

Overview:

The S6@Uni Programme converts current on-campus undergraduate science courses into online courses. These courses are ideal for S6 pupils looking for further academic challenge. They can complement existing Advanced Higher choices or, when no Advanced Higher is offered, replace this provision with study at the same SCQF level, gaining SCQF credits which are recognised by all UK Universities.

Background:

Curriculum for Excellence, and in particular the senior phase of secondary education, provides challenges for both Schools and Universities. The Flexible Science, S6@Uni spin off programme was launched by the University of Aberdeen in 2009-10 in response to changes in the senior phase of secondary education. The Programme aims to work in partnership with Secondary schools to provide as broad a range of opportunities for students in S6 as possible and enable them to fully benefit from the "Individual Learner Journey approach".

The S6@Uni Programme utilises lecture capture and virtual classroom technologies to convert current on-campus undergraduate science courses into online courses with a campus based practical element. These courses are delivered into Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Schools to complement the curriculum of pupils in the Senior Phase of their education.

The S6@Uni Programme has now reached the end of teaching for 2012-13. This year has seen a reduction in the total number of pupils taking part, compared to 2011-12, but an increase in retention rates as a result of the schools being more selective of which pupils they put forward for the Programme. We have also seen a rise in the number of schools participating.

Our S6@Uni students continue to achieve grades comparable, or even higher, than our first year cohort showing the high levels of commitment of these pupils. 14 pupils successfully completed the programme in 2012-13. Not all pupils applied to study at Aberdeen University but all pupils received an offer of University admission, 9 from the University of Aberdeen and 5 from other Scottish institutions, in the subject areas of Engineering, Geology & Medicine. Within our own institution successful completion of courses contributed to the strength of a student's application and in some cases made the difference between an offer being given and not however it is impossible to judge this for other institutions in the sector.

Feedback from our principle partner school report that over the past four years this strategy, in combination with others, has resulted in increased:

- S6 stay on rates (41% in 2009, 52% in 2012)
- S6 5+ Higher Grade attainment (27% in 2009, 35% in 2012)
- S6 1+ Advanced Higher Grade attainment (21% in 2009, 26% in 2012)

In addition pupils report positively on the independent learning opportunities, their personal and social development and confidence about going to University.

Key points & challenges:

Curriculum for Excellence, and in particular the senior phase of secondary education, provides challenges for both Schools and Universities. The Flexible Science, S6@Uni spin off programme was launched by the University of Aberdeen in 2009-10 in response to changes in the senior phase of secondary education. The Programme aims to work in partnership with Secondary schools to provide as broad a range of opportunities for students in S6 as possible and enable them to fully benefit from the "Individual Learner Journey approach".

- Increase in schools participating for 2012-13
- Increase in retention rates for 2012-13
- Pupils continue to perform as well or better than on campus students reflecting high calibre of applicants and desire to succeed
- All S6@Uni participants were successful in achieving offers to University
- The programme made the difference between achieving an offer and not in our own institution
- Knock on effects have been seen in progression and attainment in schools
- Key challenge was funding after the criteria for ILA funding changed but this has been overcome through by working in partnership with local authorities