

Guidance on use of Early Leaver Interview template

1. This template should be used when interviewing students who have made a definite decision to withdraw from their course, not with those who are still seeking advice on the best course of action.
2. Faculties should customise the template to gather information on engagement with their own activities to enhance retention.
3. The template should be used as the basis for a semi-structured interview, **not** as a questionnaire.
4. Face-to-face is the preferred way of conducting the exit interview.
5. For students who have left without a face-to-face interview, Faculties should attempt (once or twice only) to conduct a telephone interview focussing on the core questions, 5-8, and any faculty information. A pro-forma is provided to record attempts to contact students (Appendix 1).
6. Records of interviews should be stored by the School/Faculty.
7. Data obtained from exit interviews should be considered at course/subject committees and School/Faculty teaching and learning committees to help evaluation of the effectiveness of retention efforts, and to inform reporting at University level.

Early Leaver Interview Template

1. Student name
2. Student number
3. Course (including full or part-time)
4. Year (1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, PG)
5. Was this your first choice of course? (e.g. your CF choice) Y/N
6. Was this your first choice of university? Y/N
7. Did you enter your course through 'Clearing'? Y/N
8. How influential are the following on your leaving your course?
(Tick all boxes that apply)

(a) Course-related reasons

	Associated leaving code	
I simply realised that I had chosen the wrong field of study	05	
The course was not sufficiently relevant to my intended career	05	
The difficulty of the course	05	
The course was not what I expected	05	
The timetabling of the course did not suit my needs	05	
Too heavy a workload on the course	05	
The way the course was taught did not suit me	05	
The general quality of the teaching	05	
The amount of contact with academic staff	05	

The quality of the feedback on my work	05	
The speed with which I received feedback on my work	05	
Other – what?		

(b) Institution-related reasons

The level of provision of library / learning resources facilities	05	
The level of provision of computing facilities	05	
The level of provision of specialist equipment for the course (e.g. studio/ lab equipment)	05	
The level of provision of social facilities (e.g. student union activities, sports facilities)	05	
The institution was not what I had expected	05	
Other – what?		

(c) Personal reasons

I felt I was making insufficient academic progress	03	
I fell behind with my academic work and didn't feel I could catch up	03	
A lack of appropriate study skills (e.g. note taking, exam preparation, essay writing)	03	
Stress related to the demands of the course	03	
A lack of personal support from staff	03	
Financial problems	02	
Problems with accommodation	03	
Travel difficulties (e.g. cost, time)	03	
A lack of personal support from friends/family	03	
Emotional difficulties involving others (e.g. family, partner, friend)	03	
Personal health problems	01	
The needs of dependants (e.g. family, partner)	03	
Childcare problems	03	
Pregnancy or partner's pregnancy	03	
Bereavement of someone close to me	03	
The demands of employment whilst studying	03	
Taking up employment	04	
Other -what?		

9. Where are/were you living while at the University?

- a. At home
- b. In university-run accommodation
- c. In other private accommodation

10. Are you the first person in your immediate family (parents, siblings) to attend university? Y/N

11. On average, how many hours do you spend per week during term time on part-time employment?

- a. none;

- b. 1-6;
- c. 7-12;
- d. 13-18;
- e. more than 18

12. What are you planning to do next?

- a. Transfer to another institution
- b. Transfer to another course at Ulster
- c. Take up employment
- d. Look for employment
- e. Other - specify

13. Have you already discussed leaving with anyone at the University? Y/N

14. If so, with whom?

- a. Studies Adviser Y/N
- b. Course Director Y/N
- c. Head of School Y/N
- d. Student Support counsellor Y/N
- e. Career Development Centre Y/N
- f. Other – specify

15. Have you accessed any student support services while at university?

- a. Counselling Y/N
- b. Health centre Y/N
- c. Disability advice Y/N
- d. Financial Advisor Y/N
- e. Childcare Y/N
- f. Library staff Y/N
- g. Career Development Centre Y/N
- h. Students' Union Welfare Officer Y/N
- i. Chaplain Y/N
- j. Other – specify

16. Did you attend any induction sessions? Y/N

17. Did you attend scheduled appointments with your Studies Adviser? Y/N

18. Could the University have done anything to prevent your leaving? Y/N

If Yes, what?

19. Any other comments you would like to make on your reasons for leaving?

Name of Interviewer

Position (e.g. Course Director, Faculty administrator)

Date of Interview

Appendix 1

Record of contact with withdrawing student

Student Name _____

Student Number _____

School _____

Course _____

Address (home) _____

Phone Number: Home _____

Mobile _____

Face-to-face interview Yes No

Questionnaire completed Yes No

Phone Contact Attempt Record

Call date	Number	Outcome (e.g. not answered, interview completed)

Other Contacts (e.g.letter)

Name of member of staff responsible for contact _____