of’ (insider) information. Students’ familiarity with university divides knowledge into ‘layers of relevance’. Offers conceptual discussion of identity (taking a situational and processual view)  **Methodology:** Questionnaire-based (‘First Year Students’ Experience of Loss & Academic Performance Questionnaire’), but qualitatively written. Research conducted in 6 faculties in several diverse universities. Participants = first-year students (n=602). Q’naire distributed at end of semester 1. 27 students participated in follow-up individual interviews (demographic profile on p.229).  **Findings:**  When student encounter transitional challenges = largely due to reliance on past experiences: “These experiences, however, do not prepare students for the learning context of the university nor for the kinds of students they are expected to become. The reason for this is, as we have argued earlier, that they lack the all important ‘knowledge of ’ the university context, having instead only naı¨ve ‘knowledge about’ the university” (p.230). This was also true of students who entered via university-based alternative pathway.  Students found it difficult to connect with staff because of their perceived remoteness (compared with ‘teacher as friend’ at school): “When students feel that they are only a number and the lecturer is no longer a friend, then they suffer identity displacement and a sense of loss for past learning situations” (p.232). Also, students reported struggling with inadequate communication of academic expectations/ feedback.  Students’ loss of identity = related to initial feelings of anonymity (shifting from school friends/ being known). Participants also signaled that the diversity of students = confronting [my word]. Mature age students made more comments about age.  **Core argument:** Unfamiliarity with new learning context = poses significant challenges for students. Students “experience feelings of loss of continuity as they leave behind familiar learning contexts and make the transition to university” (p.237). |
| Skinner, K. (2014). [Bridging gaps and jumping through hoops: First-year History students’ expectations and perceptions of assessment and feedback in a research-intensive UK university](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1474022214531502), *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education,* 13(4), 359–376.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Assessment; feedback; history; learning; transition* | **Context:** UK Russell Group context in first-year History – students’ expectations of assessment and feedback on first year students’ transition. Broadly set in institutional demand to focus on ‘end points’. Scopes assessment literature, noting ‘sustainable learning from feedback’ turn in literature. ‘End points’ create potential disconnect between aims of programs and everyday experience of university teachers. Notes connections between assessment and accountability. Responds to Heiland & Rosenthal’s (2013) call for more local studies of assessment in context. Works from author’s own experience as teacher; describes own assessment regime. Notes concern with ‘fuzzy criteria’. Notes differences between A-levels and emergence of neo-liberal modes of surveillance (league tables, ‘performance goals’) and examines similarities with higher education – focus = provision of feedback (by teachers) rather than student focus (reception of feedback). Quantitative approaches to feedback (e.g. NSS survey) = raise more questions than they answer  **Aim:** To explore the first assignment experiences (writing an essay and receiving feedback). To contribute to ‘transition pedagogy’ (Kift 2010)  **Theoretical frame:** None explicit  **Methodology:** Qualitative and mixed methods: 1) survey (not massively successful); 2) interviews with A-level teachers about A-level History exam papers; 3) student reference/ focus group for design of questionnaire; 4) design of 2nd questionnaire (week 10, semester 1 – poor uptake in 2011/12, better uptake when repeated following year – but this was when tuition fees had grown to 9000GBP per year)  **Findings:**  Students in FG = critical of A-levels (‘hoops you have to jump through’; see p.366)  Differences in assessment from AS to A2 = perceived as problematic. A2 assessment = closer to university assessment  2 main differences: volume and difficulty of reading; teacher input at the planning stage of writing (unsure of what to write, ask teacher)  Relatively high percentage of students strongly/disagreed that A-levels = useful preparation (42% in 2011/12); students in 2012/13 = more positive (66% = strongly/agreed). Majority students = reading lists need pointers to help students get started and 87% thought teachers should look at essay plans.  Students = sceptical of formative assessment (‘unassessed essays’) – not seen as useful for next writing (‘essay’) because = different topic. Students in FG thought comments on formative essay = need to be followed up with conversation. Timing and regularity of assessment commented on.  Nearly 90% of both groups strongly/agreed that feedback = ‘only useful if it helps you to do better next time’ = “suggests that many students are hostile to summative judgements about ability within an educational setting” (p.369)  **Core argument:** It’s difficult to change assessment/ feedback practices, and underlying cultural and ideological roots, without changing the performance culture. Academic teachers need to develop better understandings of students’ prior educational experiences so as to anticipate understandings of assessment tasks and expectations of feedback. Teachers also need to think about their own ‘fuzzy criteria’ which disconnect from students’ previously explicit criteria (A-levels) |
| Smith, K. & Hopkins, C. (2005). [Great Expectations: Sixth-formers’ perceptions of teaching and learning in degree-level English](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/1474022205056173), *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education,* 4(3), 304–328.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *A-level, degree level, English studies, expectations, first-year experience, transition* | **Context:** High school (A-levels) students’ expectations of university compared with experiences of university students and lecturers (English literature). Authors note methodological limitations of asking undergraduate students to reflect on their experiences (as was the most common methodological approach at the time of writing); therefore, to explore pre-entry expectations, the authors included A-level students in their study.  **Aim:** To offer “an account of an approach to understanding pre-higher education students’ expectations of learning in degree level English courses, and of how this might inform and improve approaches to transition” (p.305)  **Methodology:** Broader study = ‘Great Expectations’ project, which involved focus groups with A-level English students (n=35); A-level English teachers (n=6); focus groups with undergraduate English students (n=8); English lecturers (n=7).  **Findings:** Challenges of independent learning: anxiously expected by A-level students; experienced as ‘the major difference’/ a shock by undergraduate students; understood to be a challenge by university lecturers — also understood to not be the fault of school teachers, who are constrained by teaching for exams. In contrast, A-level teachers viewed themselves as trying to provide opportunities to experience independent learning (but also conceding these efforts are constrained by the curriculum).  Mismatched expectations in terms of contact time with lecturers and scheduled individual time with university teaching staff.  Challenges of adapting to reading: some A-level students were anxious about not enjoying the set texts for university level English. Lecturers reflected that new student often underestimate how much reading they have to do; A-level teachers note that they try to prepare their students for the diversity, pace and volume of reading coming. Also, the reading is a lot more guided for A-level study (metaphor of ‘spoon feeding’ invoked on p.313 in student quote); authors suggest that “students seem to be lacking the skills necessary to approach an unknown text cold” (p.313). The authors paraphrase the thoughts of Lecturer 7, saying “Reading has to stop being a leisure activity and become an intellectual one” (p.313).  **Core argument:** Authors note the need/ importance of supporting students more with choosing their courses. Responsibility for transition should be shared between universities and schools/ A-level colleges |
| Smyth, E. & Banks, J. (2012). [“There was never really any question of anything else”: young people’s agency, institutional habitus and the transition to higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01425692.2012.632867), *British Journal of Sociology of Education,* 33(2), 263–281.  IRE  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *social class; institutional habitus; educational decision-making; secondary schools* | **Context:** Access to information/ decision-making about higher education for students and families from different social classes. Transition = not understood as process/ phenomenon/ discourse; rather = choice to go to university (or not) – informed by Irish school system having a ‘transition year’ towards end of compulsory schooling  **Aim:** To explore to what extent students from different schools/ social classes have equal access to information about higher education, and to examine the role that schools play in the process  **Theoretical frame:** Situates paper against social class/ social reproduction (institutional habitus - Bourdieu)/ rational choice arguments about higher education choice – but notes the difference (I.e. habitus = largely not agentic and explicit, whereas rational choice is). Agency = used “to reflect the conscious decisions made by young people in deciding whether to go to university and which college or course to attend” (p.264). Post-school planning conceptualized as:   1. individual/ familial habitus 2. institutional habitus 3. agency   **Methodology:** Qualitative (part of broader post-primary longitudinal study): questionnaires and in-depth interviews/ focus groups with final-year students and staff from two different high schools (1: middle class, fee-paying = Fig Lane; 2: working class, state school = Barrack Street)  **Findings:**  82% of FL students planned to go to university compared with 52% of BS students.  Fig Lane: Many of students from FL = not first-in-family and so could request advice from parents/ siblings (although only a third thought parents were influential on post-school decision-making). Authors note “an extraordinarily high level of expectations and confidence” in FL students about going to university (plan not aspiration). 76% planned to go to university. Students at FL given lots of support from guidance counselor about going to university (but most students = dissatisfied with guidance given) but the orientation/ campus visits organized with elite university = viewed positively by students and staff. Overall, “students’ subjective assessments are most probably based on the multiple habituses of family and school over longer periods of time” (p.271). Barrack Street: BS students = generally first-in-family and deference to parents’ influence = considerably higher (75% mothers; 60% fathers) = suggests classed/ gendered difference. Students reported being frustrated by lack of guidance on offer at BS – they felt the onus was on them to collate information about university and students appeared to have a lack of information about courses available and many felt the guidance counselor did not care about them because she is too busy (disputed by interview data from guidance counselor). 59% of BS students wanted more information about different options at uni/ 67% wanted more information about college (compared to 20% at FL). Analysis of the data suggestions expectation gap between students have higher aspirations than teachers/ guidance counselor; “Instead of withdrawing or becoming disengaged from school, students appear to react to these low expectations and are mobilised to do well at school, which is an unusual form of resistance” (p.275). Peer influence = more important for BS students than for FL students **Core argument:** Students in middle class/ working class schools appeared to have different sets of habitus/ capitals for negotiating the education field. The institutional habitus of the schools “are made manifest through the academic climate and through guidance provision” and “is reflected in the nature of guidance within the school”, impacting on a students’ view of/ approach to/ aspiration or plan for further education. However, the data also demonstrate the students’ agency in obtaining information/ making decisions which is often ignored in similar research: “Young people make rational decisions about attending higher education, but this rationality is ‘bounded’ by their individual, familial and institutional habituses and it can in no way be assumed that the information to which students have access is complete or impartial” (p.279). For some students, academic achievement = “a form of resistance to classed expectations” (p.279). |
| Sotardi, V. & Brogt, E. (2019). [Influences of learning strategies on assessment experiences and outcomes during the transition to university, Studies in Higher Education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/03075079.2019.1647411), DOI: 10.1080/03075079.2019.1647411.  NZ  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *learning; motivation; self-efficacy; anxiety; transition* | **Context:** Transition to university is complicated and can give rise to a host of personal and educational difficulties, and those “who are unable to adapt academically may struggle with course performance and the extent to which they see themselves as competent learners” (1). The “international body of literature on learning strategies…[which] involve the use of cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural strategies for a student to maximize the likelihood of success in relevant tasks, to expand on knowledge sets and skills, and to perform higher-order activities such as problem-solving (Boekaerts, Pintrich, and Zeidner 2000; Weinstein et al. 2011; Weinstein, Acee, and Jung 2011)” (2). This study focuses on rehearsal and elaboration strategies since they are the most relevant to the transition to university study.  **Aim:** “To integrate the existing research on learning strategies, anxiety, and performance by examining the extent to which New Zealand students report rehearsal and elaboration strategies prior to an early summative assessment at university” (3) and to answer research questions:  (1) What are the relations between Rehearsal and Elaboration Strategies, State Anxiety, Task Grade, and Academic Self-Efficacy?  (2) To what extent do the study variables differ as a result of the type of assessment type (test vs. essay)?  (3) What are the influences of Rehearsal and Elaboration Strategies on Task Anxiety, Task Grade, and Academic Self-Efficacy?  **Theoretical frame:** Rehearsal strategy theory, which relies on repeated exposure to a stimulus as a way to help students remember information. Elaboration strategy theory, which focuses on higher-order thinking and requires active cognitive processing to build on or transform information to promote greater understanding (e.g. van Rossum and Schenk 1984; Weinstein 2006, 2011; Willoughby et al. 1997). Lower- and higher-level learning outcomes are served better/differently by rehearsal and elaboration strategies, and so their efficacy is relative.  **Methodology:** Student recruitment from university and given summative assessments. Students in the education and chemistry courses were given a test, while the law, philosophy and communications courses required an original written essay. Participants reported via online questionnaire how they had prepared for their relevant summative assessment and responded to two subscales of the Motivation Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ; Pintrich et al. 1991): Rehearsal (RE) and Elaboration (EL) Strategies. To measure participants’ state experience of anxiety upon completing their respective tests and essays, the Multimodal State Evaluative Anxiety scale was used (MSEA-12; Sotardi 2018). Task Grades were obtained through respective course coordinators and measured as the percentage score correct on the assessment. The Self-Efficacy for Learning and Performance subscale of the MSLQ (Pintrich et al. 1991) was used to measure academic self-efficacy.  **Findings:** Little difference in results between students completing tests and those writing essays. Rehearsal strategies have a positive influence on state anxiety and, to a lesser degree, academic self-efficacy; elaboration strategies have no influence on state anxiety but a strong, positive influence on academic self-efficacy **Core argument:** “…both high schools and universities [need] to be mindful of the assessment-related differences and challenges that students face during a schooling transition” (10). Universities can encourage clarity on what students can expect, and what is expected from them, formative feedback prior to the assessment, and guidelines on how to best prepare. “Formative and summative feedback is important, as it highlights not only what needs improvement in the future and why, but also what was done well and why. Such feedback is expected to reduce student assessment anxiety, lessen over-confidence, and help students learn the course material and chart a path to academic success. Ultimately, this facilitates the meta-skill of how to learn in the particular academic discipline” (11). |
| Stirling, J. & Rossetto, C. (2015). [“Are we there yet?”: Making sense of transition in higher education](https://studentsuccessjournal.org/article/view/458), *Student Success,* 6(2): 9-20.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transition; FYE; regionalit; mature age; first in family; indigenous; low SES; blended learning* | **Context:** Examines a first year transition program at UOW designed for students at a regional campus, whose students are mostly mature age, FinF, indigenous and/or low SES. Program set up because of observations (not primarily policy/funding imperative!). Programs are largely blended (range of technologies) but some students are not confident or familiar with digital literacies. Teaching staff = primarily casual which also brings limitations. Discusses arguments to embed academic literacies in disciplines/ within a subject. UOW = undergoing university-wide curriculum renewal “to ensure the integration or embedding of academic and English language teaching and learning in core and capstone subjects” (p.11). The Yr 1 transition program = sits outside of discipline but parts are explicitly aligned with curriculum-specific ALL requirements and has 3 tiers:   1. pre-commencement “immersion” day [orientation] 2. first semester weekly curricula-aligned seminar streams (critical thinking, researching, writing in specific disciplines) 3. mid-year, day-long writing intensive   **Aim:** Program aim: “to facilitate academic participation and hence retention in a higher education environment that relies on various multimedia technologies and blended learning models” (abstract). Paper aim: to offer insights from evaluation of program: record student attendance, rate each module using likert-scale and collect ‘student commentary’. Authors note that their program aligns with Gale & Parker’s ‘transition as induction’ conceptualisation, leading them to question what transition means to students/ and seek to achieve a ‘transition as becoming’ process  **Theoretical frame:** Praxis approach [?]; draw on notion of palimpsest to “think through the complex layering between subjective responses of students to the demands of academic writing and the (con)textual product” (drawing on Yancey, 2004; p.16)  **Methodology:** Discussion of evaluation strategy (p.12-13) based on measuring attrition/retention rates + qualitative student commentary. Offers series of narratives/ representative student accounts  **Findings:**  Discussion includes complexities of blended learning (opportunities gained and lost through use of virtual technologies. For example, first year, first semester mature age indigenous student doesn’t know how to use technology (doesn’t know about the mute button for example) and is too bewildered to ask questions but tutor feels under-recognised because s/he is going extra mile to create creative, high quality learning materials. Authors argue that, “What is at stake here are the competing realities between point-of-delivery normative assumptions made by an overworked and under-supported subject lecturer…. and an at-a-distant student” (p.15). Other students note how their transformations jostle with home/work/previous identities. Working from notion of palimpsest, authors argue that to judge students by academic literacies conventions “places important differences and the politics of identity inherent in diversity and social inclusion under erasure” (p.17). Evoking the palimpsest offers reminder (‘reclamation’) of previous writing; “historical inscription and current inscription are coherently incommensurate” (p.17). Authors note that students’ “sense of location, dislocation, re-location, can have profound effects on a student’s capacity to learn and to also take satisfaction in that learning” (p.17) **Core argument:** There are core tensions between teachers, equity students and ALL: “We argue that too often subject lecturers, equity students and, indeed, ALL teachers, become entangled in the sometimes competing imperatives of teaching directives and equity policy implementation” (p.11). Authors call for radical change (‘recalibration’) of what transition means in context of widening participation and technological change. |
| Taylor, C.A. & Harris-Evans, J. (2018). [Reconceptualising transition to Higher Education with Deleuze and Guatarri](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075079.2016.1242567?journalCode=cshe20), *Studies in Higher Education,* 43(7), 1254–1267.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transition; assemblage; rhizome; becoming; Deleuze and Guattari; student; Higher Education* | **Context:** Students’ transitions into and through higher education – authors argue that transition is most commonly thought of as linear process, which “lends itself to the production of somewhat reductive and superficial accounts of students’ lived experiences” (p.1), and secondly there is a dominance towards assimilation, which “downplays the complex relations and webs that students forge between what happens in their lives ‘outside’ the institution and what goes on within it” (p.1)  **Aim:** To draw on three elements of Deleuze and Guatarri’s theory (assemblage, rhizome, becoming) to reconceptualise/ develop a more complex understanding of transition to higher education that is a “more fluid, emergent and multiple process” (p.1).  **Theoretical frame:** Draws on Deleuze and Guatarri to build on Gale & Parker’s (2014) 3-part typology  **Methodology:** Draws on two transitions-focused projects from the UK (see p.4)  **Findings:**  Assemblage: = “an emergent, temporarily stable yet continually mutating conglomeration of bodies, properties, things, affects and materialities” or “how things combine together in complex configurations that seem momentarily stable, even though we are aware things are always changing, or just about to change” (p.5). Thinking about assemblage: “highlights transition*ing* as an active making and unmaking of the ‘thing’ called ‘transition’. Transition is a process which draws elements into its orbit and fits them together in an ‘arrangement’. This provokes us to attend to the elements that each student assembles within their individual transitioning, to how those elements work together, and how they are *put to work* via connections” (p.6). The focus is less on the constitutive parts, and more on how they combine to create **individual** conditions, which are not viewed as static but instead in constant motion (think Gale & Parker’s T3).  Rhizome: “forms or beings which can spread in any direction and move through levels and scales” and which are used to “de-stablise root and branch, linear or hierarchical systems of organization” (p.7). Authors “activate the concept of the rhizome to rethink knowledge and knowing during transition” (p.7). “Thinking of knowledge and knowing via the concept of the rhizome shifts the focus from knowing as cognitive intellection to knowing as an embodied form of (be)coming-to-know, suggestive of an ongoing, unfinishable process in which the ‘self’ continually emerges in each new act of knowledgeing” (p.9).  Becoming: “Becoming is about change as ongoing flux and dynamic flow, as emergence and unfolding in micro-moments and instants. Becoming is the endless play of difference and it is difference that effectuates becoming. Becoming is the working of self-differentiation. It is not change ‘within’ an entity. Neither is it a change ‘from’ something ‘to’ something else” (p.9).  **Core argument:** Authors argue that their focus on “transition as experiential emergence through the interplay of microlevel events … makes our approach distinct” (p.3).  1) drawing on D&G’s work = helps to “foreground the fact that ‘transition’ does not have an essence; it is not a neat, unifying package containing skills or competencies, and neither is it a neutral description of a temporal or spatial linear process” (p.12)  2) helps to develop idea of transition as “dynamic, multiple, creative and mobile” (p.12), and deeply individual  3) use of verb = “constitutes transition as an emergent, dynamic event of transitioning, and encourages attention to the multiple ways which might help rupture the normative and normalising discourses” (p.12)  4) argues for focusing on individuals’ experience  5) offers new forms of data analysis |
| te Riele, K. (2004). [Youth transition in Australia: challenging assumptions of linearity and choice](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1367626042000268908), *Journal of Youth Studies,* 7(3), 243–257.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Youth transitions, particularly educational transitions. Author argues that assumptions about linearity and choice are not reflective of more complex and nuanced transitions made by young people in the more precarious/ uncertain modern (at time of writing — this is much more dynamic and complex 16+ years later). At time of writing, schooling policy had been amended to encourage young people to complete secondary education, which had the effect of “contribut[ing] to a prolonged dependency of young people on education and on their parents” (p.244)  **Theoretical frame:** Transition understood as non-linear. Author argues that policy is based on two assumptions about transition to adulthood: linearity (“defined by markers such as leaving school, leaving home, getting a job and living independently”, p.245), and individual choice (see idea of ‘choice biographies’; Beck, 1992). Author offers critique of the idea of choice: “The idea of choice biographies, perhaps unintentionally, feeds a misleading discourse around individual responsibility, which ignores the constraints on the choices available to young people” (p.246)  Author notes critique of pathways metaphor for transition because it offers “a false impression of order, and being too linear, instrumental and individualistic” (p.245)  **Methodology:** Case studies of ‘second chance’ senior college students, asking two questions: “was their transition a failure, and was any perceived failure the person’s own ‘fault’?” (p.247)  **Findings:** Case studies illustrate non-linear transitions (unsurprisingly, given they were attending a secondary college, rather than school), and that events beyond the students’ control shaped their trajectories. **Core argument:** Transitions are rarely linear or decided through agentic decision-making, partly because “risks and opportunities are not evenly distributed” (p.254)  “This research aims to contribute to a re-conceptualisation of educational transition, in order for policy to better match transition experiences in contemporary society. Neither policy nor educational institutions can afford to ignore these changed experiences of transition” (p.254). |
| Tett, L.; Cree, V. & Christie, H. (2017). [From further to higher education: transition as an on-going process](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-016-0101-1), *Higher Education,* 73, 389–406.  SCO  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transition processes; Belonging; Relationships; Changing selves* | **Context:** ‘Non-traditional’ students entering higher education from further education; context = stratified higher education system and only 34% of student body = ‘non-traditional’; also, retention rates are comparatively high. Scopes literature on transition and higher education(p.391)  **Aim:** To argue that transition is not a one-off event, but instead is an ongoing process over time; To respond to two RQs:   * “What do a cohort of non-traditional students’ perceive to be the key transitions that they experience on entry to, and during, their university studies? * What do the cohort perceive to be the impact of their studies on their identities?” (p.392)   **Theoretical frame:** Sociocultural theory/ CoP (Lave & Wenger)  **Methodology:** Authors returned to ‘the field’ 10 years after initial data collection; elite university which admitted group of FE/ HNQ articulants (unusual) = part of WP mission. Original project = semi-structured interview with students who entered university with HNQ via FE (n=35 + 10 following year; 82% = f; 49%= over 30 years) over four years of degree. Authors attempted to contact participants in 2015 (10 years later): n=15. Analysis = critical moments and themes identified from literature/ emergent themes from interviews.  **Findings:** Four perceived ‘critical moments’ identified in data: 1) loss of a sense of belonging on coming to university, 2) learning to fit in by the end of the first year, 3) changing approaches to learning and belonging in the final years of study, and 4) changing selves in the years following graduation.  *Critical moment 1*: initial expectations, uncertainties about what = to expect/ is expected; feedback and standards; where to start = ‘learning shock’  *Critical moment 2*: role of peers, role of tutorials, academic work, accessing support, support from family and friends.  *Critical moment 3*: understanding the system, adapting/ adjusting approaches to learning/ strategies, managing time.  *Critical moment 4:* staying in the system (not dropping out), changing selves, other lives (family/ personal) **Core argument:** |
| Tobbell, J.; O’Donnell, V. & Zammit, M. (2010). [Exploring transition to postgraduate study: shifting identities in interaction with communities, practice and participation](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/01411920902836360), *British Educational Research Journal*, 36(2), 261–278.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Reports on HEA-funded project exploring transitions into PG based on ethnographic work with students in 5 UK universities. This paper examines the multiplicity of identities = construct student experience and transition. Paper based around the dearth of literature exploring transitions to PG, based on assumption that “the nature of the transition is less challenging as it may be assumed that there is little to overcome in moving from undergraduate to postgraduate study because, essentially, the environment does not change” (p.261), which results “in their construction, albeit in an implicit way, as ‘expert’ students” (p.262)  **Theoretical frame:** Works from view of learning as social process; draws on Lave and Wenger’s theory of CoP. Theory of transition = shift between (from/to) educational environments (physical/ levels of complexity/ mode of study/ underpinning meanings of study – p.265): ” Transition identities, then, are not linear and ‘clean’. Rather they are the work of internalising and enacting change in the face of contradictory emotion and experience” (p.266). Also draws on Wenger and Butler’s ideas of the power of silence and absence of action (p.272)  **Methodology:** Ethnographic – to ensure micro/macro engagement with student/staff lives: 44 PG students (taught MA, research MA, doctoral), 6 staff members (f2f data collection); 180 students, 6 staff (participant observation data collection)  **Findings:** No differences between taught MA and doctoral students. Finding 1) dominance in data regarding students’ lives outside of studies and need for whole-of-life view of transition rather than restricting the view to students’ learning/engagement in curriculum. All participants (spontaneously) expressed frustration with the difficulty of balancing PG study and their “complicated” personal lives (p.269): “Many postgraduate students are giving up time and money, which indicates a commitment and involvement with the process but this exists in parallel with the tensions of family demands and self-denial” (p.270). Students’ self-reporting (through diaries) suggests that students with family responsibilities and jobs were time poor = unsurprising but important because “university structures tended not to be flexible and in many cases seemed not to be designed with the student in mind” (p.271).  There was little reference to students’ outside lives by staff members.  Students can “never achieve full membership of the CoP” (p.273) because = lack of ‘mutuality of engagement’ because they do not/ are not able to/ invited to contribute to changing the practices in the university = results in ‘peripheral trajectory’ (Wenger, 1998).  Discussion of independent learning and self-reliance: “It may be argued that the notions of finding out alone and independent study lend further support to our supposition above that the postgraduate student is constructed as already ‘expert’ and so less attention is given to their inculcation into university culture than to undergraduate students” (p.275).  **Relevance to PGCW/ equity:** No explicit connections made; highlights assumptions about ‘readiness’ of PG students and that students with jobs/families etc. are more time poor. Staff participants did not acknowledge complexity of students’ personal lives: The silence surrounding their outside lives within the university, coupled with the emphasis on independent functioning, may result in identity shifts that do not facilitate learning” (p.277)  **Pedagogical intervention suggested?** None  **Points to future research agenda?** No |
| Trautwein, C. & Bosse, E. (2017). [The first year in higher education—critical requirements from the student perspective](https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s10734-016-0098-5), *Higher Education,* 73, 371–387.  GER  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Transition to HE; First-year experience; Critical requirements; Critical incidents* | **Context:** Importance of first year experience for future academic success, particularly in the context of widening participation; recent reforms to German higher education that have created additional challenges for students’ transitions (standardised study programmes including more frequent and earlier exams)  **Aim:** To “explore the first-year challenges in German HE from the student perspective focusing on the nexus of the individual and institutional factors relevant for successful transition” (abstract). To respond to these RQs:  “1. Which critical requirements emerge from students’ reports on their first-year challenges?  2. How relevant are the identified critical requirements to first-year students?  3. How do students experience critical requirements during the first year?” (p.374)  **Theoretical frame:** Broader study has sought to develop a comprehensive framework based on psychosocial (learning strategies) and sociocultural (socialisation/ integration/ identity transformation and belonging), which “attempts to bridge the gap between the variable-centred and the more holistic, person-oriented research approaches” (p.373)  **Methodology:** Interviews with students (n=25) using critical incident technique/ qualitative content analysis – see p.374 for details  **Findings:** Analysis revealed 32 critical requirements (reconstructed from the text segments) and from these, the authors extrapolate down to four themes to answer RQ1:  1) personal requirements  2) organisational dimensions  3) content-related dimensions  4) social dimension  For RQ2, critical requirements = personal requirements (34%), organisational dimensions (30%), content-related requirements (22%) and social requirements (14%), quality of teaching/ supervision (7%)  For RQ3:  Personal requirements = balancing part-time work and travel, arranging housing, time management.Organisational dimensions = quality of teaching/ perceived lack of support from lecturers, assessment conditions, bureaucratic regulations. Organisational barriers sit on top of personal requirements.  Content-relate barriers = increase in difficulty of subjects (e.g. maths), need to modify initial expectations  Social requirements = building trustworthy relationships, navigating new spaces, find peer group  **Core argument:** Personal and organisational requirements are the most difficult to navigate |
| Tuononen, R., Parpala, A. and Lindblom-Ylänne, S. (2019). [Graduates’ evaluations of usefulness of university education, and early career success – a longitudinal study of the transition to working life](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02602938.2018.1524000?journalCode=caeh20), *Assessment and Evaluation in Higher Education,* 44(4), 581–595.    FIN  Annotation written by Dr. Megan Rose    Keywords: *Student Experiences; transition; early careers; job satisfaction; employment; academic competence; career success* | **Context:**Finnish students perceptions of the usefulness of tertiary education for employment.  **Aim:**To develop a deeper understanding of how graduate students differ in the way in which they describe their academic competencies, as well as the degree of satisfaction students have of their education and career success.  **Methodology:**Longitudinal mixed phase study.  Phase one n=83 interviewed at time of graduation  Phase two n=57 participated in a follow-up questionnaire 3 years later.  **Findings:**  Students who were able to articulate their competencies during phase one perceived stronger correlations to their job and degree during phase two. Students who had a limited understanding struggled with employment and clarity around their career goals. Competencies identified included information processing, collaboration and communication skills.  Ability to recognise diverse competencies correlated with later career success and the capacity to face challenges in the workplace, as well as perceived satisfaction with their degree and its usefulness.  **Core argument:**The ability to understand and articulate the competencies achieved through studying at university are significant in individuals’ abilities to find employment and also feel satisfied in their employment. |
| Turner, L. & Tobbell, J. (2017). [Learner identity and transition: an ethnographic exploration of undergraduate trajectories](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877X.2017.1311993?journalCode=cjfh20), *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 42(5), 708–720.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Learner identity; transition; ethnography; higher education* | **Context:** Intersection between identity, education and transition ­— whereby the destabilising processes of transition make focusing on identity salient: “Learner identity is unsure in transition because students do not know what to do or how to act in a new educational landscape” (p.709). Literature review on transition: Zepke & Leach’s (2005) study identified a dominant ‘assimilationist approach’ to transition (where students are expected to adapt to the institution); alternative = ‘adaptive approach’ (Zepke, Butler & Leach, 2012)  **Aim:** To “explore the ways in which incoming identity influences participation and higher education learner identity, consider the academic practices which construct the transition experience and analyse those practices in terms of learner identity and participation” (abstract). Stated aims on p.712:  • “To explore the ways in which incoming identity influences participation and HE learner identity.  • To explore the academic practices which construct the transition environment for first-year undergraduate  psychology students.  • To analyse academic practices in terms of learner identity and participation”  **Theoretical frame:** Communities of practice and ‘distributed approach to identity development in educational contexts, whereby “identity [is] a sense of self which emerges within and across multiple communities” (p.708)  **Methodology:** Ethnographic study; data collection = observations, informal social interactions, one-to-one interviews with students (n=9) and document analysis over first term of first year psychology degree program, with this article focusing on access to study skills and developing information literacy. RQs:  “• How does practice influence participation?  • How does participation influence learner identity?  • How does identity influence participation?” (p.713)  Analysis = ‘theoretical thematic analysis’.  **Findings:** Authors focused on “the negotiation between past and present identities” (p.713), finding that “the reconciliation of past, present and future identities is psychologically challenging for students during educational transition and this influences individual trajectories” (abstract).  ‘Tracy’ had previously studied with the Open University and was a Direct Entrant (DE) student, and she was able to draw on her experience from her previous community/ies to help her adapt. Similarly, ‘Gemma’ made connections between the Access course she had previously studied and her new learning context, but she also reported feeling challenged by the new environment and topic.  Other students found the reconciliation between past and present learning contexts more challenging. This manifested as ‘non-participation’ for some students in some contexts (for example, staying silent) because of what the authors refer to as ‘identity conflict’.  New practices also invoked challenges to comfortable adaptation, particularly in terms of writing essays, resulting in demotivation: “it is difficult to motivate yourself if you are unsure of how to proceed. Practice is hidden for these students” (p.715). Feedback was also cited as a challenging practice, particularly for students who had previously experienced regular formative feedback on their work.  Failure to adapt: authors cite example of students struggling to use the database to find sources for an assignment, and ultimately returning to familiar practices (referring to a text book, using Wikipedia). ‘Carl’ described the shift in practices as “overwhelming” **Core argument:** Success = explained by view of transition as ‘participatory trajectories’ (p.718) “Transition is a time of reconstruction, where the learner negotiates which aspects of their previous learner identity to maintain and which require transformation” (p.714). |
| Turner, R.; Morrison, D.; Cotton, D.; Child, S.; Stevens, S.; Nash, P. & Kneale, P. (2017). [Easing the transition of first year undergraduates through an immersive induction module](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13562517.2017.1301906?journalCode=cthe20), *Teaching in Higher Education,* 22(7), 805–821.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Widening participation; student experience; induction; retention; study skills* | **Context:** Transition, particularly entry in, as a particularly challenging time and especially given the diversified student body resulting from widening participation, and with ‘non-traditional’ students at “particular risk” of attrition (p.3). Authors argue there is a gap in the transition literature, with “little extant research, which has attempted to link induction activities with student retention” (p.3).  Innovation: pilot immersion model = piloted in 19 first year programs in 2014; this morphed into a disciplinary-specific 4-week module in first year of study (active pedagogies; student-led; inclusive/ non-exam assessments)  **Aim:** To describe and discuss a cross-institutional ‘curriculum innovation’; a four-week module/ intervention/ immersive model to support students with their transitions into their discipline area and improve retention. RQs:  “(1) In what ways and to what extent does the immersive module support students to develop peer networks and relationships with academic staff?  (2) To what extent did the immersive modules serve to prepare students for HE-level study through their implicit focus on study skills?  (3) How did students negotiate the transition from the immersive module into a standard curriculum structure?” (p.4)  **Methodology:** Evaluation: participant observation (field notes, semi-structured observation protocols) + online survey of students (n=789) + focus groups. Statistical data analysed with Chi-square test; focus groups = thematic analysis.  **Findings:** Themes: 1) Belonging and social self-efficacy; 2) Study skills and academic self-efficacy; 3) Managing students’ expectations; 4) Inclusive assessment; and 5) Meeting expectations or moving goal posts.  1) Belonging: strategies were embedded to facilitate social integration (e.g. team-building activities), which helped prepare students for group work in subjects where that is a dominant mode of assessment. Students = generally positive about the team-building tasks. Students also reported positive experiences of interacting with staff.  2) Study skills: students gave mixed responses; some respondents found the support too generic so that it didn’t meet their individual needs and that the timing of the sessions was too long (Health); in contrast, the Business students appeared to find the study skills sessions more relevant because they were embedded more holistically into the module.  3) Students’ expectations: there was a mixed reception to the more student-led, problem solving approach taken by Business; authors suggest explicitly outlining the approach at the beginning to help set expectations, and should help students to identify what existing knowledge and practices they bring with them.  4) Inclusive assessment: students still found the assessments confusing, despite attempts to clearly outline expectations, tasks and deadlines.  5) Meeting expectations? Highlights from evaluation = peer networking and introduction to university expectations and assessment practices. However, focus groups suggest that students still need transitional support after the first 4 weeks, particularly as students moved to different groups, bigger groups, different lecturers and studying multiple modules concurrently.  **Core argument:** Many components of the innovation were useful, but more transitional support is needed. Setting/ managing expectations emerged as an issue that the designers had not predicted: “Having made an initial module which was widely felt to be successful, the expectations for subsequent teaching were arguably difficult to live up to” (p.14). |
| van Rooij, E. & Jansen, E. (2018). [“Our job is to deliver a good secondary school student, not a good university student.” Secondary school teachers’ beliefs and practices regarding university preparation](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0883035517313393), *International Journal of Educational Research,* 88, 9–19.  NETH  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *University readiness; secondary school teachers*  *teacher beliefs; classroom practices; interviews* | **Context:** Secondary school teachers’ beliefs with regard to university preparation in the Netherlands; attrition from university (statistic for the Netherlands = 25% either drop out or switch program during/ after first year), which justifies the strong focus in the scholarly literature. However, authors argue that the period prior to starting university is under-explored. In the Netherlands, there is a form of secondary education (literally university preparation education), which is the focus of this study. Authors argue that examining the perceptions of school teachers is insightful because (1) they are university educated themselves; (2) they know their students reasonably well. Authors also argue there is inadequate attention on how teachers prepare students for their transitions into higher education, and the connection between beliefs and practices with regard to preparing students for university study.  **Aim:** To explore teachers’ beliefs so as to “investigate whether and to what extent they pay attention to making their students ready for university” (p.10). To respond to these RQs:  1) “What are teachers’ beliefs about aspects of university readiness?...  2) How do teachers contribute to their students’ university readiness?...  3) What are teachers’ beliefs about their role in the process of preparing students for university?  4) Do teachers experience barriers that hinder them from attending to university preparation, and if so, what are these barriers, and how might they be overcome?” (all p.11)  **Methodology:** Semi-structured interviews with school teachers who taught grade 11 and/or 12 of school in the university preparation stream; most = humanities teachers. Authors undertook ‘framework analysis’ (see p.12)  **Findings:**  *Teachers’ beliefs about preparation*: study skills (most prominent) — including independent study and metacognition; independence more broadly (living alone/ study); perseverance; curiosity.  *Teachers’ preparatory practices*: just less than half said they were not aware of consciously contributing to students’ readiness; one quarter described activities designed to prepare students. Most common activity (mentioned by 2/3 of teachers) = answering direct questions about university courses associated with their subjects; half of the teachers reported asking students about post-school plans for study, meaning that half left it to students to ask for assistance; half of teachers sought to develop students’ research skills/ thinking skills; 44% of teachers promoted study skills; 44% gave general information about studying at university; 42% described trying to help students developed independence; 15% mentioned paying attention to students’ language development.  *Teachers’ belief about their role in university preparation*: 66% viewed university preparation as their responsibility; 26% viewed exam preparation as university preparation; 26% did not view that they have a role in supporting students to prepare for university.  “Thus, it appears that university preparation is not high on the agenda in secondary schools or consciously in the minds of teachers” (p.16).  *Challenges*: preparing for exams as a significant barrier (40%); lack of time (38%); lack of familiarity with what universities expect (36%).  *Wishes*: more coordination between schools and universities; more attention to university preparation [presumably in the curriculum] **Core argument:** Strong connection between role perception/ beliefs and practices, suggesting that if more teachers view university preparation as part of their role then they would do more purposeful preparation activities [but obviously recognising the structural impediments to this, and the responsibility of universities to engage in more coordination and information sharing] |
| Wardley, L. & Bélenger, C. (2013). [Rites of Passage: Does adaptation to university mean severing connections](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13583883.2012.742557)?, *Tertiary Education and Management,* 19(1), 32–51.  CAN  Annotation by Caitlyn McLoughlin  Keywords: *student experience; student recruitment and selection; undergraduate study* | **Context:** Accommodation and proximity of the university to one’s permanent abode are two important factors that go into the decision of selecting a university and succeeding while at university.  **Aim:** “The purpose of this research was to find out: (1) which transition and incorporation variables influence students’ adaptation to university; (2) what the differences were between first-year students who lived on-campus in university residences and those who lived off-campus; and (3) if there were differences between first-year student groups depending on the distance between the university and the student’s permanent home” (34).  **Theoretical frame:** Theories exploring the post-secondary student’s adaptation to university, including Tinto’s (1988) theory of student integration and “Rites of Passage” and Van Gennep’s (1966) three distinct phases of movement (separation, transition and incorporation) that are involved in the separation from former environments and successful involvement in new environments. In opposition, Tierney’s (1992) hierarchy of dominant cultures.  **Methodology:** Online survey through an email invitation sent to 3155 students. Research was cross-sectional in design and a convenience sample of first-year undergraduate students from two universities with multiple geographic locations was used. Analysis of the data consisted of a three-step process using separate statistical procedures: 1) constructs were assessed using exploratory and confirmatory factor analysis, 2) linear regression was used to test the independent constructs to ascertain whether they influenced the dependent variable, namely, adapting to university and 3) to determine if significant differences existed, a test of significance between population means was conducted using an analysis of variance based on living accommodation while at university (on-campus vs. off-campus) and proximity between the university and permanent home (5–50 km vs. 51–500 + km).  **Findings:** Students who lived on-campus during the school term felt their transition to university was easy and were significantly more involved in extracurricular activities than those living off-campus. Living on-campus was found to increase commitment to the university and students were more likely to be committed to their university if separation was encouraged through a greater distance between the students’ permanent home and the university. Students living on-campus and those with permanent homes farther away from the university generally utilized more university support than those in the off-campus grouping. Overall, students without easy access to their prior community made more progress in adapting to university than those students with easy access to their permanent home (45-46).  **Core argument:** Separation of students’ living arrangements and distance from home impact on transition and incorporation variables, which influenced students’ adaptation to university. |
| Wilcox, P.; Winn, S. & Fybie-Gauld, M. (2005). [‘It was nothing to do with the university, it was just the people’: the role of social support in the first-year experience of higher education](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03075070500340036), *Studies in Higher Education,* 30(6), 707–722.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *transition, social integration, first year, retention, attrition* | **Context:** UK higher education and first year student retention. Looks at role of ‘social support’. Concerns regarding retention driven by government intention to address drop out rates (financial consequences) and anxieties about quality of learning, Cites research and commonly held understanding that two drivers of attrition = lack of preparedness and misalignment between choice of course/ institution and student (see Ozga and Sukhnandan, 1998). Scopes literature on social integration - starting with health literature – connections between social integration and wellbeing/ health, moving on to psychological accounts. Authors note there is little sociological explanation. Furthermore, most attention = paid to students’ experiences of academic domain, rather than the wider social milieu  **Aim:** To offer analysis of academic and social integration of students post-entry into Year 1, with particular focus on social support; to explore the experiences of a group of first-year students to try to capture their social development over time, and how social integration (or lack of) influenced drop out  **Methodology:** Qualitative study of students in Applied Social Science at University of Brighton = 22 students who completed Year 1 and 12 students who dropped out. Students were mostly female, white and under 21 years old. Interviews conducted with students (face-to-face with current students; telephone interviews with drop out students). Students asked to narrate experiences at different times (first day, first week, typical week)  **Findings:** Deciding to drop out = complex and multifaceted decision made over time, and was a serious decision for all students. Only one student who dropped out said it was because he chose the wrong course. Major themes in reasons for dropping out = 1) social; 2) independent learning; 3) material reasons. Detail of reasons = difficulty in making friends, accommodation, studying independently, mismatch with expectations, unhappy with subject/ course, no connection with tutor, location of campus, friends had withdrawn, finances (and others; see p.712).  Making compatible friends = authors relate to idea that student = becoming: new identity/ sense of belonging, which involves negotiation between past, present [and future]. Feeling lonely/ homesick = common – emotional support from home (family and friends) = important ‘buffer’ = leading to ‘transitional [liminal] phase – where students are anxious to make friends and connections. As students settle in, they develop friendships and ‘home’ becomes less necessary for support. Later, it becomes more important to make ‘good’ friends. Data suggests living arrangements (living in halls of residence) = significant to this (both positive and negative impacts). Students relationship with staff, particularly personal tutors = important **Core argument:** Students’ anxieties about making friends = important aspect of students’ transitions and more consideration needs to be given to this (e.g., by accommodation designers, by institutions). |
| Wilson, F.; Child, S. & Suto, I. (2017). [Assessing the transition between school and university: Differences in assessment between A levels and university in English](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/1474022216628302?journalCode=ahha), *Arts & Humanities in Higher Education,* 16(2), 188–208.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *Assessment, English literature, higher education, secondary education, transition* | **Context:** Differences between assessments in A-levels and undergraduate courses in the UK because of concerns about students’ preparedness for university study and high stakes assessments at the end of secondary schooling. At the time of writing, A-levels were undergoing reform. Authors review the structural differences between school and university (assessment types/ diversity of assessments; requirement of independent learning). Authors also consider the guidance and instructions given on assessment tasks, with the literature strongly suggesting that students are given more detail and guidance in A-level tasks  **Aim:** To “compare the assessment of English literature at upper secondary level and the first year of university in England, focusing on the type of assessment used and the level of written guidance provided with the assessments” (p.189)  **Methodology:** Document analysis: comparison between six A level English literature syllabuses and assessment materials typical for first year English literature from a range of universities (n=9). Description of coding framework on p.195–199.  **Findings:** A-level assignments = closed book examinations, coursework (extended writing, creative writing, comparison writing). Reforms to A-levels = more assessment but similar variety as the previous system. University writing = more diverse, but closed book examination = similarly dominant.  Only one assessment task for A-levels included structured questions, while these were more plentiful in the university courses. Types of guidance were different – A-levels = fewer than at university, and with less detail (e.g. ‘half this essay should include’ in university assignment brief) **Core argument:** Differences in the kinds of assessments used, the structure and guidance, and mark schemes contribute to transitional challenges that students experience — although the authors note that the summative assessments of A-levels are not necessarily representative of the whole experience. University course designers, particularly with regard to predicting how students will interpret guidance and assessment tasks. |
| Wingate, U. (2007). [A Framework for Transition: Supporting ‘Learning to Learn’ in Higher Education](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/abs/10.1111/j.1468-2273.2007.00361.x), *Higher Education Quarterly,* 61(3): 391–405.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker | **Context:** Focus on learning to learn for first year transition to higher education/ dominance of remedial, study skills approaches to supporting students/ critique of ‘skills’ approaches.  **Aim:** To propose a ‘comprehensive framework’ for supporting students to develop metacognitive practices to help with their transitions into university study  **Theoretical frame:** Holistic view of higher education  **Methodology:** Essay  **Discussion:** Frameworkdeveloped on basis of two components of learning to learn so as “to raise students’ awareness of conceptions of learning and knowledge, and of the expectations placed on them that are different from their previous educational experiences”: 1) personal development/ understanding the student’s experience/ reflective practice; 2) class time and lecturer input.  Author proposes four contexts where the framework can be applied: pre-induction, induction, personal tutorials, classrooms. The framework should be subject/discipline-specific. Detail of framework on p.401–402. **Core argument:** Learning to learn = “giving students epistemological access, making them independent learners and making them competent in constructing knowledge in their discipline” (p.403) |
| Wisker, G. & Savin-Baden, M. (2009). [Priceless conceptual thresholds: beyond the ‘stuck place’ in writing](https://www.ingentaconnect.com/content/ioep/clre/2009/00000007/00000003/art00004), *London Review of Education*, 7(3), 235–247.  UK  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *academic writing; conceptual thresholds; development* | **Context:** Examines notion of threshold crossing = “moments of moving through and beyond the ‘stuck’ places, through liminal spaces of change and development” (p.235) in context of doctoral writing, and ‘stuck moments’ (Lather, 1998) or preliminarity before transformation into embodied, articulated writing.  **Aim:** To answer these RQs:  (1) Identify significant factors \ of the processes and practices that could facilitate (1) the management and overcoming of barriers to writing; (2) overcoming and getting through ‘stuck’ places towards the achievement of the writers’ own voices; and (3) successfully articulating through writing.  (2) Isolate factors that contribute towards ‘stuckness’:  (3) Locate and identify strategies for overcoming ‘stuckness’ and for developing confidence in articulation through writing  (4) Identify the kinds of strategies that are re-employed if and when ‘stuckness’ occurs again, and what new strategies are developed.  **Theoretical frame:** Writing process (cites Lea, 1999 and Ivanic, 1998) – writing through and finishing; threshold concepts (Land & Meyer, 2006)  **Methodology:** Narrative inquiry: semi-structured interviews (40 staff, 20 students)  **Findings:** Perception of participants that ‘stuck places’ = necessary and sometimes helpful stages of writing process. Two classifications: 1) ontological insecurity; 2) “Levers through the conceptual threshold: (a) patchwriting; (b) valuing preliminality; (c) the vision of a possible movement through a portal” (p.241).  Ontological insecurity = questioning relationship between self to real world (related to identity and security): “feeling troubled and insecure in one’s sense of being in the world” (p.241) – about being recognized and self-recognition as a writer [similar to imposter syndrome?]  Strategies/ levers = patchwriting (see p.242-3); valuing preliminarity (normal part of process, space for reflection).  Discussion of writer’s block (p.244-5) |
| Wong, B. (2018). [By Chance or by Plan?: The Academic Success of Nontraditional Students in Higher Education](https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/10.1177/2332858418782195), *AERA Open*, 4(2), 1–14.  UK  Annotation written by Sally Baker  Keywords: *high achiever, nontraditional student, educational capital, happenstance* | **Context:** Higher class students are more likely to get a first-class degree in the UK than ‘non-traditional’ students (working-class, minority ethnic, and/or mature students)  **Aim:** To explore the experiences and trajectories of ‘high achieving non-traditional students’ (HANTS) so as to “potentially amplify the collective experiences that have contributed to their educational achievements for a wider range of students” (p.1).  **Theoretical frame:** Bourdieu: field, habitus and capital  **Methodology:** In-depth narrative case study with first-in-family HANTS (n=30); interviews explored educational biographies and lived experiences of higher education and pathways to academic success. Participants = in final year of study and on course to get a first class degree at two London-based post-92 universities. Details of participants on p.4  **Findings:**  *Academic study skills* = students’ reading and/or previous educational experiences (e.g. via Access course) provided resources to help cope with transition to undergraduate study (with several students attributing their ‘success’ to an enjoyment of reading and ability to ‘write well’), leading the author to posit “it is conceivable that regular reading, even as a hobby, can benefit students in their degrees, especially in the social sciences” (p.5).  *Proving themselves =* students generally not academically successful at school. Common uniting experience among participants is a desire to prove themselves and to others that they could do it, or “a strong desire to respond and reclaim their worth and dignity through education, namely, a good degree” (p.6). Students also aware of credential creep. The idea of second chances = often greeted with additional motivation/ desire to succeed.  *Supportive people*: cited as important (see p.7) – includes family, friends, peers, mentors |
| Wrench, A.; Garrett, R. & King, S. (2013). [Guessing where the goal posts are: managing health and well-being during the transition to university studies](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13676261.2012.744814), *Journal of Youth Studies,* 16(6), 730–746.  AUS  Annotation by Sally Baker  Keywords: *health, well-being, first year university students, governmental practices* | **Context:** Examines impact of transition to HE on students well-being and health. Set in context of post-Bradley review Australian higher education system, located in critique of logic neoliberalism. Argues that little is known of students’ health and well-being in metrics collected on students’ transitions (attrition, retention, success data)  **Aim:** To explore factors that impact on health and well-being of students transitioning into higher education studies (first year); to examine students’ perceptions of various dimensions of health and well-being and impact factors. Paper reports on students’ understandings. RQs:   1. what are the perceptions of health, healthy bodies and well-being for university students in their first year? 2. What are the factors that influence and impact on health and well-being as students transition into university studies? (p.733)   **Theoretical frame:** Governmental practices (draws on Foucault, 1982); situates alongside well-being + risk discourses (Wyn, 2009; Rose, 1999) – neoliberal logics = “reconfiguration of societal institutions, such as universities, as responsible for producing students whom can protect themselves from ‘risk’ (p.732)  **Methodology:** Qualitative: online questionnaire (n=132; 23% of cohort) with closed and open question. Students = Year 1, semester 2 Health Sciences. Analysis = interpretive lens; individual researcher coding = cross-check – ‘common organisational themes’. Second reading = ‘governmentality’.  **Findings:**  Complexity of university learning = impacted on well-being, particularly due to expectations/ realities of moving from school to university (not feeling ‘fully prepared’; expressions of confusion, frustration and stress). Recognition and care from lecturers also important for positive impact. Students appeared to be unprepared for disconnection with lecturers/ tutors [as opposed to familiarity with teachers?] Insufficient feedback on assignments = had limiting effect on students’ understandings of expectations. Data suggests students rely on each other rather than asking lecturers for assistance (draws on hot/cold, Ball & Vincent 1998). Sense of community = important. Self-management and well-being = participants found it difficult to manage workload, competing demands and maintain health/well-being = impact on physical activity/ diet (particularly increase in poor eating habits)/ sleep, managing stressful events, managing mental health. **Core argument:** Participants “gave evidence of the relentless future orientation of their lives” (p.742); participants developed not-so-healthy responses to pressures and social changes related to transitions. Message for universities: develop programs that promote social networks and supportive peer relationships. |