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17TH IDP AUSTRALIAN INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION CONFERENCE

*securing the FUTURE for International Education:
Managing growth and Diversity*

Managing the student experience in a holistic manner: Case Example

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Outline

- Background on DIS
- Motivations behind looking at Transitions
- Areas to be addressed
- Main programs
 - Buddies
 - IS101
 - Professional Skills
 - Sessional Tutors

Background on DIS

- Large numbers of students from overseas. Good mix of students from all cultures.
- Different backgrounds in terms of education styles, social class, social circles and work experience.
- Teaching in a very dynamic field is done by staff members with very diverse background.

Motivations behind looking at Transitions

- The need for cohesion as a course and as a department
- The need for greater understanding amongst students as to what we are trying to achieve together
- The need to support students better and create happier more independent students
- The need for creating a feeling of “loyalty”

Areas Addressed

- Student needs and their journey through DIS
- Staff needs
- Managing expectations and fulfilling expectations
 - Buddies Program
 - IS 101
 - Professional Skills Program
 - Sessional Tutor Training

Program: Buddies

- Basically, this program was brought about by a need to get senior students to help out during “Welcome Day”
- Buddies (international and local) are trained in communication skills, intercultural sensitivity, information sharing, referrals.
- The friendly face at the start of the program in the initial interaction with DIS.

Program: IS101

- A series of two lectures...
- Understanding what coming to Uni means?
 - What does one do with all that ‘free’ time?
 - What does one do at lectures?
 - What can one get out of the degree and the department? What is expected?
 - How can one maximise experience at Uni?
 - Where to from the degree?

Program: Professional Skills

- Cross-cultural Communication
- Time Management
- Conflict Management
- Negotiation Skills
- Interview Skills
- Etc. ...

Voluntary across 5 semesters... 75% attendance

Program: Sessional Tutor Training

- Academically, students rely mostly on their tutors. Most of our teaching is done by sessional tutors.
- Training is compulsory, talking about:
 - Good tutorials (and bad ones)
 - Communication
 - Intercultural teaching
 - Teaching and learning expectations
 - Administration
 - Dealing with colleagues @ DIS
- Tutor assessment is done for every subject
- Tutors attend weekly meetings

Concluding Thoughts...

- A holistic approach means looking at the student experience and what it means to go through our education system.
- It does not stop when the student gets here, or when the student graduates.
- It means departments and institutions have to invest time, money and support to create an inclusive environment.