Academic Monitoring Desk File

INTRODUCTION

Academic Monitoring is used by International Student Support Team to pick up on, and assist students who are experiencing academic difficulties.

It is also used to fulfil our obligations under the following section of the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021:
(2) Providers must have practices for supporting learners through their studies, including –
  (a) enabling learners to prepare and adjust for tertiary study, and
  (b) maintaining appropriate oversight of learner achievement and engagement; and
  (c) providing the opportunity for learners to discuss, in confidence, any issues that are affecting their ability to study and providing learners with a response to their issues; and
  (d) providing learners with advice on pathways for further study and career development, where appropriate.

Academic Monitoring is normally carried out twice a year – usually around March/April and July/August. We prefer to do this as early in the trimester as possible so students have a chance to turn things around, but the practicalities of the orientation period means that it can generally not be started before these times. We also need to wait until all the results of the previous trimester are posted. It is usually best to begin in week 3 of the trimester, as then we can check which students have enrolled in the current trimester.

It is a process which is constantly changing, based on the needs of students, the ideas and preferences of staff members and based on previous experience. Therefore, this desk file is not intended as a set of strict rules to follow. Rather it aims to show the considerations which need to be taken into account, and the various ways this has been handled in the past.

IDENTIFYING STUDENTS

The report we have begun to use in 2015 is pulled from Student Records. The students we want to make contact with are those who are currently enrolled and failed 50% or more of their courses last trimester).

Pulling a report

From July 2022, we are using Power BI to get the list of students' GPA below 2.
1. Go to Enterprise Reporting - https://vuw.sharepoint.com/sites/Enterprise_Reporting
2. Click Student report
3. Scroll down to student details
4. Go to student performance report
5. There is a report automatically run by PAMI but need to filter to narrow down to international students only.
6. Export data into Excel and sort it out by GPA for Academic Year.
7. Please note this report has no student's email and qualification, need to cross reference from student contact detail report. But this report can tell you if the student is continuing in current trimester – save time to check.
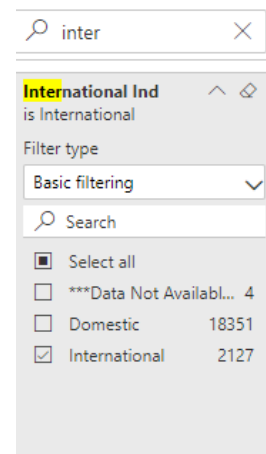
An alternative report can be pulled from Banner and cross-matched to ensure we have identified all international students with poor academic performance (this report is not very accurate, leave it here in case Power BI or student record is not functioning):
  1. *Go to the SWRINGSR page in Banner*
  2. *Press Ctrl+PGDN twice*
  3. *Enter your email address in the box to the right of 'Email Address'.*

There are a few other students who we should not see. These are:

- NZSP students, who are monitored by the NZSP team. It is helpful to pass their names on, but they are kept a close eye on anyway.
- Study Abroad (number codes, eg. 201) and Exchange students (codes end in X) will probably have left already; check and delete.
- Master's thesis and PhD students – check individual student records to determine this information.

We are meeting twinning students (NIT, UET, HUT etc) – pass their names on to the International Programmes Coordinator, just a FYI.

MAKING APPOINTMENTS

Staff doing academic monitoring made their preferences for the scheduling of appointments known through their calendars by setting aside particular blocks of time. Advisors may want to limit the number of students seen each day. Within a two-hour slot, advisors should mark two appointment times e.g., 10am and 11am for students to be slotted in.

1.   Students are sent an initial email from the International Support inbox to request that they make a time to see an advisor (Appendix 1)
2.   Students who do not respond are called soon after by the team and are booked in with an Advisor (Appendix 2)
3.   After multiple attempts at contacting the students, those who we couldn't get hold of were looked at by the student advisors. If there was concern about a student, we make contact with their Course Coordinators of current courses to ensure they are attending/submitting work.
4.   Email and interview documents are also saved in Sharepoint – ACM folder

MEETING WITH STUDENTS

When the appointment is made the student is asked to arrive 5 minutes early to allow time to complete some paperwork if they haven't email them back to the advisor. The receptionist gives them a form to complete – Self evaluation form, and also academic consent form.

See *Academic Monitoring Guidelines for Student Advisors* (Appendix 5) for details of how to conduct the interviews with students, how to make referrals to other services, and appropriate filing procedures after the interview. Accompanying documents are listed in the Documents section.

LIAISE WITH TITOKO

The Titoko team also conducts Student Success Plans with "high-risk" students each trimester. They will inform the ISST of any concerns about international students, particularly those on academic hold or studying part-time.

The ISST also needs to inform the SSA when meeting students for ACM, to avoid double handling.

NON ATTENDANCE

Students who we are unable to contact by email or phone/text need to be followed up by the Team Leader. Further contact via phone and email is attempted then a final email is sent (Appendix 3). If there is still no response, the following steps are followed:

1. Identify the students and put them in separate spreadsheet.
2. Access to Nuku to check students' attendance. If no access, look up the course co-ordinators of all the papers they are currently doing; enter the course coordinator's name, phone number and email address in the spreadsheet, alongside the courses.
3. Send an email to the course coordinators, asking for details of these students' attendance and progress this trimester in their courses. See template emails in Appendix 4.
4. When responses come back in, cut and paste from emails into the spreadsheet. It is then easy to see which students have disengaged from study, and those we should be concerned about. Thank/respond to those coordinators who have gone to some trouble with their replies, or expressed concern for the students.
5. Record in Kuruwai with all the details
6. Follow up with students of concern can take various forms. When there is evidence that the student is mostly attending and submitting work, they need no further follow up at this stage; they have made it clear that they do not want to engage in our support. When they are clearly not attending and submitting work, email them with support service –
   - Student Learning Support - https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-learning
   - Student Health and Counselling - https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/student-health-counselling
   - Student Finance Hardship Fund - https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/students/money
   - Disability Services - https://www.wgtn.ac.nz/disability
7. Students who have disengaged from study and do not answer the email will be rung to make sure they are OK. If they still do not respond, discuss options with the International Student Support manager: i.e. contact their emergency contact; or making a home visit.

SUSPENSION

Regarding suspension of students
From 2022, Titoko is in place instead of Faculty. Student Success management team may provide a list of international students on suspension.

It is a Associate Dean's decision to restrict a student's enrolment. Decisions regarding suspension are made by the Convenor of the Academic Committee (a central VUW Committee), on the recommendation of the relevant Associate Dean.
What we need to do:
1. Have a list for those students and create a case in Kuruwai
2. Follow up with those students to check if they are onshore or offshore, do they understand the policy, or if they need any help.
3. Inform INZ about their suspension

APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Initial email to students

Hello from the International Student Support Team,

The International Student Support Team is responsible for monitoring international students' academic progress in accordance with Immigration New Zealand and the Education (Pastoral Care of Tertiary and International Learners) Code of Practice 2021.

We are currently reviewing the academic results of all international students and offering support to those who have shown unsatisfactory academic progress in their last trimester. Unsatisfactory progress is defined as passing fewer than 50 percent of the points undertaken in the latest trimester. This may result in restrictions on the number of courses you can enroll in and may also affect the renewal of student visas for those in New Zealand.

The International Student Support Team requires you to make an Academic Monitoring appointment with us. Appointment times will be available starting **Wednesday, 24th July.** You can schedule an appointment by replying to this email or by visiting the International Reception on Level 2 of the Easterfield Building, Kelburn.

It is important that you take this opportunity to improve your performance. If you already have plans to improve your academic performance, we would be glad to hear your ideas and may be able to suggest additional support. Many students who have attended Academic Monitoring appointments in the past have found them helpful and made significant progress as a result.

If we do not hear from you by **Monday, 5th August**, we will follow up with you again.

We look forward to seeing you.

Yours sincerely,

International Student Support Team

Hi I'm…. from International Student Support Team. I'm calling to follow up on the email sent to you two weeks ago about your academic performance in trimester 1 this year.
Did you receive this email? (*If not can you read out the email we have and check it is correct over the phone*)
Under the Code of Pastoral Care for International Students, we are required to monitor and support students who are struggling academically. I would like to make an appointment for you to meet with one of our Student Advisors, who will provide you with information and support to support your study.
Can you let me know some times that you are free over the next week?

Appendix 3: Final email to students unable to be contacted.

Hello again from the International Student Support Team,

The International Student Support Team has a legal responsibility to monitor your academic progress and welfare while you hold an International Student Visa. Despite our efforts to reach you via emails and phone calls regarding our Academic Monitoring Programme, we have not received a response from you. To ensure you are actively engaged with your studies, we must take the next steps. If you have not been attending classes or completing your assessments, we will arrange a visit to your home and contact your next of kin.

If we do not hear from you by midday tomorrow ( ), we will proceed with further steps to ensure your safety and wellbeing.

Yours sincerely,
International Student Support

Appendix 4: Email to Course Coordinators to check for contact/academic progress

Dear

I am emailing you on behalf of International Student Support Team. We have a responsibility under the Code of Practice for the Pastoral Care of International Students to monitor the attendance, progress and welfare of international students. We have attempted to contact ……. to attend our academic monitoring programme with no success, and would like to find out from you if they are attending classes (if these details are recorded) and/or submitting work in your course.

Enrolled courses:

We appreciate that your time is limited, so we are only approaching academic staff about students who are restricted, or whom we are concerned about for other reasons.

Thank you very much in advance for taking the time to get back to us.

Kind regards

International Student Support

Why do we do academic monitoring?
- Not condemnatory or punitive
- To support the student to improve their academic progress or to find more suitable alternatives to university study
- To break the cycle of failure, debt, shame and depression/anxiety; it can provide the first opportunity to identify students who are not coping and need support
- Required under The Code of Practice: Section 14

Before the interview
1. Skim through Student Records to get the picture of their results, and if student is restricted.
2. Check Kuruwai and see if there is a case with Titoko team for this trimester. They may have presented to ACM before, and this will be useful information for your meeting with them.
3. Write details in appropriate sections of Academic Progress Interview Record.
4. When the student arrives at reception, please make sure the student complete the Self-evaluation form before they see an Advisor.
5. Before interview, please make sure the student sign the consent form.

Interview
The interview can involve 3 stages:

I. <u>Build rapport</u>

Introductory discussion: Introduce self and role, discuss where student is from, course they are doing, where they live, clubs, sports, interests, etc. Some of these details can be listed on the coversheet. This can be a chance to find out what supports they are already using, and how often they contact their parents.
Check contact details: Ask student to fill relevant form if incomplete; remind them to change their details in Student Records.

II. <u>Discussion of academic progress, factors affecting it, and important policy information</u>

Rationale
If needed, explain why we monitor progress and that it is nothing to be afraid of (visa requirement that students make progress; we want their time here to be happy and effective; often students who are not progressing well have other issues going on that we can help with; it is not ethical for the Uni to keep taking student's money if they are clearly not in the right place….)

History – results & reasons
Look at student's results for last 2 trimesters, briefly. Discuss what they have identified as the barriers to success – enter these in the 'issues affecting progress' column of the Academic Progress Interview Record. As the interview goes on, ask if there are other issues they can think of. Talk about how many hours they work, how their week is filled.

Future
If they have been failing consistently, check with the student if they want to continue study or if there might be something more suitable for them to do. If they think it better to leave, discuss options. Put them in touch with Polytechs, look at courses on-line; discuss how they will have conversations with their parents about changing…
If continuing study, talk about their motivation to make a change (0 – 10; now, compared with last year?)

Regulatory factors
Talk about the importance of academic progress to the renewal of their visa. Remind them to sort their visa immediately if it is expiring soon.

University policy
Explain restriction, suspension and the disengagement/disenrollment procedures. Emphasise that if any of these apply to them in the future they can come to us for support; our support for them is not conditional on them doing well, and that you need as much (or more) support to return home with dignity as you did when you first came to start your study.

III.   Discussion of strategies for change

Strategies
Talk about things they have done already to overcome the issues identified on the Academic Progress Interview Record, or things they think would help. Add in some more possibilities that you think of. Write these in the 'Strategies' column of the Record. Talk about the details of the strategies, who will do them, and when. Maximise the student's role in making changes; beware of taking on anything not strictly necessary.

Referrals
If a referral to SLSS or Counselling is decided on, offer to make a time there and then for the student, and ring for an appointment, or even better, put the student on the phone. Give the student a note of the appointment and the number to ring if they need to reschedule – **stress that they do reschedule if unable to keep it.** Fill in the SSG referral form for SLSS referrals.

Summary
Check if there are other ways we could help. Emphasise what you will do and what the student will do. Send a time to follow up. i.e in two weeks' time or a month time.

After the interview
  a. Create a case under student – ACM – Tri 2, 2024
  b. Scan all documents and file them in the Kuruwai
  c. Enter details in the Academic monitoring spreadsheet and save in Sharepoint
  d. Email the scanned referral form to SLSS, according to their instructions.
  e. When SLSS send or email back the results of the session, save the email in Kuruwai. Note in spreadsheet if they attended referred appointment.
  f. Inform ISST manager if there is a potential risk