

**Students at Risk Procedure 2022/23:**

**Supporting Students at Risk of Withdrawal or Underachievement**

**Introduction**

It is important for us all to be able to identify at an early stage when students are not engaging with their programmes, so that the cause can be understood and appropriate support can be provided. This is the purpose of the ‘Students at Risk Procedure’.

This updated version for 2022/23 summarises the Procedure and the roles played by key staff in ensuring its effective implementation. These revisions have been made in response to an internal audit completed in January 2022, which identified key areas where the procedure and mechanisms for recording, storing and reporting data can be improved. This Procedure applies to all UG programmes (Level 3, 4, 5 and 6) and Masters (Level 7) programmes.

**Section 1: Programme Team Meetings**

The most important thing that programme teams can do to ensure that students at risk of withdrawal or underachievement are identified and supported, is to:

* Meet weekly during the first 3 weeks of the first semester and share information across the team where concerns exist to ensure timely interventions are put in place for each student.
* Meet fortnightly thereafter during the first semester as a team to monitor ‘at risk’ students.
* Add students at risk as a standing agenda item at your programme team meetings.
* Bring relevant information on poor engagement/attendance, failure to submit formative or summative assignments, failed assignments, extenuating circumstances requests, etc so that useful insights into engagement and attendance can be drawn-upon by the team.
* If a student is added to the Students at Risk Monitoring Log, ensure that the Programme/Course Lead alerts the student’s Personal Tutor so they can also intervene to support them where appropriate/necessary.

**Section 2: Completion of Monitoring Logs**

A standard Monitoring Lo is available on the central MS Teams site associated with the Students at Risk Procedure. Programme/Course Leads are responsible for their completion and for uploading completed Logs to the correct folder in the central MS Teams. If they require guidance, staff in the local Admin Hub will be able to provide guidance on the correct folder to upload material, and how to upload. Guidance videos produced by the Admin Hub will also be available to all staff.

When completing Monitoring Logs it is crucial that Programme/Course Leads:

* **Use the standard Monitoring Log provided on the Teams site.** Admin Hub staff will be carrying out checks on the Teams site and in cases where non-standard Logs are identified, the Programme/Course Lead will be asked to replace it with a properly completed standard Log.
* **Do not over-write actions when updating the Monitoring Log.** It is important that there is an audit trail of information and actions logged from week-to-week so staff should instead use the next column in the Log to note new/updated information/actions/interventions.
* **Provide as much information as deemed necessary –** try to ensure that the reasons for the student(s) being added to the Log are clearly captured, along with a brief record of the discussion at the relevant programme team meeting, and the actions/interventions/support agreed, and a timescale by which they need to have been actioned. Where students have been referred to central services or other sources of support, please note this.
* **Updated the Monitoring Log weekly during the first 6 weeks of the first semester, and fortnightly thereafter -** Teams will normally capture any updates/revisions automatically.
* **Remember to note when a student is no longer at risk –** once key actions/interventions have been addressed, follow-up with the student and determine whether they remain at risk, or whether they are no longer considered at risk. If they are no longer considered to be at risk, please enter ‘NO LONGER AT RISK’ in the Monitoring Log.

**Section 3: Personal Tutors**

Where personal tutors have cause for concern and believe that a tutee may be at risk, they should:

* Flag this for the relevant Programme/Course Lead in the department.
* Refer the student to the relevant local or central sources of support e.g.:
* [Student Services](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-services/about.aspx)
* [Wellbeing Service](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-services/wellbeing/about.aspx)
* [Student Hub](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/student-hub.aspx)
* [Library Services](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/library/library-home.aspx)
* [Student Funding Services](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-services/student-funding/the-student-funding-service.aspx)
* [Learning Development Lecturers (LDL)](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/learning-development/study-support.aspx)
* Programme Liaison Officer(s) (where appropriate)
* [English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Tutors](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/learning-development/english-language-support.aspx)
* [Registry](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/overview.aspx)
* [International Office](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/international/home.aspx)
* [Careers Service](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/careers/careers.aspx)
* A subject specialist lecturer on the programme concerned

**Section 4: Personal Tutor Dashboard**

All academic staff have access to the [Personal Tutor Dashboard.](https://mymodules.stmarys.ac.uk/course/view.php?id=24486#section-14) This provides a range of information on student engagement which will be useful for academic staff who are concerned about particular students. This includes:

* Information on students’ use of online library resources.
* Moodle logins and engagement with specific learning resources.
* Attendance data for on campus sessions

The Dashboard also includes information relating to:

* Cases of academic misconduct.
* Fitness to Study.
* Outcomes of meeting with personal tutors (PTs should leave notes of meetings or record concerns about a student).

**Section 5: Attendance Monitoring**

Student non-attendance is often the first sign that a student may be ‘at risk’ of falling behind or disengaging, so please continue to monitor students’ physical attendance at on-campus sessions, and (where possible) ‘live’ Zoom/MS Teams online sessions, and refer as necessary to the webpages for information on [Attendance Monitoring](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/ctess/Learning-and-Teaching/attendance-monitoring/attendance-monitoring.aspx). Data on attendance and engagement contained in CELCAT and the PTD are likely to be crucial sources of information during the critical first 1-6 weeks of the semester; these are known to be times of highest risk for student withdrawal, particularly in the first year.

In order to ensure that attendance data contained in the Personal Tutor Dashboard (PTD) is accurate and complete, it is important to be aware that staff and students can do certain things to ensure this.

**Things to encourage you students to do:**

1. Get students to tap-in using the card readers provided in teaching spaces. Regularly remind students of the importance of tapping-in. Failure to tap in will be recorded as an absence. Monitoring students taping-in as they enter the class helps to ensure that incorrectly recorded absences are minimised.
2. Ensure that students tap-in at the right time. Students can tap in 30 min or less **before** and up to 60 min **after** the beginning of the class. If they tap in more than 15 min after the beginning they will be marked as “Late”. If they tap in more than 60 min after the beginning they will be automatically marked as “Absent”. Staff need to manually correct in CELCAT if they wish to record such students as having ‘attended’.
3. Be mindful of back-to-back sessions. If one class is immediately followed by another in the same classroom, ensure that your students tap-in again. Student failing to tap-in when a subsequent session (i.e. ‘back-to-back’) starts in the same room result in an absence being recorded.
4. Discourage students from swapping seminar groups without proper authorisation. Students swapping seminar groups (without informing their module tutors) will result in attendance not being recorded and the student(s) will be recorded as “Absent”. Where such ‘swaps’ are authorised, please inform Timetabling. This will ensure that CELCAT is expecting the correct students to be present in the right room.

**Things you can do yourself:**

1. Regularly remind your students of the importance of tapping-in to all timetabled class sessions. If students tap-in this will be recorded in CELCAT and will feed through the Personal Tutor Dashboard.
2. Inform Timetabling when a session in a specific room has been moved to another room at short notice. CELCAT expects tap-in data, but none will be recorded if the group is not in the room recorded in CELCAT. The whole group will be recorded as ‘absent’ in CELCAT and this will feed into the Personal Tutor Dashboard.
3. Inform Timetabling when a session scheduled in a specific room is moved online. CELCAT expects tap-in data, but none will be recorded and the whole group will be recorded as ‘absent’ in CELCAT and this will feed into the Personal Tutor Dashboard.
4. Where it is possible to do so, check attendance in real time using the class register in CELCAT. Note: Lecturers do not need to check for late students, unless they are going to mark as “Present” or “Late” anybody arriving more than 60 min after the start of the class.
5. Where it is possible to do so record attendance at online sessions (e.g. in Zoom, Teams), Check attendance in real time using the class register in CELCAT. Note: Lecturers do not need to check for late students, unless they are going to mark as “Present” or “Late” anybody arriving more than 60 min after the start of the class.

The University will provide programme teams with guidance and training on how to get the most out of CELCAT as a tool, and to complete registers effectively.

**Section 6: Other sources of Information**

As the semester progresses, Programme Teams will have additional information about factors which constitute additional ‘risk’ i.e. aspects of a student’s engagement or attainment that might leave them at risk of withdrawal or under-performance. This information is useful, but cannot be used as a first indicator of concern because it is normally only available relatively late in the semester/year. Programme teams will have this information, however, and can draw on it as necessary.

This includes:

* *A fail mark for a summative assessment (Module Convenors)*
* *A fail mark for a module (Module Convenors)*
* *Failure to submit a summative assessment (Module Convenors)*
* *Submission of extenuating circumstances (Course/Programme Leads)*
* *Fitness to Practice & Fitness to Study procedures*

In addition, Registry will add information to the ‘Case Management’ section of the Personal Tutor Dashboard, which can be seen as increased risk factors that Programme Directors and Personal Tutors should be aware of. This data will include:

* *Permission granted by an Exam Board to carry over a module/modules (20 credits or more).*
* *More than one application for extenuating circumstances requiring Registry approval.*
* *Students on or returning from a Leave of Absence (LOA)*
* *Academic/University misconduct panel hearings*

All of the above are likely to be symptoms of wider academic, social or environmental issues that students are experiencing and may have significant implications for student continuation and attainment. Therefore, a meeting with their Subject or Course/Programme Lead and/or Personal Tutor is essential to ensure that the academic team understand the student’s circumstances, any additional needs they may have and can advise or develop a programme of support, where appropriate. This is particularly crucial for students returning to repeat a year or following a Leave of Absence (LOA).

Whilst case management data will be useful in identifying and monitoring students potentially at risk in the longer-term, attendance and engagement data in CELCAT and the Personal Tutor Dashboard (PTD ) will carry more immediate information during the first half of the semester.

**Section 7: What kind of interventions or support might be captured by programme teams on the Monitoring Logs?**

Experience from previous years indicates that the kind of support and interventions put in place by programme teams varies considerably in order that they address the particular issue or challenge that is causing the student to be identified as ‘at risk’. These can include:

* Referral to Personal Tutors for extra support/guidance-focused meetings are rapidly convened with the student.
* A meeting with a module convenor or the Course Lead to address issues around engagement, attendance or course content.
* Referral to the relevant local or central sources of support e.g.:
* [Student Services](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-services/about.aspx)
* [Wellbeing Service](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-services/wellbeing/about.aspx)
* [Student Hub](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/library/using-the-library/student-hub.aspx)
* [Library Services](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/library/library-home.aspx)
* [Student Funding Services](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-services/student-funding/the-student-funding-service.aspx)
* [Learning Development Lecturers (LDL)](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/learning-development/study-support.aspx)
* Programme Liaison Officer(s) (where appropriate)
* [English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Tutors](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/learning-development/english-language-support.aspx)
* [Registry](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/registry/overview.aspx)
* [International Office](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/international/home.aspx)
* [Careers Service](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/student-support/careers/careers.aspx)
* It is not uncommon for students deemed to be ‘at risk’ to need support across a range of issues (e.g. finance, wellbeing, academic skills) and therefore multiple referrals to central support may be appropriate.
* Guidance relating to the [Extenuating Circumstances Policy](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/extenuating-circumstances.aspx) or [Leave of Absence Policy](https://www.stmarys.ac.uk/policies/leave-of-absence.aspx).

**Section 8: SITS**

Programme/Course Leads and other members of programme teams are able to view student profiles on e-Vision. This will provide additional information that can support academics when reviewing students at risk. The University will provide programme teams with guidance and training on how to get the most out of the e-Vision staff interface in SITS.

**Section 9: Key roles**

**Module Convenors** – Please encourage/adopt the behaviours highlighted in Section 5 above. Please also alert the Subject or Course Lead and students’ Personal Tutor(s) to cases of poor attendance and/or engagement, or other factors that might cause you to consider students to be ‘at risk’ of under-achievement or withdrawal.

**Personal Tutors** – Please meet with your tutees face-to-face or online as regularly as possible during the autumn semester, and during the first 6 weeks of the semester especially. Monitor tutees’ engagement with Moodle using the Personal Tutor Dashboard. Refer students when appropriate to central sources of student support or liaise with the Programme/Course Lead in cases where additional academic support from the team may be required. Be proactive in asking concerns to be considered at Programme Team meetings. Record your interactions with tutees in the Personal Tutor Dashboard (remember that these notes are not editable and should not be used to record details of sensitive/confidential conversations). Please be mindful of GDPR at all times.

**Programme/Course Leads** – Meet weekly with your team during the first half of the semester especially, and fortnightly thereafter, and have a standing agenda item in your team meetings relating to 'Students Requiring Support', so the interventions and progress of students ‘at risk’ is carefully monitored. Draw on the data sources outline above. Programme/Course Leads must use the standardised Students at Risk Monitoring Log to monitor students considered at risk at each team meeting. Teams using non-standard Logs will be asked to replace them with the standard version provided in the central Students at Risk Teams site.

**The University Student Retention and Engagement Project Officer (SREPO)** – will access the Students at Risk Teams site at the end of each week during the semester.

They will:

* Carry-out weekly randomised ‘spot checks’ on students noted on the Logs in each department – they will phone the students concerned and check that the interventions/support provided (and noted in the Monitoring Logs) are having a beneficial impact. Where a need for additional support is identified the SREPO will contact the Programme Lead accordingly to communicate this. Where the ‘issues’ experienced by the student have been satisfactorily mitigated/removed/addressed, the SREPO will recommend to the Programme Lead that the student can be deleted from the Monitoring Log.
* Use the information contained in the uploaded Monitoring Logs for each programme to produce a fortnightly report for each Head of Department (HoD). The report provided to HoDs by the SREPO, will include:
* Numbers of students deemed to be ‘at risk’ by programme, and by department.
* Common reasons/patterns in the reasons for the students being deemed ‘at risk’.
* A summary of key types of actions taken/interventions/support provided
* A summary of the effectiveness with which programme teams in the department are applying the principles of the Procedure.

**Heads of Department**

It is expected under this Procedure that Heads of Department will:

* Draw on the fortnightly reports provided by the Student Retention & Engagement Project Officer (SREPO) to produce a departmental ‘Students at Risk Report’ for ADC. Heads of Dept will provide these reports for ADC in time for its meetings in Oct, Nov and Dec, and a final report in June.
* Monitor the implementation and impact of the 'Students at Risk' procedure within their departments, and address issue of low compliance or inconsistent practice where these are identified.
* Include an agenda item on ‘Students at Risk Procedure’ in all Departmental Executive meetings, so that the members of the Executive/Management Group concerned can understand how the Procedure is being applied and whether any issues relating to low levels of compliance need to be addressed.

**Chair of Academic Development Committee (ADC)**

The Chair of ADC will ensure that Students at Risk is included as an agenda item at its meetings in October, November, December and finally in June.

They will also:

* Require the ADC secretary to liaise with Heads of Department to secure Students at Risk Reports for these meetings so that ADC can have effective oversight over the implementation of the Students at Risk Procedure.
* Require the ADC secretary to draw on the reports provided by HoDs, to ensure that a ‘Students at Risk’ summative report is provided from ADC to Academic Board twice a year – i.e. in time for consideration by the Board at its January and June meetings. Note: The secretary will be supported in drafting the reports for Academic Board by the Chair, Deputy Chair and the SREPO as deemed necessary.

Thank you to all colleagues for supporting the effective implementation of this Students at Risk Procedure.

**Professor Symeon Dagkas**

**Provost**