

Executive Summary

- i. SPAT is a generic, rather than subject specific FDTL-3 project, working in the context of the collaborative provision of higher education by HEIs and their 'partner' FECs. The project has looked at both operational and strategic issues with particular influence on the experience of students undergoing progression and transfer. This requires partnership between those staff preparing and receiving the students, and between staff and students.
- ii. The primary aim was to promote effective student progression between HE levels, and transfer across institutional boundaries. The specific target group was students progressing from HND into the second or third year of an honours degree programme (sometimes called top-up or direct entry students), although the materials developed have a wider applicability.
- iii. In any one department there may be small numbers of top-up students but the cumulative effect of provision means that there are a significant number of students affected by transfer and progression. The introduction of foundation degrees is also likely to increase the number of students involved in top-up degrees.
- iv. SPAT has worked with around fifty HEI, FEC and LTSN partners in developing, trialing, and evaluating a range of customisable materials. The project has produced guidance materials on structures, approaches, methods, stages and checklists. It has also created case studies and collected examples of customised materials.
- v. Materials for both staff and students were developed in a variety of formats. These materials can be used at various points in the student life-cycle. The project has identified four periods as particularly appropriate for the use of SPAT materials: when students are planning whether or not to progress further in higher education; when students have been accepted for a top-up programme but not yet started it; the induction period for the new programme; and the first semester of the new programme.
- vi. The principal topics covered in the materials are: culture shift, pre-planning, induction, student support, understanding the modular scheme and key skills. There is also a pack on transferability that

deals with adapting the materials to different contexts, and includes examples of how partners have used and customised the SPAT materials.

- vii. The student materials will be most useful if customised for the relevant institution. The optimal mechanism for distribution to students is through staff.

- viii. It has become apparent during the course of this project that many of the progression routes and good practice materials for transferring students are most efficiently delivered in the context of multi institutional and regional partnerships between FECs and HEIs. There is therefore a partnership pack that gives information relevant to those initiating and working within partnerships, with particular focus on the issues that affect student progression and transfer.

- ix. Copies of the materials are available in this report, on CD-ROM and on the SPAT website www.spat.ac.uk. This report is available in large print on the website.