

Equity Frontiers Trial Protocol

“The Impact of Non-Participating Enrolments Withdrawal Campaign on Non-Participating Enrolments: A randomised controlled trial”

Table of Contents

1. Trial overview	3
2. Background and objective	4
Background	4
Intervention	4
Objectives.....	5
3. Trial design	6
Outcomes.....	6
Trial design.....	6
Primary outcomes	6
Outcome 1: Increase unit withdrawal rates among NPE prior to (financial and/or academic) penalties	6
Detailed trial process	6
Data extraction and identification (Weeks 0-2)	6
Opt-out period (Weeks 1-2).....	7
Randomisation (Weeks 2).....	7
Intervention and monitoring (Weeks 3-12).....	7
Final extraction and analysis (Week 13 onwards)	9
Sense-making (SP2)	9
Participants	10
Participant withdrawal criteria and procedures.....	10
4. Data management and statistical analysis	11
Data management.....	11
Sample cleaning	12
Handling missing data	12
Detecting spurious data	13
Quality assurance measures.....	13

Statistical methods and diagnostics	13
Quality control and quality assurance	14
5. Publication	15
Plans for publication and dissemination of trial results	15
6. Appendices	16
Appendix 3: Trial information email communication with opt-out option	16
Appendix 4: Opt-out confirmation email	18
Appendix 5: SMS Communication – Opt Out Notification	19
Appendix 6: Nudge 1 email communication	20
Appendix 7: Nudge 1 SMS communication	21
Appendix 8: Nudge 1 email response communications – YES	22
Appendix 9: Nudge 1 email response communication – NO	23
Appendix 10: Nudge 1 call script	24
Appendix 11: Nudge 2 email communication	27
Appendix 12: Nudge 2 email response communication – YES	28
Appendix 13: Nudge 2 email response communication – NO	29
Appendix 14: Nudge 2 call script	30
Appendix 15: Nudge 3 (auto enrolment) SMS communication	33
Appendix 16: Nudge 3 email communication	34
Appendix 17: Nudge 3 email response communication – YES	35
Appendix 18: Nudge 3 email response communication – NO	36



1. Trial overview

Trial title:	The Impact of the Non-Participating Enrolments (NPE) Withdrawal Campaign on Non-Participating Enrolments: A randomised controlled trial		
Trial start date:	March 2025	Trial finish date:	April 2026
Principal Investigator name:	Emma Pelliccione (co-lead) Patricia Vermillion Peirce (co-lead)		
Principal Investigator contact details:	emma.pelliccione@curtin.edu.au Patricia.vermillionpeirce@curtin.edu.au		
Sponsor:	Curtin University Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES)		
Trial summary:	<p>The Non-Participating Enrolments (NPE) Withdrawal Campaign identifies highly disengaged online students and provides early intervention to minimise the obstacles in the withdrawal process.</p> <p>The Student Support team identifies “highly disengaged” online students as those who were enrolled but did not participate in a previous study period. The Campaign engages these identified students, initially through a Student Relationship Engagement System (SRES) email, offering the opportunity to consider “withdrawal” prior to the census date. This email provides guidance on how to enrol, to enable easier withdrawal. Students who do not respond by the outlined due date will receive two attempted phone calls from the student support team to discuss their options, and a final SRES email. This same campaign will be applied prior to “census date” (the withdrawal date which will not incur course fees), and for those who remained enrolled, the same campaign will be applied prior to “academic census” (the withdrawal date which will not result in academic penalties).</p> <p>The NPE Withdrawal Campaign is expected to benefit NPE students, particularly those from First-in-Family and low socio-economic backgrounds, and result in fewer NPEs incurring penalties inevitable in disengagement.</p>		
Funding (total, and funding sources)	\$167,663, fully funded by the Australian Centre for Student Equity and Success (ACSES)		
Ethics approval (grantor, date, reference ID)	Curtin University Ethics Panel, Approval Number: HRE2025-0242		



2. Background and objective

Background

Research shows that students previously classified as Non-Participating Enrolments (NPE) are at high risk of poor academic outcomes and attrition. These students may wish to withdraw but may not know how or be unaware that they are still enrolled. This is particularly true for students who are “automatically enrolled” and participate in online courses, such as Open Universities Australia (OUA) students studying at Curtin University. These students may struggle to navigate higher education systems and processes, especially when those systems cross two universities.

Data from Curtin University (2024) shows that 95% of OUA students enrolled at Curtin who are identified as NPE in the previous study period go on to fail in their next enrolled unit. Therefore, it is not expected that any existing interventions will increase successful completion or that existing supports will facilitate positive attrition and reduce student financial burden.

Existing activities to support these same students include Curtin University’s broader “disengaged campaign,” which aims to increase engagement among students who do not meaningfully interact with their course content in the first three weeks of the study period. This campaign focuses on increasing engagement directly. Our theory is that at least some NPE students may not wish to continue their studies but may require assistance withdrawing, and these students may require a campaign focused on this outcome. A common theme among student support calls is students’ struggles with OUA withdrawal. Many students do not know how to withdraw from an OUA unit, or erroneously believe they have already done so, often only successfully withdrawing post-census, at which point they are liable for course fees. Furthermore, students have reported being unaware they were enrolled, having been “rolled over” to the following study period by OUA, rather than manually opting in.

Intervention

This trial examines the effect of the NPE Withdrawal Campaign (the Campaign) on pre-census withdrawal among enrolled, non-participating, fully online Open Universities Australia (OUA) students enrolled at Curtin University. The trial examines the impact on NPE students overall, with a particular focus on those who may have limited support to help them navigate higher education systems, such as first-generation students and those from low socioeconomic backgrounds, who may be impacted most by accumulating financial debt and failing grades.

The NPE Withdrawal Campaign first identifies highly disengaged online students and provides early intervention to minimise the obstacles in the withdrawal process. The Student Support team examines currently enrolled OUA students and identifies “highly disengaged” students. There are two phases to this evaluation. NPEs are identified in the first phase as those who are currently enrolled in Study Period 2 (2025) and were enrolled in a previous study period (Study Period 4) and received a final grade of Fail/Incomplete, or 0, for any completed unit in that period. The second phase is for those enrolled in Study Period 4 (2025), and who were enrolled in Study Period 2 and received a final grade of Fail/Incomplete, or 0, for any completed unit in that period.



Once identified, these students are randomly allocated to either receive the Campaign (the “intervention group”) or not (the “control group”), ensuring equal allocation across students identified as First-in-Family and/or from low socio-economic status (SES) backgrounds (i.e. stratified random allocation). Students in the control group receive the existing support available to them through the university, provided by Curtin University’s broader “disengaged campaign”.

The Campaign engages identified students initially via an SRES email, offering them the opportunity to consider withdrawal prior to the census date. This email links to a purpose-built form in the university’s Customer Relationship Management (CRM) portal, designed to simplify the withdrawal process by linking multiple student management systems. Students who do not respond by the outlined due date receive two phone calls from the Student Support team to discuss their options, followed by a final SRES email. This same campaign is applied prior to the census date (the withdrawal date that will not incur course fees) and, for students who remain enrolled, prior to the academic census date (the withdrawal date that will not result in academic penalties).

Objectives

The trial estimates the impact of the Campaign, including the identification process, and campaign communications on student withdrawals.



3. Trial design

Outcomes

There are four study periods for OUA students studying at Curtin University. The first phase of the trial focuses on Study Period 2 (SP2). The second phase will be undertaken in Study Period 4 (SP4).

Trial design

This is a randomised controlled trial (RCT), with half of the students randomly allocated to either the intervention (campaign support) or control (no intervention). In phases 1 and 2, students are identified as NPE if they did not engage in a previous study period (SP4 2024 and SP2 2025, respectively). In study periods 2 and 4, these students are randomly allocated to either the intervention or control group using stratified randomisation to account for confounders related to student background, specifically First-in-Family status and low SES background. The trial is monitored for implementation fidelity, uptake, and response. Analysis is conducted on all cases using an intention-to-treat approach, with secondary analysis focused on student-specific backgrounds to assess treatment effects for these groups.

Primary outcomes

Outcome 1: Increase unit withdrawal rates among NPE prior to (financial and/or academic) penalties

Measures:

- Student unit withdrawals (Yes / No), prior to census date (Week 4).
- Student unit withdrawals (Yes / No), prior to academic census date (Week 6).

Instrument:

- University administrative data, captured directly from the student data management system, Student One.

Approach:

- The student enrolment data is extracted from Student One, by Week 4 and 6. The enrolment information is cross-checked with unit information using the student identification (ID) number. Successful unit withdrawal is indicated by either census or academic dates.

Detailed trial process

The following process will be applied in SP2 and SP4.

Data extraction and identification (Weeks 0-2)

Using Student One, the student ID numbers of all eligible NPE students are extracted. Importantly, students who have opted out of the trial are excluded from the extract. Additional variables collected include: First-in-Family (FiF) status, low SES postcode, culturally and



linguistically diverse (CALD) status, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander identification, rural/regional/remote location, and self-declared disability.

A second analyst inspects the list for enrolment count accuracy, duplicate student ID numbers or names, and consistency of identified information with Student One. Once validated, the dataset is extracted with relevant information—unique identifier, NPE flag (confirmation), and key variables. This “eligible list” is retained as a separate file and given to the two teams working across the data (the intervention team and the research team), allowing for later quality assurance checks.

Opt-out period (Weeks 1-2)

Students are eligible for the trial only if they are over 18 years old, have an Australian phone number, an email address, and, for the first phase, are enrolled in both SP4 (2024) and SP2 (2025), or, for the second phase, are enrolled in both SP2 and SP4 (2025). Students are classified as NPE if they were enrolled in the study periods and received a final grade of 0 or Fail/Incomplete for any completed unit in the previous study period. Totals (n) and any data loss are documented for each inclusion variable.

Eligible NPE students are given the opportunity to opt out of the trial. Across weeks 1 and 2 of the semester, all eligible students receive a clear written explanation of the trial, its objectives, and how the Campaign may affect them, via their first SRES communication. Instructions on how to opt out are also provided.

An analyst on the trial team records any opt-outs and removes these individuals from lists of eligible individuals that will be randomised.

Randomisation (Weeks 2)

In Week 2, students are grouped into four strata based on two characteristics: whether they are the first in their family to attend university (yes or no) and whether they are from a low SES background (yes or no). Within each stratum, students are assigned a random number and then sorted accordingly. They are then allocated alternately to the intervention and control groups, ensuring a 1:1 allocation ratio within each stratum. This stratified randomisation approach maintains balance between conditions across key equity characteristics.

The final randomised list of anonymous student ID numbers is cross-checked by a second analyst using the *eligible list* to confirm all individuals are uniquely represented and balanced across groups. A new file, named *implementation*, is created containing only student ID numbers assigned to the intervention group and sent to the implementation team analyst.

Intervention and monitoring (Weeks 3-12)

The list of student ID numbers that are allocated to the intervention is provided to the Campaign delivery team. The delivery team combines the contact information relevant to each individual, using the student management system to join together student ID numbers with first name, phone number, and email address(es).

This concatenation, pulling together the student ID numbers with individual contact information, is cross-checked by a second analyst manually, checking 20% of the student records with the contact details. If more than 1% of the individuals checked include errors,



the remaining dataset is manually checked. This cleaned and quality assured dataset will be provided to the Campaign team.

Throughout delivery, the trial is monitored for implementation fidelity (that is, whether all those allocated to treatment receive the intervention as intended), as well as uptake and response (that is, engagement among those supported through the intervention).

The following variables are added to the dataset, reflecting the engagement at different points in weeks 3-4:

- **SMS Email delivery 1** is noted, according to the date.
- **SMS Email outcome 1** will be noted by the end of week 4, as the student:
 - withdrew from the course
 - notified to remain enrolled (as the student responded via SMS that they wish to remain enrolled in their unit).

After the SMS Email engagements, the list is manually reviewed by the Campaign team, to identify any persons in the intervention that did not receive support as intended. These numbers are noted, and the individuals are maintained for intention to treat analysis.

- **Phone Engagement 1** is noted, according to the SRES send date.
- **Phone Engagement Result 1** will be noted, as the student:
 - withdrew from the course
 - notified to remain enrolled (as the student responded via SMS that they wish to remain enrolled in their unit).

Following this initial campaign, a second wave of support will be delivered to the remaining NPE students in the intervention, irrespective of whether they begin to engage in the course or not. During weeks 4-6, the list of students receiving the Campaign will have any individuals who withdrew from the course or notified to remain enrolled filtered out.

- **SMS Email Delivery 2** is noted, according to the date.
- **SMS Email Outcome 2** will be noted by the end of week 4, as the student:
 - withdrew from the course
 - notified to remain enrolled (as the student responded via SMS that they wish to remain enrolled in their unit).

The list is manually reviewed by the Campaign team, and any identified anomalies are noted and reflected as “errors”. This data informs the participant flow diagram, showing the numbers of students flowing into each stage of the campaign, according to outcome.

This updated list is filtered by SRES result, removing any individuals who responded. The students who do not respond will receive up to two attempted phone calls.

- **Phone Engagement 2** is noted, according to the SRES send date.
- **Phone Engagement Result 2** will be noted, as the student:
 - withdrew from the course
 - notified to remain enrolled (as the student responded via SMS that they wish to remain enrolled in their unit).

The final dataset, including outcome data and response indicators, is reviewed by two analysts—one from the Campaign team and one from the trial team. Each analyst independently produces counts across key demographic characteristics within the



intervention and control groups, cross-referencing them against the original “eligible list.” They also generate counts for each outcome variable by subgroup. Any discrepancies are investigated and corrected, and the final “implementation” file is securely stored in Curtin University’s data management system.

Final extraction and analysis (Week 13 onwards)

The *implementation* dataset forms the basis for the core analysis dataset. All personal identifiers, including names and contact details, are removed before sending to the research team. This cleaned dataset is then merged with the *allocation* dataset, which includes unique ID numbers and equity-related variables for both control and intervention groups. Outcome data (for example, withdrawals and unit results) are extracted from the university’s student management system.

A sample of records is randomly selected and cross-checked against university systems and the original *implementation* dataset to ensure accuracy. The final combined dataset is provided to the trial team for analysis using an intention-to-treat approach, applying logistic regression methods as described below.

Sense-making (SP2)

At the conclusion of the first trial phase, we conduct a participatory sense-making session. In this session, we invite all OUA students to review and reflect on the preliminary trial results. This collaborative process allows students and the trial team to share experiences, explore potential explanations behind the findings, and co-develop recommendations to inform future improvements to the intervention.

Students are recruited via CRM communications, with a general invitation for trial participants to express interest in joining the sense-making session. Up to 25 students will be self-selected for an online 1-hour sense-making session, with an appropriate incentive offered for participation. Discussion topics will include:

- an overview of the initiative, including its theory and activities
- the preliminary trial results
- an open dialogue on the findings and recommended next steps to support NPE students.

Following the student session, the trial team will hold an additional sense-making session for key Curtin University and OUA stakeholders, including equity practitioners, staff, and faculty academics. These sessions aim to identify actionable improvements and explore broader institutional mechanisms for supporting NPE students.

Stakeholder recruitment is conducted via email and phone, drawing on those already engaged during the trial preparation phase. These stakeholders are familiar with the initiative and invested in addressing the challenges faced by NPE students. Invitations will include a registration form (as used for student sessions), enabling participants to confirm attendance and provide any relevant context in advance.

Discussion points for the stakeholder sessions will mirror those of the student sessions:

- the initiative, including its theoretical foundation and activities
- the trial’s preliminary results



- collaborative discussion on findings and future strategies for supporting NPE students.

Participants

Participants in the trial are OUA students enrolled in any Curtin University course. To be included in the trial, students must have an Australian phone number, an email address, and be enrolled in both SP2 and SP4. From this group, only students who were enrolled in SP4 and received a grade of Fail/Incomplete for any completed unit during that period are classified as NPE (Yes or No).

In the absence of previous research to guide expected effect sizes, and assuming a standard withdrawal rate of 31%, we defined a practically meaningful difference of 10%: the percentage of NPE in the intervention group who withdraw will be 10% higher than the control group (41% vs. 31%). We used GPower 3.1.9.7 to estimate the required sample size. To detect this difference using two-tailed z test, examining the difference between two independent proportions with 80% power and an alpha 0.05, we calculated a required sample size of 722 students, with 361 in each of the intervention and control groups. Accounting for an expected 25% dropout rate from the trial, we aim to recruit at least 963 students, which would allow us to examine the overall effects of withdrawal (at any stage prior to academic or financial penalty) on NPEs.

If numbers permit, we will examine the effects of withdrawal at financial census (not incurring financial penalty) and/or academic census (not incurring academic penalty) separately. Our expected effect size for both census dates is an increase in withdrawals by 7% and 3%, which would result in our total sample size requirement of 1446 and 8336 respectively.

Since funding allows for delivery across two study periods (SP2 and SP4), we will re-estimate statistical power before the second phase of the trial. If the first phase achieves sufficient power, the second phase may test a slightly modified intervention approach. If the first phase (SP2 intervention) does not achieve the required power, data from both study periods (SP2 and SP4) will be pooled. In SP4, we will adjust the stratification approach (see Section 3.3) to account for participants' previous exposure to the trial intervention.

Participant withdrawal criteria and procedures

This trial employs an opt-out consent approach. Students are informed prior to the trial that they may withdraw at any time. To do so, they notify the Project Co-Lead via email. If a student chooses not to participate, all information collected from or about them is deleted from the study records. Participants who opt out are not replaced, and no follow-up is conducted for those who withdraw.



4. Data management and statistical analysis

Data management

Information is extracted from the Student One system to create four datasets—each aligned with a specific stage of the implementation process. These datasets are stored separately, allowing for cross-checking and quality assurance throughout the trial. Each dataset is accompanied by a data dictionary, outlining the information relevant to those accessing the data, as well as the core variables required for quality assurance.

The four datasets are used at different points in the implementation process, corresponding to specific weeks of the intervention. The data included in each dataset are as follows:

Table 1: Data dictionary for the operational datasets.

Variable name (Source)	Response categories	Weeks 0-2 (Eligibility)	Weeks 2-3 (Allocation)	Weeks 4-13 (Implementation)	SP3 (Analysis)
Student ID (Student One)	Free text	X	X	X	X
Name (Student One)	Free text	X		X	
Phone number (Student One)	Number			X	
Email address (Student One)	Free text			X	
First in Family (Student One)	Yes; No	X	X		X
Low SES (Student One)	Yes; No	X	X		X
Other equity (Student One)	Yes; No	X	X		X
Year level of study (Student One)	First; Other	X	X		X
Age (Student One)	In years	X	X		X
Degree level (Student One)	Certificate or diploma; Bachelor; Post graduate	X	X		X
Admission Type (Student One)	ATAR; non-traditional	X	X		X
Withdrawn consent (Practitioner)	Withdrawal date; empty	X		X	X
Allocation (Trial team)	Control; Intervention		X	Include Intervention only	X
SRES Census (Practitioner)	Date			X	X



Variable name (Source)	Response categories	Weeks 0-2 (Eligibility)	Weeks 2-3 (Allocation)	Weeks 4-13 (Implementation)	SP3 (Analysis)
SRES Census Result (Practitioner)	Withdrew; Remain enrolled; No response			X	X
Phone Census	Date			X	X
Phone Census Result (Practitioner)	Withdrew; Remain enrolled; No response			X	X
SRES Census	Date			X	X
SRES Census Result (Practitioner)	Withdrew; Remain enrolled; No response			X	X
Phone Census (Practitioner)	Date			X	X
Phone Census Result (Practitioner)	Withdrew; Remain enrolled; No response			X	X
Unenrolment (Student One)	Date				X
Pass (Student One)	Pass; Fail				X

All data are stored on Curtin University's Research Drive as a central, secure location and are only shared with project team members in accordance with Curtin University's guidelines and policies. Access is restricted to Curtin University's password-protected digital portals. No alternative storage systems are used for the collected data. There are no physical data storage requirements. Data are retained for a minimum of seven years, in line with the Western Australia University Sector Disposal Authority guidelines. All data are backed up and version-controlled to safeguard integrity. Files are stored in standard formats, such as MS Excel or other common spreadsheet formats.

Sample cleaning

Ensuring data integrity is a critical component of the trial. The following steps outline how the sample are cleaned, addressing missing, unused, and spurious data.

Handling missing data

All collected data are reviewed for missing entries at both individual and variable levels. Missing data points are identified through initial checks during data entry to flag incomplete records. If outcome data are missing for some participants, the primary analysis will assume data are "Missing At Random" (MAR). Sensitivity analyses will explore a complete-case analysis, and imputation to account for potential biases due to missingness.



The proportion and pattern of missing data will be described and reported.

Detecting spurious data

Spurious data, or entries that appear inaccurate, are identified through:

- logical consistency checks and identifying entries that do not align with expected ranges
- outlier analysis, using statistical tests such as Z-scores and interquartile range (IQR) methods to identify extreme outliers
- duplicate assessment, reviewing data to detect and remove duplicates that could arise from repeated submissions.

Quality assurance measures

A subset of the data will be randomly selected to verify accuracy and consistency. Data collection tools include validation checks to minimise errors during data entry (for example, preventing invalid ranges or empty fields).

Statistical methods and diagnostics

Statistical analyses are conducted at the end of SP2 (first phase) and SP4 (second phase). All analyses will be two-tailed, with an alpha level of 0.05, using complete case analysis and an intention-to-treat approach. The primary predictor for all analyses is allocation to the treatment group.

The primary analysis compares the proportion of participants who withdraw between the intervention and control groups, with the primary effect measure being the odds ratio for withdrawal between the intervention and control groups, with 95% confidence intervals. Thus, the primary outcome is a binary indicator of participant withdrawal (withdrawn = 1; not withdrawn = 0) assessed at the point that academic penalties would not be incurred by the student (week 6).

The model diagnostics will include assessing:

- multicollinearity, examining the variance inflation factors to ensure no high collinearity between covariates
- sufficient events per predictor variables, with at least 10 events per parameter
- model fit, using the Hosmer-Lemeshow test and/or plots.

A logistic regression model is used to estimate the odds of withdrawal, including the trial arm as the main predictor. The model adjusts for the two stratification variables used in randomisation. This approach ensures appropriate estimation of the intervention effect and accounts for the stratified design. The model is specified below.

$$\log(p1-p) = \beta + \beta1Inti + \beta2FiFi + \beta3LowSESi$$



Where:

- Int_i is the binary indicator (1 = intervention, 0 = control)
- FiF_i is the binary covariate (1= First in Family, 0 = No)
- $LowSES_i$ is the binary covariate (1 = low socioeconomic background, 0 = Not low socioeconomic background)
- β_1 is the parameter of primary interest, representing the log-odds difference in withdrawal between intervention and control groups.

If there is a sufficiently large sample size, we will explore withdrawals by census and academic dates separately. Models will include stratification variables.

Subgroup analyses are conducted to examine the different effects of treatment on outcomes between those who are low SES (or not) and FiF (or not). This will be done by adding interaction terms to logistic regression models and reporting estimates within each subgroup. In both cases, the presence of a statistically significant interaction term ($p < 0.05$) indicates evidence of effect modification. The results of each subgroup analysis are reported as an estimated odds ratio and 95% confidence intervals within each subgroup, and interaction p-values are reported for the subgroup differences.

Additional descriptive analysis will explore withdrawal rates among students from other equity groups, as data allows, including but not limited to:

- CALD status
- students with a disability
- rural, regional, or remote students
- indigeneity.

Quality control and quality assurance

De-identified, password protected copies of final datasets are stored should they need examining after review.



5. Publication

Plans for publication and dissemination of trial results

The plan to publish the trial results is as follows:

- Protocol and final report are made publicly available on the ACSES Trials Registry.
- Presentation and discussions of results at STARS conference and/or other relevant student equity conferences.
- Results shared more broadly in a journal publication, for example, Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management, or similar.



6. Appendices

Appendix 3: Trial information email communication with opt-out option

Subject: ACSES Research Trial: *Investigation of effects of targeted interventions on NPE in Open Universities Australia.*

Hi <preferred name>,

We hope you're doing well!

We are reaching out to invite you to be part of an exciting new research study design to support first year students at Curtin University. The study is called *Investigation of effects of targeted interventions on NPE in Open Universities Australia*, led by Patricia Vermillion Peirce and Emma Pelliccione.

What is it?

The goal of this study is to test a range of proactive support activities aimed to helping students, like you, during your first year at Curtin. If you choose to participate, you'll be involved in a trial that provides additional support to help you stay on track academically.

What happens?

To make the study as fair and effective as possible, students are randomly assigned to receive one of two different levels of support. This means only **50% of students** who participate will receive the additional support while the other half will not.

If you choose to participate, you will be part of the trial involving intervention activities designed to support your academic progress. We have outlined these activities below:

- **Intervention Activity 1.** If identified as a non-participating student, which may be an effect of an unknown enrolment, the team will send an initial SMS and email correspondence to support the student, should they wish to withdraw. If we do not receive a reply from the student, the team will call the student to check-in.
- **Intervention Activity 2.** If it is identified that the student has been automatically enrolled by OUA in future studies, the team will send an initial SMS and email correspondence to ensure the student is aware of this, as well as support the student, should they wish to withdraw. If we do not receive a reply from the student, the team will call the student to check-in.

These activities will be implemented at key points throughout the study period.

It's up to you!

Participation in this study is completely voluntary, and you can withdraw at any time without any impact on your studies or services at Curtin. If you do not wish to participate, please let us know and we will be able to remove you from the trial.

Please email ssa.oua@curtin.edu.au if you would like to opt out of the trial and receiving communications regarding the trial.



While there may not be direct benefits to you from participating in this study, your involvement will contribute to valuable research that may improve educational support services. There are no anticipated risks associated with participating in the study.

If you do wish to participate, a detailed participation information statement is attached with more details about the trial.

<Information statement document to be included>

Your privacy

All data collected during the study will be kept confidential. Your personal information will be anonymised and stored securely. Only the research team will have access to your data, and it will not be shared with anyone outside of the study.

Contact Information

If you have any questions or concerns about the study, you can contact the Principal Investigator Emma Pelliccione on emma.pelliccione@curtin.edu.au , trial academic co-lead Dr Patricia Vermillion Peirce at patricia.vermillionPeirce@curtin.edu.au.

Kind regards,

<Name>

<Title>



Appendix 4: Opt-out confirmation email

Hi <preferred name>,

Thank you for getting in touch.

We have received your request to opt out of the *Investigation of effects of targeted interventions on NPE in Open Universities Australia*. This email is to confirm that you have been removed from the trial, and you will not receive any further communications related to the trial.

We want to reassure you that your decision to opt out will not affect your academic standing directly or any of the services you receive at Curtin University.

Thank you for your time and we wish you all the best with your studies!

Kind regards,

<Name>

<Title>



Appendix 5: SMS Communication – Opt Out Notification

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

This is your Student Success Advisor at Curtin University.

This is a notification to let you know that we have sent you an email regarding a research trial we are investigating. Please check your emails for further information.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!



Appendix 6: Nudge 1 email communication

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

My name is < SSA NAME >, and I am your Student Success Advisor.

Our system has identified that you are enrolled in Study Period 2 via Open Universities Australia (OUA).

This study period commenced on June 2, 2025.

We wanted to get in touch to determine whether you wanted to remain in this unit.

If you are wanting to withdraw from your unit, please respond “YES” to this email. Otherwise, if you are not considering withdrawing from this unit, please reply to this email “NO”.

Please note that the census date is the **June 23 2025** so if you wish to withdraw, you will need to go via your OUA Student Hub or contact [OUA](#) directly.

Please respond by < **11:59PM AWST June 9 2025** > to avoid any upcoming financial penalty, or unnecessary communications from our team.

If we do not hear back from you by then, our team will give you a call to follow up in the coming days.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!



Appendix 7: Nudge 1 SMS communication

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

This is your Student Success Advisor at Curtin University.

Our system has identified that you are enrolled in Study Period 2 via Open Universities Australia (OUA).

This study period commenced on June 2, 2025.

Please note that the census date for this study period is June 23, 2025.

If you are considering withdrawing, please check your student email account for more information, including how to withdraw to avoid any financial or academic penalties.

Thank you. Have a lovely day



Appendix 8: Nudge 1 email response communications – YES

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

Thank you for your reply.

I can confirm that you will remain enrolled in < UNIT CODES and Name> via Open Universities Australia (OUA) for Study Period 2 2025.

We wish you all the best for your upcoming studies, and please contact our team if you have any questions or reach out to [OUA](#) if you wish to have any changes to your studies.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 9: Nudge 1 email response communication – NO

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >,

Thank you for your reply.

We have received your intention to withdraw from your studies for Study Period 2 2025 via Open Universities Australia.

To withdraw from your studies, you will need to contact OUA directly via phone on 136 736 or you can [book a consultation](#) with an OUA Advisor. Alternatively, you can go directly via your OUA Student Hub by following the instructions below:

- Log into OUA Student Hub
- Click on 'Student Hub' in the top right corner of the page
- Select 'Manage your studies'
- Select 'Request an enrolment change'
- You can send a request to change your enrolment on this page

As long as this is actioned by you on or before the census date of **June 23 2025** for Study Period 2, you will not receive any financial or academic penalty.

If you have any issues with withdrawing from your studies, please contact [Open Universities Australia](#) for further assistance.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 10: Nudge 1 call script

[If the student does not pick up]

Hi < Student Preferred Name >, My name is < Caller Name> and I am your Student Success Advisor at Curtin University. I am reaching out to students who may wish to withdraw from their enrolled OUA units. I'm sorry I missed you, however, will try give you a call back in the coming days, please refer to your student email account for further information. Thank you and speak soon.

[If the student picks up]

Hi, my name is < Caller Name >. Am I speaking to < Student Name >?

[If the answer is no]

Do you have the best contact number for < Student Name >? [person provides new contact information]

Thank you, have a lovely day.

[If the student answers yes]

Hi < Student Name >.

I'm your Student Success Advisor that's part of our current OUA non-participating student trial, which means I am here to support you with the process should you wish to withdraw from your current OUA unit/s. This study has Curtin ethics approval under record number [HRE2025-0242](#). Would you like to participate in the trial?

[If student answers no]

Not a problem at all. I will make sure to remove you from the trial. I hope you have a lovely rest of your day.

[If student answers yes] – continue with call:

That's great. As your Student Success Advisor, I proactively monitor how students are tracking in their studies.

I've noticed that you haven't been interacting with your OUA studies for this study period so I thought I would reach out to check-in with you and offer any support you may need. Are you considering potentially withdrawing from your units?

[If student answers yes] – they want to withdraw prior to census

(on or prior to June 23 SP2): No problem. Today is the <current date> and the census date for Study Period 2 is June 23. Since it's prior to census if you complete the form which I will send to you via email in the coming days following this call, you will not be charged for the unit and will not appear on your academic transcript.



[If student answers no]– they want to remain in the unit:

No problem [continue with talking points below]

Finding Reason

May I ask why you have not engaged with your OUA unit <unit code and name> yet if you're comfortable sharing this information?

Possible reasons:

- Work commitments
- Family issues
- Unaware of enrolment
- Focusing on other units
- Travel Restricted
- Other (If possible, please specify)

Unit & Course Support

- How have you been finding your unit so far?
- Have you accessed your Unit Outlines?
- Do you know all your Unit Coordinators and Tutors and how to contact them if you need help?
- How are your classes going?
- How are you feeling about your study load?
- Do you have a study routine? Tips might help here.
- How comfortable are you with your use of Blackboard? Are you able to navigate it?

Important Links: (Format to be a check box for the form)

- [Blackboard and OASIS tutorial](#)
- [IT support](#) – online resources and guide
- [Curtin Connect](#) - Administration support (e.g UC escalations, AE assistance/follow up, course progression advice)
- [Student Wellbeing Service](#) – confidential support to help support your student wellbeing, especially if student is struggling with study or personal issues. Good place to start.
- [Curtin Access Plan](#) (Accessibility) – students are eligible to apply for a Curtin Access Plan to get reasonable adjustments for their assessments if they have a disability, physical or mental health condition or are a carer of a person with a disability
- [Counselling](#) – direct through OUA, can go online to book
- [Scholarships](#) – financial difficulties
- [Indigenous Student Support](#)



- [Peer Academic Mentoring](#) - provide you with tips and advice on how to exceed at your studies too. Face-to-face or online appointments.
- [UniPASS study sessions](#) - **Available for selected units**, group study sessions and Facebook groups led by a senior students
- [Studiosity](#) - online writing and study skills feedback service for enrolled in first-year units
- [UniSkills](#) – online modules that help you with your study or assignments.
- [Workshops](#) (on campus and fully online) boost study skills and useful tutorials
- [Online Orientation Sessions](#) – Help students with their transition into university study

Conclusion

That's great. I will put all this into a follow up email so you can refer to it later and have the links to access the support services we discussed. Is there anything else I can help you with today?

[If student answers NO] – No problems at all. Thank you so much for talking to me today and please reach out if there is anything else we can do to help.

[If student answers YES]– Continue with the call, outlining the relevant supports needed (info above)



Appendix 11: Nudge 2 email communication

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

My name is < SSA NAME >, and I am your Student Success Advisor.

Our system has identified that you have not engaged with your studies in Study Period 2 via [Open Universities Australia \(OUA\)](#) and wanted to get in touch to determine whether you wanted to remain in this unit.

If you wish to continue with your studies, please reply to this email with a “YES”. Otherwise, if you wish to withdraw from your studies, please respond “NO” to this email and our team will be in touch with you in the following days.

Please note that the census date was the <June 23 2025> and the last date to withdraw without academic penalty is < July 13 2025 > so if you wish to withdraw, you will need to go via your OUA Student Hub or contact [OUA](#) directly.

Please respond by < 11:59PM AWST June 26 2025 > to avoid any upcoming financial penalty, or unnecessary communications from our team. If we do not hear back from you by <June 26 2025>, our team will give you a call to follow up in the following days.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 12: Nudge 2 email response communication – YES

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

Thank you for your reply.

I can confirm that you will remain enrolled in < UNIT CODES and Name> via Open Universities Australia (OUA) for Study Period 2 2025.

We wish you all the best for your upcoming studies, and please contact our team if you have any questions or reach out to [OUA](#) if you wish to have any changes to your studies.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 13: Nudge 2 email response communication – NO

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

My name is < SSA NAME >, and I am your Student Success Advisor. Thank you for responding to my earlier email.

By responding “NO,” you have indicated that you do not wish to continue with one or more of your currently enrolled OUA units.

To withdraw from your studies, you will need to contact OUA directly via phone on 136 736 or you can [book a consultation](#) with an OUA Advisor. Alternatively, you can go directly via your OUA Student Hub by following the instructions below:

- Log into OUA Student Hub
- Click on ‘Student Hub’ in the top right corner of the page
- Select ‘Manage your studies’
- Select ‘Request an enrolment change’
- You can send a request to change your enrolment on this page

Please action this by the last withdrawal date of **June 23 2025** for Study Period 2, you will still be liable for the relevant student contributions and/or tuition fees for the unit(s) you are withdrawing from and these will show as a ‘WD’ on your academic transcript.

If you have any issues with withdrawing from your studies, please contact [Open Universities Australia](#) for further assistance.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 14: Nudge 2 call script

Script

[If the student does not pick up]

Hi < Student Preferred Name >, My name is < Caller Name> and I am your Student Success Advisor at Curtin University. I am reaching out to students who may wish to withdraw from their enrolled OUA units. I'm sorry I missed you, however, will try give you a call back in the coming days, please refer to your student email account for further information. Thank you and speak soon.

[If the student picks up]

Hi, my name is < Caller Name >. Am I speaking to < Student Name >?

[If the answer is no]

Do you have the best contact number for < Student Name >? [person provides new contact information]

Thank you, have a lovely day.

[If the student answers yes]

Hi < Student Name >.

I'm your Student Success Advisor that's part of our current OUA non-participating student trial, which means I am here to support you with the process should you wish to withdraw from your current OUA unit/s. This study has Curtin ethics approval under record number **HRE2024-XXXX**. Would you like to participate in the trial?

[If student answers no]

Not a problem at all. I will make sure to remove you from the trial. I hope you have a lovely rest of your day.

[If student answers yes] – continue with call:

That's great. As your Student Success Advisor, I proactively monitor how students are tracking in their studies.

I've noticed that you haven't been interacting with your OUA studies for this study period so I thought I would reach out to check-in with you and offer any support you may need. Are you considering potentially withdrawing from your units?

[If student answers yes] – they want to withdraw prior to census

(on or prior to June 23 SP2): No problem. Today is the <current date> and the census date for Study Period 2 is June 23. Since it's prior to census if you complete the form which I will



send to you via email in the coming days following this call, you will not be charged for the unit and will not appear on your academic transcript.

[If student answers no]– they want to remain in the unit:

No problem [continue with talking points below]

Finding Reason

May I ask why you have not engaged with your OUA unit <unit code and name> yet if you're comfortable sharing this information?

Possible reasons:

- Work commitments
- Family issues
- Unaware of enrolment
- Focusing on other units
- Travel Restricted
- Other (If possible, please specify)

Unit & Course Support

- How have you been finding your unit so far?
- Have you accessed your Unit Outlines?
- Do you know all your Unit Coordinators and Tutors and how to contact them if you need help?
- How are your classes going?
- How are you feeling about your study load?
- Do you have a study routine? Tips might help here.
- How comfortable are you with your use of Blackboard? Are you able to navigate it?

Important Links: (Format to be a check box for the form)

- [Blackboard and OASIS tutorial](#)
- [IT support](#) – online resources and guide
- [Curtin Connect](#) - Administration support (e.g. UC escalations, AE assistance/follow up, course progression advice)
- [Student Wellbeing Service](#) – confidential support to help support your student wellbeing, especially if student is struggling with study or personal issues. Good place to start.
- [Curtin Access Plan](#) (Accessibility) – students are eligible to apply for a Curtin Access Plan to get reasonable adjustments for their assessments if they have a disability, physical or mental health condition or are a carer of a person with a disability
- [Counselling](#) – direct through OUA, can go online to book
- [Scholarships](#) – financial difficulties



- [Indigenous Student Support](#)
- [Peer Academic Mentoring](#) - provide you with tips and advice on how to exceed at your studies too. Face-to-face or online appointments.
- [UniPASS study sessions](#) - **Available for selected units**, group study sessions and Facebook groups led by a senior students
- [Studiosity](#) - online writing and study skills feedback service for enrolled in first-year units
- [UniSkills](#) – online modules that help you with your study or assignments.
- [Workshops](#) (on campus and fully online) boost study skills and useful tutorials
- [Online Orientation Sessions](#) – Help students with their transition into university study

Conclusion

That's great. I will put all this into a follow up email so you can refer to it later and have the links to access the support services we discussed. Is there anything else I can help you with today?

[If student answers NO] – No problems at all. Thank you so much for talking to me today and please reach out if there is anything else we can do to help.

[If student answers YES]– Continue with the call, outlining the relevant supports needed (info above)



Appendix 15: Nudge 3 (auto enrolment) SMS communication

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

This is your Student Success Advisor at Curtin University.

Our system has notified us that you are enrolled for SP 3 2025 and have been identified as previously disengaged with your studies via Open Universities Australia for SP2 2025.

If you wish to withdraw your SP 3 enrolment, please check your student email for more information or contact OUA directly.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!



Appendix 16: Nudge 3 email communication

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

This is your Student Success Advisor at Curtin University.

Our system has notified us that you are enrolled via Open Universities Australia for Study Period 3 2025 and have been identified as previously disengaged for Study Period 2 2025.

We recognise that you were not engaged with your studies in Study Period 2 2025 and are currently enrolled into the following study period, Study Period 3 2025.

If you are considering withdrawing from any of your upcoming studies, please reply to this email "YES." Otherwise, if you do not wish to withdraw, please reply with "NO" by <11:59PM AWST 27 July 2025 >.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 17: Nudge 3 email response communication – YES

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

My name is < SSA NAME >, and I am your Student Success Advisor. Thank you for responding to my earlier email.

By responding “YES,” you have indicated that you do not wish to continue with one or more of your currently enrolled OUA units.

As it is still before SP3, you will not incur any financial or academic penalty but I would recommend getting in touch with OUA directly to organise your enrolment for future study periods and discuss how this withdrawal may affect your academic standing and course progression.

Please respond by < 11:59PM AWST July 27 2025 > to avoid any upcoming fees, or unnecessary communications from our team.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

< CURTIN EMAIL SIGNATURE >



Appendix 18: Nudge 3 email response communication – NO

Hi < PREFERRED NAME >

Thank you for your reply.

I can confirm that you will remain enrolled in < UNIT CODES and Name> via Open Universities Australia (OUA) for Study Period 3 2025.

We wish you all the best for your upcoming studies, and please contact our team if you have any questions or reach out to [OUA](#) if you wish to have any changes to your studies.

Thank you. Have a lovely day!

