

Hurdle or Ladder? Student Transition to Undergraduate History

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My presentation examines the learning and subject issues faced by first-year undergraduate history students in the United Kingdom. Based on two survey of students who had just transitioned from A-Level history courses to the completion of their first year at the University of Hertfordshire, the project explores the relationship between students and the discipline of history, specifically their perceptions of courses, key historical concepts, effective instruction, and their preparation for the demands of undergraduate academic work. Informed by recent research focused on the relationship between teaching and students' perceptions, the research project is ultimately tied to an ongoing effort to shape curriculum development. Preliminary findings suggest significant differences in the perceptions of students in terms of their preparedness for university work, particularly with regards reading and independent learning, and their views on different types of learning, students' stronger preference for formal lectures and whole-group discussions over group work and student-led presentations. The project's long-term trajectory includes potential to develop collaboration between secondary schools and higher education aimed at improving students' transitions to university.