Transitioning to Postgraduate Education – Do

they really need support?

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# **ASSUMPTION: POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS ARE EXPERIENCED...MATURE...SO THEY WILL COPE!**

- Transitioning to postgraduate studies can be as daunting as it is when students begin their undergraduate degree
- In spite of some having real-life work experience, the majority of them have had gaps in studying
- Sometimes they are out of their comfort zone when they enter postgraduate study, possibly in a different discipline and/or education system
- Motivating students' engagement calls for academic and social adjustments, and integration, all of which depend on formal and informal support

## DO POSTGRADUATES GET ADEQUATE SUPPORT?

#### **OBJECTIVES**

- To understand the role of formal support structures in meeting postgraduate student needs
- To understand the factors that support student success and satisfaction

## **METHODS**

Using a purposive sampling in diverse group of participants, 2 Focus Group Discussions were conducted among Postgraduate students

## **RESULTS**

Three main themes emerged:

- Awareness and Accessibility
- Fulfilled but not tailored
- Communication

"On-line map terminology does not match the actual building... walking for ever?

Awareness and accessibility

> Lack of awareness

Buried information

Discrepancy in information

"I think there were links in long e-mails....click this and go somewhere

away on internet" Fulfilled but not

tailored

"One week later got

accommodation

...really early...then

found it is a bit far

Accommodation

Support in different locations

"Thought all facilities would be here...then have to go to Old Aberdeen for every information...bank, fees"

"I was fed up with Facebook. I wondered, was that the right medium you

Communication

Social media vs. personal contact

Delay in core information

"She gave me a hour long chat about the course...really supportive actually"

Get everything else....but nothing about the course until late

#### CONCLUSION

Postgraduate students while appreciative of support, feel they are overwhelmed with generic information whereby crucial information is missed. Tailored, accurate and accessible information will strengthen the support system

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