

# GSU Check-in Service - Business Faculty

Term 1 Summary

2024/25

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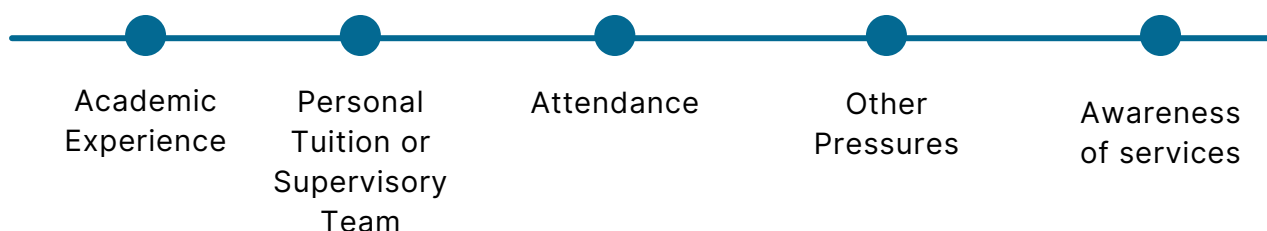
greenwich  
students'  
union

# 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 are vulnerable to withdrawing from their studies, and 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 call?

We prioritise calling students who are most at risk of being withdrawn due to nonattendance and students at risk of withdrawing or interrupting themselves.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

- Returning Interrupted Students
- Repeating
- POLAR4 Q1
- First Year International
- Mature students for GSU research
- Students on programmes with high non-continuation rates or flagged as Red on the Performance Task Force
- Spanish students after the flooding
- Students spoken to in Welcome by GSU staff for the Talk To Every Student objective

## New questions we asked this term

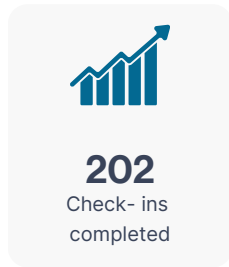
This term we introduced a few new questions, to see what students were thinking about the Wellbeing service, their student reps and their experiences of being in their final year of their studies.

This term we also introduced follow up calls to students who were previously escalated. These are intended to check on the situation that the student initially disclosed, and to see if there is any further support needed to resolve issues.

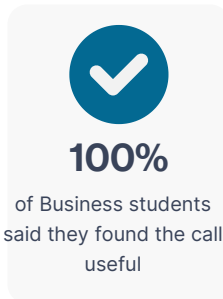
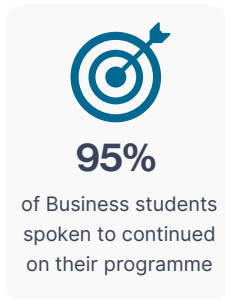
We also asked students if they were aware that the Greenwich Students' Union would be calling students before they received the call, and if so, where they heard about the calls. This is because we are relaunching the service with new branding and its new name, and we want to be able to track whether this has an impact on the visibility and knowledge of the service for students.

# Business Faculty Summary

## KPI overview

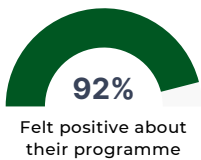


## Our Impact

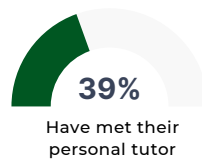


## What are students saying?

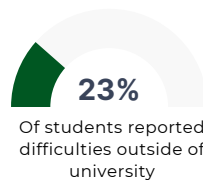
### Course Satisfaction



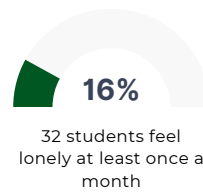
### Personal Tuition



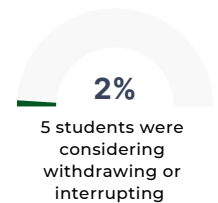
### Pressures



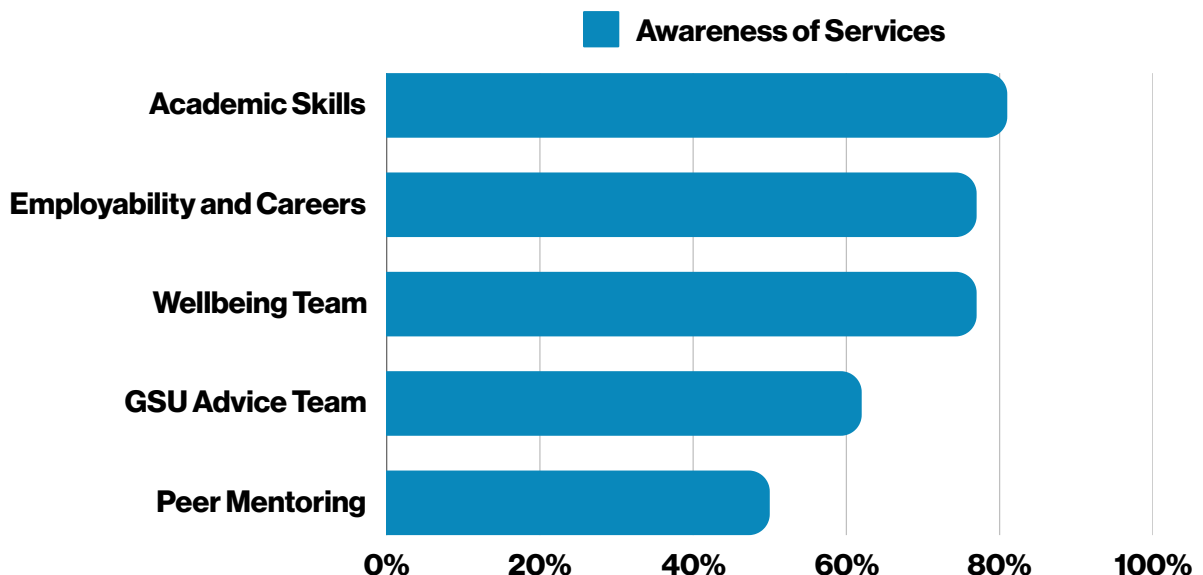
### Loneliness



### Considering Withdrawing



## Support Service Awareness



# Term 1 Overview

This report gives a summary of the key findings, themes and recommendations from the Check-in Service in term 1 of 2024/25 for the Business faculty.

## Who we called this term

- Returning Interrupted Students
- Repeating
- POLAR4 Q1
- First Year International
- Mature students for GSU research
- Students on programmes with high non-continuation rates or flagged as Red on the Performance Task Force
- Spanish students after the flooding
- Students spoken to in Welcome by GSU staff for the Talk To Every Student objective

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

### Spanish Student Check in

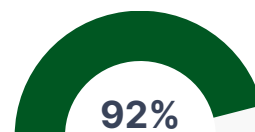
We called Spanish students after the floods, to check in and see if they needed any additional support. We spoke to 176 Spanish students - many of them commented on how grateful they were to hear from us and to know that someone was checking in. Students were directed to Wellbeing and the Hardship funds if needed.

## Analysis of General Check In Calls

### Course Satisfaction

92% of Business students felt positively towards their course and only 1% negatively, with the remaining 7% offering a neutral response. This was in comparison to 88% of students overall.

The area that drew the most negative response was 'timetabling', which is in line with previous reports from other cohorts. Proportionally, Business students were less likely to say that they felt negatively about timetabling than other faculties. Overseas students also ranked greater course satisfaction (95%) than their home counterparts (88%).



92%  
Felt positive about  
their programme

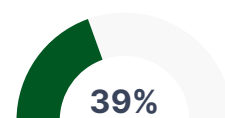
**“It’s good that GSU checks on us - I’ve had calls in every year of my degree, and the information is really helpful!”**

Third year  
Accounting, Finance  
and Economics  
home student

### Personal Tutoring

39% of Business students knew and had met their personal tutor and 26% knew, but had 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.

We also included a new question, asking those who had met their personal tutors how the experience had been for them. 92% said that meeting their personal tutor had been an overall good experience. We will be adjusting this question in future to ensure it is relevant for the new personal and academic tutoring framework.



39%  
Have met their  
personal tutor

**“Our personal tutor is very supportive; told us to get in touch with him anytime if we need any help.”**

1st year international Management and  
Marketing student

# Co-Curricular Experience

## Loneliness

32 Business students we spoke to reported feeling lonely in Term 1 equating to 16% of respondents, 5 % more than this time last year. This is the same percentage as the percentage of all students reporting loneliness.

Of these students, the majority (59%) reported feeling lonely sometimes. Students reporting loneliness were 59% overseas and 41% home students. .

## Cost of Living Concerns

18% of Business students are concerned about supporting themselves financially or paying their fees compared to 21% of students overall.

## 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.



44

Business students had a follow up with further support



21

Business students were sent personalised follow up support

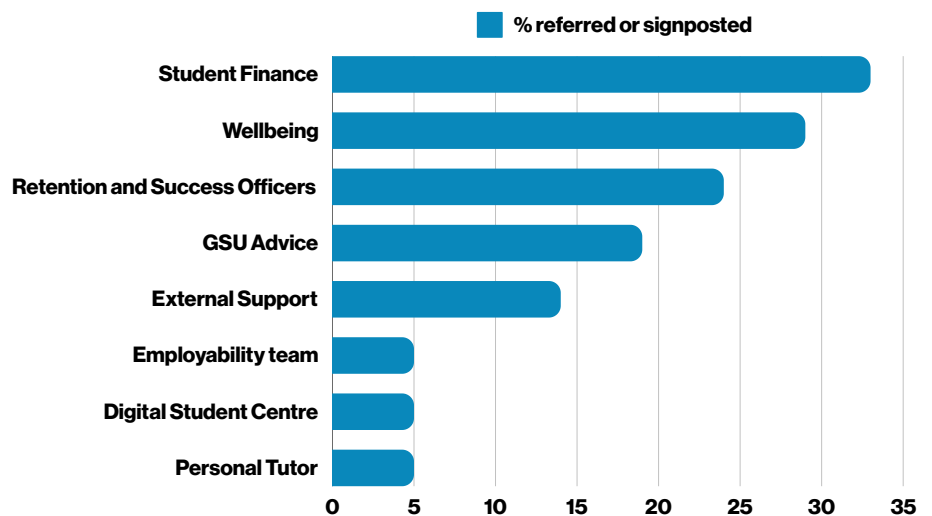
## Referrals to other services

21 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.



89%

of Business students who received follow up support continued with their studies into Term 2



In addition to those students who were directly referred for support, 23 Business students told us about financial concerns, social support, and course issues. We send these students additional information in support packs. 20 students received a finance support pack, 8 students received a social support pack and 2 received a course support pack.

# Final Year Students

60 Business students that we spoke to were in their final year of their studies. 32 were feeling overall positive about life after graduation, 6 felt overall negative and 22 felt neutral. 18 students mentioned being worried about employment after they graduate. Several students mentioned that they felt confident about life after graduation and were looking forward to gaining experience in their chosen fields.

# Programme Reps

48% of students knew who their programme reps were. Of those who knew who they were, 69% rated them a 4 or 5/5 for supporting students on their course. Students commented that issues have been resolved, the reps were kind, helpful and very good at listening to the issues that their fellow students were bringing.

# Absences

52 Business students who completed the survey were called due to non-engagement. The most frequent reason for non attendance cited was due to illness (38%). Other significant and reoccurring reasons are personal or family circumstances, such as bereavement or childcare, issues with registration and QR code issues.

# Continuation Rate

95% of Business students who completed the survey continued on their programme. This is roughly the average across all faculties.



**95%**

Of Business students called continue on their programme

# Those considering withdrawing

5 students told us they were considering withdrawing or interrupting this term.

2 were home students, 3 were international students. 4 were UG students, 1 were PGT students.

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, 1 student withdrew or were withdrawn and 1 never completed registration. The remaining 3 have continued on their programmes.



**5**

Business students told us they were considering withdrawing

**1**

students withdrew (or was withdrawn)

**1**

did not complete registration

**3**

students are continuing with their studies

**Approx**

**£36,520**

of fee income retained this term\*

\*2 x home UG and 1 x overseas UG

# Recommendations

The recommendations made here stem from the conversations had with students and the themes that emerged. It is proposed that these are reviewed by university services, faculties and the GSU.

## Timetabling

**The issue:** Timetabling has been a recurrent theme for several years and there are clear issues and barriers to resolving them.



**Students said:** Timetables can be sporadic which result in frequent journeys to campus and difficulty with balancing other commitments. There have also been reports of last-minute timetable changes and overcrowded teaching spaces.

**The Check-in Service recommends:** Coordination across faculties and programmes to ensure that, from the beginning of the year, there are as few issues as possible. Flexibility for students to change seminar groups to ensure they are convenient for students is recommended, although initially arranging timetables carefully may limit disruption for both students and teaching staff of mid-term changes.

## Spreading payments for international student fees

**The issue:** A recurring theme in the Retention calls and the GSU Advice Service is international students asking for payment plans, although they do not meet the University of Greenwich criteria for a payment plan.



**Students said:** They felt the payment plan was too harsh, worry about paying fees was impacting on their ability to study and the Student Finance team were very slow to respond to emails and queries. Students reported feeling very stressed and worried about finances and visas.

**The Check-in Service recommends:** Additional fee payment installments could be offered to all self-funding students. We believe this could significantly reduce the number of students contacting the GSU Advice Service and the Student Finance team to request payment plans, as well as addressing the stress and detriment that students report.

## Mental health support for students post-withdrawal

**The issue:** After students have been withdrawn, either for non-engagement, non-payment or other issues, they are not able to access support from the Wellbeing team. This is often a time of high distress and impact on their mental health.



**Students said:** They were needing mental health support after being withdrawn, and particularly if they were appealing the decision.

**The Check-in Service recommends:** A three month grace period after withdrawal for students to access Wellbeing team support - this would be similar to the three month post-graduation period for student-staff jobs, and would cover the time it takes for a student to submit an appeal.

# Term 2 2024/25

In the coming term we have lots of exciting developments regarding our strategy and objectives. In Term 2 our priority order will be:

1. New January Starters
2. Students not in attendance
3. All other students

We will be calling between 27th January to 3rd April.

As well as this, in Term 2 we are launching our brand refresh which will increase the visibility of the service across both students and staff. You can see the new branding on our website here: <https://www.greenwichsu.co.uk/gsuhub/wrproject/>

We will also be moving forward with our research into WhatsApp outreach, which will reach many more students and give us a new angle for reaching students.

As before, we will be reactive to any local or global events that may make students vulnerable to disengagement from their studies and will prioritise checking in with them where needed.

## **Want to make a referral?**

We will also check in with any students that staff have concerns for. Staff can refer a student for a check in call via email at [gsu-retention@greenwich.ac.uk](mailto:gsu-retention@greenwich.ac.uk).