

Guidelines on Monitoring Student Progress

The guidelines provide a framework for departmental procedures and practices and ensure compliance with the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress. It is for departments to determine, in the light of their structures, procedures, resources and knowledge of their students, how the guidelines are to be operated. Departments determine exact procedures, including which members of staff are involved and at what stage, and the specific student attendance requirements, as well as the threshold(s) at which non-attendance generates specific action.

When reporting students as Unsatisfactory it is essential that departments assess whether non-attendance reflects personal problems or circumstances; these should be made clear to the Dean.

Departments should ensure that Unsatisfactory students are reported to the Dean promptly during the semester to allow time to call them in for interview. However, while the process of reporting a student as Unsatisfactory may assist in identifying problems and in helping the student address these, this is a serious matter and the risk of exclusion needs to be understood.

Departments should make clear to the Dean what action has been taken to interview and support the student and what response from the student has resulted.

Guidelines on Monitoring Student Progress

These guidelines have been prepared to clarify procedures under the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress and should be read in conjunction with that regulation.

1. Under the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress each department is required to provide for each student taking courses within it 'a document containing details for each course provided by the Department of its requirements in relation to students' attendance at classes, the submission of work, methods of assessment and examinations'.
2. Departments are free to stipulate their own requirements within the Academic Regulation. In particular, practice with regard to whether students are required to attend lectures and/or seminars differs, though most departments require attendance at seminars. Whatever system is adopted it is essential that appropriate mechanisms are in place to ensure the effective monitoring of student attendance.
3. To assist individual staff members with this task there should exist a departmental infrastructure which enables staff to identify
 1. which students are registered for each module;
 2. that assessed work is regularly completed.
4. Departments may appoint Degree Scheme Co-ordinators and/or Year Tutors to co-ordinate the above.
5. Records are maintained centrally of the modules being taken by students. These records are available to authorised users over the local area network.
6. The requirements for each module in terms of attendance and course work should be clearly identified to staff and students. Penalties for late submission of coursework should be clearly stipulated and rigorously applied. Departments should have in place robust procedures for dealing with late submission of assessed work.
7. Modules have their own co-ordinators who have a crucial role to play in the monitoring of student progress. Where several staff contribute to an individual module, the Module Co-ordinator should liaise with the staff on a regular basis to ensure that all are aware of the module requirements and to help identify potential problem students. This is particularly important where part-time staff or graduate teaching assistants contribute to teaching.
8. Where students are failing to meet the Academic Regulation they should be reported to the Study Scheme Co-ordinator and/or the Year Tutor or other designated member of staff in the department concerned who will contact other Module Co-ordinators to establish whether the problem is specific to one module or more general.
9. It is the student's responsibility to seek approval from the department and, where appropriate, the Dean, for any changes of module or degree scheme after registration at the beginning of session. Approval will only be given if the student can demonstrate good reasons to support any late changes. All changes of module, study scheme or Faculty are recorded on the Student Records System and made available to authorised users over the network.

10. In small classes, it is relatively easy for staff to identify absentees or unsubmitted work. Where there are large classes however it may not be feasible to take a roll call of those attending every class. Some departments ask students to sign an attendance register in lectures which is then followed up by checking against computer lists of students registered for the course. Note however that attendance registers are open to abuse as for example when students sign in for absent friends. A system of spot checks may be introduced if it becomes obvious that numbers attending are significantly below what they should be.
11. Students who are absent from compulsory classes or who fail to hand in required assessed work should be followed *up at an early stage* by the Module Co-ordinator, Scheme Co-ordinator or Year Tutor as appropriate. An interview should normally be held identifying the shortcomings and a formal report should be made to the Head of Department/Director of Teaching or equivalent. Specific attention should be drawn to the implications of the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress.
12. Students who have been interviewed should be closely monitored. Where there is no improvement in attendance and submission of work the student should be asked to attend an interview with the Head of Department/Director of Learning and Teaching or equivalent normally within 2-3 weeks of the first interview. The purpose of this interview is to enable the Department to decide whether to report the student formally to the Dean.
13. The Head of Department/Director of Teaching or equivalent may decide to report the student immediately to the Dean or to allow the student a further opportunity to redeem himself or herself. In the former case a report form should be completed. Copies are available from the Deans' Office and through the Web. In the latter case, it is essential that the student's progress over a limited period (2-3 weeks at most) should be closely monitored by the academic staff to ensure that proper follow-up takes place and that a written record is kept on file.
14. Where Semester One Examination Boards have identified a pattern of non-submission of work, students may be reported to the Dean as Unsatisfactory. Students should not be reported for non-attendance at examinations alone, nor in cases where Special Circumstances have been recorded at the Examination Board.
15. If it is decided to report a student to the Dean, either immediately or after an opportunity for improvement, the Deans' Office will formally call the student in at a specified time. The letter should mention
 1. the powers of the Dean as laid down in the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress.
 2. that the interview must take priority over any other commitment which the student may have.
 3. that if the student fails to attend at the specified time the Dean may act immediately within the terms of the Academic Regulation.

A copy of the letter should be sent to all the departments in which the student is studying.

16. Where a student is taking modules in more than one department, the Deans' Office will inform the other departments that the student has been called for interview by the Dean and ask for a report on his or her academic progress in those departments to assist the Dean. The reporting department will liaise with any other department involved. Where students are taking modules

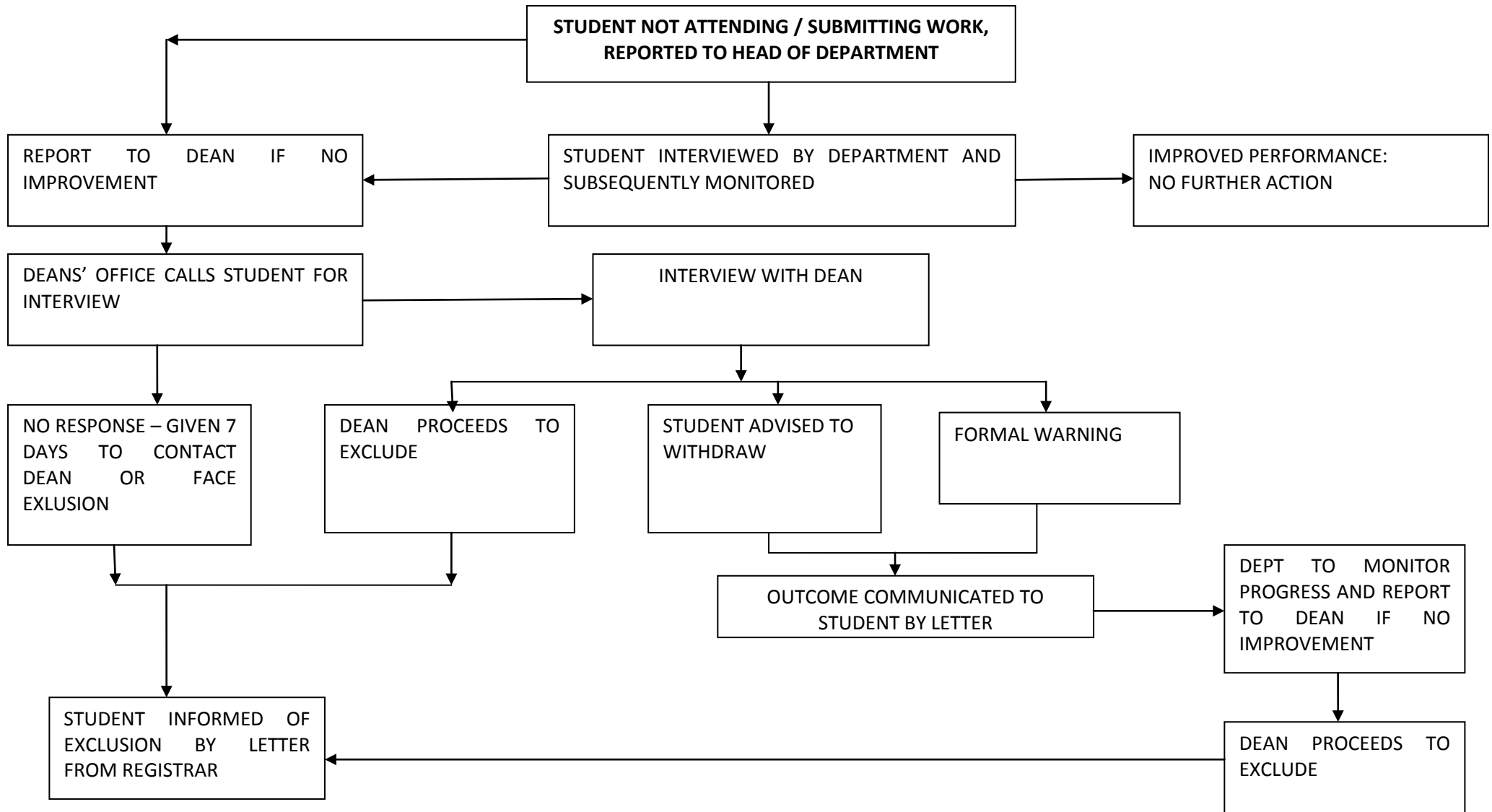
outside their Faculty, the Dean to whom s/he should be reported is the Dean of the Faculty to which their department belongs.

17. Following the interview with the student the Dean will normally decide:
 1. To issue a formal warning that unless the student improves he or she will be required to withdraw from University for a period or permanently.
 2. To require the student to withdraw from University for a period or permanently.
18. The decision of the Dean will be formally notified to the student by the Deans' Office with copies sent to all departments concerned. Departments should ensure that all their staff teaching the student are aware of the decision.
19. If the Dean's decision is to issue a formal warning, the student's academic progress must be closely monitored by the departments over a short period. Normally, attendance at classes over a three week period and submission of any outstanding written work over a similar period will be specified. The Dean may follow this up with a request to all departments concerned for a formal report on the student's academic progress during this period.
20. As a result of these reports the Dean may act without a further interview
 1. to exclude the student from University
 2. to allow the student to continue with his or her course.
21. Where a student is repeating the year because they have failed the previous year for purely academic reasons, having previously been interviewed and warned, and is reported as Unsatisfactory, the Dean will normally exclude the student without further interview. The Dean will write to students in this category at the beginning of October, warning them that they will be closely monitored by their department during Semester One.
22. The last date on which a Dean can decide either to exclude a student from University or to give approval to a Department not to sign a student up for any examination is the first day of Term 3.
23. Where a student is excluded from University for a period the Dean should normally consult with the relevant departments over the means by which the student may be allowed to return (e.g. departmental tests, completion of written work, etc).
24. Where a student is identified as 'Unsatisfactory' by a department after the end of the Term 2 a slightly different procedure applies, as the deadline for signing up for examinations has passed (see 3.3. of the Academic Regulation). Here, the Dean will inform the student that any departmental reports will be taken into account by the relevant Faculty Examining Board when it considers his or her examination results. The Board may deny the student an opportunity to resit any failed modules and exclude the student permanently or temporarily.
25. In all cases, if the Dean decides to act in accordance with the Academic Regulation on Academic Progress, the Dean's decision must be notified to the student and the departments involved. If a student is excluded from University, it is essential that his or her financial sponsors are informed. If a student is allowed to remain in University, he or she should be warned that any further adverse reports on academic progress, even in a subsequent year, may result in the

Dean deciding to act forthwith and without further interview within the terms of the Academic Regulation.

26. A student does have the right of appeal against the Dean's decision to exclude him or her from University. Any such appeal must be made to the Academic Secretary within 14 days of the date of the letter notifying the student of the Dean's decision. In such cases, an appeal will only be considered if the student can provide good reasons why the grounds for appeal had not previously been made known to the relevant department or Dean and must be based on information relating to special circumstances not already known to the University. Appeals are considered by the Academic Progress Committee chaired by the relevant Pro-Vice-Chancellor.

DEANS' OFFICE – UNSATISFACTORY STUDENTS



n.b. Students reported after the end of Term 2 will not be called for interview, but will be warned that the Faculty Exam Board will be considering their marks and that they may be excluded.