

Supporting Students with Academic Risks

Whether or not you are in a formal advising role, there are many ways in which you can help make a positive turn for students struggling with studies by early identification and intervention as well as drawing support from other offices/units. This leaflet aims at providing colleagues a handy and easy-to-follow Guide for supporting students with academic risks.

I. Help Spot them: A 15-item Checklist

Academic

- ✚ Significant drop in GPA (e.g. from 3.0 to lower than 2.0)
- ✚ Missed examination without follow-up from student
- ✚ Failed grade in more than one courses
- ✚ Repeated absence from classes/tutorials
- ✚ Repeated failure to submit assignments on time or of reasonable standard
- ✚ Repeated no show at appointments to meet
- ✚ Showed inability to comprehend subject content
- ✚ Lack of motivation to study

Personal/Social/Family

- ✚ Withdrawal from friends and/or family
- ✚ Recent traumatic experiences
- ✚ Fatigue/ lack of energy
- ✚ Mood swing and crying
- ✚ Loss or gain in weight within short time
- ✚ Sickness/poor health
- ✚ Heavy involvement in work/other activities

II. Advising Struggling Students: Use the S O A P Approach

Subjective

Objective

Assess

Plan

Subjective:

Listen to student's story

- ❖ Create a friendly and positive atmosphere
- ❖ Invite student to talk while you listen

Objective:

Note the incidents and the facts

- ❖ Take note of student academic background and records in SIS and gather facts

Assess:

Diagnose causes

- ❖ Lack of academic skills (e.g. math, language, computing)
- ❖ Lack of interest/ motivation (e.g. student does not put in effort, loss in educational/career direction)
- ❖ Lack of effective learning strategies (e.g. time management, prioritizing, revision skills)
- ❖ Other conditions that interfered with study (e.g. emotional issues, family pressure, social relationships, work, financial difficulties, health and behavior problems)

Plan:

Plan actions / referrals

- ❖ Revise study plan/ study habits
- ❖ Improve academic skills (e.g. tutoring, study group)
- ❖ Refer to AAO/ Faculty office for University Regulations/curriculum requirements/ programme transfer option

- ❖ Refer to CEDARS for other personal and non-academic issues:
 - CoPE – psychological counseling and study skills
 - Careers & Placement – career counseling and employment
 - Campus Life – financial assistance
- ❖ Refer to University Health Service for health concerns

III. How to make Referrals

Before referral

- ◆ *Listen* closely to the student's problem before making the referral.
- ◆ Assure student of confidentiality.
- ◆ Explain *why* you're referring the student rather than trying to help the student yourself.
- ◆ Provide a description of the resource and its purpose.

When making the referral

- ◆ Refer student to *a person if possible*
- ◆ Deal with student's worries about the referral.
- ◆ If needed, help student make an appointment and walk them to the referred person's office.
- ◆ Compliment student for making the effort to seek support and striving for self-improvement.
- ◆ Follow up with the referred student.

Useful Numbers

Academic Advising Office	3917 0128
Academic Services Office	2859 2433
CEDARS Campus Life	2859 2305
CEDARS Careers & Placement	3917 2317
CEDARS Counselling & Personal Enrichment (CoPE)	3917 8388
Centre for Applied English Studies	3917 2004
Common Core Curriculum	2219 4957
Finance and Enterprises Office	2859 2337
International Affairs Office	2219 4549