

OPATEL 3rd Training Workshop

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Center of Excellence for e-Learning
in Medical Education

OPATEL

Virtual School - Tehran University of Medical Sciences

How to Build Effective Online Learner/faculty Support Services

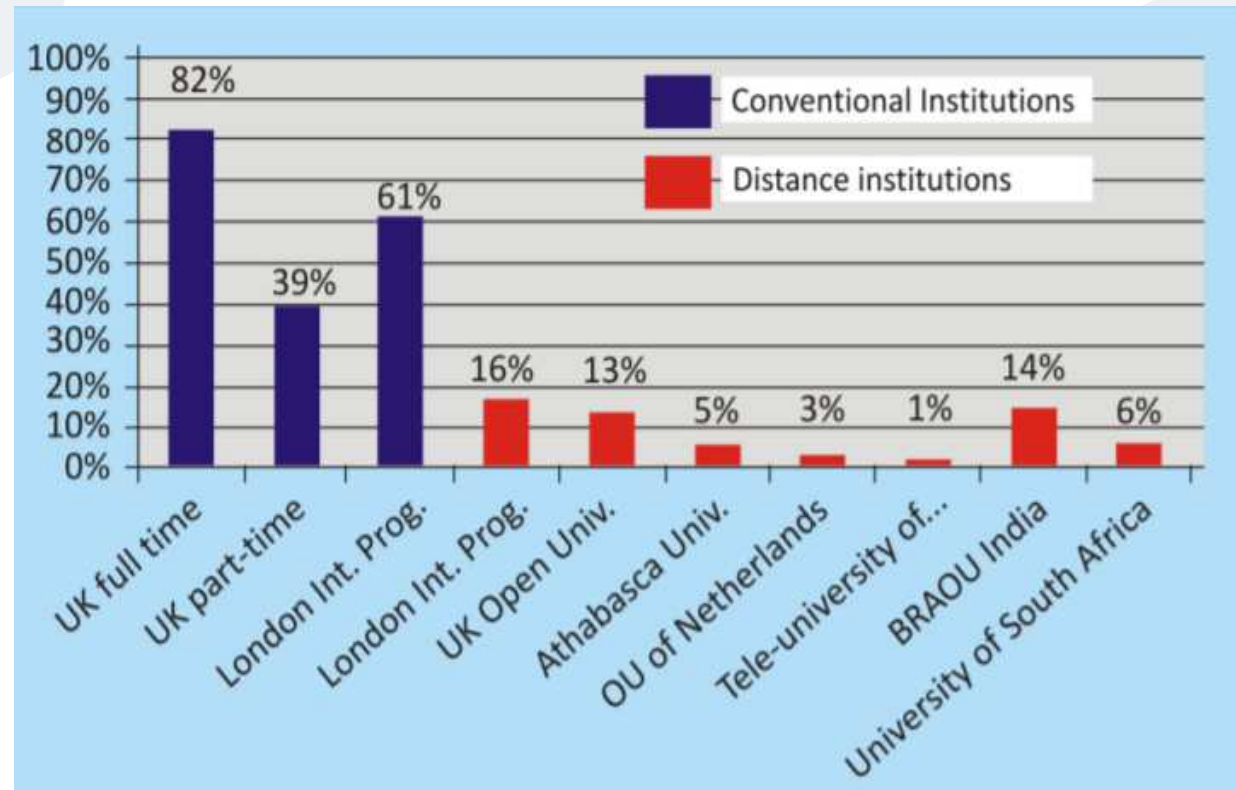
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The background is a solid light green color. On the left side, there are several abstract shapes: a large semi-circle with a fine grid pattern, a smaller solid semi-circle, a solid leaf shape, and another semi-circle with a grid pattern. A large, dark green fern frond is positioned in the center-left, overlapping the other shapes.

Why Student Support?

Online learning has been a great success in the latter half of the twentieth century. However there is what Woodley et al (2013) call 'an elephant in the room of distance education' - its **drop out rate.**





Impact of LSS


The London University International Program:

- ☐ Face to face program
- ☐ Online program
- ☐ With Identical Course content and examination
- ☐ Graduation rate 61% to 16%



Main reason for deficit

- ☐ Isolation from teachers, peers, institute
- ☐ Part time study
- ☐ Job demands
- ☐ Family problems



Support can be helping a Student develop into a more effective learner or is helping them overcome a problem which is inhibiting their progress.



Defining Student Support

What qualities and skills do students need to succeed in an online learning environment?

- ☐ Good learning skills
- ☐ Motivation to learn
- ☐ Ability to deal with stress
- ☐ Self-confidences a learner
- ☐ Time management skills
- ☐ Ability to balance demands of family, job and study



Qualities and skills needed by the distance student

Cognitive skills:

- ☐ Intellectual abilities
- ☐ Learning skills

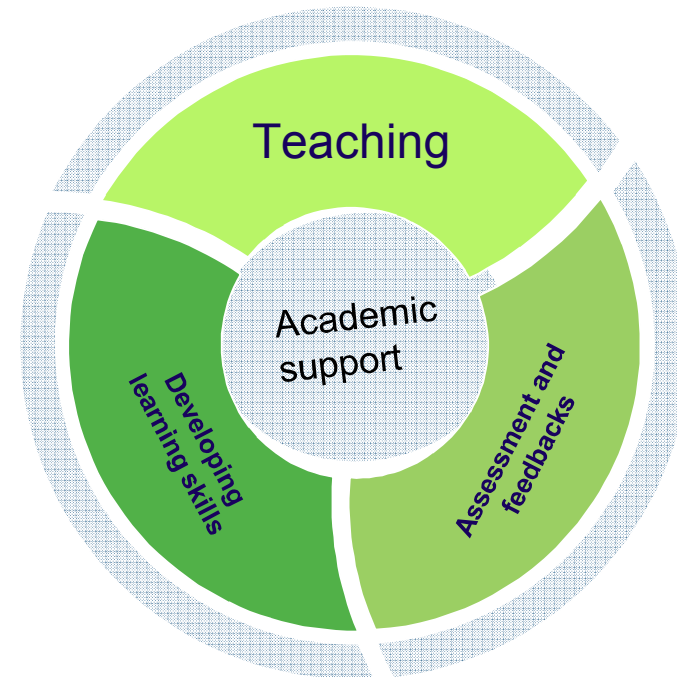
Emotional skills:

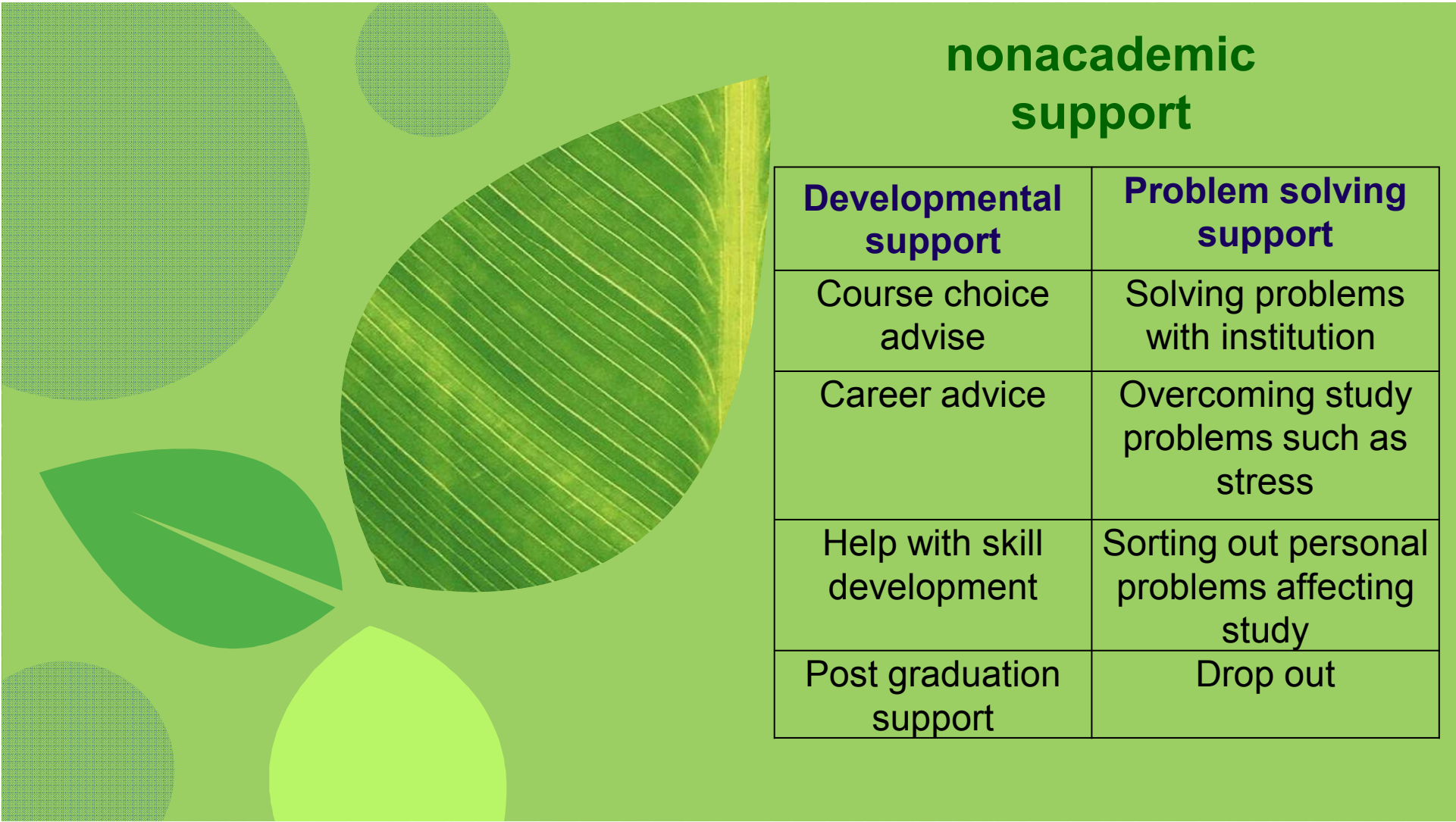
- ☐ Dealing with stress
- ☐ Motivation
- ☐ Self confidence

Organizing skills:

- ☐ Time management
- ☐ Balancing job and family demands

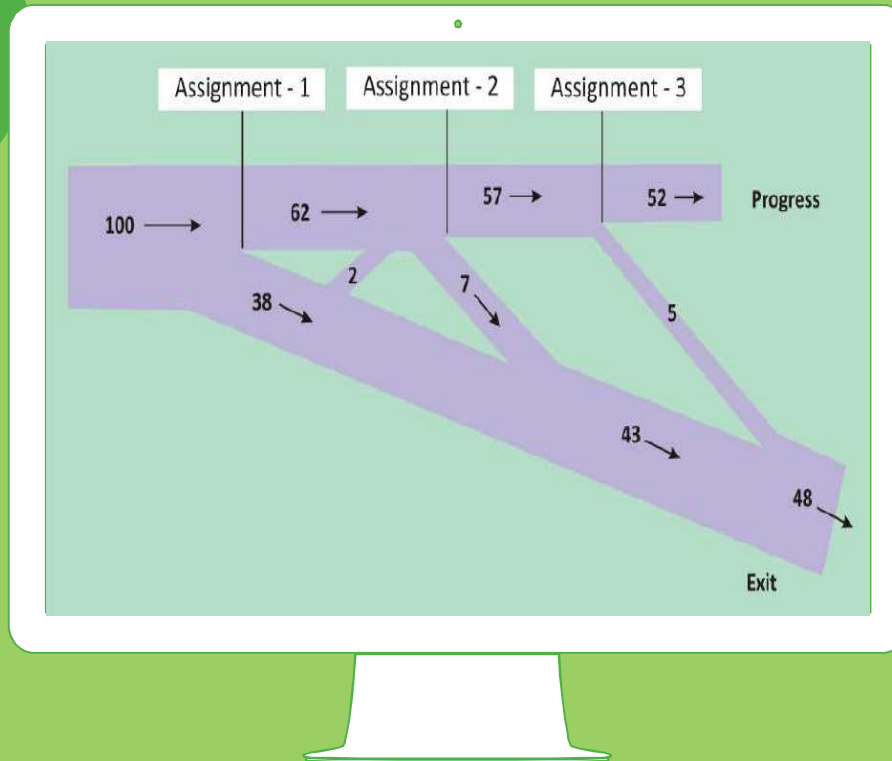
Cognitive(academic)support





nonacademic support

Developmental support	Problem solving support
Course choice advise	Solving problems with institution
Career advice	Overcoming study problems such as stress
Help with skill development	Sorting out personal problems affecting study
Post graduation support	Drop out



Timing of support

This suggests that support also needs to be heavily focused at the start of a course, and even before the start.



Media for support

- ☐ **Individual meeting:** probably the most effective
- ☐ **Individual call:** quite effective
- ☐ **Email individual:** quick and as effective as call
- ☐ **Email group:** economical but limited evidence for effectiveness
- ☐ **Text messaging:** useful for reminder
- ☐ **Social media:** effective as calls



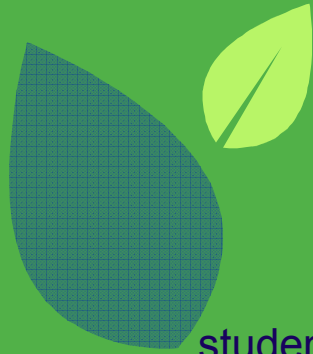
Institutional organization for support

Reactive support:

a system which answers student enquiries quickly and effectively.

Proactive support:

a system which systematically proactively contacts students at appropriate critical times, especially to reinforce their motivation.



Support for different student

students with some kinds of disabilities, particularly remote students, students working shifts and so on. Such students are sometimes called **“Vulnerable”** or **“At risk”** students.

The field of **‘learning analytics’** now enables institutions to predict which students are most likely to be vulnerable. This system predicted **“probability of success”** to each new student which can vary from around 9% to 83% (most students are between 30% and 60%). This prediction is surprisingly accurate.





Faculty support services

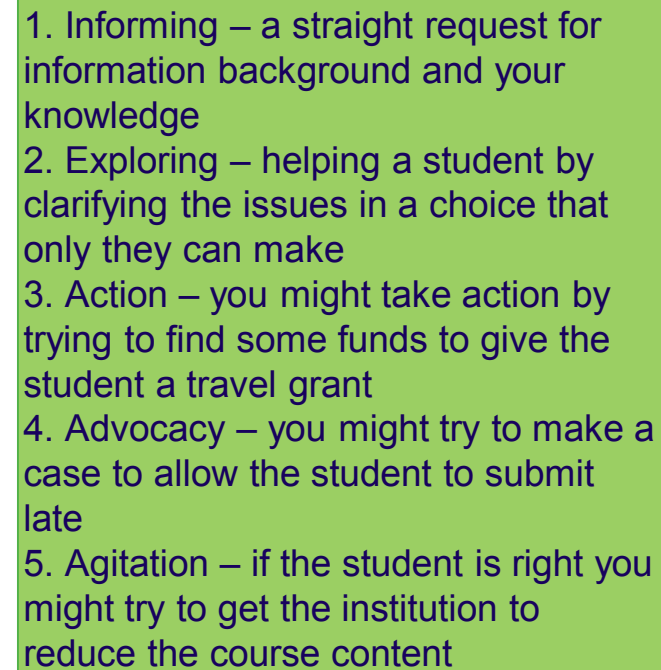
- course development and teaching support
- management of online material and resources
- technical support




Activity:

Decide which categories (informing, advising, exploring, taking action, advocating, agitation) the following student queries and problems fall into.

1. "Which courses do I need for a maths degree?"
2. "My daughter is seriously ill. Should I drop out?"
- 3 "I cannot go to the tutorial because I cannot afford the plane fare"
4. "I missed the due date of this assignment because I was ill. Can I submit it now?"
5. "I have got behind because there is far too much material in this course."

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1. Informing – a straight request for information background and your knowledge
 2. Exploring – helping a student by clarifying the issues in a choice that only they can make
 3. Action – you might take action by trying to find some funds to give the student a travel grant
 4. Advocacy – you might try to make a case to allow the student to submit late
 5. Agitation – if the student is right you might try to get the institution to reduce the course content

A group of people, seen from behind, are walking away from the camera on a purple background. The people are of various ages and are dressed in casual clothing. The image is slightly blurred, giving it a sense of movement. A solid green vertical bar is on the left side of the image.

**Alone we can do so little;
together we can do so
much.**

✧Helen Keller