

## **'Throwing a lifeline' - intervention strategies for students at risk**

This paper will discuss a pilot scheme which started in the academic year 2005/6. It was introduced for 1<sup>st</sup> year students on a computing course at the University of Central England, Birmingham and ran for two years. The aim of the study was to provide an intervention tool as early as possible, in our case immediately after the release of semester one results. The paper reports on the process and outcome evaluation of this intervention method with the aim of developing a successful early intervention strategy. The primary method used was a face-to-face structured 'progression interview' between the Faculty Student Support Tutor and the students. The paper will investigate the strategies designed to identify and combat obstacles to attending, learning and succeeding in the first year of University study. This takes the following into consideration:

- identification of students at risk
- the 3 stage strategy
- timely invitations and interventions
- the effect on attrition rates.

Key to these considerations will be a discussion of how students learn, assessment criteria and feedback.

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