Recruitment, Retention and Progression of Geomatics Students

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Overview

- The state we’re in
  - Fewer people, fewer courses
  - The Newcastle Situation

- Define the student lifecycle
  - The three stages

- Approaches taken by Newcastle University geomatics group at each stage

Fewer People; Newcastle Situation

- European and International commentary about low numbers studying geomatics

- UK is no different

- Newcastle University
  - Research
    - Geodesy, Geomatic Engineering, Applied
  - Teaching
    - 2.5 Undergraduate Programmes (≈35-40 students)
    - High level of "service teaching"
    - Outreach, consultancy, etc.
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10 years work

- Wide range of work
- Classify as one of the following:
  - Recruitment
  - Retention
  - Progression
  - Raise awareness
  - Keep the applications
  - Successful conversions to registrations
  - Keep them
    - Enjoyment
    - Further Study
    - Travelling

Recruitment

- University-led activities
- Geomatics specific activities
  - Workshops (1hr or 1 day)
    - Fieldwork
    - Google Earth
    - GIS
    - Online information
    - Free loans of equipment to schools
  - CPD for teachers (2008 - )
    - Four courses, one day each
      - Geography; Maths; Physics; Construction

CPD for Teachers

- Introduction to geomatics
- Outdoor, practical exercise (GPS and Levelling)
- How to use geomatics more than once in your teaching
- Discussion session
- Free loans of equipment
- VERY positive feedback from school staff
- Based on two big pushes in UK secondary education
  - The outdoor classroom
  - GIS
Retention (1 of 2)

- Essential to keep the students we do get
- Induction
  - Residential Induction Course
  - Industrial Evening
- Teaching
  - Student voting systems ("clickers")
  - Increasing fieldwork and practical work
  - Study Tour
  - Geomatics laboratory

Retention (2 of 2)

- Pastoral Care and Communications
  - Formal structures
  - Confidential focus groups
  - Buddy system
- Staffing
  - A close relationship with our staff
  - Open Door

Progression

- Industrial Evening in induction week
- Visits by employers
- Online jobs board
- CV and application advice
- Encouragement
- Strong links with alumni

- + the university careers service!

The Process ... but not a lifecycle

- School
- Recruitment
- University
- Retention
- Job / Postgrad
- Progression
Virtuous Links and Complex Feedback

School → Recruitment

University → Retention

Job / Postgrad → Progression

Alumni → Recruits graduates ... Makes degree course attractive

Good facilities → More income → Better Facilities

Support Teaching

Retention → Satisfaction → higher ranking

Recruits graduates ... Makes degree course attractive

Is it working?

- We make our quota of 35 students
- High levels of satisfaction amongst students
- We are the only UK undergraduate geomatics courses accredited by the RICS
- We have a very high rate of successful progression

- But we must keep working!
  - Current project: Maths