

Onwards from Learning Analytics (OfLA). (2020). 09 – Evaluation of the second cycle of studies: Prompts, communications and action – NTU student research Appendix.

Appendix 1: Criteria for alerts

The criteria for alerts are as follows:

- The student has had no measured engagement for the defined number of consecutive days (10 or 14) during term time
- The student is a full-time, undergraduate student
- The student is fully, temporarily or conditionally enrolled
- The student is studying on a course that is coded as taking place at one of our campuses (City, Clifton, Brackenhurst or Confetti)
- The student is not studying a course run collaboratively with another institution
- The student is not on a third year year-long placement

Appendix 2: Direct to student alert content email

Dear {student first name}

This is an automatic support email generated by the NTU Student Dashboard. It has been sent because it appears that you have not engaged with activities such as logging in to NOW for nearly two weeks.

There may be many reasons why you have not engaged, but we'd like to reach out to you and see if there's anything we can do to help. An extended period not engaging with course activities could be a sign that you are working on assignments, on a short placement, etc., but it could also be a sign that you might benefit from some help right now.

Most important

We strongly suggest that you:

1. Pause and ask yourself, could you benefit from a bit of extra support right now?
2. If so, please make contact with someone at NTU, the following people may be able to help:

- Your personal tutor (log in to your Dashboard page {link to student page})
- Student Support Services (access via the Help button on the Dashboard {link to student page})
- Academic librarians (access via the Help button on the Dashboard {link to student page})

Please note that your personal tutor has been sent a copy of this email. If you believe this alert has been sent in error, or that you have a valid reason for not attending, then please contact your tutor to advise, and they will be able to create an exemption to prevent further alerts being sent to you. More information about alerts can be found on the Dashboard FAQ page.

We know that being a student can be complex and challenging at times. NTU has a wide range of support services and people here to help you succeed.

Best wishes

NTU Student Dashboard Team

Appendix 3: Interview question areas

Thank you for agreeing to take part in this research – it will be great to hear your views.

Thank you for taking part in this phone interview and signing and sending back the consent form.

As a reminder, you don't have to any questions that you would prefer not to answer and you can ask to stop the interview at any time.

If there is anything that isn't clear- or doesn't make sense – just let me know.

Introduction to the research

The research aims to explore how to improve support to students and so I would be really interested in hearing your experience of what communications (if any) you have received about your engagement and/or attendance, what support you have been offered, and your views about how support to students can be improved.

Introduction question -

The University often contacts students or sends reminders where there are concerns about low engagement with the course.

Can you tell me if you have had any of these communications -

Prompt... it may have been...

- A lecturer/tutor spoke to me in class
- I received an email alert from the Student Dashboard
- My personal tutor contacted me
- Another member of staff in my school contacted me
- Other -

Can you tell me what and when (if you remember)

Did you receive more than one communication (either from your tutor/email from tutor/direct from DB/anyone else in your School/other)

If yes, can you tell me when and who from? (and face-to-face/email/letter home/letter to term time or home address?)

Ask about high engagement only if appropriate

I would like to ask you more about that so we can find out how to improve this process.

PROMPT (alert)

Were you aware that you might be contacted about your engagement before you received this?

How did you feel about being contacted in this way?

Did receiving that contact change how you feel about your studies?

Did you change what you do/your study behaviour at all as a result of being contacted?

If yes, can you tell me a bit more about this? (what you did/why) Did this improve your engagement? Anything else (your grades? Wellbeing?)

If no, can you tell us a bit more about why not? (is there anything that would?

(Was the low engagement because they needed to change behaviour or other factors outside their control?)

Is there anything else you would like to say about why got alert?

Or what else might have helped you at that time?

If you did change your study behaviour did you receive a positive communication from your tutor about this?

If no, would you have liked to have a received a positive alert for changing your behaviour?

Would you prefer this from your tutor or from a Dashboard generated communication?

COMMUNICATION

Thinking about the communication itself (either from tutor/direct from Db etc) can you tell me what you think about the content and tone of the communication?

What (if anything) did you like about it?

Can you suggest any ways we can improve this?

What was more effective in encouraging you/helping you – email/phone call/seeing your tutor/letter to term time or home address?

If more than one communication/escalation - prompt about tone/content of these.

What do you think about when the communication was sent? Was it useful? Reasonable timescale?
(10 days for first years, and 2 weeks for second and final years) Do you think this should be changed?

Again - if escalation - how was the timing?

Can you suggest ways this could be improved?

Which do you think would be more likely to change your behaviour:

- An anonymous alert from the Dashboard or
- A more personal one from your tutor?
- Or both?

(and if reason for low engagement is something other than behaviour /ie external factors can ask about what they would prefer)

SUPPORT/ACTION

Can you tell me about what support you were offered as a result of the communication?

Did you have to seek it/were you contacted?

What worked well?

What could be improved here?

If escalation - how did you find support offered at each stage?

Did you face any challenges with accessing support you needed /were offered?

If yes, is there anything that the university can do to help you overcome these challenges/barriers?

If you met with your tutor...can you tell me what happened in the meeting?

Did they use DB notes with you? How was this? Useful?

Did you do any goal setting/coaching? How was this? Useful? Change behaviour?

Anything that can be improved here?

How and why students ask for help

Before you had this communication, did you try to seek help?

(if not/why not - did alert help?)

What works well/could be improved here?

Overall university and wrapping up

Do you think the university should continue to send these messages to students about their engagement? (why?/any unintended negative consequences?)

Is there anything else that you can say about what you liked about this?
Or about how it can be improved?

We will continue to gain feedback from students on the Dashboard. Would you be happy to be contacted again to be invited to take part in further Dashboard research?

Is there anything else that you would like to say before we finish the interview?

Appendix 4: Debrief sheet following interview

OfLA Research Debrief Sheet

Thank you very much for taking part in this project.

We hope that the findings will help to better understand the student experience, and how universities can support students.

This document is a reminder that if you change your mind about taking part and wish to withdraw from the study you are free to do so (up until 1st June 2020). Your acceptance of the thank you voucher does not affect this - you are still free to withdraw. If you would like to do so, please contact me at [researcher contact email address].

If you have been affected by any of the issues raised by taking part in this research and would like any further information or would like to discuss this with anyone, you may wish to visit the following webpages and sources of support:

- Student Services https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/
- Mental Health Support Team
https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/health_wellbeing/mental_health/index.html
- International Student Support
https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/international_students/
- Corona advice for current students <https://www.ntu.ac.uk/coronavirus/advice-for-current-students-at-ntu>
- Health and Wellbeing
https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/health_wellbeing/index.html
- Financial support
http://www4.ntu.ac.uk/student_services/fees_finance/index.html
- The Virtual Global Lounge – a welcoming community offering activities, tips and chats <https://www.ntu.ac.uk/about-us/news/news-articles/2020/03/virtual-global-lounge>

Thank you again for taking part, and please do contact me at [researcher contact email address] if you have any further questions, comments or thoughts about the project.

Appendix 5: Type of tutor by student

The following summary is taken from information given to the researcher in the interview

Pseudonym	Type of tutor
Arya	Invited for 1-1 tutorial due to low attendance
Katie	1-1 tutorials
Leanna	1-1 tutorials
Tom	1-1 tutorials
Emma	1-1 tutorials (10 minutes, 2-3 times a year)
Adam	1-1 tutorials
Conor	Invited to contact tutor for 1-1 tutorial
Corrina	Group tutorials
Aazim	Only saw personal tutor on first day (due to staff absence)
Hannah	Group tutorials
Arthur	1-1 tutorials
Luke	1-1 tutorials
Jacob	No 1-1 tutorials
Zoe	Group tutorials

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