

Academic Performance Procedure

Staff Guidelines

Purpose

At The Bedford College Group we are committed to providing a learning environment in which students can fulfil their potential and participate freely in college activities. All staff are expected to help and support students in achieving high standards of performance and success, and have a shared responsibility to raise expectations and aspirations.

Principles

The Academic Performance Procedure is designed to:

- provide a framework for addressing issues of academic neglect
- encourage all students to meet the high standards of attendance, punctuality and work performance expected by the college
- ensure that students know what is expected of them
- ensure that students understand the consequences of poor performance and academic neglect
- ensure consistent and just treatment for all regardless of disability, age, race, gender, religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity
- ensure procedural fairness

The Academic Performance Procedure is separate from, but runs parallel to, the Student Disciplinary (Misconduct) Procedure, which should be used to address issues of unacceptable behaviour. Like the Disciplinary (Misconduct) Procedure it is underpinned by the Student Code of Conduct, which clearly sets out for students the college's expectations of them in relation to all aspects of their college life. The Code of Conduct is shown at annex A, and highlights those areas which fall within scope of this procedure. Examples of causes for concern are included at annex B.

Details of warnings will remain on the student's file for 12 months from the date of the warning being issued, after which they expire.

Equality and Diversity Statement

The Bedford College Group is committed to the advancement and promotion of equality and diversity. We aim to provide a learning environment which values individuals equally regardless of disability, age, race, gender (sex), religion and belief, sexual orientation, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity.

It is our duty and obligation under the Equality Act 2010 to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- advance equality of opportunity
- foster good relations between different groups

This procedure will be implemented in accordance with our equality and diversity policy, and students subject to action relating to academic performance will not be discriminated against or victimised on any grounds.

Procedure

Issues relating to academic performance and academic neglect, including poor attendance and punctuality, failure to submit work on time, under-performance and under-achievement, of work, **must be dealt with through the tutorial system in the first instance**, with effective communication between course managers, subject teachers and Personal Achievement Tutors and in line with the Tutorial Policy. Clear targets to address the relevant issue(s) should be set and reviewed. The review period is 15 days which is reviewed on a weekly basis by the Course Manager and Personal Achievement Tutor.

If, however, following tutorial intervention and target setting, the student still fails to achieve the required standard within the set review period, formal action may be taken under this procedure immediately.

It operates on a series of warning – stages 1 to 4 – corresponding to those in the Student Disciplinary (Misconduct) Procedure. In exceptional circumstances, and where it is beyond reasonable doubt that they are not going to achieve their qualification, the decision may be taken to exclude a student (this is stage 4 of the process). In such cases, the final decision rests with the Curriculum Director (Head at The Bedford Sixth Form), but this would normally be taken on the recommendation of appropriate teaching and tutorial staff.

In cases of exclusion for academic neglect, the student should normally be allowed to return in the academic year following that in which the student was excluded (unless the exclusion occurs in the final term, in which case the exclusion period may be extended).

Fast Track Procedure – 1st Six Weeks

There is a fast track procedure which may be used to address academic performance issues **only**, during the first 6 weeks of a student's programme **only**, in order to facilitate transfer onto a more appropriate opportunity. See annexes D and E.

Framework

The stages of the academic performance procedure and levels of responsibility are as follows. Action should start at stage 1 before working through the levels.

Stage 1

Where performance has not improved **following tutorial/subject support and target setting**, three occurrences of not meeting standards e.g. lateness, non-attendance, miss a deadline etc in a two week period will lead to stage 1, the student should proceed to the formal stage. In such instances the relevant staff member will issue the student with a Stage 1 warning. The issuing of a Stage 1 warning will trigger communication to parents/guardian on behalf of the College stating the warning has been issued and the standard of performance expected by the student. A review period of 30 days will be put in place with a review taking place each week

- If a stage 1 warning is felt to be appropriate, issue the student with the warning and recorded on ProMonitor Retain a copy of the form in the students file
- Send out Stage 1 warning letter to parent (or person with parental responsibility) for any student aged under 19 at the start of the course, unless parental consent has previously been withdrawn
- Give a copy of the form to Student Services (normally via Personal Achievement Tutor)
- Record the warning on ProMonitor, including the nature of the concern and the standard of performance expected from the student
- Advise the student that their performance will be reviewed for a 30 day period and reviewed weekly by the Course Manager and Personal Achievement Tutor. If their

performance does not improve, further action will be taken at any point where there are further causes for concern.

Stage 2 and Stage 3

If their performance does not improve the student may proceed to Stage 2 and then Stage 3. In such instances the relevant staff member should:

- Arrange a date and a time to hold an academic performance meeting with the student **within 5 working days**
 - Confirm with the student:
 - the date and the time of the meeting
 - the reasons for the meeting
 - the student's right to be accompanied by a supporter (parent, person with parental responsibility or friend)
 - Explain that failure to attend this meeting or make contact to rearrange it will result in a decision being made in their absence
 - Phone/email the parent (or person with parental responsibility) if the student is **under 19 at the start of their course, unless they have previously withdrawn consent to contact**. Make them aware of the date and the time of the meeting and the reasons for why the meeting is taking place.
 - Conduct the meeting in line with this procedure
 - Confirm the outcome in writing to the student within 5 working days of the meeting, sending a copy, with a covering letter, to the parent (or person with parental responsibility) if the student is **under 19 at the start of the course, unless they have previously withdrawn consent to contact**
 - The letter must include:
 - a clear statement of the reasons for such action
 - the standards of performance expected of the student
 - an explanation that the letter will be held on the student's file
 - the action that will be taken in the event of continued unsatisfactory performance
 - the student's right of appeal. This must be submitted in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the written warning letter.
- Sample letters are given at Annex C.**
- Record the action taken on ProMonitor. Put a copy of all other documentation relating to the action, in the student file. Send a copy of the form to Student Services (normally via Personal Achievement Tutor).

Details of warnings will remain on the student's file for 12 months from the date of the warning being issued, after which they expire.

Stage 4 (Exclusion)

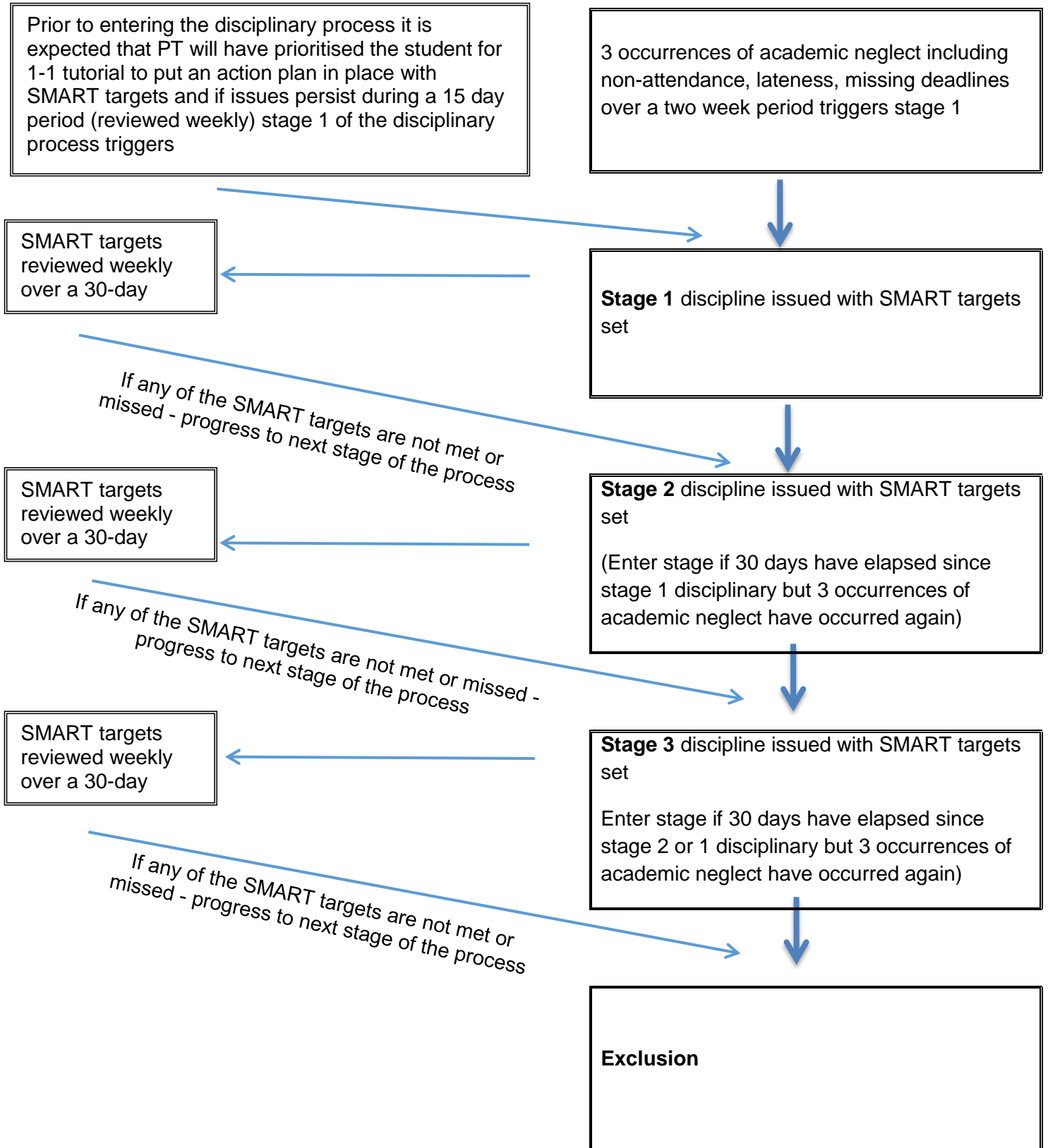
If their performance still does not improve the student may need to be excluded. Only a Curriculum Director or above (Head at The Bedford Sixth Form) has the authority to exclude a student from college. In exceptional circumstances, the Chief Executive may exercise the right to exclude.

If the disciplinary interview is likely to result in exclusion, the interview must be carried out by a Curriculum Director (Head at The Bedford Sixth Form).

The procedure is as for Stages 2 and 3 above.

The Director of Student Services (or his/her representative – normally the Personal Achievement Tutor) should be present at the disciplinary interview. His/her role will be to advise on the procedure to ensure fairness of treatment and to offer advice to aid decision-making.

Discipline Process – Academic Performance



Levels of Responsibility in Academic Performance Procedure

The levels of responsibility in the Academic Performance Procedure framework (stages 1 to 4) are as follows:

Stage	Process	Action	Responsibility	Appeal
Stage 1 warning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Achievement Tutor / Course Manager will issue the student with a Stage 1 warning immediately • Warning will be logged on Promonitor • Communication sent to parents (or person with parental responsibility) within 5 working days (where student is aged under 19 at the start of the course and parental consent has not previously been withdrawn) informing them that a Stage 1 warning has been issued and the standard of performance expected from the student. The actions to improve must be smart and reviewed each week. Failure to meet the actions may result in the next stage of the process 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Decision • Monitoring period of 30 days set and reviewed weekly 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal Achievement Tutor or Course Manager • Course Manager, or Personal Achievement Tutor in consultation with Course Manager/Head • Personal Achievement Tutor and Course Manager/Head 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No appeal

<p>Stage 2 and 3 warnings</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate to student and parents (or person with parental responsibility) date and time of meeting and reasons for meeting. This can be by phone or email Meeting should take place <u>within 5 working days. It is only necessary to inform parents of the meeting time. If they do not attend the meeting should still take place as planned.</u> • Outcome logged on Promonitor. • Decision letter sent to student and parents (or person with parental responsibility) with information on how to appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Decision • Academic performance decision letter 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Manager or above • Course Manager or above • Head of Department or above, on recommendation of Course Manager 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In writing to the Curriculum Director within 10 working days
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<p>Exclusion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Following a recommendation for exclusion from the Head of Department, the Curriculum Director for the department will meet with the student to consider exclusion • Communicate to student and parents (or person with parental responsibility) date and time of meeting and reasons for meeting. Meeting should take place <u>within 5 working days. It is only necessary to inform parents of the meeting time. If they do not attend the meeting should still take place as planned.</u> • Outcome logged on Promonitor. • Decision letter sent to student and parents (or person with parental responsibility) with information on how to appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting • Decision • Academic performance letter • Appeal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director or above • Director or above • Director or above • Vice Principal with responsibility for Quality (if the exclusion was conducted by that VP, the appeal must be heard by another VP) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In writing to Vice Principal (Quality) within 10 working days
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Code of Conduct for Students

This Code of Conduct is designed to encourage all students to meet the standards of behaviour, attendance and work performance expected by The Bedford College Group and Tresham College. The highlighted points below relate specifically to areas of academic performance, which should be dealt with through this procedure.

Students at The Bedford College Group and Tresham College are required to:

- treat everyone with respect, and make sure that their behaviour does not discriminate against anyone or make any other person feel uncomfortable
- respect the rights and interests of other College students, staff and visitors
- **attend all required activities regularly and punctually**
- **explain to their tutor or lecturer any reason for non-attendance**
- **take personal responsibility for their own learning and make active use of the learning resources and support services provided**
- **work hard and complete all work within specified deadlines**
- **take an active part in reviewing their progress with their tutor**
- **seek help from their tutor or Student Services if they need it**
- act safely so that they do not put themselves or others at risk and observe all health and safety rules of the College
- wear their ID card at all times on College premises and show it, on request, to any member of the College staff
- act with consideration for the College environment and other College users, e.g. by not spitting or dropping chewing gum and litter
- pay all fees and other costs for which they are liable, or seek advice from us if in financial difficulty
- abide by all College policies and procedures.

Students at The Bedford College Group and Tresham College must not:

- behave in a disruptive, aggressive, intimidating, bullying, indecent or unruly manner
- disrupt or interfere with the education or learning of fellow students
- display or circulate any material which is designed to cause offence or distress to others
- misuse College property and equipment, including IT or health and safety equipment
- be intoxicated while on College premises or be incapable of undertaking their course work because of excessive drinking or use of controlled substances
- smoke anywhere other than in designated smoking areas, in accordance with the College's smoke-free policy
- consume, possess or supply toxic, dangerous or controlled substances
- make or send annoying, obscene, malicious or indecent telephone calls, letters, SMS messages, text messages or emails, or place malicious, offensive or extremist materials on any electronic or social media
- cause malicious damage to, or theft of, the property of other students, staff or visitors of the College
- use foul or abusive language
- gain unauthorised access to, or make modifications to, College files or computer material
- enter any part of the College which the student is not entitled to access
- carry any weapon or any other object with the intention or purpose of use in a threatening way
- falsify College documents
- submit materials or work for assessment which have not been made or authorised by the individual, or which have been copied from other students or sources without acknowledging or referencing those sources (plagiarism), or allow one's work to be knowingly plagiarised
- take part in any illegal activity
- behave in any way which adversely affects the reputation of the College.

Examples of Causes for Concern

STUDY/WORK PERFORMANCE

Causes for concern include:

- persistent non-completion or late submission of course work
- work consistently below the standard which the student is capable of achieving

Plagiarism and disruptive behaviour in class are regarded as misconduct and should be dealt with through the Student Disciplinary (Misconduct) Procedure.

ATTENDANCE

No unexplained absence from any part of the learning programme is acceptable and the tutor or teacher should seek an explanation at the first opportunity.

Explained absence is only acceptable if:

- the tutor or teacher has evidence of, or confidence in, the explanation and
- the frequency of the absence does not discredit the explanation.

Unexplained absence of 4 consecutive weeks leads to the presumption that the student has withdrawn and the appropriate procedures should be followed.

Where a tutor is aware of on-going health or personal issues which necessitate a student being absent for more than 4 consecutive weeks, the student may remain active on the register, providing there is written evidence of active learning taking place (e.g. e-mail communications, record of contacts, work being completed at home) and the appropriate mark is used on the register.

Causes for concern include 3 occurrences in any half term:

- absence for unacceptable reasons exceeding 5% in any half term
- absence for 3 consecutive working days without explanation
- a significantly declining pattern of attendance
- a significant pattern of absence, eg missing the last session on Friday afternoon on three consecutive Fridays.

PUNCTUALITY

No unexplained lateness during any part of the learning programme is acceptable. This also includes leaving a session early.

Explained lateness is only acceptable if:

- the teacher has evidence of, or confidence in, the explanation and
- the frequency of the lateness does not discredit the explanation.

Late students must always be challenged. The teacher should, at the earliest opportunity or at the end of the lesson, obtain from the student the reason for their lateness and draw attention to any work which has been missed. The teacher must make a judgement as to whether this is a 'one-off' unavoidable occurrence (eg transport or childcare problem) or part of an on-going pattern of poor punctuality. The teacher must note the minutes the student is late on the register.

Sample Academic Performance Letter

Notification of Stage 1 warning

Parents/Guardians of
FORENAME SURNAME
ADDRESS1
ADDRESS2
TOWN
COUNTY
POSTCODE
DATE

Dear Parent/Guardian

Stage 1 of the Academic Performance Procedure

Your son/daughter has recently received a Stage 1 warning of the Academic Performance Procedure.

Receiving a Stage 1 warning is serious and indicates that despite tutorial intervention, the expected standards of performance are not being achieved and remain a concern to the College. We would ask for your support in helping us resolve the issues leading up to being given this sanction. A copy of the Stage 1 warning is enclosed.

Your child's performance against the standards expected will now be monitored for the next 30 days. If there is no improvement in their performance, the College will take further action. A copy of this letter will be kept on their records for a period of 12 months.

A successful student results from a combination of high attendance, meeting deadlines, embracing their study programme and trying hard to achieve their best. We at the College have great staff, great students and great programmes to support your son/daughter. Thank you for your support at this time.

Yours sincerely

Ian Pryce CBE
Principal & Chief Executive
The Bedford College Group

Sample Academic Performance Letter

Notification of Written Warning (Stage 2 or Stage 3)

Date

Name

Address

Dear **(Name)**

Following the Academic Performance meeting which you attended with **(name of staff member)** on **(day) (date)**, this letter serves as a **(Stage 2/Stage 3)** Warning. The College has taken this action because **(state reasons for decision)**.

The College expects **(state standards of academic performance expected)**.

Your performance against the standards expected will now be monitored for the next 30 days. If there is no improvement in your performance, the College will taking further action. A copy of this letter will be kept on your records for a period of 12 months.

If you wish to appeal against this decision you should do so in writing to **(name of staff member to whom appeal would be made)**. This should be received no later than 10 working days from receipt of this letter and should state the reasons for your appeal.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

(Designation)

THIS LETTER MUST BE SIGNED BY A HEAD OF DEPARTMENT OR DIRECTOR (OR DEPUTY HEAD AT THE BEDFORD SIXTH FORM). IF THE NAMED MEMBER OF STAFF IS NOT AVAILABLE IT MAY BE SIGNED BY ANOTHER MEMBER OF STAFF AT THE SAME LEVEL

Sample Academic Performance Letter

Notification of Exclusion

Date

Name

Address

Dear **(Name)**

I regret having to inform you that, following the Academic Performance meeting which you attended with **(name of staff member)** on **(day) (date)**, you have been excluded from College. The College has taken this decision because **(state reasons)**.

You may reapply to The Bedford College Group in **(state timescale – there may be other conditions such as evidence of commitment to course/study)**.

If you wish to appeal against this decision you should do so in writing to Emma Lowe, Vice Principal. This should be received no later than 10 working days from receipt of this letter and should state the reasons for your appeal.

Yours sincerely

(Name)

(Designation)

THIS LETTER MUST BE SIGNED BY THE DIRECTOR OR VICE PRINCIPAL (HEAD AT THE BEDFORD SIXTH FORM). IF THE NAMED MEMBER OF STAFF IS NOT AVAILABLE IT MAY BE SIGNED BY ANOTHER MEMBER OF STAFF AT THE SAME LEVEL.

Fast Track Procedure – 1st Six Weeks

It is important to identify quickly if a student is on the wrong course, either in terms of level or subject. It may be too easy/difficult, not what the student expected, not match their career aspirations. The student may also show lack of commitment to the course, for whatever reason, and this may manifest itself through poor attendance, punctuality or academic performance.

In such cases, where it is deemed that the student is unlikely to succeed on the course, action must be taken swiftly, during the first six weeks, so that the student can be considered for transfer to an alternative, more suitable programme.

Transfer of students must be allowed in all programme areas during the first six weeks. Transfer must be completed and the student installed on the new course before October half term for students starting in September. (For 'A' level students at the Bedford Sixth Form the permitted transfer period onto another 'A' level course is 3 weeks, 6 weeks for vocational programmes.)

The following fast track procedure can be used during the first six weeks of a student's programme only.

1. Course manager to discuss with HOD where a student's performance gives cause for concern.
2. If it is felt that the student should be withdrawn from the course, this must be justified to, and approval obtained from, the Director (Deputy Head at BSF) using the proforma at EF. The form should be held in the Student File and a copy sent to Student Services.
3. Course manager or Head of Department, together with the Personal Achievement Tutor, meet with student and agree next steps for the student. Parents should be invited if the student is under 19 at the start of the course **unless the student has previously withdrawn consent to contact.**
4. Transfer of student – Personal Achievement Tutor with support from careers team where appropriate. The Course Manager to support the transfer of the student to the new department. Student information transferred to new programme area.

Fast Track Transfer/Withdrawal Request

Student:
Course:
Tutor:
Course Manager:

Student ID No:
Personal Achievement

Reason for transfer/withdrawal request:

Action taken:

Intended destination:

Options explored with student

Careers interview offered? Yes No

Outcome agreed: *(to be completed by Head of Department)*

Approved by: (Director)

Date:

Copy 1: Student File (ProMonitor)
Copy 2: Student Services