

# MAHATMA GANDHI INSTITUTE OF MEDICAL SCIENCES, SEVAGRAM

## MEDICAL EDUCATION UNIT

### CRITERIA FOR IDENTIFYING LEARNERS WHO NEED ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

Every institute has several kinds of learners. Respecting their diversity in learning, the institute has developed strategies to assess their learning abilities, in order to identify and support learners who need additional support.

The aim of this exercise is to identify learners who require additional support early in the MBBS course, and to enhance their learning using tailor-made strategies.

Broadly, the programme will focus on two categories:

- (a) Learners who do not perform well academically and
- (b) Learners who excel in academics

### THE NOMENCLATURE

1. We find it discriminatory and deprecatory to attach a label of slow learner or low academic performer to students. Therefore, henceforth the terminology used will be **“students needing additional support”**.
2. The learners who achieve excellence in academics will henceforth be referred to as **“high academic achievers”**.


### STRATEGIES TO IDENTIFY THESE STUDENTS NEEDING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT

It is not wise to wait for the results of a summative high-stakes examination to identify learners needing additional support. Failure will lead to reduced motivation among learners. Extra classes or supplementary examinations taken at this stage will have limited impact on learning. The best way will be to identify them at the first opportunity at formative assessment, so that preventive action can be taken.

Immediately after the first internal assessment examination of each subject, students will be divided into three categories based on total marks acquired in theory and practicals. The students who have scores in the lower one-third group will be identified as students needing additional support. Teachers will be asked to go through their answer papers and have one-to-one interactions with students to identify the root cause behind poor academic performance.

Based on this, students will be classified as:

- (a) students needing additional curricular support (SNACS)

  
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- *Cognitive problems*: Difficulty in understanding English; problems in writing coherently; problems in expression and communication; learning disabilities; poor foundation of knowledge or skills; inability to integrate knowledge
  - *Affective issues*: Difficulty in retention of knowledge; poor memory; low intrinsic motivation towards learning
  - *Structural problems*: Difficulty in managing time; difficulty in organization of content; inability to manage workload; difficulty in concentrating on studies
- (b) students needing additional psychological support (SNAPS):
- *interpersonal issues*: difficulty in adjusting with colleagues or hostel life; difficulty in interacting with students or teachers; family or personal issues
  - *clinical problems*: stress, anxiety, depression, health issues, substance abuse etc.

Departments will assign academic mentors to these students. Their academic performance and progress will be closely followed up by these mentors periodically.

### **STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT SNACS AND SNAPS**

These students will have the following options:


1. Additional one-to-one coaching or small group teaching on topics of their choice with an assigned teacher twice a month
2. Attending workshop on Developing Good Study Skills: sessions on memory, reinforcement and retention techniques, time management, metacognition, Cornell's note taking, speed reading techniques, group learning.
3. Stress management sessions: conducted by Arogyadham and Students Council
4. Self-directed learning sessions using techniques like problem-based learning, self-assessment online modules, small group discussions, tutorials etc.
5. Peer-teaching sessions: Volunteer students from same or senior batch will spend two hours per week in teaching students individually or in small groups.
6. Opportunity to visit student counselling and guidance cell

Students have a cafeteria choice, where they can choose whatever works best for them.

### **STRATEGIES FOR HIGH ACADEMIC PERFORMERS**

Students who score in the upper-third of marks in the first formative assessment of each subject will be listed as high academic performers. They will be encouraged to:

1. Participate in intercollegiate quizzes and competitions
2. Participate in ICMR-STs Research projects or other research projects
3. Join electives of their choice under suitable mentors
4. Join summer internship opportunities
5. Train in specific research methodologies such as: searching literature, referencing, critical analysis of a paper, writing for publication etc.
6. Conduct group community or clinical projects


  
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## PLAN OF ACTION

1. IDENTIFICATION: After first internal assessment of each subject, each department identify students needing additional support and high academic achievers
2. DIAGNOSIS: Diagnose exact category into which they can be placed after one-to-one interaction with them
3. ASSIGN A MENTOR: Assign an academic mentor to students needing additional support. The mentor will conduct one-to-one assessment on the student's performance and give feedback to the learner on how to improve performance. Document each step properly
4. INFORM LEARNER ABOUT CHOICES: Learners will be informed about choices available to them to improve academic performance
5. MAKE A MUTUALLY AGREED PLAN OF ACTION: Both the mentor and learner will decide a time-bound plan on how to improve performance.
6. SUBMIT NAMES:
  - Names of students needing additional curricular support and strategies planned for them will be sent to Dean, Students' Section, and Medical Education Unit
  - Names of students needing additional psychological support will be sent to Dean, Students' Section and Student Guidance and Counselling Cell
  - Names of students who are high academic performers will be sent to Dean, Students' Section and Undergraduate Research Committee. The UG Research Committee can allot research mentors to them in groups of 4 or 5.
7. Departmental mentors will follow progress of the students and submit every six months, with reports of meeting conducted with them to Dean and IQAC (Format given below). Document each step properly.

## REFERENCES:

1. Shivasakthy M, Sethuraman KR. Students needing additional curricular support and psychological support (SNACS, SNAPS) – A perspective shift. *Ann SBV*. Jan-Jun 2017; 6(1): 44-47
2. Vaughn LM, Baker RC, DeWitt TG. The Problem Learner. *Teaching and Learning in Medicine*. 2015;10(4):217-222

  
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**INTERNAL QUALITY ASSURANCE CELL, MGIMS SEVAGRAM**  
**HALF-YEARLY REPORT ON STUDENTS REQUIRING ADDITIONAL SUPPORT**  
**(To be filled on Google forms)**

Department:

Name of Academic Mentor:

Name of student:

Batch:

Roll Number:

Date of meeting conducted with student:

What were the issues discussed?

What was the plan of action mutually agreed upon by the mentor and student?

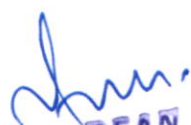
Attendance and Scores of the student in internal assessment (Write in percentage)

First Term	Attendance	Theory marks	Practical marks
Second Term			
Third Term			

Any other remarks:

Signature of student

Signature of academic mentor

  
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