

Effective Student Support for Academic Success

Intentionally constructing a course with specific, evidence-based student academic support activities can improve students' outcomes and engagement and reduce awarding gaps. These activities include modular based revision, academic advising, peer support and 1:1 workshops. Each year the Student Success Central Team complete a robust impact evaluation of interventions intended to reduce disparities between protected groups. This document focuses on activities that have been shown in recent years to improve educational equity and may benefit all students.

What activities work?

The following types of activities have evidence of impact on improved students' attendance at lectures and seminars and/or attainment.

1. **Academic Advising:** Well structured and monitored academic advising, be it through group sessions or 1:1's, has a strong causal chain with improved attendance. More recent findings suggest that it also supports improved attainment for students.
2. **Skills Sessions:** Providing mechanisms for enhancing academic skills, particularly those embedded within the module itself, has a causal effect on both improved attendance and improved attainment. Utilising diagnostic tests can be helpful to identify students that require upskilling additional to that provided to all students within the module.
3. **Inspirational Speakers:** Embedding guest speakers from industry within modules, particularly speakers from a diverse background, is linked to improvements in both attendance and attainment.
4. **Peer Mentoring:** Mentoring, both for mentors and mentees, has links with improved attendance and attainment. Signposting this support or embedding module-based peer mentoring programmes is helpful.
5. **Peer Assisted Learning (PAL)** has been shown elsewhere to help build confidence and a sense of belonging among students. [PAL](#) is a module-based programme coordinated by the

Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS), led by a trained PAL student leader who assists students in their learning on that module.

Further resources at Kent

Find further guidance on a range of activities and the practicalities of running various student success initiatives at [DP235875: Searchable SStaRT Database \(kent.ac.uk\)](#).

Contact the Student Learning Advisory Service (SLAS) at slas@kent.ac.uk to discuss options for SLAS to run discipline-specific study skills workshops or embed PAL within your course or module.

Contact your Division's Student Success Attainment Manager or email studentsuccessproject@kent.ac.uk to be referred to appropriate support in connecting to an inspirational speaker in your field.

References

De La Torre, A., & Dowie, E. (2023, December 1). Student Success Evaluation Framework: Determining causality in activities to improve attendance and attainment. <https://doi.org/10.35542/osf.io/9v35b>