Onwards from Learning Analytics (OfLA). (2020). O9 – Evaluation of the second cycle of studies: Mode of communication pilot study Appendix

Appendix 1: Dashboard notes

Tutors can create notes about an individual student with the Dashboard. This can be seen by both the student and the tutor, and both can add comments to the note.

Description - The content of the communication can be entered here. Wherever possible the content of the notes should be agreed with the student.

Type of communication - this is a drop-down list for how you communicated with the student. The options available to tutors here are:
• Attempted phone call/Voicemail
• Email
• Face to face
• Letter
• Missed appointment
• Phone Call
• Online Meeting
• N/A

Date - This will default to the current but tutors can change the date to reflect when students were communicated with.

Action - Actions that the tutor would like the student to take can be completed here.

Meeting length - This is not mandatory but helps with analysis if completed.

Target Date - If tutors wish to track progress of this note they can set a target date. We would advise also setting a reminder as the target date only changes the status of the Note but does not send an email.

Reminder - Tutors can set a reminder to send them an email about the note.

Referral - Referrals can be made through the Dashboard for:
• Student Support Services
• Employability
• Library
• Social Sciences
• Confetti

Tutors can view in the student's Notes page where a referral was sent to but not the content of the submission. Referrals are confidential and to make a

referral tutors need the consent of the student and to tick the box confirming this.

Appendix 2: Quartile calculation

Prior to this pilot, the subsequent progression of students by engagement quartile was calculated using 2018/19 data for first year undergraduate students within this school in order to test whether dividing this data in this way would allow us to identify those students that were least likely to progress to the next year.

This was done because a weighted average calculation was used in order to divide the students into four quartiles. A weighted average assumes a linear relationship between the engagement ratings (that Partial is twice the value of Low, and Good is three times the value of Low), which isn't the case, so checking that there is a relationship between weighted average and progression allowed us to be confident that we could effectively use the lower quartile as a trigger to contact students.

Weighted average calculation
The weighted average was calculated as follows:

Engagement rating	Weighting for average	Count of days in a particular engagement category	Code for formula
Very Low	0	Days spent with Very Low engagement	a
Low	1	Days spent with Low engagement	b
Partial	2	Days spent with Partial engagement	c
Good	3	Days spent with Good engagement	d
High	4	Days spent with High engagement	e

Total number of days with engagement data = sum of number of days spent in each engagement category = **a** + **b** + **c** + **d** + **e**

Weighted average = $\frac{((0 \times a) + (1 \times b) + (2 \times c) + (3 \times d) + (4 \times c))}{(a + b + c + d + e)}$

For example a student with 10 days of partial engagement and 4 days of good engagement in a fortnight would have a weighted average as follows:

Weighted average = ((2 x 10) + (3 x 4))/(10 + 4) = 32/20 = 1.6

(ignoring the zeros for the other days, strictly the full calculation is as follows:

Weighted average = ((0 x 0) + (1 x 0) + (2 x 10) + (3 x 4) + (4 x 0))/(0 + 0 + 10 + 4 + 0) = (0 + 0 + 20 + 12 + 0)/20 = 32/20 = 1.6

As Very Low is coded as 0 and High is coded as 4, the minimum weighted average value possible is 0 (all days Very Low) and maximum weighted average value possible is 4 (all days High).

Progression of students by engagement quartile using 2018/19 data for first year undergraduate students within this school
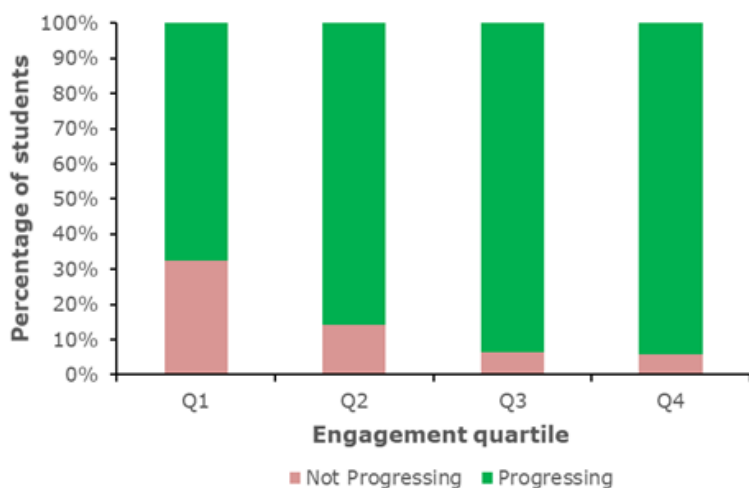
For 2018/19 the quartile calculations based on weighted average were as follows:

Quartile	Lower weighted average limit	Upper weighted average limit	Percentage of student in quartile
Q1 (lower quartile)	0	2.06	23.5%
Q2	2.06	2.39	25.3%
Q3	2.39	2.70	24.9%
Q4 (upper quartile)	2.70	3.74*	26.3%

*Could have been set to 4 but in reality no one had a weighted average that high

Note that because of the way the weighted averages were spread (multiple students with the same weighted average) it wasn't possible to get exact 25% quartiles)
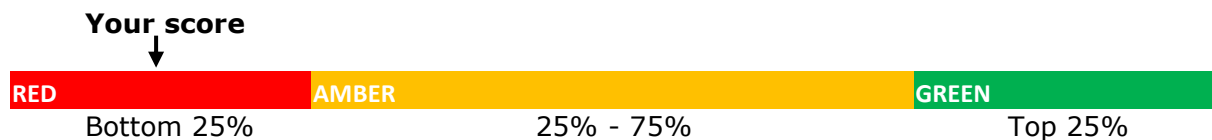
Appendix 3: Email/letter communication content

Administrator to send to lowest quartile first year students

Dear name,

I am contacting you regarding your **recent engagement** during your studies **for this term**.

Your overall engagement score is within the lowest 25% of the average engagement for your year

Your score

RED	AMBER	GREEN
Bottom 25%	25% - 75%	Top 25%

[Name of school] statistics show a strong link between engagement and progression. Data has shown that **1 in 3 students** who are in the lowest 25% of average engagement who are in your situation for their year **do not pass enough modules to progress** onto the second year of their studies.

You will shortly be contacted by your Academic Mentor to arrange your meeting, however if you wish to meet your mentor urgently then please contact them directly.

In this meeting you and your Academic Mentor   will discuss any factors you feel are preventing you from engaging with your studies and your risk of non-progression should your engagement not improve. This meeting will be recorded in Dashboard.

If there are any issues preventing you from attending this meeting or if you would prefer to meet someone from student support, please contact the School's Student Support Adviser, [Name of Adviser] via email studentsupportadvisers@ntu.ac.uk

Further details in respect of support available to you can be found on the Student Support Services webpage: http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/index.html.
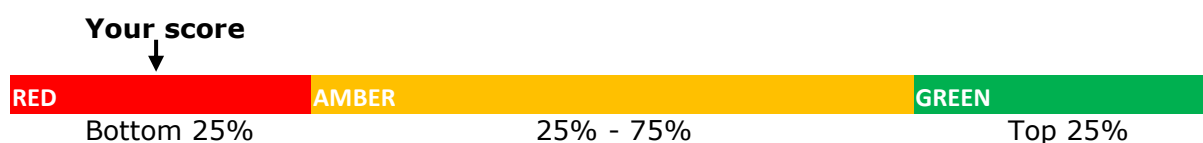
Regards,

[Course Leader name]
Course Leader

Administrator to send to lowest quartile second year students

Dear name,

I am contacting you regarding your **recent engagement** during your studies **for this term**.

Your overall engagement score is within the lowest 25% of the average engagement for your year

Your score

RED	AMBER		GREEN
Bottom 25%	25% - 75%		Top 25%

[Name of school] statistics show a strong correlation between engagement and your second year grades. Data has shown that only **30% of students** who are in the lowest 25% of average engagement for their year achieve an overall **2:1 or 1st class result** at the end of the second year of their studies. Your second year grade profile counts towards your final degree classification and can make a difference to your final degree result.

You will shortly be contacted by your Academic Mentor to arrange a meeting, however if you wish to meet your mentor urgently then please contact them directly.

In this meeting you and your Academic Mentor will discuss your engagement and any factors you feel are preventing you from fully engaging with your studies. This meeting will be recorded in Dashboard.

If there are any issues preventing you from attending this meeting or if you would like to meet someone from student support, please contact the School's Student Support Adviser, [Adviser name] via email studentsupportadvisers@ntu.ac.uk

Further details in respect of support available to you can be found on the Student Support Services webpage: http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/index.html.
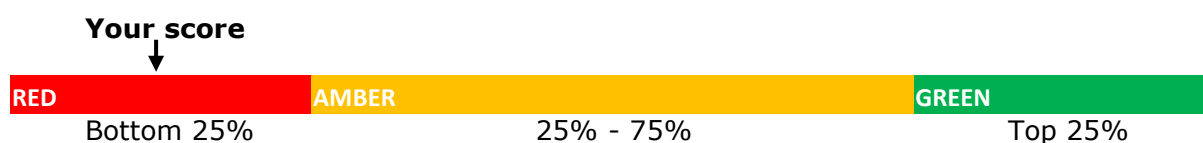
Regards,

[Course Leader name]
Course Leader

Administrator to send to lowest quartile final year students

Dear name,

I am contacting you regarding your **recent engagement** during your studies **for this term**.

Your overall engagement score is within the lowest 25% of the average engagement for your year

Your score

RED	AMBER	GREEN
Bottom 25%	25% - 75%	Top 25%

Business School statistics show a strong link between engagement and your final grade. Data has shown that **just over 50%** of students who are in the lowest 25% of average engagement for their year achieve a **2:1 or 1st class result** in their final year, compared to nearly 90% of students in the highest 25%.

As a final year student we want to ensure you are giving yourself the best opportunity to achieve your full potential in your last year of studies. We are getting in touch, to see if there is anything we can do to support you to improve your overall level of engagement. Therefore, if there are any issues preventing you from engaging fully with your studies this year, please contact your Course Leader or a member of your Course team.

If you would like to meet someone from student support, please contact the School's Student Support Adviser, [Adviser name] via email studentsupportadvisers@ntu.ac.uk. Further details in respect of support available to you can be found on the Student Support Services webpage: http://www.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/index.html.

Regards,

[Course Leader name]
Course leader

Appendix 4: Appendix: Example recording for evaluation purposes

These suggestions were put forward at a meeting with the OfLA researchers and the two senior staff members within the school involved in this pilot about how the reporting process could be improved in future studies.

- A spreadsheet is created containing essential information needed for the evaluation and drop-down boxes used wherever possible to minimise time for completion and to ensure consistency of reporting. The spreadsheet should ask for information about:

  o Which students were contacted as part of the mid-term review process

  o Whether there was subsequent contact with the student (Yes/No) to ensure accurate recording where there was no contact

  o If there was contact:

    ▪ Did the mentor contact the student?

    ▪ Did the student contact the mentor?

    ▪ Was this subsequent contact by email, phone, face-to-face, or other means of contact (please state)

  o The spreadsheet should also include space for more detailed notes where appropriate to allow the recording of more complex cases.

- Staff are given clear guidance about how to complete the spreadsheet, by what date, and who to return it to, and that this information is also included as a tab in the spreadsheet itself.

To cite this appendix:
Onwards from Learning Analytics (OfLA). (2020). *O9 – Evaluation of the second cycle of studies: Mode of communication pilot study Appendix.* Retrieved from https://oflaproject.eu/outputs/output-9-evaluation-of-second-cycle/.

For further information, please contact the following people:

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- Peter Crowson, Learning Analytics and Research Coordinator (Access and Participation), The Centre for Student and Community Engagement (CenSCE), Nottingham Trent University, peter.crowson@ntu.ac.uk
- Sarah Lawther, Learning Analytics and Research Coordinator (Access and Participation), The Centre for Student and Community Engagement (CenSCE), Nottingham Trent University, sarah.lawther@ntu.ac.uk