

# SWAP prep for HE. Bringing lifecomp alive

## SCAPP conference 16<sup>th</sup> May 2023

- Welcome – my name is Kenny Anderson, Director of SWAPWest
- Really pleased to be with you at SCAPP conference
- Talk about and share our SWAP guidance work and the new Prep for HE development
- Credit for the development and the presentation goes to Amy Angus.
- **Key question we always ask – is why does one student succeed and another who is just as academically able not complete?**
- Also spend some time exploring the lifecomp framework and how it may prove an useful tool to think about our widening access guidance practice.
- First a little about SWAP

# SWAP history and philosophy

Developed by Colleges and Universities in Glasgow in 1985 as a response to recession and de-industrialisation. Strathclyde Regional Council.

Then funded by Government in 1989 for national roll out.

When funding from central government concluded in 1994, partnership continued as registered Scottish charities. SWAPEast and SWAPWest

Remains a central part of Scottish education. Funded by SFC.

- ▶ Social Justice in action
- ▶ No qualifications, no problem
- ▶ Interviewing for potential
- ▶ Robust academic programme



**No qualifications, no problem**  
**“An outrageous idea” – Director**  
**of Education, Strathclyde**  
**Regional Council**

# SWAP aims and objectives

promote the advancement of adults into education, with a focus on adults from widening access backgrounds, by means of access programmes specifically tailored to enable them to progress onto higher education. In furtherance of this purpose, we shall:

Work with colleges and universities to **promote** the education of adults and to work with and alongside other organisations committed to adult education.

Provide **accessibility** of educational opportunities for adults to move into higher education by means of coherent, effective pathways and quality programmes.

Promote the **success of SWAPWest students** and develop their talents to help SWAPWest's work in widening access to education.

Highlight **social justice** and work with wider initiatives to promote equality and diversity within further and higher education.

# our widening access model

## **Academic: “no qualifications – no problem”.**

Based on Scottish Qualification Authority subject units, broad programmes with multiple progressions / specialist programmes. Humanities / Science – life and STEM / Nursing / Allied health / Childhood Practice / Medical studies.

Deliver 120 programmes. 2000 students.

Colleges provide quality assurance with SQA.  
Equivalent to subject knowledge of school leavers.  
Look at a balance of measures for evaluation.

Additional stats and evidence , please don't hesitate to get in touch

Requires additional elements of our programme -

**Progression:** relationship with Universities, college **profiling** / transition. Need to complete all units and appropriate profile grade

**Guidance:** preparation for higher education / study skills / admission, selection and transition.

Prep for HE is what we are going to look at next.



# PHE – developments



- Purpose is to prepare students with the skills, tips and techniques to do well on their degree or HNC studies
- Initially left to college development. Standardised in 2007. Massive paper folders, then word document on the web page. Designed reflective exercises.
- Evaluation work – students stressed the importance of PHE once they were studying at degree level
- Number of concerns with critical thinking, management of time and referencing.
- Carried our research on transition with Universities and thoughts on student identity (STAY project).

# PHE drivers for change



SWAP 2016

Covid led to additional analysis and developments around wellbeing, balancing of work and flexibility.

Analysis of what we meant by time management

Successful learner and developing professional attributes.

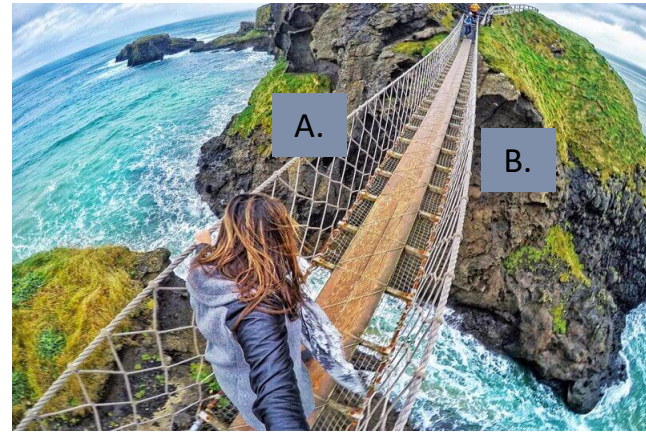
Credit for the development and the presentation goes development team at SWAP – Amy, Paula, Lisa and Nick

# Making PHE more effective

We conceptualised the new PHE as a **path** leading from Point A (the beginning of the SWAP programme) to Point B (successfully completing the first year at university).

We imagined the path as having two “handrails” for support:

- A. Academic skills development
- B. Personal development and support



# Making PHE engaging

## Academic skills

- Research and Working with Sources
- Academic Writing
- Referencing
- Applying to university
- Preparing for university interview
- Critical Thinking
- Listening and note-taking in lectures
- Using Feedback and Preparing for Exams

## Personal development

- Developing resilience to disappointment / adversity
- Cultivating a positive (“growth”) mindset
- Maintaining a healthy work-life-study balance
- Reflecting on learning; recognising strengths; trying new approaches; improving
- Asking for support
- Making sound decisions
- Making a successful transition to the next level



# Big questions

- How to “teach” adult returners competencies.
- Drew on feedback from our students. They had initial concerns about materials that are not directly related to academic study.
- Concerns from our college tutors in getting the approach correct.
- Previous project feedback was not to use a deficit student model.
- Working with students on authentic SWAP student voice for a number of years.
- COVID provided us with the technical confidence to record podcasts and video. Use of articulate software by colleagues at GCU.



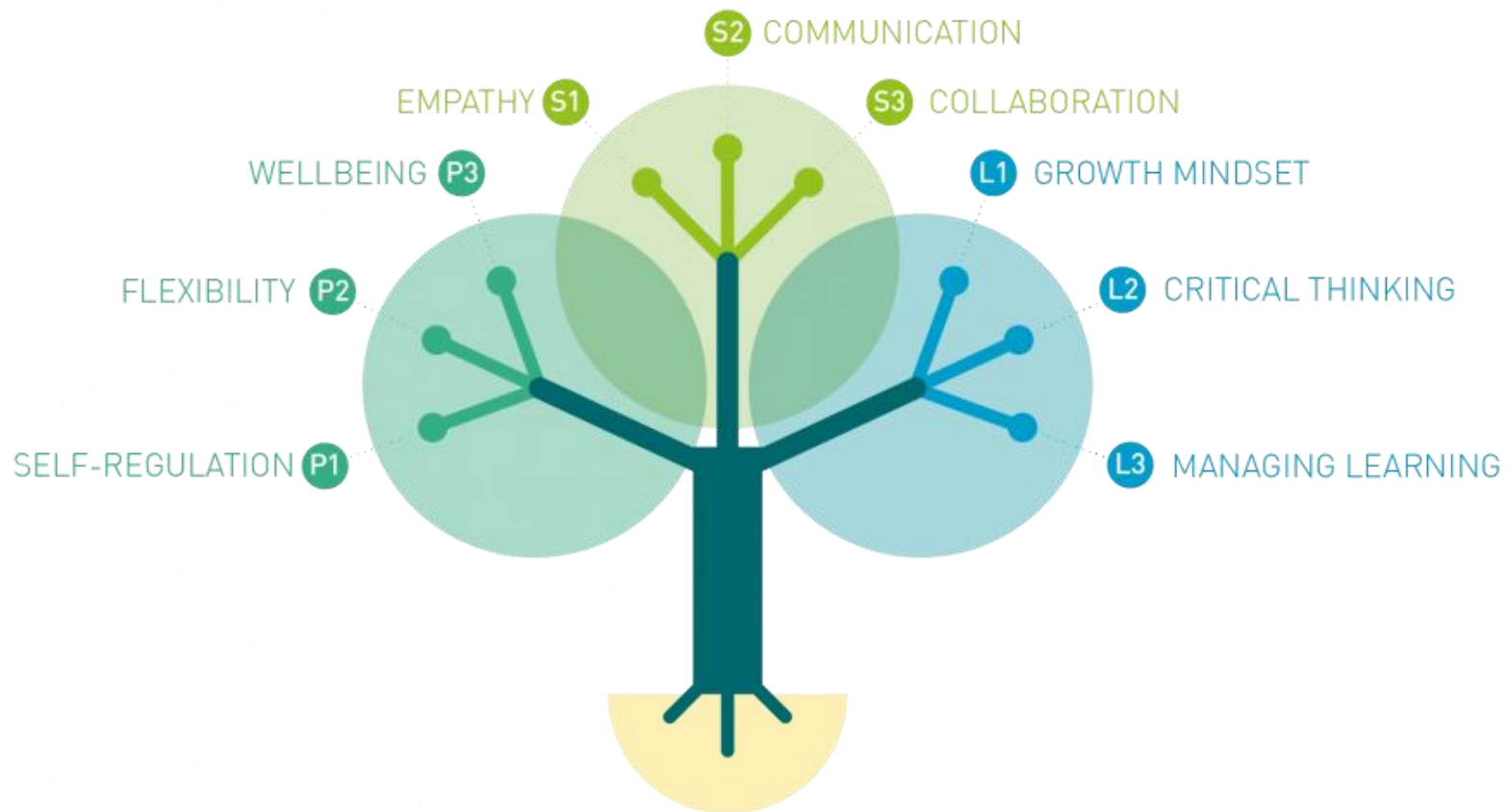
# Re-Development (2020-21) phase 1

- We drew on input from some of our most experienced class tutors in our partner colleges
- First iteration featured 14 modules:
  - Personal development and support
  - Academic skills development

01 - SWAP Induction for students
02 - Intro to Prep for HE
03 - Prepare to be successful
04 - UCAS
05 - Support (STAY Pt. 1)
06 - Critical Thinking
07 - Academic writing
07 - Research skills and ww sources
10 - Referencing
11 - Feedback, evaluations and exams
11 - Group work and presentations
12 - SAAS and student finances
13 - Listening to lectures and note-taking
14 - Moving on (STAY Pt. 2)

# Evaluation

- Unintended consequences. We have live data of how students are coping with their studies
- Celebrate success – provides us with feedback on prep and ideas for improvement
- First Year Uni Study
- College tutors and focus groups
  
- **Life Comp.** Why it proved useful for us.
- Useful website – [https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/lifecomp\\_en](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/lifecomp_en)
- Non prescriptive and fitted in well with our adult education principles.
- Still evolving



## Lifecomp framework

[https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/lifecomp\\_en](https://joint-research-centre.ec.europa.eu/lifecomp_en)  
[The lifecomp framework.pdf](#)

# Development 2022 – 2023 phase 2

		Module No.	Module name	Suggested completion date:
Introduction to skills	AUG to DEC	01	General induction for all SWAPWest students	Aug-Sep
		01b-e	<i>Induction supplements (if applicable)</i>	
		02	Introduction to Prep for HE	Sep-Oct
		03	Prepare to be successful: RESILIENCE	
		04	Introduction to Research and Working with Sources	
		05	Prepare to be successful: MINDSET	
		06	Introduction to Academic Writing	Oct-Nov
		07	Prepare to be successful: BALANCE	
		08	Introduction to Referencing	
		09	Prepare to be successful: REFLECTION	
		10	Applying to university: UCAS and Personal Statement	Nov-Dec
10b	(optional) Interview Skills			
Development of skills	JAN to JUN	11	Introduction to Critical Thinking	Jan – Feb
		12	Developing Skills: Academic Writing	
		13	Prepare to be Successful: SUPPORT	
		14	Listening Skills and Lectures	Mar - Apr
		15	Prepare to be successful: UCAS FIRM & INSURANCE	
		16	Enhancing Skills: Academic Writing	
		17	Prepare to be successful: SAAS & STUDENT FINANCES	
		18	Developing Skills: Research and Working with Sources	Apr - May
		19	Developing Skills: Critical Thinking	
		20	Developing Skills: Referencing	
		21	Using Feedback and Preparing for Exams	May - Jun
		22	Prepare to be successful: TRANSITION	
		23	Look Back & Look Ahead: CELEBRATE SUCCESS	
				Jun

## Student Feedback (cohort 2020-21)

I feel one of the main challenges I faced this year was my self-belief. Through my time at college, my self-efficacy has changed for the better, I now know that I am capable of achieving academic success and this has only helped fuel my motivation to push myself at university. I feel this has been achieved by witnessing my progress through my results and looking back at my earlier PREP responses. Seeing my own growth has given me an understanding of my abilities when stepping out of my comfort zone.

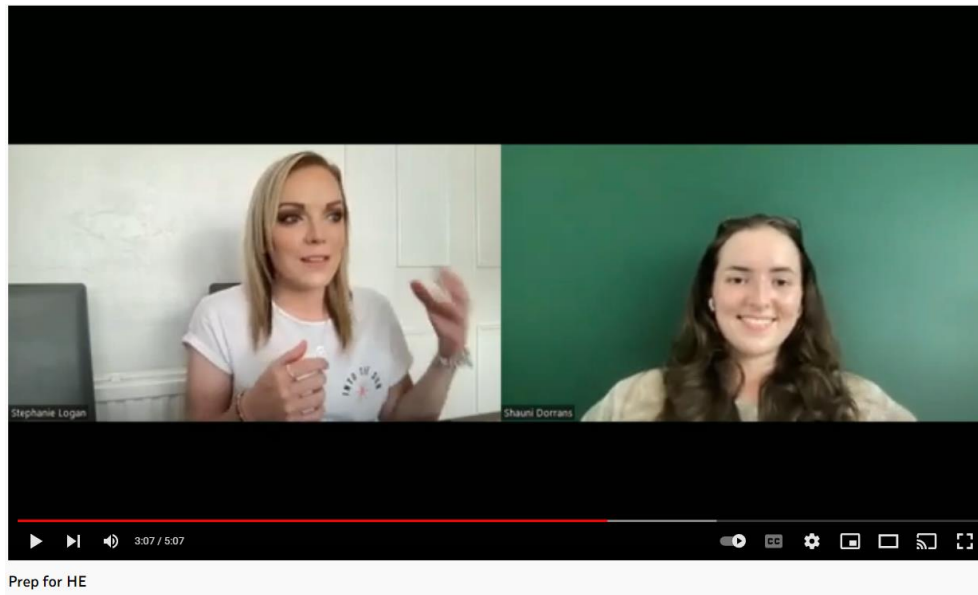
I have found SWAP to be majorly beneficial. After leaving school at a young age, to now being in my 30s, it has been so refreshing to learn the basic skills to academia that I have never been shown. Learning how to read academic journals, reference, are all things I had never done and would have no clue how to do before taking on this programme. I have also enjoyed just writing down how I'm feeling to be very important, and made me think of things that I wouldn't have done unless prompted. I find the programme to be well paced, and it has set me up for the next challenge I decide to take on.

# Student Feedback (cohort 2020-21)

The SWAP programme works, it's a real-life route to higher education. I lost my job after 25 years, I had not heard of SWAP, when I read some of the stories of previous SWAP students, I realised they were of a similar age to me and had completely changed their career and obtained degrees that at one point they never thought would be possible. It's really useful to hear from former SWAP students.

I have loved every part of the swap course, the structure of the course is great as it eases you in and before you know it you are able to write essays, read educational articles and journals and participate in class discussions on topics you never thought you would be able to participate in. The main strength of the course for me was the prep for HE module. It gave so much information and help throughout the course and it also gave me confidence watching the videos of other students and it was very relatable that most people are feeling the same as you.

# Post-SWAP comments from students



<https://youtu.be/nEHMmN1gBD8>



# LifeComp and Prep for HE

- [LifeComp Training\The lifecomp framework.pdf](#)
- Awareness, understanding and action.
- There is an interconnectedness
- Non prescriptive
- Developmental and dialogue tool

What is important for my teaching practice and my students?

- Prep for HE – freely available for use – <https://www.scottishwideraccess.org/moodle/course/view.php?id=5>. And tutor resource – password swap2223. These are available for free. Ask for scorm packages and we will forward them on.
- New resources coming soon for community work. Launched at our Erasmus conference on 28<sup>th</sup> June at GCU.

## Some thoughts

- What “learning to learn” skills do you use?
- Should we be discussing personal and social competences?
- How best can we do that?



### Where are we now?

‘We are now graduates of psychology, sociology, politics, philosophy, law, anthropology, languages, religious studies, primary education, social work ...’

# Never hesitate to get in touch

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website: [www.scottishwideraccess.org](http://www.scottishwideraccess.org)

Moodle - <https://www.scottishwideraccess.org/moodle/>

Shared our new resources online.

<https://www.scottishwideraccess.org/moodle/course/view.php?id=5>.

And tutor resource – password swap2223. These are available for you to dive in.

# transforming lives, it is what we do

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- ▶ **“If you are feeling that you're not from the “right” part of town, or you can't do it because no one in your family has ever done it, don't believe it. I'm the first in my family to go to university and I'm doing well, and passing everything. It's the best thing I've ever done.**

**If it's what you want, have the courage to go for it.” – Cheree Ann University of Strathclyde**



## **Where are we now?**

**“We are now at university studying biomedical science, marine biology, podiatry, occupational therapy, physiotherapy...’**