Southampton Management School



Undergraduate

Transition buddy guidebook  
2011

Transition buddy name:

**The School of Management Undergraduate Transition Buddy Scheme 2011-12**

Welcome to the School of Management Transition Buddy Scheme.

This is the first time that the School has run this Scheme and we really appreciate you getting involved. As you are progressing into your second year of studies in the School, it is all too easy to forget how far you’ve already come; in many ways your first days in the School will feel like a distant memory. The aim of this Scheme is to provide the new first year students with the benefit of your experience based on the fact that you will have already gone through what many of them will be experiencing. The most important role you have to play is one of reassurance, helping them to find the confidence to take full advantage of the support that the School has to offer them, in particular, the personal tutor.

This Guidebook will help support you through the training for the Buddy Scheme and throughout the full six weeks of supporting the new students as a Transition Buddy, so please take the time to read it through. Make this Guidebook your own and scribble notes throughout to make it as useful as possible!

In week 7 of term we will ask you to come along to a one hour feedback session, and we would like you to provide any reflections on what your experience of the Scheme was like. Please bring your copy of this Guidebook with you to this session to help prompt you to remember how it all went. We will use this session as an opportunity to present you with your Transition Buddy Certificate from the School, something well worth keeping in your record of achievement. We will also be awarding you 15 Graduate Passport points to acknowledge your hard work.

I would personally like to thank you for your commitment to this Scheme and the fantastic contribution you will be making to enhance the experience for new students to the School.

Best wishes

Professor Terry Williams  
Head of the School of Management

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**1. The Transition Buddy Scheme**

**1.1 About the Scheme**

On your first days in the School of Management you will have felt a mixture of emotions: excitement, apprehension, confusion, to name a few! This is exactly how the new students in September will be feeling, and we believe that the first six weeks can be the toughest to get through.

This is where the Transition Buddy Scheme will fit in.

As a Transition Buddy it will be your role to be present during induction to shadow them through the experience and be a reassuring presence, and to then meet with your assigned students every two weeks up until week 6. It will be up to you to arrange when and where these three meetings take place.

It may be that students will want to email you for your opinion, and if so, please do your best to respond to them as promptly as possible. A student may also want to meet with you independent of the rest of the group – you can deal with this by either meeting with them at the end of a group meeting, or arranging it for a separate occasion.

There is no formal expectation that your role will continue beyond the first six weeks of term. However, if you have built up a rapport with your group of first years and you would like to continue to meet with them, then that will be your decision.

**1.2 Your role**

It is essential that you are disciplined when it comes to responding to questions and queries that come your way; remember that you are there to enhance existing support systems and not replace them. Your main role will be to encourage the new students to go to their Personal Tutor who will then refer them to the appropriate support service.

You are free to offer students the benefit of your experience, but do this sensibly and constructively. For example, if you had a problem similar to them when you were in your first year, share with them what you went through so that they don’t feel as though they are the only ones to be going through it, but also explain how you resolved the situation, or looking back, what you think you should have done. If in doubt, always point them towards their Personal Tutor. We will cover how to deal with student queries, how to listen effectively, and how to help students to help themselves in the training.

**1.3 Who to contact for advice**

IF YOU HAVE ANY CONCERNS ABOUT ANY STUDENTS OR DO NOT KNOW HOW TO DEAL WITH A SITUATION THAT ARISES, THEN PLEASE CONTACT JEAN LEAH AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, IN CONFIDENCE: [j.h.leah@soton.ac.uk](mailto:j.h.leah@soton.ac.uk), 023 8059 7655

**2. Code of Practice**

The purpose of this Code of Practice is to provide clarity over what we expect from you and the boundaries of your role.

* During induction, don’t expect the new students to come and find you. Go and greet them and if they aren’t one of your students, point them towards their Transition Buddy.
* Be punctual and reliable. Once you have arranged to meet your students, it is essential that you are there in good time. If there is an emergency and you can’t be there, make every effort to let them know as early as possible (via email or via the School Office). It may be that another Transition Buddy could go in your place.
* When you meet with your students, give them 100% of your attention. Don’t allow yourself to be distracted or disengaged.
* We do not advise that you share your phone numbers, so organise other ways of contacting each other. Email will work best, so during the six weeks that you are a Transition Buddy for, please be attentive to your email and respond to any emails from the students in your group promptly.
* Be respectful of the views expressed by the students in your group.
* Remember that any views you express should be appropriate, balanced and neutral. If you find that you have given incorrect information, let the students know as soon as possible and provide them with the correct information.
* If a student seems to be needing support beyond the basic provision, direct them to their Personal Tutor. If they continue to be demanding then contact Jean Leah for advice or speak with their Personal Tutor.
* Do not be tempted to advise beyond your remit. If in doubt, it probably means that you should not advise on the issue. In this situation always direct the issue to the Personal Tutor.
* If the student goes to their Personal Tutor and does not get the support they require, contact Ian Harwood (iah@soton.ac.uk), Senior Tutor, who will sensitively take the appropriate action.
* If at any point you feel uncomfortable about your role, please contact Jean Leah asap who will be happy to speak with you.
* Your attendance record

**3. Transition Buddy Scheme training programme**

**3.1 Format**

The training has been designed to provide plenty of opportunity for you to:

* Get to know your fellow Transition Buddies and feel part of a team
* Gain a clear understanding of the scheme and your role, including where your responsibilities start and finish
* Learn and use new skills in supporting new students usefully and appropriately
* Know how to use this Transition Buddy Guidebook to best effect
* Understand where to go if you need help or advice

**3.2 Training Schedule**

| **Tues 28th June 2011 – Part I**  School of Management (Bldg 2) Room 3041, Highfield Campus | |
| --- | --- |
| 11.00 - 11.15 | Welcome and Programme outline |
| 11.15-11.30 | Ice-breaker activity |
| 11.30-12.00 | What are the key issues faced by new students in the School of Management? |
| 12.00-12.15 | Individual reflection time, followed by sharing of ideas and feedback |
| 12.15-12.50 | Buffet lunch |
| 12.50-13.45 | Overview of the Management UG Transition Buddy Scheme, with Q &A session led by Dr Ian Harwood and the School President |
| 13.45-14.30 | Active listening exercise: Responding to questions in the right way |
| 14.30-14.45 | Reflections from the day and looking ahead to tomorrow: consider, how would you set up your first meeting? |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Wed 29th June 2011 – Part II** School of Management (Bldg 2) Room 3041, Highfield Campus | |
| 11.00 - 11.15 | **Part I Refresher and discussion of the Transition Buddy Guide** |
| 11.15– 11.30 | **Overnight reflections - How would you set up your first meeting?** |
| 11.30 – 11.45 | **Emily Rees (SUSU VP Welfare and Societies) introduces student support within SUSU**  **Rosalynd Davies (Head of Global Opportunities, Career Destinations) answers questions regarding the Graduate Passport** |
| 11.45- 13.00 | **Role play exercise – Dealing with difficult situations** |
| 13.00- 13.30 | **Buffet lunch**  Reflections on the role play exercise over lunch time  Revisit transition themes and plan for when some themes are likely to be of more concern than others  Next stages |

**4. Your role in the Transition Buddy Scheme**

**4.1 Induction**

Please be present for all of the main induction sessions to answer any queries that the new students have and to be a visible and reassuring presence. It is likely that they will feel more comfortable asking you questions than a member of staff, for fear of asking something that they think they should already know the answer to. The induction programme starts on Wednesday 28 September. You will receive confirmation of the details of the programme over the summer.

Students will know the name of their Transition Buddy and it should be easy for them to identify you during induction due to your names being on your Transition Buddy t-shirts. There will be a formal opportunity for you to meet them after they have met their Personal Tutor, Look out for an email telling you when these meetings will take place.

By the end of induction, you should already have set up your week 2 session time and place with your group of new students. If you have been organised, you will also have organised your week 4 and week 6 meetings too. The advantage of organising them all up front is that if a student misses a session, they will already know when the next will be.

**4.2 Week 2**

This will be the first of your Transition Buddy Sessions. Your training will have prepared you for how to approach the session and for some of the most likely topics that will arise. You may find it beneficial to run a simple ice-breaker activity at the beginning of your first session to get the group relaxed and talking to one another. Some students will naturally be shier than others, and don’t be surprised if some students prefer to talk to you at the end of the session once the others have gone.

Remember to note who was present in this Guidebook, and record all of the main topics that arose.

**4.3 Week 4**

By week 4, many of the students will be gaining confidence, but for many the reality of being in a new learning environment and away from home may be beginning to sink in, so be prepared for this. Remember to be reassuring, empathetic and up-beat, and that just because someone is quiet, it doesn’t always mean that they haven’t got anything to say.

Remember to note who was present in this Guidebook, and record all of the main topics that arose.

**4.4 Week 6**

This will be the last of the prescribed sessions. You may find that not so many students attend this session as they feel well orientated and have developed strong friendship networks that are helping them to settle in. If students are absent, please take the trouble to email them soon after the session to check that they are fine. On the other hand, it may be that being the last, this will be a very popular session, with students wanting to use this as a last opportunity to check that they are on track and have understood everything correctly.

Remember to note who was present in this Guidebook, and record all of the main topics that arose.**5. Feedback**

In week 7 we will schedule a feedback session which will provide all of the Transition Buddies with the opportunity to:

* Reflect on the experience broadly, and whether it was as they had expected
* Share experiences with other Transition Buddies
* Determine whether the themes they expected to emerge did so, and whether they were raised when they expected them to be
* Gauge whether they all had similar patterns of attendance
* Identify whether there were any occasions when they felt out of their comfort zone and how they dealt with it
* Explain what worked really well and why
* Say how many of the new students they expect to keep in contact with
* Consider what advice they would give to the Transition Buddies next year
* Make any recommendations on how the Scheme might be improved next year

It is really important that you bring this Guidebook with you to this meeting, as the notes you will have made in it will help you to reflect on what your experiences have been.

At this meeting we will award you with your Transition Buddy certificate and confirm your entitlement to 15 graduate passport points.**6. Useful information**

**6.1 Some ice-breaker activity ideas**

* INTRODUCE MYSELF. Participants introduce themselves and explain how they came to be studying at the School of Management in Southampton. They could go on to explain how they became interested in the subject, home town, favourite television programme, or the best book they have read in the last year.
* INTRODUCE ANOTHER. Divide the group into pairs. Each person talks about him/herself to the other, sometimes with specific instructions to share a certain piece of information. For example, "The main reason why I came to study here is…” After five minutes, the participants introduce the other person to the rest of the group.
* I'VE DONE SOMETHING YOU HAVEN'T DONE. Each person in the group introduces themselves and describes something they have done that they think no one else in the class has done. If someone else has also done it, the student must state something else until he/she finds something that no one else has done.
* COMMON GROUND. This works best for small groups or for each small group sitting together as a team (4-6 students). Give the group a specific time (perhaps 5 minutes) to write a list of everything they *all* have in common. Tell them to avoid the obvious ("we're all taking this course"). When time is up, ask each group how many items they have listed. For fun, ask them to announce some of the most interesting items.   
  (adapted from honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/breakice.htm)

**6.2 School support**

The main points of contact that you should refer students to are either the School Office or their Personal Tutor. Use your best judgement to advise with this. Remember that Programme Handbooks also hold a lot of useful information.

**6.3 University support**

We will endeavour to make sure that you have your own copies of the latest version of the Student Handbook, so that you will be able to point the students to the relevant sections if they have a query.

**7. Your students and the buddy sessions**

You will be provided with a list of the students that you will be buddying shortly before the beginning of term, so please be alert and check your emails. Where possible, the students will share the same personal tutor, which again, where possible, will be the same as your personal tutor. Once you know the names of your students, please note them down on the table below.

During induction or by email, you will need to arrange when your three sessions will be. Write the dates, times and locations below so you will not forget.

To help you keep a record of who is attending your sessions, please tick all sessions that each student attends.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Date | Time | Location |
| Week 2 Session |  |  |  |
| Week 4 Session |  |  |  |
| Week 6 Session |  |  |  |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Student name | Week 2 Session | Week 4 Session | Week 6 Session |
| 1 |  |  |  |  |
| 2 |  |  |  |  |
| 3 |  |  |  |  |
| 4 |  |  |  |  |
| 5 |  |  |  |  |
| 6 |  |  |  |  |
| 7 |  |  |  |  |
| 8 |  |  |  |  |
| 9 |  |  |  |  |
| 10 |  |  |  |  |
| 11 |  |  |  |  |
| 12 |  |  |  |  |
| 13 |  |  |  |  |
| 14 |  |  |  |  |

It is essential that you keep this attendance sheet up to date, as we will use this record as the evidence to award graduate passport points to the first year students. They will need to attend all three sessions to be entitled to the 10 graduate passport points.

**8. Notes pages**

Use this page for notes and thoughts

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