

Attendance monitoring and student support in first year biomedical sciences

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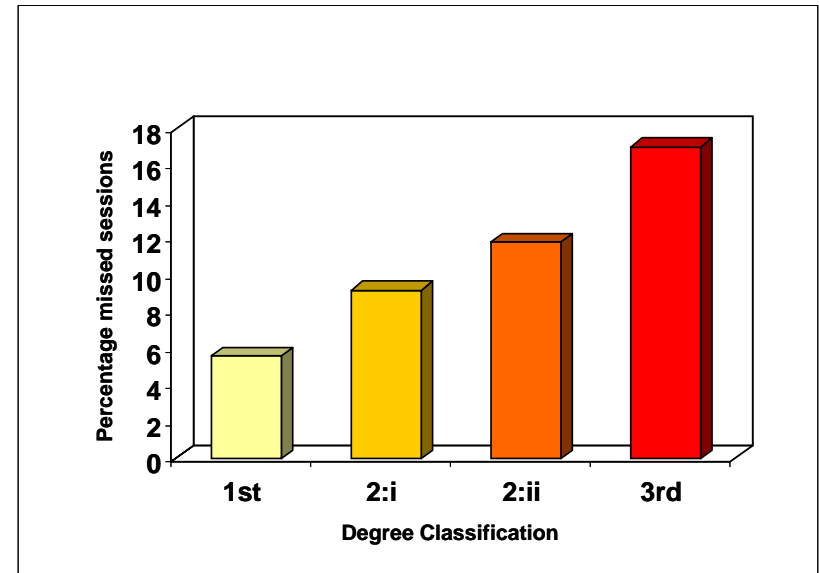
School of Biomedical Sciences

Newcastle University



Why monitor attendance?

- Strong correlation between poor attendance and poor performance
- To ensure that all learning outcomes are met
- To identify students who are struggling at an early stage and offer support



Relationship between final degree classification and attendance at taught sessions (cohort 2003/04-2005/06).

Phase 1 advisors

2 members of academic staff designated “Phase 1 advisors”

Role:

- Monitor student attendance at seminars and practicals in Phase 1 and interview non-attendees.
- Meet with students who fail in-course assessment and Semester 1 exams and offer additional support
- Provide a “backup” to the personal tutor system

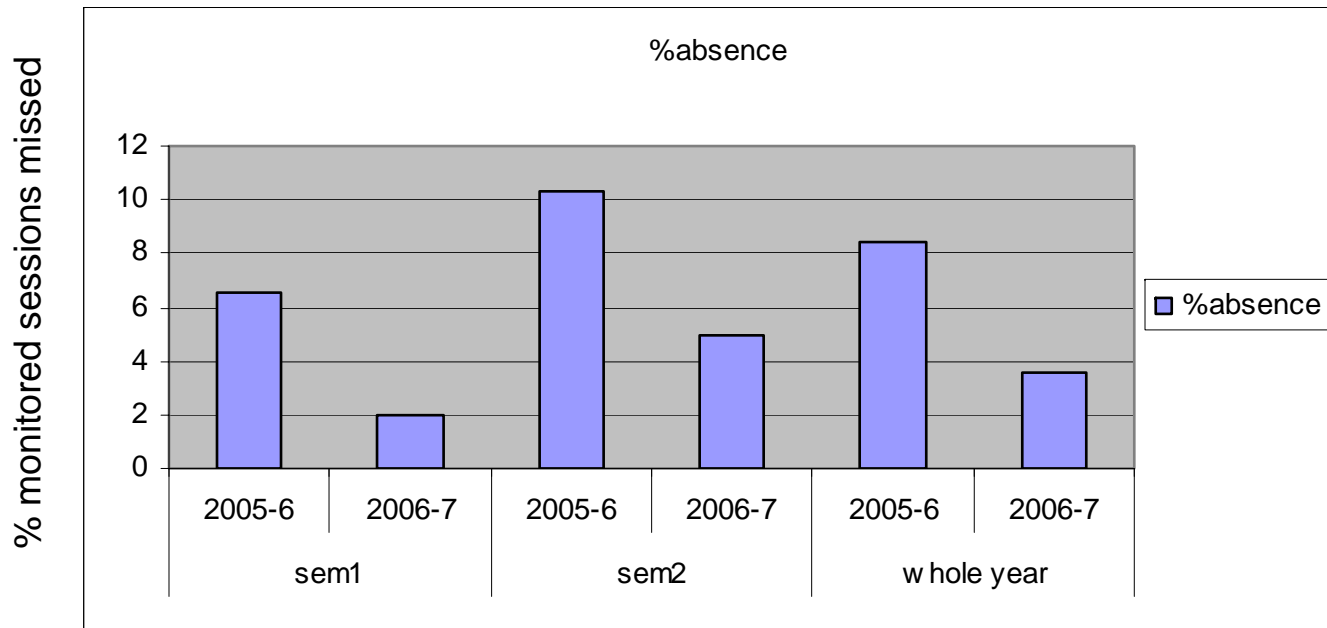
Attendance Monitoring: Methods

- Attendance monitored by signed register at all practical and seminar sessions in Stage 1 (& Stage 2 semester 1)
- Absentees contacted by email and required to attend interview with Phase 1 advisor
- Non-response to email followed up by letter from Phase 1 advisor
- Persistent absentees received letter from Head of School

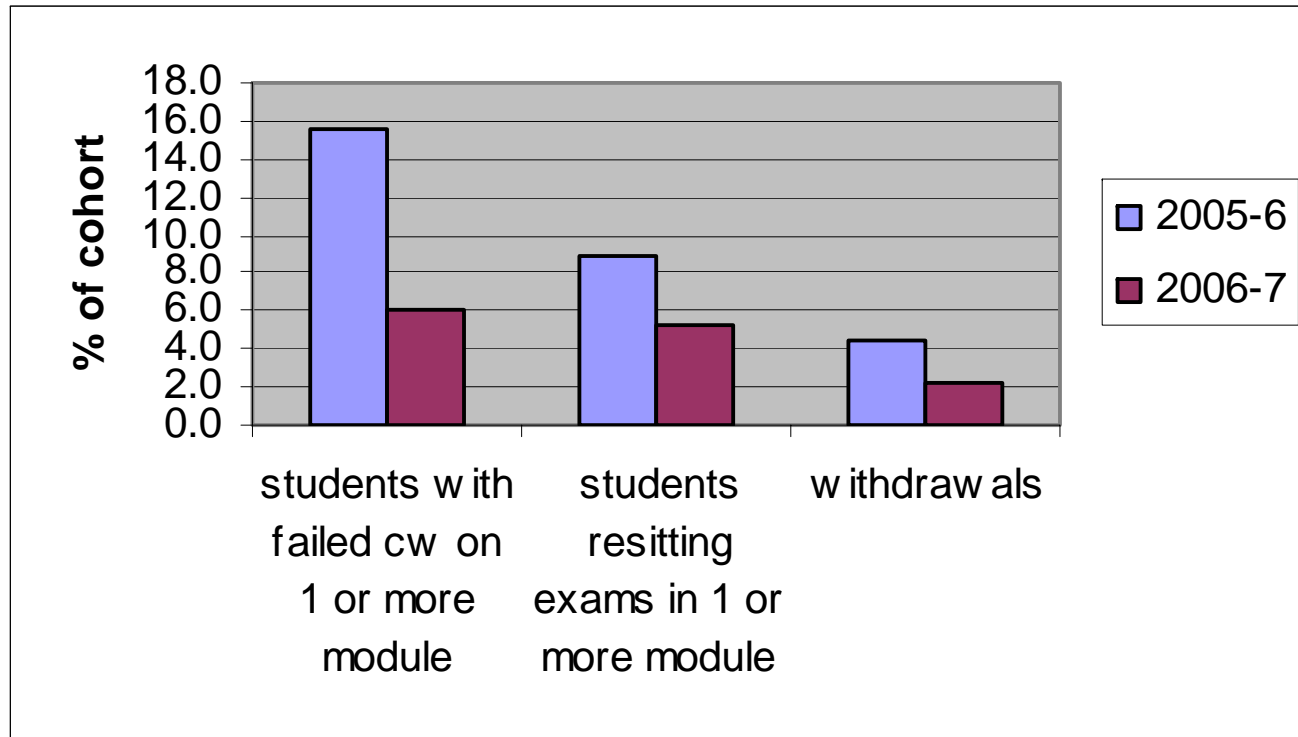
- Students must pass course work to pass module

Results

1. A marked reduction in absence from monitored sessions

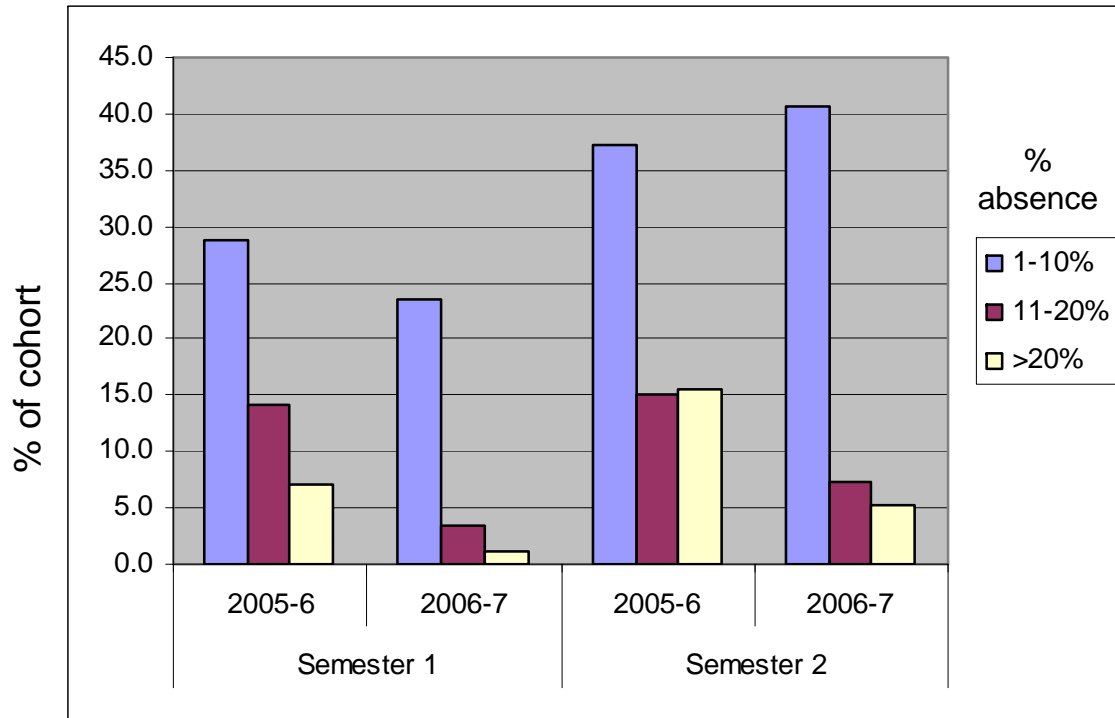


2. A reduction in % students failing coursework and exams



3. Improved student retention

4. Most significant impact was on the most “serious offenders”



Summary

- We have piloted a student support system which is **triggered by poor attendance** in the early stage of studies
- Initial data suggests that the system has had a positive impact on student **performance** and student **retention**.

Supplementary information

Attendance monitoring (Stage 1 students):

E-mails sent:	88
Meetings:	54
Letters from Ph1 advisor:	6
Letters from HoD:	2