

gsu

Check-in⁺

s e r v i c e

student-to-student support and information

Term 3 Overall Summary Report 24/25

reliable



scan to learn more

friendly

helpful

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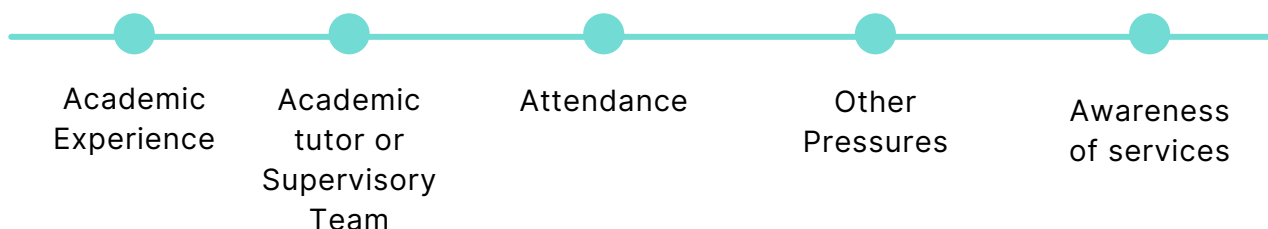
greenwich
students'
union

The Check-in Service

What is the Check-in Service?

The Check-in Service is run by Greenwich Students' Union, previously referred to as The Retention Project. It is a peer-to-peer wellbeing service, which aims to contact students who may be vulnerable to challenges throughout their studies, which could lead to withdrawal. We aim to provide them with early intervention support to help them to stay at Greenwich and thrive.

Our student-staff reach out, primarily through phone calls at the moment, and lead students through a structured conversation. We make it clear we're calling from the SU, that we hold their confidentiality unless they consent for us to share information, or they disclose anything that breaches our confidentiality or safeguarding policies, and that students can be open with us about issues they are facing. We ask questions about the following things:



If at any stage during the call we identify an additional support need we'll ask the student for permission to refer their case to the relevant service

How do we decide who to contact?

We prioritise reaching out to students who are most at risk of being withdrawn due to nonattendance and students at risk of withdrawing or interrupting themselves. This term we contacted:

- New April Starters
- Students not in attendance
- PGT students
- Students on an interruption
- All other students
- Iranian students
- Indian and Pakistani students (via email)
- Select Nursing and Paramedic students on placement (via WhatsApp)

This term, the Check-in Service reached over 1,255 students, supporting 69 with further interventions and helping retain over £85,000 in tuition income. 98% of students contacted remained on their programme. We saw continued high course satisfaction, excellent experiences with personal/academic tutors, and continuing challenges with financial stress, timetabling and placements.

WhatsApp Outreach pilot

This term we piloted our WhatsApp outreach programme. We chose to contact students who are on placement (Nursing and Paramedic students), as we know from various colleagues that these students often feel disconnected from the university. Their schedules also mean that they may not be able to answer an unplanned phone call. For more information on the WhatsApp pilot and the leanings from this, please see the WhatsApp Outreach Pilot report which can be found here: <https://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/gsuhub/wrproject/>

Executive Summary

KPI overview



1,255

Check-ins completed



11,252

Calls Made



69

Students had a follow up with further support

Our Impact



98%

of students continued on their programme



96%

of students said they found the call useful

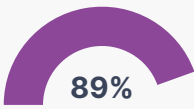


81%

of students who received follow up support continued to the end of the academic year

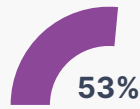
What are students saying?

Course Satisfaction



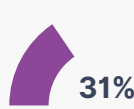
Felt positive about their programme

Personal Tuition



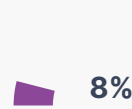
Have met their personal tutor

Pressures



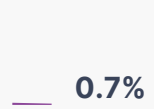
Of students reported difficulties outside of university

Loneliness



89 students feel lonely at least once a month

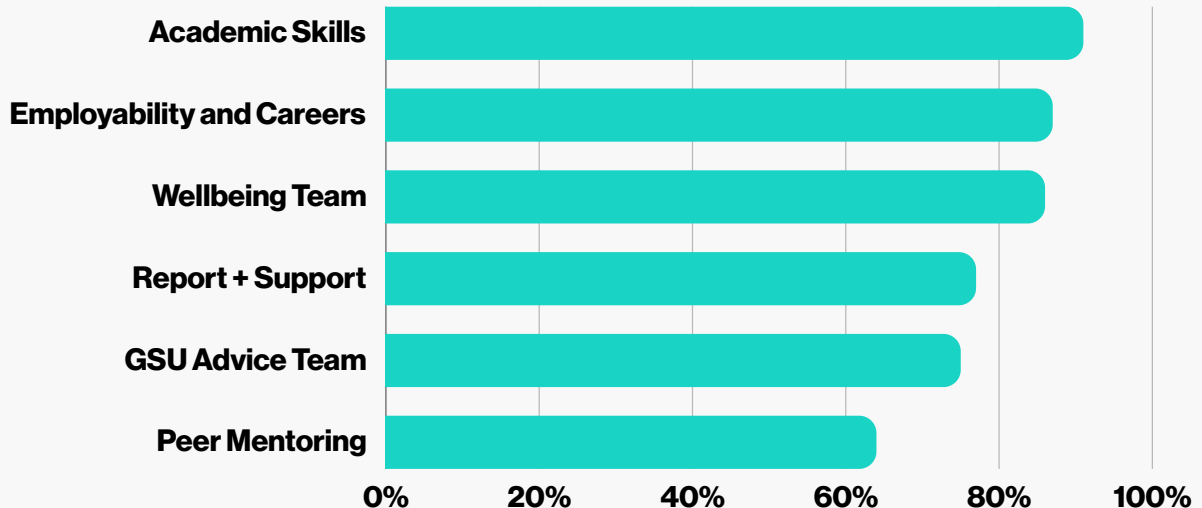
Considering Withdrawing



8 students were considering withdrawing or interrupting

Support Service Awareness

Awareness of Services



Term 3 Overview

This report gives a summary of the key findings, themes and recommendations from the Check-in Service in term 3 of 2024/25.

Who we reached out to this term

- New April Starters
- Students not in attendance
- PGT students
- Students on an interruption
- All other students
- Iranian students
- Indian and Pakistani students (via email)
- Select Nursing and Paramedic students on placement (via WhatsApp)

These groups are therefore over-represented in the findings below.

Emails to Indian and Pakistani students

Over 9/05 & 10/05 this year, we sent an outreach email to almost 8000 students from India and Pakistan to ensure that they were aware of the support available to them as the conflict between the two countries increased. We received 17 direct email responses to this communication;

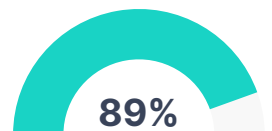
- 3 thank you emails
- 4 asking for support for academic issues (e.g. results, extenuating circumstances etc.)
- 2 visa issues
- 8 finances and fee payment issues

Analysis of General Check In Calls

Course Satisfaction

89% of students felt positively towards their course and only 1% negatively, with the remaining 10% offering a neutral response.

80% of students cited 'quality of teaching' as a positive aspect of their course, and this was the most frequently given response. The area that drew the most negative response, which is normally timetabling, was this time placements. These feelings of negativity came primarily from FES and Business students, and stemmed from either difficulty finding placements, or feeling that their course should offer more practical experience and links to employers. Overseas students also ranked greater course satisfaction (91%) than their home counterparts (78%).



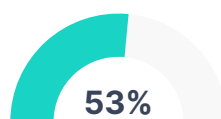
Felt positive about their programme

"The university's services are very good, and the library services are top-notch."

PGT FEHHS Student

Personal and Academic Tutoring

53% of all students know and have met their personal tutor and 35% know, but have not met them. This is lower than previous years, and may be due to the launch of the new framework, and how students understand the delegated responsibilities of the Academic tutors and Faculty Student Advisors.



Have met their personal tutor

We also ask those who had met their personal tutors how the experience had been for them.

93% said that meeting their personal tutor had been an overall good experience.

"My tutor helped me with issues related to my disability, and I felt very supported."

Second year FLAS student

Co-Curricular Experience

Loneliness

89 students we spoke to reported feeling lonely in Term 3 equating to 8% of respondents, 2% more than this time last year.

Of these students, the majority (62%) reported feeling lonely sometimes, 17% said rarely and 16% said often. 43% attributed their loneliness to difficulty making friends, and 30% cited homesickness, struggling with the move and/or being away from home.

Cost of Living Concerns

9% of students are concerned about supporting themselves financially or paying their fees. Of those students concerned about their finances and fees, 35% identified financial pressures affecting their studies, such as cost of living or work commitments.

Linking students with support

We aim to link students with the right support at the right time. We believe if we support students with the underlying issues they are facing they will be more likely to continue on their course of study.

This is why we prioritise making contact with students who are likely to be withdrawn because of poor attendance or who we know are more likely to withdraw because of their personal circumstances.



69

Students had a follow up with further support

Referrals to other services

16 students were sent personalised follow up support based on their specific circumstance. Some of this support includes direct referrals to other services, as well as more complex signposting and ensuring students have the information about support that they need. Of the students who had indicated that they were considering withdrawing or interrupting, 100% continued with their studies.



16

Students were sent personalised follow up support



81%

of students who received follow up support continued with their studies into Term 3



In addition to those students who were directly referred for support, 56 students told us about financial concerns, social support, and course issues. We sent these students additional information in support packs. 46 students received a finance support pack, 13 students received a social support pack and 5 received a course support pack.

Wellbeing Service

45 students we spoke to had used the Wellbeing services. Many students commented on how helpful, supportive and responsive the team had been when they used the service. A particular comment was made about how important the support was during one student's transition to parenthood, as an international student. Some students did suggest more follow ups after support, additional support for more complex mental health conditions and more staffing so students can access appointments quicker.

Of students who had heard of the Wellbeing Service but had not used it, the vast majority said they had not used the service because they had not needed to. Some students told us that they already had support in place, and one student mentioned that they had felt uneasy about going to the Wellbeing team, but did not elaborate on why.

Final Year Students

874 students that we spoke to were in their final year of their studies. 67% were feeling overall positive about life after graduation, 6% felt overall negative and 27% felt neutral. 499 students mentioned being worried about employment after they graduate, and 88 spoke about being worried about their finances.

Programme Reps

54% of students knew who their programme reps were. Of those who knew who they were, 87% rated them a 4 or 5/5 for supporting students on their course. Students commented that reps were approachable and supportive, and were good at engaging the cohort and offering useful information.

Follow Up Calls

32 students were called following a previous escalation, to check on the progress of their case and to see if any further support was needed. 13 of those calls were completed and of these students 11 were fully or partially satisfied with how their situation had been dealt with. 2 students were re-escalated to try and find a further solution to their issue.

Since introducing the follow up text to direct the students to the support emails, there were no students who reported that they did not remember being contacted for follow up support, which is a huge improvement and shows that this slight adjustment has had a positive impact. It also seems to have increased the satisfaction rates of the escalated students.

Student Follow Up Case Study

A student we spoke to was struggling due to their child's health, and this was stopping them from attending their classes. They were considering interrupting their studies, but were also concerned about the impact this may have on their financial situation. The student received an escalation phone call and email, and was referred and signposted to RSOs and Student Finance. When we followed up to see how the situation had progressed, the student said that they were now being supported by multiple teams and felt very grateful for the support that has been provided. The situation was much improved.

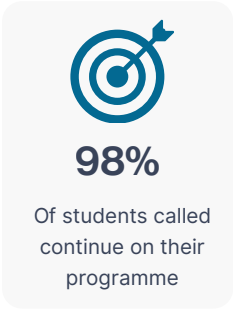
Absences

102 students who completed the survey were called due to non-engagement across the faculties. This number is always lower in Term 3 as less students are having their engagement recorded during this term.

Continuation Rate

98% of all students called continued on their programme.

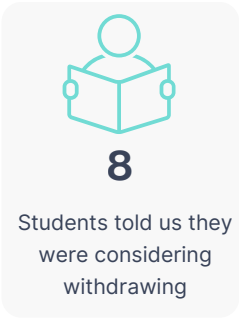
This was fairly consistent across faculties.



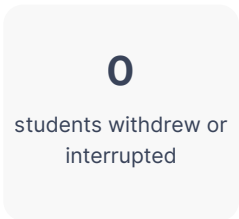
Faculty	Continuation %
Faculty of Education, Health and Human Science	98%
Greenwich Business School	99%
Faculty of Engineering and Science	98%
Faculty of Liberal Arts and Science	99%

Those considering withdrawing

8 students told us they were considering withdrawing or interrupting this term. All of them were home students. 3 were UG students, 5 were PGT students. 2 students told us that they were already being withdrawn by the university. All students who are considering withdrawing or interrupting receive follow-up support including signposting to Retention and Success Officers, their personal tutors and to any other additional support tailored to their situation.



Of those who suggested that they were considering it, no students withdrew, were withdrawn or interrupted their studies, and all have continued until the end of term.

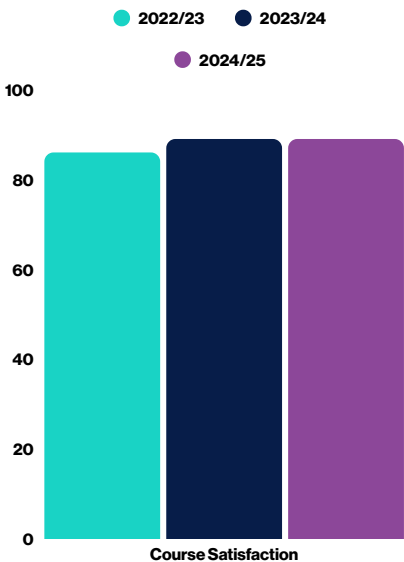


Students currently on an interruption

In collaboration with the Engagement Team within the university, we called students who are currently on an interruption and are expected to return in September. These calls help to ensure that students are aware of the communication that has been sent to them and any actions they need to take to return or extend their interruption, as well as increasing awareness of support services. We spoke to 110 students and of those, 42 needed some additional support or signposting regarding their interruption. 20 had not received the email from the Engagement team, and were therefore resent the information.

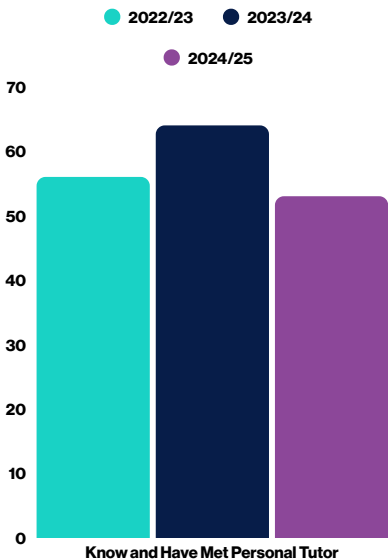
3 Year Comparison of Check In Calls in Term 3

Over the years that the calling service has been running, the questions being asked have changed and adapted to the needs of students and the perceived pressures they may be facing. However, we do now have enough similar data to compare trends over three years in certain areas. We did not complete a Term 3 report for 2022/23 so these are comparisons with the overall annual report from 2022/23, which may skew results somewhat.



Academic life

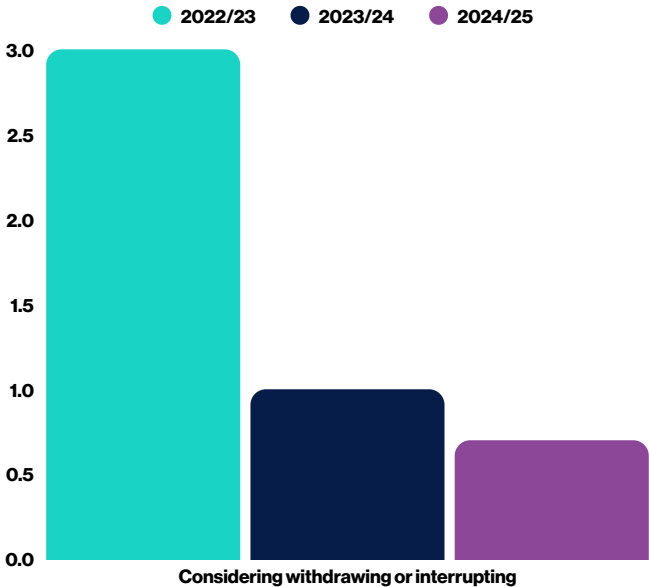
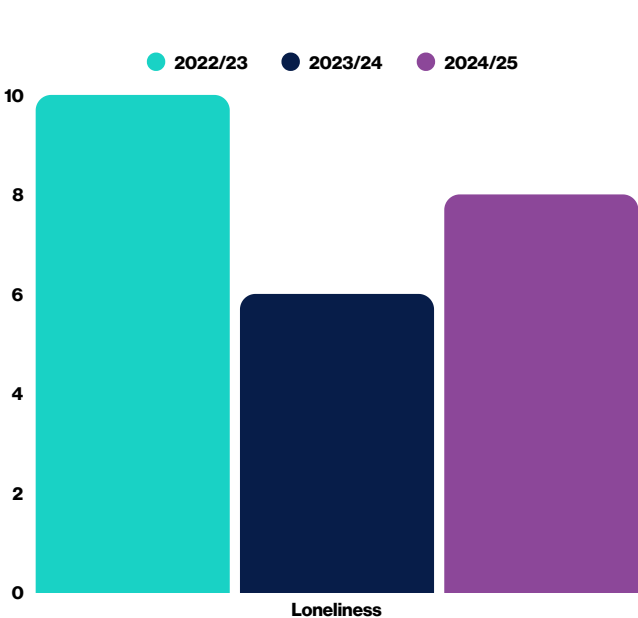
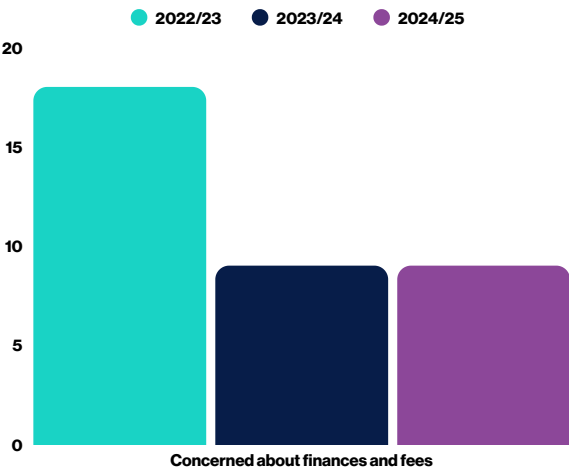
Course satisfaction remains high in Term 3 calls. In terms of knowing and having met Personal Tutors, this has fallen again. We will be reviewing our questions over the summer break and considering how best to ask about academic tutors/Faculty Student Advisors to ensure we can track the impact of the new Personal Tutoring framework.



Co-curricular student experiences

Concerns about finances remain lower in Term 3 than in other terms across the academic year. This may be due to more time to work, or for the PGT students spoken to, due to fee payments being completed.

Loneliness has risen in Term 3 this year as opposed to last year. It is interesting to consider what may be impacting this - there are always less activities put on in Term 3, and the vast majority of students spoken to this term were international students. Both of these elements may be having an impact. As always in Term 3, there is a very minimal number of students considering withdrawing or interrupting. This is due to the approaching end of the year.



Themes, Recommendations and GSU Actions

We are now highlighting overall themes alongside our more specific recommendations for the university. This allows us to see where interventions affect the trends that are coming through the calls.

We are also including an actions section which will track the actions of the Check-in Service team. This will demonstrate the practical actions taken by the team to support students and the university to seek resolutions to issues that are being raised.

Themes

Timetabling

As has been the case for many years, timetabling is often an area that students highlight as causing them difficulty. This includes large gaps in timetables, last minute changes and incorrect information on moodle. This term we had particular feedback from part-time students (several said they would have chosen the full-time option if they had been aware of the timetabling) and from students who struggled during Ramadan.



We are aware that there will be a new member of staff joining the university soon who will take responsibility for timetabling on a university-wide scale. We are interested to see how this will filter through to the calls, and will report back on whether we see a decrease in timetabling issues over the next academic year.

Communication issues

Students have been talking about communication issues between themselves, academic staff and administrative/support staff within the university. This included asking for more in-person support, quicker responses and clear information.



Overcrowding in lectures

Several students this term mentioned overcrowding in their lecture and teaching spaces. This impacted their ability to learn and meant that they felt less supported by the university in general.



More practical and industry-related content

Several students this term fed back that they would appreciate more practical and industry-related experience on their course. This was alongside other students saying how excellent the industry-focused or practical elements of the course were, so it seems that this is variable based on the course, as well as what the student is expecting from their studies.



Recommendations

Placement support

The issue: Students across faculties have fed back that they are experiencing difficulties with their placements.



Students said: that they needed more support with finding placements, or they were not able to get the support they needed when things went wrong on their placements, or if the placement became unsuitable.

The Check-in Service recommends: For each course which has a placement element, there should be an easily accessible guide to placements - how to get support with finding a placement, where to go for support if encountering difficulties on the placement and the specific information for students who are disabled or have health issues. These should be accessible for support staff as well as students to ensure signposting is accurate.

Career guidance

The issue: Students would like more guidance from the university regarding careers and post-graduation opportunities.



Students said: they were concerned about getting jobs after university and, although many had accessed employability support they did not feel confident.

The Check-in Service recommends: Term 3 is a key time for students who are graduating or finishing their dissertations. It would be a good opportunity to reach out to students and offer more online or 1-1 support for those who are feeling anxious about life after graduation.

Ongoing actions for us

Temporary illness signposting

The issue: It is unclear where students should go to get support for shorter term illness which lasts under 12 months, such as a planned surgery, broken bone or illness lasting a few weeks/months.



The Check-in Service will: Find out the support that is available to students through speaking with the university Wellbeing team and FSAs, and included this information on the GSU website.

Diversifying Check-in comms channels

The issue: Some students are not seeing our follow up emails, are unable to answer the phone when called or do not answer calls from unknown numbers



The Check-in Service will: Diversify our methods of following up with students, including texting to direct to email support sent and move to the next stage of our WhatsApp outreach.

2025/26 Academic Year

That's a wrap for the 2024/25 academic year! It's always incredible to speak to students across the academic year, and to hear about the things that are important to them during their studies.

Over the summer we will be reviewing our work over the last year and planning for next year. This will include:

1. Planning next steps for the WhatsApp Outreach project
2. Developing our Avery Connect offer
3. Reviewing the questions we ask students
4. Participating in The Big Conversation across the academic year

Do you have any questions?

If you have any questions about the service and our plans for next year, please do get in touch on checkinservice@greenwich.ac.uk

Academic staff shout outs!

This term we had a number of academic staff named as particularly good and supportive.

From FEHHS **Amal Elamin** and **Julia Morgan** were both named twice by student who said that their lectures and the support offered were excellent.

There were also three staff mentioned by their first names from the Natural Resources Institute from a student on the MSc AP Food Safety Programme - we were not given their last names unfortunately. These were recorded as **Elena, Brenda and Mithrania**.