

Trajectories towards failure: Stories focusing on post-16 transitions within the UK Sport- Education sector

Cardiff Metropolitan University Learning & Teaching Conference, Thursday, 12th April 2018.

Dr David Aldous & Dr David Brown

Applied Physical Education & Health Research Group (APEH)

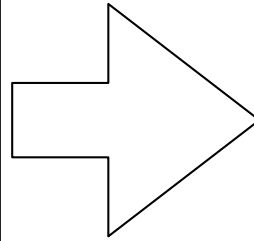
Cardiff School of Sport & Health Sciences

E: daldous@cardiffmet.ac.uk

Tw: @dcraldous

Outline of Research Focus

- 18th-month PhD ethnographic study understanding the FE-HE transitions of sport students (Aldous, Sparkes & Brown, 2012; 2014)
- Exploration of 'pedagogic relations' within college based sport and coaching qualifications (Aldous, 2012; Aldous & Freeman, 2015)
- Implementation of pedagogic and pastoral strategies within Level 4 BSc Sport & Physical Education programme (ongoing)



- we now draw on data generated by an 18-month ethnographic study to focus on the experiences of two students, Peter and Charlie (all names are pseudonyms) who underwent the transition from an FdSc onto a BSc qualification. In so doing, we seek to **provide insights into the increasing dichotomy that exists between the construction of official forms of opportunity within policy, and the actual 'lived experience'** within FdSc–BSc transitions. [Aldous et al, 2014, p.4]

The participants...

- I went to college from High School not really knowing what I wanted to do in life... **When it came to choose what sort of university course I wanted to do I was a little bit, I don't know, scared [is] not the word but sort of shocked.** I don't think I was really ready for it. [Charlie, Interview 1]

**“framed by the
*alluring necessity of
needing a degree qualification
to progress or avoid
employment”.***

**Implications for the
way they engage with
university structures...**

- Before I decided to go to college I went around and did a few interviews for full- time and part-time jobs. The impressions I got from that, was I'd rather be going to college than be going to work. **The prospect of a full-time job at Sainsbury's or Tesco's didn't really appeal to me.** [Peter: Interview 1]

Facilitators of transition

- School, it's sort of almost pushing you. **I think I can remember one [teacher] even giving me a coursework to copy to make sure that I did it.** The way they write it out is that they give you: for a pass you must do this, for a merit you must do this, for a distinction you must do this. You look back and it's like 'Peter do this, tick'. [Peter: Interview 1]

**the disparity
between official discourses
of opportunity and lived
experience of transition.**

**Choice was
strongly facilitated by the
discourses of access and widening
participation. The combination of school
encouragement and the porosity of
FE–HE acted as conditions of
action**

- It might, alienate us a little bit? I think they are going to exclude us. **They're going to be really wary of us. They'll probably be a massive divide.** I don't know ... I think on a whole, the lecturers don't know us and the existing students don't know us so we might be treated slightly different [Charlie, Interview 2]

Managing expectations

- **It was a bit of a shock**, like it was our first bit of work within the first two weeks of getting here ... I think **its the whole step up...to the degree**. [Charlie: Interview 2]

data
highlighted an apparently
irreversible detachment of
general dispositions from
the processes

inward process
in which agents reproduce
rather than elaborate on their
experience led to a series of
transformations that slowly isolated
them from academic and social
positions.

- **I feel just left alone really**. Okay, we were treated as any other student who had been there but we weren't there for the two years before. **In lessons we were labelled** the 'CAFE progression students' **and were singled out**. **You feel like everyone is looking at you** and thinking 'who the hell are they'. [Charlie: Interview 3]

Transformation

- It's different than at Hope. At Hope it's a ratio of 1:5 between teacher and student. Whereas here at TUC, it's usually a ratio of about 1:50. Some of the rooms are like 2 or 3 times the size of what they are at Hope college. To begin with, I wouldn't say I was daunted but **I wanted to find out what the experience was going to be like.** [Peter, Interview 3]

Future

research is required to facilitate some re-examination of the conditions that prevent students within sports education becoming lost within the current myriad of academic discourses of performativity, academic achievement and career success.

- **I kinda went downhill a little bit; didn't really cope with the work.** I haven't been back yet but I am not expecting a great amount and possibly might have to retake [the final year]. **That's how bad it was. I was handing it [work] back to lecturers but they weren't getting back to me in time.** If they did, they were giving me a day to sort of fix it. **I was sort of panicking.** [Charlie, Interview 4]

Outcomes/recommendations

Research-Based Recommendations	Possible Actions
Needs-Analysis of vocational qualifications (e.g. BTEC, FDS Sc)	1. Greater understanding of structural difference BTEC/BSc qualifications [curricula, pedagogies & assessment]
Re-Examination of the conditions that support student transition <i>within & between</i> qualifications	1. Staff Training 2. Creation, Implementation & Evaluation of Academic Skills Modules at both college and university 3. Personal Tutor System
Adaptation of curriculum, pedagogy & assessment structures within college and university	1. Decrease in summative assessment 2. Increase focus on Staff & Student skills/ pedagogic practice
Enhanced collaboration between partnership institutions	1. Greater understanding of pedagogical practices in college & university settings 2. Develop of staff awareness on transition process

Recommended readings

Aldous, D., Sparkes, A.C., and Brown, D. (2012) Transition experiences of post-16 sports education: Jack's story, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 35,2,185-203.

Aldous, D. (2012). Understanding the complexity of the lived experiences of Foundation Degree sport lecturers within the context of Further Education. *Sport, Education and Society*, DOI: 10.1080/13573322.2012.674506

Aldous, D., Sparkes, A.C., and Brown, D (2014) Trajectories towards failure: considerations regarding post-16 transitions within the UK Sport-Education sector, *Sport, Education and Society*, DOI: 10.1080/13573322.2014.890929

Aldous, D., & Freeman, J. (2015), Framing pedagogic relations within the boundaries of Foundation Degree Sport and Coaching qualifications, *Sport Education and Society*, 19(4), 1-11.

Brown, David H.K., Morgan, R. and Aldous, David Changing the student teacher habitus: Bourdieu's theory of practice, crisis, creativity and problem based learning in PE teacher socialisation. In Richards, K. A. R., & Gaudreault, K. L. (Eds.). (2016). *Teacher socialization in physical education: New perspectives*. New York, NY: Taylor & Francis.