

Student support

List of potential student support needs



Student administration for non-award online courses incorporates many of the considerations for in-person and award bearing teaching. However, there are important considerations that impact how departments consider the administration of non-award online courses:

- Learners are studying at a distance from the university without the level of pastoral care Colleges typically provide
- Typically learners haven't studied at an institute of higher education for some time and are less familiar with the rigours of an application process
- Typically learners are balancing work and family commitments alongside part-time study
- Often learners have a more transactional relationship with the University, where they expect a degree of customer service and value for money
- Courses are typically taught multiple times across the academic year, often involving multiple cohorts running each term.

All of this tends to mean that course administration needs to be well defined and efficiently run to minimise the administrative burden.

The following table provides a summary of the types of services that Oxford Lifelong Learning (via the Online Education Hub) provide to support students. This support relates specifically to courses that have already been created and now require on-going support.

As a team, use this table to identify the key features of student support that are relevant for your course, as well as identifying the areas that may require further information gathering or up-skilling.

Configuring the course

	Support	Description
	Monitoring levels of demand for advertised course	Tracking user traffic on course pages, enquiries and applications submitted to determine if the level of demand is likely to be sufficient to run a cohort of the course
	Administering financial accounts	Maintaining the relevant account string, cost centre or source of funds to administrate income and expenditure
	Scheduling academic staff	Engaging with faculty to determine availability of teaching staff to timetable cohort delivery

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	Contracting sessional tutors	Issuing contracts or adjusting fixed term equivalence for staff to resource teaching team
	Defining pre-requisites	Shaping academic achievement, written and spoken English and access requirements for the course so students know whether students are able to undertake the course
	Applying pricing strategies	Consider the advertised price of a course based on market and tax circumstances of countries the course is advertised in
	Rolling over Learning Management System courses	Create a new iteration of the course on the LMS for a new cohort of students
	Scheduling courses dates in Learning Management Systems	Updating date specific events, like tutorial and seminar times and assessment deadlines in the LMS

Marketing the course

	Promoting courses to alumni	Engaging with Alumni & Development Office to promote courses cross-departmental for targeted social media and emails comm
	Providing website search engine optimisation	
	Developing paid marketing campaigns	

Student enquiries, applications and enrolments

	Maintaining student records	Track prospective learners and actual learners to manage individual enquiries and applications and enrolments.
	Triaging queries	Respond to prospective learners' queries about the course, escalating to academic teams where they relate to the subject matter. Maintaining a list of course specific queries that help to update course page FAQs, inform course marketing strategies and feed AI support.
	Updating course webpage	Make adjustments to the course webpage based on feedback from prospective students whilst the course is being advertised
	Collect applications for consideration	Where the course is not open access, collate applications for academic assessors to consider
	Manage requests for discount or scholarship	Collate requests for discounts or access to more formal bursaries or scholarship

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	Communicate conditional offers	Where the course is not open access, notify prospective students of successful or unsuccessful applications. Gather supporting evidence from student for review by academic assessor
	Reasonable adjustments	Adapt the teaching strategies and online content based on the disabilities requirements of learners request reasonable adjustments be made.
	Collecting fees	Collect fees from credit or debit card payment, or direct bank transfer
	Issuing invoices	Collect fees from employers or group purchases, by issuing an invoice
	Managing waitlists	Maintain a list of enquiring students and promote the course if cohort numbers are not full

Starting the course

	Launching courses	Based on academic decision of a viable cohort numbers, publish the course on the Learning Management Systems
	Adding students and external users to Learning Management Systems	Creating individual user accounts on the LMS
	Enrolling students	Enrol users as students on specific courses
	Managing enrolment queries	Respond to queries from students about accessing the course and navigating around the site
	Managing withdrawals and suspensions	Triage requests to be removed from the course after enrolment, possibly to be re-added a later date
	Managing refunds	Assess the circumstances of drop-outs to decide whether a full or prorated/partial refund is appropriate, and whether it's appropriate to charge an administrative fee
	Managing debt collection	Follow-up on enrolled students who have not made full payment for the course, and potentially withdraw student for non-payment
	Onboarding students	Issue welcome emails and notifications to the course with instructions on how to begin the course

Teaching and assessing the course

	Triaging and escalating complaints	Acknowledge complaints from students, and triage them to appropriate levels of academic governance
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	Escalate misconduct issues	Acknowledge and escalate issues of alleged academic misconduct through the appropriate governance to the appropriate level of authority
	Administering academic integrity concerns	Support academic teams in communicating with students on matters of academic integrity in teaching and assessment
	Supporting technology for live seminars/tutorials	Support academics with synchronous teaching events hosted in Microsoft Teams to deal with screensharing, recording, audio/visual and breakout room configuration
	Collate requests for assessment extension	Collate requests from students to extend their deadline for summative assessment submissions, and communicate decisions back to students
	Administrate marking	Manage tutors to mark and provide appropriate levels of feedback against assessment rubrics in a timely manner. Co-ordinate second assessor and grade consolidation, where appropriate
	Issuing of grades	Publish grades through the MAS systems to students
	Offering resits	Collate requests from students to resubmit or retake a summative assignment, communicating decision back to student and configuring the Learning Management System as appropriate
	Issuing of digital credentials	Issue a non-award digital credential for attendance or attainment, as relevant

Ending the course

	Gathering course evaluation data	Issue course evaluation surveys to completing students and collate the results for analysis by academic departments
	Managing alumni relations	Add opt-in students into mailing lists and invite students to follow social media accounts for on-going engagement
	Promoting pathways	Promote opportunities for on-going study and pathways advancement to students in relevant disciplines