

## **Progress Weeks Policy**

### **Purpose**

To clarify the principles and purpose of Progress Weeks.

### **Overview**

Progress Weeks were introduced to describe the periods in the academic year previously referred to as reading weeks or Worcester Weeks. The change in terminology was specifically designed to emphasise focus at these points on student progression, success and retention.

This policy therefore clarifies the key principles that underpin the concept and outlines the types of activities that might be undertaken by students.

### **Scope**

The policy is aimed to inform all academic staff.

### **The Policy**

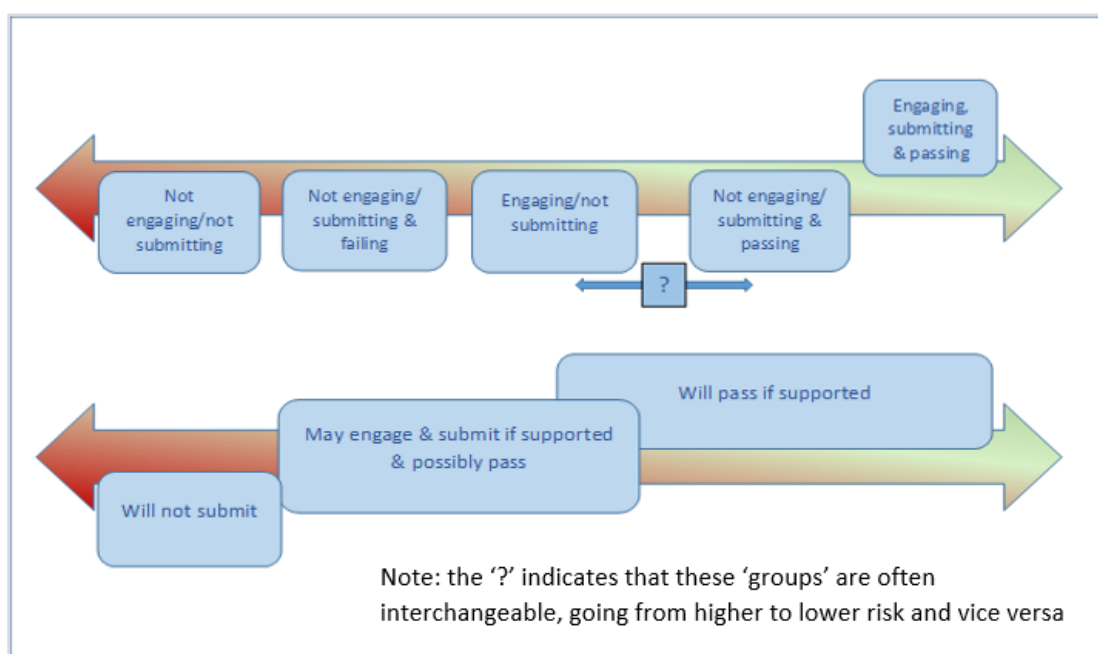
#### Key principles

1. Progress Weeks are designed primarily to focus on improving academic achievement through appropriate targeted support, both within modules and via the PAT system. The opportunity presented by these points, typically in November and March, enables staff to consider engagements at modular level (which might be generic, subject or programme specific) to support engagement, retention and success.
2. Progress Weeks enable us to review the progress of each individual student whether that is to support them with the best opportunities to meet their potential, encourage them to attend more regularly, submit assessments or otherwise engage with their studies. These acts will help us to improve retention and create a positive experience for individual students.
3. Engagement with students during Progress Weeks can take place in various ways, including through in-person tutorials or online interaction with staff. Attendance in person during Progress Weeks is not compulsory for students. However, there should be a strong expectation for students to participate actively and to access the dedicated support.
4. In most cases, Progress Weeks will be a break from teaching new content whilst learning continues through other forms of academic engagement. Staff should maintain their normal presence on campus and should actively promote and maintain tutorial availability, through both module-level engagement and PAT support. By way of example, scheduled practice at module or smaller group level might include the following:

- exploring and discussing assessment feedback;
  - planning or revising for forthcoming assessments;
  - workshop discussions and/or peer review of plans and drafts;
  - guidance on research, study skills, referencing, etc.
5. Progress Weeks can also be used for learning activities that cannot be accommodated in teaching weeks. Such activities might include live presentations/pitches to employers, field trips or structured opportunities to gain extra-curricular qualifications.
  6. In any event, to ensure that students are fully informed about Progress Weeks and aware of expectations, proposed activities and tutorial availability should be clearly set out in module outlines.

### Progress Review

7. In terms of retention, Progress Weeks are used to evaluate the risk to individual students based on their behaviours to date. This can be explained through the following diagram, where the top continuum outlines these behaviours and the bottom how we might successfully intervene to help individuals move from the left (high risk of failure/withdrawal) towards the right (low risk). The process by which this operates is detailed under 'Progress Review' below.



8. The progress of every individual student should be reviewed in each Progress Week via a Review aimed at identifying the action to be taken in relation to each student related to their perceived level of risk of failure to complete successfully.
9. In the first Progress Week (typically early November<sup>1</sup>), staff will review the progress of each student, identifying and following up on students who are not attending or engaging in their learning, including where they have failed to submit assignments.

<sup>1</sup> The timing of Progress Weeks may be different for some courses by exception, for example where timetables involve set professional placements.

10. In order to ensure a realistic and manageable staff workload, typically students should be encouraged to meet (physically or virtually) with their PAT in order to set personal targets for Semester Two. Nonetheless, the main purpose of the Review will be to identify students whose attendance or assessment profile suggests they may be at risk of failure and/or withdrawal.<sup>2</sup>
11. Details on the process to be followed will be discussed with Schools annually, and shared early in each academic year. Supplementary data, for example on students failing to submit assessments during Semester One, will be provided to Heads of Schools for the purposes of following up students who are emerging as 'at risk' during the academic year.
12. In the second Progress Week (typically March), staff will again review the progress of each student and aim to ensure that continuing students are able to meet their potential. This might include:
  - reflection on academic progress;
  - reviewing persistent themes in assessment feedback, and taking action;
  - advice on module selection for the following year;
  - promoting assessment literacy;
  - referral to relevant support;
  - Reflection on skills acquisition and career planning.

### Evaluation

13. The impact of Progress Weeks, and Progress Review in particular, will be evaluated at least annually, with the outcomes being reported to the Learning, Teaching and Student Experience Committee.

### **Approval/Review Table**

| <b>Item</b>                      | <b>Notes</b>                         |
|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Version Number                   | v1.0                                 |
| Date of Approval                 | 23 <sup>rd</sup> September 2020      |
| Approved by                      | LTSEC                                |
| Effective from                   | September 2020                       |
| Policy Officer                   | Learning & Teaching Outcomes Manager |
| Department                       | QED                                  |
| Review date                      | September 2023                       |
| Last reviewed                    | N/A                                  |
| Equality Impact Assessment (EIA) | 8 <sup>th</sup> September 2020       |
| Accessibility Checked            | 29 <sup>th</sup> September 2020      |

<sup>2</sup> For the purposes of the Review this is defined as being at risk of failing to progress to the next level of study, progressing with conditions or at risk of withdrawing or being withdrawn, especially for reasons of non-submission.