

STaRS Coordinators: Expectations and Responsibilities

A guide for Staff and Schools

Direct responsibilities under the Vice Chancellor's Transition and Retention Taskforce

The STARS Network is overseen by the Vice Chancellor's Transition and Retention Taskforce, established in 2021 to drive Western Sydney University's transition and retention strategy.

The Taskforce's Terms of Reference are to:

1. Oversee the implementation and development of Western's Transition and Retention strategy.
2. Develop better data sources, learning analytics and business intelligence to support access, integration and interpretation of data for planning and intervention.
3. Use an evidence-based approach to the identification of key 'at-risk' indicators.
4. Develop effective data-driven interventions to support transition and retention.
5. Report to the Executive Committee and inform the work of the Senate Education Committee.

The Taskforce has also created a [Transition and Retention Strategy](#) to guide schools in this area.

School responsibilities

These are overarching responsibilities that apply to all schools.

1. Liaise with unit coordinators/DAPs/ACAs and other staff across the School to ensure the effective implementation of transition and retention activities, and to share evidence-based best practice information, resources, and strategies.
2. Disseminate information provided via the STaRS 'functional network' to the appropriate person(s)/area(s) within the School, and provide a conduit for other staff within their Schools for feedback to the broader university (via school managers and the VC's Taskforce) on any transition and retention issues.
3. Be active members of the STaRS Community of Practice. The Community of Practice is practitioner led and offers an informal and supportive forum to review and discuss transition and retention, both at WSU and in the wider sector context.
4. Promote the display and discussion of the STARS Key Transition Message slides in each first-year course's core-transition unit.

Responsibilities for curriculum and pedagogy

These activities may have different priorities according to the needs of the school and academic staff. Interpretation of the duties listed below should be negotiated with the Associate Dean of Learning and Teaching and other school staff.

Inform pedagogy

- Work with unit coordinators to manage and support individual at-risk students academically
- Assist teaching staff and coordinators to gain timely access to transition and retention data for curriculum and research purposes

Support curriculum design

- Promote awareness among academics of STARS coordinators
- Embed activities/skills and coordinate deadlines for assessments across first year
- Coordinate assessment and literacy focus across units
- Contribute to a First Year Handbook to support academics teaching first-year students
- Participate in and promote teaching and learning showcases

Promote and develop co-curricular support

- Connect students with onboarding team, the Library, academic skills resources and other support
- Distribute information 'just in time' e.g. information about marking feedback
- Inform staff about available co-curricular support
- Organise activities for first year students, such as virtual hangouts

Cultivate good teaching and learning practice

- Understand student needs and the student experience
- Embed student well-being support further into first year curriculum and scaffold this beyond first year
- Support the completion of the Academic Integrity Module
- Support colleagues by facilitating sharing of knowledge/ experiences