Evaluation of Week 1

Report

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1. Executive summary

1.1 Evaluation of Week 1
Week I was established as an integral and significant element within Napier University’s move to a 20-credit modular structure in the 2008/9 academic year. This evaluation of Week 1 by Academic Development was commissioned to enable an initial review of the effectiveness for students of the first operation of Week 1 and to use the outcomes to inform plans for future iterations. Outcomes include this report and an online guide currently under development providing student feedback and examples of best practice contributed by staff.

1.2 Benefits of Week 1
Week 1 ran successfully for many students with some evidence of enhanced engagement by new students in their programmes and in the Napier community as a result. Continuing students were involved in relevant activities including identifying differences in the year ahead and reflecting on the past year.

1.3 What aspects of Week 1 are useful to students
Students ranked the following as the most useful aspects of Week I and the value of their experience depended on the extent to which opportunities were provided (or not) to engage meaningfully in them: meeting programme and module staff; completing administration and the matriculation process; meeting and networking with other students; engaging in programme-based activities; learning about available resources and support; and meeting Personal Development Tutors (PDTs).

1.4 Concerns about Week 1
Staff together with new and continuing students raised many concerns about Week 1 and there is a risk that some students will not participate in further Week 1s unless substantial changes are made and communicated. In particular, the Week 1 experience for continuing students was not judged sufficiently worthwhile in terms of extent or opportunities for forward planning to ensure their future engagement. Main concerns about Week 1 focused on its length and resulting impact on the remainder of the trimester; issues relating to Student Affairs responsibility and Confident Futures input; inequitable staff workloads; logistical issues; and issues with particular student groups.

1.5 Main recommendations
Recommendations are made for the future responsibility for Week 1 for new and continuing students; the operation of Week 1, trimester 1 for new and continuing students and for particular groups; the operation of Week 1, trimesters 2 and 3; logistical issues; and engagement with PDTs. Also covered is the implementation of recommendations and the re-evaluation of Week 1.

1.6 Further information
References provide details of other reviews of Week 1 carried out within the university of which this evaluation has taken cognisance. Appendices contain the Academic Development Week 1 evaluation online questionnaire research findings and the Online guide to Week 1 activities: example entries.
2. Evaluation of Week 1

Week 1

Week 1 was established as an integral and significant element within Napier University’s move to a 20-credit modular structure which was approved by the Academic Board in February 2008 and implemented from the start of the 2008/9 academic year.

*In the new structure for the academic year, the first week of each trimester has been defined as a major opportunity for the university to work co-operatively, creatively, and with imagination on a range of activities which will help establish a beneficial and valuable student experience tailored to the level of study and the precise point in the academic year. It is planned as a joint and co-operative venture between all staff of the university and the NSA to provide a thorough preparation for students comprising administrative, academic, co-curricular and social activities.*

*The 20-Credit Handbook (Napier University, 2007)*

Evaluation process

This evaluation of Week 1 was commissioned by the Vice-Principal, Academic Quality & Customer Service, to enable an initial review of the effectiveness for students of the first operation of Week 1. The evaluation was carried out quickly (between Weeks 4–8) to gather the immediate reactions of student to their experience of the first Week 1 together with the views of key staff involved in the delivery of Week 1 and to use the outcomes to inform plans for future iterations. The views of a broader cross-section of staff will form part of the wider evaluation of the 20-credit structure to be completed by the end of this academic session by Academic Development.

This initial evaluation has elicited the views of new and continuing students and of key staff in order to:

- highlight examples of successful and good practice related to Week 1
- identify areas where the conduct, operation or nature of Week 1 might be improved
- make suggestions to be fed into the wider evaluation of Week 1.

The evaluation outcomes are twofold:

- this report which provides a review of the student experience of Week 1 including issues and recommendations
- an online guide targeted at academic staff providing student feedback (a revised version of Section 3.2 of this report: *What aspects of Week 1 are useful to students*), practical suggestions for enhancements and examples of best practice contributed by staff.

The evaluation sought primarily to collect information of the students’ experience of Week 1 which was achieved through:
Consulting students

Via:

- focus groups held with those who had agreed to market research at matriculation. The discussions used agreed question sets and were independently facilitated. Notes of meetings were made and all discussions audio-recorded and transcribed to enable verbatim student views to be preserved. Focus groups were held with:
  - new students (one meeting with each faculty)
  - continuing students (one meeting with each faculty).

- an online questionnaire which all students who had agreed to market research at matriculation were invited to complete. Questions closely matched those used in the focus groups. The summary of the results of the survey are detailed in the Academic Development Week 1 evaluation online questionnaire research findings (Kivlichan, November 2008) provided in Appendix 1.

All students were incentivised for their participation.

Consulting staff

Through:

- meetings with key staff groups for feedback on their perception of the student experience of Week 1 using agreed question sets. Meetings were held with:
  - each faculty with Director of Student Experience and Week 1 Coordinators invited
  - relevant staff of Student Affairs (including Confident Futures team), NSA.

the two professional development Good Practice fora Revising Week 1 for continuing students, organised by Academic Development in late October (www2.napier.ac.uk/ed/profdev/detailpast.asp?ID=26) where the views of staff attending were noted.

Given the short timeframe for the evaluation, decisions were taken at the outset which established parameters to enable the work to be carried out and reported on time. These included a primary focus on the academic experience of students in Week 1 rather than on activities and events intended to introduce students to university life (such as Freshers’ Family Day or the International Welcome Day) or on wider aspects of the student experience (such as accommodation or finances). Decisions were also taken not to survey:

- off-campus students
- all programme leaders (although where views were contributed these have been included)

The wider evaluation of the 20-credit structure will include the views of these groups.

The evaluation has taken cognisance of other evaluations and reviews of Week 1 carried out within the university. These include:
Evaluation of Week 1

- C&IT student induction feedback results (October 2008)
- Confident Futures: Review of Week 1 (new students) Activity 2008-09 (Westwood, 2008)
- Students Calling Students Initiative 2008 (Chirnside and Kivlichan, October 2008)
- Students contributions to the 2008 International Student Experience Programme (International Office, October 2008)
- Survey of Sport & Exercise Science first year students (Laird, November 2008)

The Director of Academic Development has executive responsibility for the evaluation and the process was led by Fiona Campbell with support from staff in Academic Development and Planning & Intelligence (see Acknowledgements).
3. Main issues

3.1 Benefits of Week 1

The first Week 1 had a positive, exciting atmosphere with a good buzz of activity as students engaged in a range of social, confidence-building and discipline-specific opportunities.

The week ran successfully for many students. There was some very positive feedback from students about their experiences and the helpfulness and friendliness of Napier staff. Attendance levels were not monitored but seem to have been good for new students with more students turning up to Week 1 events than anticipated and with less students drifting in to university in later weeks (with clear implications for retention) as a direct result of Week 1.

Some staff and the NSA were able to evidence enhanced engagement by students in their programmes and in the Napier community as a result of Week 1 by:

- new students felt welcomed as a result of school introductions and Confident Futures input
- new students were more willing to participate in class as they had had to speak out during Week 1 activities
- effective tutor groups and support networks among students were established early
- increased numbers of new students signed up to be student reps because they had mixed with students from higher levels in Week 1
- increased attendance at Freshers' Fair with overwhelming increase in students signing up for clubs and associations
- large attendance at Freshers' Family Day.

New students commented on the benefits:

- I would say that Week 1 made a huge difference. It’s the time that’s available to think about what’s going on in the next few weeks. Time to communicate with lecturers and tutors and the other students.
  *NUBS new*

- My confidence has definitely grown in the first week.
  *FECCI new*

New students appreciated the welcome they received:

- I was relaxed and made welcome straight away. Good atmosphere created by lecturers.
  *FECCI new*

- Really warm welcome, professors really nice
  *FHLSS new*
Evaluation of Week 1

People were warm and helpful, showing us where to go.

*NUBS new*

Schools developed a range of stimulating, varied and relevant activities which helped put programmes in context for students. Confident Futures ran engaging workshops providing opportunities to network with peers and explore positive approaches and attitudes.

The activities in Week 1 successfully aimed to:

help us to adapt to University life.

*NUBS new*

and to

settle into a culture – [it’s not just] an academic briefing.

*FLHSS new*

Continuing students welcomed the opportunities that Week 1 had provided to engage in relevant activities. The majority reported that these had involved identifying differences in the academic year ahead (81% in online survey) and a lesser number reported these had involved reflecting on the past year (42%).

Brought you up to speed, got you back in the mindset. Apart from that, light-hearted and general.

*FECCI continuing*

It reminded you of the skills you might need or that you had.

*FECCI continuing*

International students attended and enjoyed the International Welcome day.

I came on Sunday, the big event day for international students which I found very useful.

*NUBS new*

Sunday was very important because it was the first contact with the university where there were all those stands with people with different information and leaflets.

*NUBS new*

They also appreciated the support available from the International Office.

I liked the way international students were welcomed and introduced to the Napier system activities. When I needed help there was always someone to ask and to help from the International Office.

*NUBS new*

Some schools planned particular events for international students – both new and continuing. Efforts were also made to integrate international students across tutor groups where they often became a positive element of each group.
Freshers’ Fair was well-received by new and continuing students with record numbers attending and signing up for clubs and societies.

The Freshers’ Fair was very useful, good information about the activities. University is not all about modules but the other things you can do. This one was really really good because everything was in one place.

NUBS new
3.2 What aspects of Week 1 are useful to students

In the online survey, the most useful aspects of Week I were ranked by students as:

1. Meeting programme and module staff
2. Completing administration and the matriculation process
3. Meeting and networking with other students
4. Engaging in programme-based activities
5. Learning about available resources and support
6. Meeting Personal Development Tutors (PDTs)

This correlates with views contributed by students during the focus group discussions held with new and continuing students in each faculty and with student feedback collected in other Week 1 evaluations that have been carried out (see References on page 29).

Crucially, the value of their experience of Week 1 depended on the extent to which opportunities were provided (or not) for students to engage meaningfully in these aspects. Students views on these aspects are detailed below.

3.2.1 Meeting programme and module staff

Students found meeting programme and module staff the most valuable aspect of Week 1 with 69% of those completing the online survey indicating this had been very useful or useful to them. But the extent to which students had meaningful opportunities to meet with programme and module staff was variable.

The School Leaders should appear. Give an introduction to the school leaders, their responsibilities. I don’t know who is who.  
*NUBS new*

You couldn’t practically [meet programme staff]. It was like a lecture with a very fixed time schedule.  
*NUBS new*

When programme leaders are involved it’s more coherent so currently inconsistent when they are not.  
*NUBS continuing*

Confident Futures facilitators also reported that workshops worked better when academic staff remained in the room.
I felt quite happy that they prepared me for the programmes and for what was coming up and one of the features was that there was lots of time left for discussion with individual lecturers and the programme leader. That was really valuable because a lot of people had questions.

*FECCI new*

I thought [meeting programme and module staff] was really valuable and I would have liked more of it because there were one or two people who weren’t at the Week 1 event who are now lecturing on the course. The full complement of teaching staff wasn’t there.

*FECCI new*

Interaction with academic staff should be more, students must get the time to interact with their module tutor and programme leader.

*NUBS new*

Meeting the tutors was the best part. The Confident Futures wasn’t all that informative of what was happening. The best bit was where the lecturers were introduced. I felt, to be in a new place, if there was anything I needed I could go to them.

*FECCI new*

For me, it would have been useful for your academic future to have had an appointment with our programme leader individually or in couples. Being in 4th year … it would have helped me.

*FECCI continuing*

Some students on flexible programmes who need to make module choices early to fix their timetables experienced difficulties in meeting module leaders during week 1 as 'they were busy with their own students'.

### 3.2.2 Completing administration and the matriculation process

Overall completing matriculation was regarded as very smooth with new students commenting on the swiftness and efficiency of the process and continuing students reiterating this while those who took advantage of online matriculation via NimWeb in advance of Week 1 found it speedy and effective. Over 68% of the students completing the online survey indicated that completing these processes had been a very useful or useful aspect of Week 1 and this was confirmed in focus group discussions.

I was amazed how efficient it was. It was a very easy process. It was really well organised. The structure, the card system works really well and the other thing that impressed me was that everyone involved was exceedingly considerate.
Evaluation of Week 1

The people at Registry and on the front desk have also been extremely nice.

FECCI new

The process was well-organised. There were a lot of students but they were really fast putting people into the section they were to go, where to queue. The administration processes were very good.

NUBS new

Matriculating online only took a few minutes, it was great.

FECCI continuing

Students and staff reported some queuing when larger numbers than expected appeared and lengthy matriculation for some students groups (primarily direct entrants, international or postgraduate students) but this seems to have been the experience for a small minority.

Students also took advantage of online information when available.

[The timetables] were all available on the student portal from weeks back, and you could get the most up-to-date timetable from that rather than a piece of paper.

FECCI continuing

3.2.3 Meeting and networking with other students

This was rated as one of the most useful or useful aspects of Week 1 by 59% of students completing the online survey and reinforced by students in the focus groups.

Yes, we made good contacts, people to meet. The whole Freshers’ week, what they planned in the evening, was an opportunity to meet people. We have continued contact and made friends with some of these contacts from Week 1.

NUBS new

It is a good opportunity to know your classmates not only in your class but also your programme classmates.

NUBS continuing

Activities carried out by Confident Futures were thought enjoyable (by 82% of students and beneficial (by 85% of students) (Westwood, J., 21 November 2008) although many advised that they would prefer shorter sessions with smaller groups and particularly with their year groups.

What is missing is a social event for your class. With Confident Futures it was an ice breaker but when there are
400 there you cannot get to know people in that situation. I find that a bit pointless.

*FLHSS new*

That was the problem with Confident Futures, it was packed with stuff all day. You felt frazzled at the end.

*FECCI new*

Schools also organised a number of events suited to the needs of their students which were popular and well-received. Some of these were purely social and had a big impact in helping students meet in informal and enjoyable settings.

**Question:** What would you like more of in Week 1?

*Daft games.*

*FLHSS new*

However some schools have tried a number of social networking ideas in the past with limited success as students have advised they would prefer to engage with other students in Edinburgh and not necessarily their programme peers.

Activities with some academic purpose but involving interaction and socialising with fellow students were successful.

Our group activity…took off what you’d learnt previously and it was a case of getting to know everybody again, having fun, seeing different approaches. We got the kind of light-hearted introduction back into the world of what we were going to be doing. There was a purpose to it but also the social side of getting back in touch with people after three months off. That was useful/positive.

*FECCI continuing*

Continuing students also enjoyed meeting up with and assisting new students.

I liked that it was one day of introduction, and still able to participate in Freshers' Week with Freshers' Fair responsibilities to meet fellow and unknown students and getting settled into a new flat. If there hadn't been a Week 1 there wouldn't have been the opportunity as we would have been straight into teaching. I was able to help friends in first year, show them around.

*FLHSS continuing*

Freshers' Fair itself also provided opportunities to meet and socialise with other students.

I’m really pleased I attended Freshers' Fair. I got a lot of information, met interesting people and spent a good time.

*FECCI new*
Evaluation of Week 1

3.2.4 Engaging in programme based activities

55\% of students completing the online survey advised they had found this a very useful or useful element of Week 1 which was backed up by student views aired in the focus groups.

The context of the programme was explained generally and more details of the new module covered in a calm way. Without Week 1 there would not have been the same opportunity. The unknown is worrying so it was nice to have it covered.

FLHSS continuing

The day gave us useful information about the dissertation which is going to be the main thing about year 4.

FECCI continuing

We got handouts for each module we were doing. Shows what you’re being marked on. I didn’t have any questions to ask.

FECCI new

Relevant activities were popular and in the course of the evaluation a number were identified by students and contributed by staff and will form part of the online guide being developed for staff to learn about and to share good practice of activities that worked well in Week 1 and which have potential for use in other disciplines (indices of initial examples are included as Appendix 2).

Staff advised that guest speakers (including alumni, representatives of relevant professionals or professional body members) who had been invited to participate by school staff or the Confident Futures team engaged students and were received with enthusiasm.

FLHSS new

We had a guest speaker…and it was totally unexpected. He talked about how he got through, how he carried on, whatever life throws at you, is a case of get through it.

I liked that they invited a student who had graduated, a previous student, who gave very useful information about approaches to study, difficulties and how she solved the problems.

FLHSS continuing

Students appreciated flexibility in the timetable which enabled opportunities for school staff to meet newly identified needs relevant to the programme.
Some of the activities in Week 1 were spontaneous – the programme leader was analysing what was going on and was ready to respond.

FECCI new

3.2.5 Learning about available resources and support

This was rated as a very useful or useful element of Week 1 in the online survey by 53% of students and reinforced in student discussions.

The laboratory, WebCT, and what you are studying.

FLHSS new

How to access the Library. Small things which are very important.

NUBS new

Library resources presentation was very helpful. You get one every year but it is a useful reminder of how to use it.

NUBS continuing

The introduction to computer and library system is very convenient.

FECCI new

Some staff were concerned that because the Library introduction is self-directed, some students had put off doing it in Week 1 and had therefore not gained familiarity with the Library or what it could offer them. Some students shared these views.

Question: What should be included in Week for new students?
A proper introduction to the Library.

FLHSS new

Optional Library tour.

NUBS new

Information on Library services especially how to take books out and return them which could be done as a demo.

FECCI new

Many students were concerned about the limited induction provided to WebCT considering their need to get up to speed quickly and the use that they anticipate that they will be required to make. Students indicated they would prefer far more information on WebCT.
Evaluation of Week 1

I would like to have seen more information on WebCT. For one module we are making quite extensive use of it and the assessments are going up on WebCT.

FECCI new

These views were substantially confirmed by data collected as part of the C&IT student induction feedback results (October 2008).

3.2.6 Meeting Personal Development Tutors (PDTs)

Students also welcomed the opportunity of meeting with their PDTs with 42% of students indicating this was a very useful or useful element of Week 1. However experiences in this area were very varied: one school arranged for all new students to have a 15 minute interview with their PDT, the majority introduced the PDT system with plans for meeting later in the trimester and some students seem not to have been made aware of the PDT system or know who their PDT was.

There was a huge amount of information on PDTs. It was mentioned on several occasions what a PDT was, and it was spelt out in fine detail. I shouldn’t imagine that people would not go to their PDT if they had any kind of difficulty, so it is highly satisfactory.

FECCI new

Scheduling issues meant I have never met my PDT and I would rather have one in the same subject area. Would be good to have meeting with PDT scheduled in Week 1.

FLHSS continuing

Question: Did you meet your PDT?
I don’t know what that is.

FECCI new

Question: Were there opportunities to meet with your PDT during Week 1?
No. If you wanted to arrange it you could but nothing was formalised.

FECCI new

3.2.7 Other activities students would like to engage in during Week 1

Students advised they would also appreciate:

a) visits to all campuses to enable them to be better informed and orientated

b) sessions covering if full time students are allowed to work (and if so, how many hours per week) and about individual funding from SAAS or the university NUBS
c) involvement of 2nd and 3rd level students with year 1 students via societies

d) coursework related activities taking advantage of the cultural and other opportunities offered in Edinburgh.
3.3 Concerns about Week 1

3.3.1 Length of Week 1

Many new students felt that a week was too long for the purpose and the activities were unnecessarily drawn out.

Would rather have a half Week 1.
*NUBS new*

The introduction was good [and] beneficial. I just felt a week was too long.
*FLHSS new*

Question: What would you like more of in Week 1?
Do some coursework, waste of a week.
*FLHSS new*

These views were also keenly felt by the majority of continuing students who felt Week 1 had been of limited value to them. ‘Week’ was considered a misnomer with very few activities timetabled or planned (sometimes as little as 40 minutes for the entire week) and they felt it was time wasted which could have been more productively spent on coursework.

Even if they didn't call it Week 1, because it feels as if you are missing out if you are not doing anything much in the week when there is just one day you have to go in.
*FLHSS continuing*

For me it was like losing two weeks because the second week all the lecturers were introducing the module and some of them would have an hour class, it was just an introduction so you can go home, so it was two weeks of not doing much. The meeting was only one hour in one day in the whole week.
*FECCI continuing*

Conversely many staff who had spent time organising relevant and interesting activities were disappointed and frustrated that many continuing students did not turn up to participate in them. Although attendance levels were not monitored, participation of continuing students was much less than that of new students with verbatim comments in the online survey suggesting a number of continuing students did not attend Week 1 events. This was confirmed in focus group discussions and in the Students Calling Students Initiative 2008 report (Chirnside, A., and Kivlichan, N., October 2008).
Absent students would not have missed much and would get the info from module leaders or fellow student in Week 2. Opinion was that Week 1 would not be useful so they didn’t turn up.

*FLHSS continuing*

Some students did not see the relevance of some of the activities and reported everything they did in Week 1 was replicated in Week 2. These students – particularly at higher levels – arrived keen to get started and were frustrated by the lack of activity in Week 1.

We were waiting to start and even though you may not admit it, you really just want to start working. They were telling us what we were going to be doing, but we wanted to get started.

*FECCI continuing*

### 3.3.2 Impact of Week 1 on the remainder of the trimester

As a result of Week 1, module introductions took place generally in Week 2 and as a consequence work did not start in earnest until Week 3 with some students reporting that their first tutorial did not take place until Week 4. This proved frustrating for most students and particularly difficult for some groups of students including mature students and students with work placements due to start in Week 4.

Students very strongly made the case for introductions to modules and module choices to be made in Week 1.

Two weeks out of 13 not doing anything. It could have been combined with the introduction to the module timetables for Week 1 and we would be able to start doing the next week and give yourself more time to learn.

*FECCI continuing*

Combine Week 1 introduction with introduction to the modules.

*FLHSS continuing*

Despite the lack of activity in Week 1, students felt that when they had to make module choices they were compelled to make them very quickly – sometimes within the course of a half day – and as a result were making ill-informed and poorly thought-through choices.

We had less than 24 hours to get everything in. I didn’t know if that happens every year or just because everything had changed. A lot of us probably did not make the best choice because we didn’t have enough time to choose.

*NUBS continuing*
Staff were also concerned that Week 1 resulted in teaching sometimes not commencing until Week 3 which was of a particular worry at levels 3 and 4. They felt this could have later implications by squeezing out important elements such as more focused and advanced library sessions, workshops offered by Confident Futures and other input – including from Academic Advisers – concerned with generic academic preparation which would otherwise have taken place at appropriate transition points later in the trimester.

3.3.3 Issues relating to Student Affairs responsibility and Confident Futures input

There was confusion by some academic staff over their contribution to Week 1 as they saw Week 1 and Confident Futures input as synonymous. As a result there was less involvement in Week 1 activities for new students by some school staff than in others. Some of this confusion arose from Student Affairs having responsibility for Week 1 for new students, the proactivity of the Confident Futures team in working with schools to plan and deliver the welcome programme for new students in Week 1 and the paper Principles for allocation of space in Week 1 (Lambert, 2008) which gave priority booking for these events.

Some schools reported they were unable to commence activities for any new students until the Confident Futures activity had been undertaken (in one case this did not take place until the Thursday) and felt that Week 1 activities had not been as effective as induction in previous years because of the lack of availability of appropriate rooms, lack of contextualisation of Confident Futures activities and, as a result of these, the reduced time academic staff were able to spend with students. Some staff had concerns that due to poor coordination between schools and the Confident Futures team some icebreaker activities were repeated with the same group of students on the same day.

Many felt much of what had been included in Confident Futures workshops they had covered in the past and were equipped to do – and with smaller groups within schools – again in future. Overall academic staff felt their schools should be making decisions about Week 1 rather than these ‘being dictated from above’ and that the university should trust schools to know what they are doing in relation to the induction of new students.

Although Confident Futures activities were well-received and activities students engaged in were perceived as beneficial and enjoyable, issues for students arose over the size of workshops and the lack of opportunities to network in year groups:

The ethos of Confident Futures is something that I very much subscribe to but [it was] a day long session, an introductory session and it was pretty chaotic. The basic problem was that there were too many students.

*NUBS new*
A flatmate said he really enjoyed the Confident Futures in his group which was about 6 as opposed to 70 in ours. He thought very highly of it. Being in a smaller group, getting to know people.

FECCI new

Confident Futures took too long. Perhaps should have been in smaller groups ie class sizes.

FLHSS new

Some students also did not enjoy some of the activities which sometimes seemed forced.

It felt a bit cold when you talked to everyone in the Confident Futures set up but when you were in the hall everything was a lot warmer [with people] talking a lot more.

NUBS new

Question: What would you like to do less of in Week 1?
Speed dating style events. Getting up and running around a room to meet people.

FECCI new

3.3.4 Inequitable staff workloads

Staff reported that organising Week 1 was very time-consuming and scheduling activities for Week 1 was roughly as difficult as scheduling the entire trimester. Much of the organisation and delivery of Week 1 in schools rested with a small number of enthusiastic staff with many staff not engaging in any activities. Those involved were overwhelmed and there was a disproportinate workload falling on some staff – primarily programme leaders and Week 1 Co-ordinators. Some individuals were negative about Week 1 and either did not participate or had the approach of ‘tell me what I need to do’ leaving colleagues to decide how best to use them – usually by running workshops.

The heavy workload for those members of school staff contributing actively to Week 1 was exacerbated by their involvement in a range of administrative activities in the run up to and during Week 1 which could have been more effectively handled by administrative staff. These included room bookings, Week 1 timetabling and qualification checking.

There was a significant increase in workload for school administrators in organising and supporting Week 1 and dealing with the consequences of low participation of continuing students. Some schools involved extra administrative staff. Effort was reduced where online timetables were available early and, in at least one case, a year tutor WebCT page was produced which proved valuable.
Evaluation of Week 1

These workload issues were less extreme in schools which reported good support from heads of school or, as in one case, had adopted a managerial approach to the implementation of Week 1.

The Confident Futures team also had heavy — and potentially unsustainable — workloads. During Week 1 the facilitators ran 53 workshops involving a total of just under 5000 students between them, often back-to-back.

3.3.5 Logistical issues

Accommodation
Sufficient and appropriate accommodation is a significant problem at all campuses. The effects of the paper *Principles for allocation of space in Week 1* (Lambert, 2008) caused some resentment in schools as appropriate rooms were not available — in particular large flat floor rooms. As a consequence some sessions with tutorial groups had to be held in smaller rooms and to be repeated (sometimes up to 5 times) and programme cohorts lost identity as they had to be split up. Accommodation that was available was often inappropriate for the intended purpose and there were instances of double-booking. There was also concern that the room allocation priorities could prevent staff from being able to carry out the week long induction for new students which was a requirement of their professional body accreditation.

Some students said Week 1 activities did not take place at their home campus and there seems to have been a perception among them that events held at other than in the actual buildings of their home campus (for instance, as the marquee, another campus or an external venue) were not so relevant or of such importance.

Communications
Although 84% of new students surveyed reported seeing the Welcome Pack, less that half of that number saw the First Day webpages. On average only 36% of continuing students saw the First Day webpages, Changes 4U booklet or Changes 4U webpages.

Problems arose with some students being sent the wrong information regarding activities and timetables.

I received the documents very late and I got the wrong one. They sent me documents for courses of study I didn’t apply for. It was a big mess with me coming. I wasn’t even sure what I was going to study but I came anyway because I contacted the International Office.

*NUBS new*

There was a trimester 1 timetable and it was changing from 31 August to 1 September…[and then] suspended for a while.
I thought I knew what to choose then it changed. It caused some anxiety.  
**NUBS new**

In any correspondence from the university they would say, the programme is changing, please see the website. [The internet] was not equipped well enough with information.  
**NUBS new**

Staff reported that the requirement to append Week 1 programmes to student letters was an onerous task and with several different programme timetables there was a huge opportunity for error.

### 3.3.6 Issues with particular students

**Direct entrants**  
Many of the sessions for direct entry students were not focused on their specific needs. Activities provided by Confident Futures enabled social integration but, crucially, not with their cohort and students felt unprepared for joining their year group. Difficulties also arose because numbers were either vastly under- or over-estimated by schools making planning and running Confident Futures workshops very difficult. Some schools did arrange a specific induction for direct entrants which focused on student information for half a day enabling them to interact with their year group for the remainder of the day.

Issues in relation to direct entrants also arose with the students whose cohorts they were joining:

> People who were jumping into third year or came from other countries, were told how to use WebCT, what was for us who continue our studies from 2 years before was ridiculous. Maybe there should be some difference [between provision for existing students and direct entrants]. It was good for the others but boring for us.  
**NUBS continuing**

**International**  
International students mainly appreciated the International Welcome day. However there was some duplication of information.

> I think they can leave out the Sunday. A lot of the things were repeated on Monday. I wasn’t sure why I was here on Monday as I heard nothing new. On Sunday it was international students, same thing on Monday. On Sunday it was nice to meet people but it wasn’t about the information you got. They could tell you before to either come on Sunday or Monday.  
**NUBS new**
Evaluation of Week 1

International students reported difficulties with understanding lectures (due to the speed of delivery and sometimes unfamiliar accents), gaining familiarity with learning, teaching and assessment practices and needing additional support arising from moving to a new country such as with finances, accommodation and local orientation.

In China we never have a lot of course work in the form of a report or essay. When the teacher asked us to give our course work in the format of a report I did not know what kind of report.

NUBS direct entrant

The only problem is the Harvard referencing system which is quite new for us and will take some time to get use with it and our first coursework is so soon.

NUBS new

What shocked me in the first few days was that I was not able to understand what many of the Scottish students say.

FECCI new

3.3.7 Future Week 1s

Students’ experiences of the first iteration of Week 1 coloured their views of the value of future Week 1s.

The only thing I could imagine [Week 1 in trimester 2] would be useful for would be some sort of review of the first trimester. Any kind of activity was delivered in Confident Futures then I wouldn’t go. And I am quite assiduous about turning up for things.

FECCI new

Why bother? Are they going to email us about this because we weren’t told about this in trimester one.

FLHSS new

I don’t think a lot of people on the course would go to a [Confident Futures session] because its not something they are graded on.

FECCI new

Are you looking forward to next Week 1 in trimester 2?

I don’t think I’d feel pressured to go so might not turn up. No.

FECCI continuing
4. Main recommendations

4.1 Responsibility for Week 1

Schools should continue to be responsible for organising and delivering Week 1 for continuing students and should be given responsibility for organising and delivering Week 1 for new students from academic year 2009/10. This would enable the conduct and activities of Week 1 to relate better to the school, disciplinary and programme contexts, involve more local academic and administrative staff in Week 1 activities, permit better vertical integration of students and facilitate good partnership working with the Confident Futures team in the delivery of their activities at appropriate times throughout the year. The change would also avoid some existing misperceptions by some staff who see Week 1 and Confident Futures’ input as synonymous. School ownership of and commitment to Week 1 is essential for its continuation in steady state.

Student Affairs very effectively set up a workable process for the substantial task involved in organising the first Week 1 for new students. Their support of schools in the transition to school ownership of Week 1 for new students will be of much benefit in ensuring future iterations of Week 1 in succeeding years runs just as smoothly and includes similar welcoming, stimulating and valuable content.

The organisation of Week 1 should be the responsibility of Week 1 Coordinators with explicit support from heads of school and input from the faculty Associate Dean (Quality & Customer Service). The significant work associated with organising Week 1 should not be underestimated and should be clearly acknowledged by senior managers. More academic staff should be involved in order to share the delivery of Week 1 more equitably, meet the students’ strongly identified priority of interaction with programme and module staff in Week 1 (see Section 3.2.2) and introduce students to more of the staff they will be encountering and to wider school activities (eg presentations from research groups). Care should be taken to ensure that no other significant university or school activities are timetabled for the Week 1 such as programme boards or – as this year – the deadline for academic appeals which took place at the end of Week 1.

Administrative staff with specific responsibility for Week 1 within their workload are needed at school level to undertake the considerable work in planning (with a recommended trimester lead-in time) and operating Week 1 and to take responsibility for a range of tasks associated with Week 1 currently often being conducted by academic staff. Heads of School should plan for a 0.5 administrator equivalent with explicit responsibility for supporting Week 1 for new and continuing students.
Evaluation of Week 1

Schools should be responsible for:

- devising the content of Week 1 for new and continuing students at the start of each trimester including commissioning relevant workshops from the Confident Futures team
- booking appropriate centrally available and local accommodation for Week 1 activities preferably at the students’ home campus – taking account of the requirements of Confident Futures workshops
- developing timetables for Week 1 activities (preferably achieved through the use of SyllabusPlus) and making these available beforehand either online, in attachments to letters or on arrival
- ensuring the accuracy of the content of letters regarding Week 1 sent to students.

Confident Futures should continue to provide the excellent series of workshops for students both in Week 1 and later in the academic year. Greater ownership by schools of Week 1 will enable these sessions to be better contextualised within disciplinary frameworks, free up Confident Futures facilitators for ongoing running of workshops at appropriate transition points and facilitate productive partnership working between schools and the Confident Futures team.
4.2 Week 1, trimester 1 for new students

Schools should be responsible for the conduct and operation of Week 1 for new students (see 4.1) and should work in partnership with Confident Futures to run sessions which encourage social networking and positive approaches to study. This partnership would prevent duplication of similar activities, enable workshops to be better contextualised within disciplines, and run in smaller groups – especially year groups.

Week 1 should continue to provide a welcome to new students and activities which help to settle them into university life, their school and their programme. More school staff should contribute to Week 1 activities as new students set great store by the opportunities (or lack of them) to meet with programme, module staff and to engage in programme-based activities (see Section 3.2.2).

Activities for new students should continue – or be extended – to include:

- visits to all campuses to provide orientation to the university, practical help for those studying on more than one campus and assist in developing a sense of community
- introduction to the PDT relationship with interviews taking place either in Week 1 or as soon as possible thereafter
- engaging in cross-year programme/disciplinary activities with the clear benefits this brings to both the new students involved and their peers at higher levels. Involving continuing students in this way will allow new students to more quickly absorb information about the Napier student experience. Activities could include input from externals (such as visits from professional bodies and presentations from external speakers including alumni) and internals (such as volunteering and the NSA)
- activities relevant to their level or situation that are not module specific, eg Library, critical thinking, use of internet, academic misconduct and Confident Futures input
- an introduction to WebCT from relevant members of school staff. This could include a general introduction to the system, an explanation of the extent of use within the school and the differences that students may encounter from module to module and a hands-on practical to enable students to experience WebCT. Academic Development’s Professional Development team are equipped to assist staff design and provide such a session and to contribute to the development of a centrally-produced package for the practical element which all schools could employ.
- more opportunities to use central services including C&IT and Library through the provision of individualised tasks.
- self-directed individualised or group activities of relevance and value.

Activities arranged during Week 1 for students should continue to be stimulating, relevant and enjoyable and staff should be encouraged to use the online guide being developed to learn about and to share good practice of activities that worked well in Week 1 and which have potential for use in other disciplines (indices of initial examples are included as Appendix 2).
4.3 Week 1, trimester 1 for continuing students

There is a very real risk that continuing students will not return for further Week 1s unless substantial changes are made and communicated to students. The Week 1 experience for continuing students has to be more worthwhile in terms of extent, value and opportunities provided for forward planning to ensure their continued engagement.

This should be achieved by:

- communicating effectively to them the benefits of reflection and orientation in Week 1 – as opposed to getting started with course work immediately – but reassuring them that teaching will commence at the start of Week 2.
- extending Week 1 to include all of the days of Week 1 – not just the Thursday and Friday
- including module introductions – although not teaching – and the opportunity to make considered module choices in Week 1 thus enabling, importantly for these students, teaching to begin at the start of Week 2. Module information should be available throughout the summer to enable those who wish to be informed to have longer to make decisions over their choices.

Activities for continuing students should continue – or be extended – to include:

- programme orientation, reflection on the previous year and exploration of differences in approaches and expectations relevant to level of study
- module introductions providing an opportunity for students to be considering modules and making informed choices over a longer period.
- interviews with their PDT or interviews arranged to take place as soon as possible after Week 1
- engaging in cross-year programme/disciplinary activities with the clear benefits this brings to both the new students involved and their peers at higher levels. This could include inputs from externals (such as visits from professional bodies and presentations from external speakers including alumni and interns (such as volunteering, NSA)
- activities relevant to their level or situation that are not module specific, eg Library, examination preparation, critical thinking, project and dissertation preparation, practical activities, if appropriate and Confident Futures input. For placement students, how to prepare CVs, meetings with potential employers.
- self-directed individualised or group activities of relevance and value.

Activities arranged during Week 1 for continuing students should continue to be stimulating, relevant and enjoyable and staff should be encouraged to use the online guide being developed to learn about and to share good practice of activities that worked well and which have potential for use in other disciplines (indices of initial examples are included as Appendix 2).
4.4 Week 1, trimester 1 for particular student groups

Direct entrants

To meet the needs of these students, the last two days of Week 0 should be developed as a time for direct entrants to engage in a programme of activities comprising institutional induction, academic preparation, skills development and social networking activities. These activities could potentially tie-in with existing Wider Access sessions ongoing at this time. The programme should be directed by schools and run by the Confident Futures team together with relevant input from C&IT, the library and faculty Academic Advisers. Direct entrants will then be better equipped to join their cohorts and participate in the full week of Week 1 activities planned for continuing students (see 4.3) and provide them with more time to arrange module choices as some staff have requested.

These changes should free up accommodation currently used for Confident Futures activities with direct entry students.

Part-time students

Schools should fix timetables early to assist part-time students and should schedule activities carefully to enable effective participation by part-time students on a limited number of days.

International students

To address the concerns raised by many international students, Week 0 should be developed as an optional welcome week for new international students to participate in enhanced generic support activities arising from their move to a new country and drop-in sessions covering aspects of academic preparation and language enhancement. These sessions should be led and/or organised by the International College.
Evaluation of Week 1

4.5 Week 1, trimesters 2 and 3 (all students)

Week 1 should continue as an established element at the start of all trimesters to enable the aims of Week 1 to be realised and for students to benefit by:

- existing students reflecting on their learning in the previous trimester
- February starts and distance learning students participating in induction and orientation activities.

Where possible, module choices for these trimesters should be made in the latter part of the previous trimester (possibly in Week 10). This would provide sufficient time for students to make good and appropriate choices. The modular timetable should be in place in Week 1 in these trimesters but the week would be used for a range of activities before teaching commenced in Week 2.

These should include:

- welcome back session
- reflection on previous trimester activities in relation to the programme
- orientation to level-based work
- practical activities where relevant
- orientation to the modules and preparation for them
- relevant individualised activity
- Confident Futures activity
- other input as appropriate, eg Academic Advisers (skills development), Library inputs (resources, electronic references
- PDP reflective activity
- meetings with PDTs where possible
- if appropriate, local visits related to the programme.
4.6 Logistical issues

Accommodation

Room allocation priorities detailed in the *Principles for allocation of space in Week 1* (Lambert, 2008) should be reconsidered. Accommodation for all activities should be requested by schools based on the timetabled needs of both new and continuing students (including Confident Futures activity).

Accommodation availability should be improved on this year if the recommendations suggested for direct entrants (4.4) and for more individualised activities for continuing students (4.3) are implemented.

Schools should continue to use accommodation for which they have responsibility (labs etc). If necessary, external facilities should be used, although only as an exception, because students do not feel engaged until within Napier buildings and on their home campus. Freshers' Fair should continue to take place on a central campus.

Consideration should be given to the provision of appropriate accommodation to support Week 1 activities – particularly large flat floor area – in estate development plans including the redevelopment of the Sighthill campus.

Matriculation

The effective matriculation processes put in place this year – both the face-to-face process and online matriculation via NimWeb (for continuing students) – which students found effective and speedy, should continue. Efforts should be made to reduce matriculation times for particular student groups including direct entrants, international students and postgraduates.

Communication

**Student communication:**
The purpose of Week 1 and the value resulting to them from their participation should be positively sold to all students to ensure they are prepared for it and attend. It is particularly important for communications to emphasise the benefits of the induction, orientation and reflection opportunities provided to continuing students and, if the recommendation related to module choice (4.3) above is implemented, that Week 1 will in future provide the time for module introductions and choices to be made allowing the modular timetable to be in place and teaching to commence at the start of Week 2.

Communications should be improved to ensure all students are aware of all the mechanisms being used to inform them about Week 1 activities. Where possible, online opportunities should be used as a significant number of
Evaluation of Week 1

students use these methods with many reporting successfully accessing university and programme information (such as timetables, module introductions) over the summer. The Week 1 website should continue to be developed.

Signage on each campus should be improved during Week 1.

Staff communication:
All Napier staff should be made aware of Week 1 and the expectations for it in relation to customer focus. This could be best communicated by an all-staff email and Intranet message from the Vice-Principal (Quality & Customer Service) immediately before Week 1 encouraging all staff to be supportive of students during Week 1 and, as their role determines, contribute as appropriate to ensure the success of students' Week 1 experience. Student feedback shows how much they value staff who are helpful, supportive and friendly and appreciate participating in events which run smoothly and to plan.
4.7 Engagement with Personal Development Tutors

Given the importance of the PDT system to student retention, progression and success, efforts should be made to ensure its effectiveness and reduce the significant variation of experience reported by students. There seems considerable differences in the relationship of students with their PDTs with some students reporting a close, effective and supportive experience and others indicating little or no contact, no understanding of the expectation of the PDT relationship and a seeming lack of interest from their PDT.

This could be best achieved by university agreement and dissemination of an agreed level of expectation on the part of the PDT, better co-ordination of PDTs at school level – perhaps through the creation of a school PDT Co-ordinator and underpinned by appropriate professional development provided at school level.

4.8 Implementation of recommendations

This evaluation was commissioned and executed with the intention of ensuring the effectiveness of the Week 1 experience of students by gathering feedback from students and key staff on the conduct and operation of the first Week 1 and making changes to future Week 1s if required. Any changes made to Week 1 as a result of these recommendations should be communicated clearly to students and staff to emphasise that the university listens to its communities and responds appropriately in order to enhance the Napier student experience.

Changes can be supported by a range of professional development opportunities available through Academic Development including contextualised student feedback on what they found useful and through the online guide featuring examples of good practice contributed by academic staff (Appendix 2).

4.9 Re-evaluation

An evaluation of Week 1 to determine the effectiveness of changes made as a result of these recommendations, together with the impact of the revised academic year Week 1, should be undertaken in trimester 1 of 2009/10.
5. References


C&IT student induction feedback results (October 2008).

International Office, (November 2008) Students contributions to the 2008 International Student Experience Programme

Kivlichan, N., (November 2008). Academic Development Week 1 evaluation online questionnaire research findings. Edinburgh, Napier University. (Appendix 1)

Laird, P., (November 2008) Survey of Sport & Exercise Science first year students (Laird)


6. Acknowledgements

Many individuals contributed willingly to this evaluation of Week 1 enabling the activities to be carried out in the short timescale required.

I am grateful to Rowena Pelik for oversight of and contribution to the evaluation and for insightful advice.

Particular thanks go to:
- John Cowan for effectively facilitating the focus group discussions with new students
- Nicola Kivlichan for valuable advice and for conducting and reporting on the online student survey
- Fay Wilson for efficiently organising the many meetings which took place, communicating with thousands of students and transcribing recordings of the focus group discussions.

My thanks also to Stephen Bruce, Sally Dellar, Margaret Nairn, Panos Vlachopoulos and Iona Waterston who supported the evaluation in different ways.

Above all, I would like to acknowledge the many students who participated in the focus group discussions and in the online survey providing thoughtful and constructive feedback on their experience of Week 1 and to the staff who contributed considered views and offered useful suggestions in discussion and in writing concerning the organisation and delivery of Week 1.

Fiona Campbell
Academic Development
7. Appendices
Appendix 1

Academic Development Week 1 evaluation online questionnaire research findings.

Week 1 Evaluation Research Findings – November 2008

Nicola Kivlichan
Planning & Intelligence Services
x5007

Week 1 Evaluation Research - Summary

Background
• In 2008 Napier University introduced a new Week 1 programme of activities for new and returning students. As a result a review of the effectiveness of the first operation of Week 1 has been conducted. The outcomes will be used to inform the plans for Week 1 in trimester 2.
• Week 1 activities are currently being evaluated using a number of different methods and sources. This survey is part of a wider evaluation of Week 1 activities.

Methodology
• An internal market research project was conducted by Napier University in November 2008.
• An email invitation to take part in the survey was issued to a total of approximately 3800 new and returning students. The students had all agreed to take part in market research as part of their matriculation process.
• The research was quantitative in nature and consisted of a short online questionnaire.
• Respondents were offered the opportunity to take part in a prize draw as an incentive.
• 184 completed surveys were received.
• As part of the survey students were asked if they were new or returning students. The results were:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Type</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>New students</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Returning students</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of Week 1

Respondent Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>16 - 20</td>
<td>24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 - 24</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 - 29</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 +</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Level</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Undergraduate</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Postgraduate</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Study Mode</th>
<th>% of Respondents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Full Time</td>
<td>95%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Part Time</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Week 1 Evaluation Research - Summary

• The other sources of communication mentioned by new students were:
  • information from the bridging course,
  • finding information as they went along,
  • the Fresher’s Handbook.

• Overall the Welcome Pack is the most commonly used information source for new students to Napier.

Communications – New Students

• New students were asked which communications they had seen either prior to, or upon, commencing study at Napier. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>% of New Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Welcome Pack</td>
<td>84%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Day WebPages</td>
<td>41%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fresher’s Week Website</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• The other sources of communication mentioned by new students were:
  • information from the bridging course,
  • finding information as they went along,
  • the Fresher’s Handbook.

• Overall the Welcome Pack is the most commonly used information source for new students to Napier.
Communications – Returning Students

• Returning students were also asked which communications they had seen either prior to, or upon, commencing their new academic year at Napier. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Communication</th>
<th>% of Returning Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Day WebPages</td>
<td>36%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes 4U Booklet</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Changes 4U WebPages</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Students who were returning to Napier were less likely to be aware of specific forms of communication than the new students surveyed.

• Returning students were also asked how their experiences of Week 1 in September 2008 compared with their experiences at the start of previous years. Their responses were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience Comparison</th>
<th>% of Returning Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Better</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Worse</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The same</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Don’t Know</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• The majority of returning students felt their first week experience in 2008 was comparable to what they had experienced in previous years.

Communications – Returning Students Cont.

• Finally returning students were asked if Week 1 had given them the opportunity to reflect on the previous year and identify differences in the academic year ahead. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did Week 1 2008 give you the opportunity to:</th>
<th>% of Returning Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Reflect on the past year?</td>
<td>Yes 42%  No 49%  DK 8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify differences in the academic year ahead?</td>
<td>Yes 81%  No 17%  DK 2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Evaluation of Week 1

Week 1 Evaluation Research - Summary

Purpose of Week 1 at Napier

• Respondents were asked if the overall purpose of Week 1 was explained to them by university communications and staff. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Was the purpose of Week 1 explained to you by:</th>
<th>% of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Napier’s Communications?</td>
<td>66% 29% 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Staff</td>
<td>73% 23% 4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Students were also asked if, for them, Week 1 achieved the propose intended. The majority claimed that Week 1 had achieved the purpose attended (71%) with only 18% saying that Week 1 had not achieved the purpose intended.

• In addition students were asked how Week 1 in 2008 had prepared them for their studies. The results were as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Did the Week 1 activities you took part in prepare you for:</th>
<th>% of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Your programme?</td>
<td>70% 22% 7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Your studies in the trimester ahead?</td>
<td>69% 20% 10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NAPIER UNIVERSITY
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Napier University Week 1 - Ratings

• Respondents were asked to rate Napier University Week 1 on a number of factors using a 5 point scale ranging from Very Useful to Not Very Useful.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Napier University Week 1</th>
<th>0%</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>40%</th>
<th>60%</th>
<th>80%</th>
<th>100%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Engaging in programme based activities</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting programme/module staff</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting your Personal Development Tutor</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning about available resources and support</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improving employability skills</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting and networking with other students</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completing admin and the matriculation process</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Overall the aspects of Week 1 which students found to be the most useful were meeting their programme / module staff and completing administration and the matriculation process. However the aspect of Week 1 which was considered to be of least use was its link to improving employability skills.
Evaluation of Week 1

Week 1 Evaluation Research - Summary

Usefulness of Week 1

• Students were asked what they found to be the most useful aspect of Week 1. The key areas which were highlighted by students were:
  • Meeting Napier staff (PDT’s, programme leaders, lecturers).
  • Introduction session to different aspects of the university (Library, C&IT).
  • Administrative functions (matriculation, establishing timetable).
  • Social events (Freshers Fayre, meeting other students).
  • Identifying the academic requirements for the year ahead / finding out about course content.
  • General preparation for student life.
  • Confident Futures workshop.

• Students were also asked what they found to be the least useful aspect of Week 1. The key areas which were highlighted by students were:
  • Feeling that the week could have been more productively spent with teaching time and that a week of lectures were being missed.
  • Lack of activity in Week 1 (for some only 1 meeting to attend, some sessions where lecturers did not turn up).
  • Overall feeling of time having been wasted.
  • Some returning students did not find the week to be of value to them and did not see the relevance to the activities.
  • Some students that everything they did in Week 1 was then replicated in Week 2.
  • Some students felt the activities in Week 1 could have been condensed into 2 – 3 days.

Suggestions For Improvement

• Students were asked if they had any comments or suggestions for improvement to enhance Week 1. The suggestions made were:
  • More course / module specific information should be included.
  • More information about the future / employment etc.
  • Give students a chance to speak to the NSA president.
  • For some keeping the events shorter and having some teaching in Week 1 would be preferable.
  • Improved communications about the events and the purpose of Week 1.

• Finally students were asked if there was anything which Napier should consider including in the next Week 1. The suggestions made were:
  • More presentations and/or sessions run in smaller groups.
  • More team work / interaction with other students.
  • A meeting between the student and their Personal Development Tutor.
  • Some ‘get to know’ sessions with other students on the course.
  • More information on how to choose modules.
  • Tour of campus / provision of campus map.
  • 1:1 session with programme leader.
  • Timetable information – make sure everyone has it and it is clear.
Conclusions

- When looking at communication methods, new students are most likely to have seen the Welcome Pack however returning students get their information from a wider range of sources.
- The majority of returning students in September 2008 felt they had had a comparable or better experience in Week 1 when compared with what they experienced in previous years. However it is important to note that verbatim comments in this survey suggest a number of returning student did not attend Week 1 events and this may have contributed to the large numbers who felt it had not changed.
- Despite this, a majority of returning students did state that Week 1 2008 gave them the opportunity to identify differences in the academic year ahead.
- Overall students felt the purpose of Week 1 had been explained to them by staff and university communications and that Week 1 had achieved the purpose intended.
- The majority of the students taking part in the survey felt that Week 1 had prepared them both for their programme and the trimester ahead.
- Overall the aspects of Week 1 which students found to be the most useful were meeting their programme / module staff and completing administration and the matriculation process. However the aspect of Week 1 which was considered to be of least use was its link to improving employability skills.
- Overall students found meeting staff and fellow students along with the general introduction to life at Napier University the most useful aspects of Week 1. However when students were asked about the least useful aspects of Week 1 it is clear that their time in Week 1 must be adequately filled so students do not feel they would be better served attending timetabled classes. It also appears that more work is required with returning students to promote the benefits of the Week1 and to highlight the advantages to them in attending. There are a group of returning students who question have relevant Week 1 is to them.
Appendix 2

Online guide to Week 1 activities: example entries

Indices to initial entries to online guide (currently under development) describing examples of good practice in Week 1 activities contributed by academic staff.
Index

Levels:

Level 1:
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)
- Impact on students of Week 1 activities (speed dating, quizzes and module introductions)

Level 2:
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)
- Impact on students of Week 1 activities (speed dating, quizzes and module introductions)

Level 7:
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)
- Day out for students around Edinburgh

Level 8:
- A student snapshot (a video session)
- Visit to exotic animal handling session
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)
- Student challenge – Robot Team Challenge
- Session for students on their career aspirations

Level 9:
- A student snapshot (a video session)
- Visit to exotic animal handling session
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)
- Evaluation with students of Week 1 activities (Critical reading/writing and referencing, Library update, What’s new in 3rd year, What’s, new with 20 credit modules, Student portal and Turnitin, Meet with PDT, Meet with previous 3rd year students, Ice breakers and social activities, Student affairs – session with Maxine wood)

Level 10:
- Visit to exotic animal handling session
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)

School:

Life Sciences
- Session for students on their career aspirations
- Day out for students around Edinburgh
**Evaluation of Week 1**

**NSA**
- Group sessions for EU students

**SAES**
- Impact on students of Week 1 activities (speed dating, quizzes and module introductions)

**HSS**
- Staff evaluation of Week 1

**School of Computing**
- Student challenge – Robot Team Challenge
- Student skills workshops (Java programming)

**SNMSC**
- Evaluation with students of Week 1 activities (Critical reading/writing and referencing, Library update, What’s new in 3rd year, What’s new with 20 credit modules, Student portal and Turnitin, Meet with PDT, Meet with previous 3rd year students, Ice breakers and social activities, Student affairs – session with Maxine wood)
- Visit To Exotic Animal Handling Session
- A student snapshot (a video session)

**Programme:**

**All undergraduate biological sciences route**
- Session for students on their career aspirations
- Day out for students around Edinburgh

**BA (Accounting)**
- Impact on students of Week 1 activities (speed dating, quizzes and module introductions)

**All year 2 Psychology, Psychology & Sociology and Social Sciences returning students in School of Health & Social Sciences**
- Staff evaluation of Week 1

**BEng Computing**
- Student challenge – Robot Team Challenge

**Child Health**
- Evaluation with students of Week 1 activities (Critical reading/writing and referencing, Library update, What’s new in 3rd year, What’s new with 20 credit modules, Student portal and Turnitin, Meet with PDT, Meet with previous 3rd year students, Ice breakers and social activities, Student affairs – session with Maxine wood)
Evaluation of Week 1

School of Computing - all programmes
– Student skills workshops (Java programming)

Veterinary Nursing
– Visit to exotic animal handling session

Pre-registration Mental Health Nursing
– A student snapshot (a video session)

Type of Activity:

Evaluation of Week 1 activities by students
– Session for students on their career aspirations
– Impact on students of Week 1 activities (speed dating, quizzes and module introductions)
– Student challenge – Robot Team Challenge
– Evaluation with students of Week 1 activities (Critical reading/writing and referencing, Library update, What’s new in 3rd year, What’s new with 20 credit modules, Student portal and Turnitin, Meet with PDT, Meet with previous 3rd year students, Ice breakers and social activities, Student affairs – session with Maxine wood)
– Student skills workshops (Java programming)
– A student snapshot (a video session)
– Group sessions for EU students

Evaluation of Week 1 by staff
– Staff evaluation of Week 1

External visits
– Day out for students around Edinburgh
– Visit to exotic animal handling session