



Student–Staff Ratio (SSR) Metrics and Policy

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to define clear rules for the calculation, monitoring and management of the Student–Staff Ratio (SSR) at GMBS, ensuring that sufficient teaching and academic support capacity is available in a fully online learning environment. The policy supports consistent quality of teaching, achievement of learning outcomes, timely feedback, and adequate student academic support.

2. Scope

This policy applies to:

- all study programmes delivered fully online by GMBS,
- all enrolled students,
- all lecturers, tutors and academic experts engaged by GMBS under contractual workload allocation,
- all academic activities requiring direct student support (teaching, tutoring, discussion facilitation, assessment and feedback, consultations, supervision).

3. Definitions

3.1 Student–Staff Ratio (SSR)

Student–Staff Ratio (SSR) is the relationship between the volume of students and the academic teaching/support capacity available to deliver teaching and student support activities.

3.2 Student FTE

Student FTE is a workload-adjusted student equivalent reflecting study intensity and study load (based on internal study-load parameters and programme design). Student FTE is used as the primary student volume metric for capacity planning and quality monitoring.

3.3 tFTE (Teaching Capacity FTE-equivalent)

tFTE (Teaching Capacity FTE-equivalent) is the teaching and academic support capacity expressed as an FTE-equivalent, calculated from contractually allocated academic workload.

tFTE represents capacity available for:



- teaching delivery (synchronous and asynchronous),
- tutoring and facilitation of online discussions,
- assessment, grading and feedback,
- consultations,
- supervision (final theses, capstone projects, research projects where applicable),
- teaching-related academic administration directly linked to delivery and assessment.

tFTE is a capacity metric used for consistent planning and monitoring in an online delivery model.

4. SSR Metrics and Calculation

4.1 Primary SSR Metric (FTE-based SSR)

GMBS uses the following primary metric:

$$\text{SSR (FTE-based)} = \text{Student FTE} / \text{tFTE}$$

This metric is the primary basis for capacity planning and quality monitoring because it reflects actual teaching and support capacity.

4.2 Supplementary SSR Metric (Headcount SSR)

GMBS also monitors a supplementary indicator:

$$\text{SSR (Headcount)} = \text{number of enrolled students (HC)} / \text{number of engaged lecturers (HC)}$$

This indicator is used for high-level overview; operational decision-making is based primarily on FTE-based SSR.

4.3 Supervision Capacity Ratio (where applicable)

For supervision-intensive activities GMBS monitors:

- number of supervisees per supervisor, and/or
- supervision loads based on allocated supervision capacity, including maximum supervision limits.

5. Methodology for Calculating tFTE and Student FTE

5.1 Methodology for Calculating tFTE

GMBS defines the annual teaching/support capacity standard as:



1.0 tFTE = 1,600 hours of academic teaching and support activities per year (teaching delivery, tutoring, grading and feedback, consultations, supervision and teaching-related academic administration).

tFTE for an individual lecturer/tutor/supervisor is calculated as:

tFTE = (contractually allocated annual academic hours) / 1,600

GMBS may use a modular workload model (norm hours per student cohort and module) as a verification mechanism to ensure that contractual allocations reflect actual delivery needs.

6. SSR Targets and Thresholds

6.1 Target SSR Values (FTE-based SSR)

GMBS applies the following indicative targets:

1. General online teaching delivery and academic support:
Target SSR ≤ 25:1 (Student FTE : tFTE)
2. Supervision limit:
Max. 15 supervisees per supervisor

Targets may be adjusted per programme if justified by programme design, assessment strategy and learning outcomes. Any deviation must be justified, documented and approved.

6.2 Alert and Risk Thresholds

- Capacity Alert: SSR exceeds the applicable target by more than 10%
→ corrective action plan is required and monitoring is intensified.
- Significant Capacity Risk: SSR exceeds the target by more than 20%
→ immediate capacity and/or enrolment management measures are required, subject to governance approval.

7. Monitoring Frequency and Levels

7.1 Monitoring Levels

SSR is monitored:

- at institutional level (overall GMBS SSR),
- at programme level (SSR per programme and intake),
- at module level where relevant due to intensive feedback/supervision requirements.

7.2 Monitoring Frequency

SSR is evaluated:



- before each intake (projection for capacity planning),
- after enrolment confirmation (validation at the start of the term),
- at least annually as part of annual programme monitoring and institutional quality reporting.

8. Roles and Responsibilities

Rector

- approves SSR methodology, targets and thresholds,
- ensures institutional capacity planning and adequacy of academic resources,
- approves major capacity actions and enrolment management decisions.

Programme Leader

- prepares SSR calculations per programme and intake,
- monitors capacity for tutoring, feedback and supervision,
- initiates corrective actions when thresholds are exceeded,
- ensures evidence is documented and archived.

Vice-Rector for Quality, Accreditation and Development

- verify SSR monitoring outputs,
- evaluate SSR trends and risks,
- ensure SSR is included in annual QA reporting,
- monitor the effectiveness of corrective actions within continuous improvement cycles.

Administrative Support

- ensures accuracy of enrolment data and capacity allocation records,
- supports tFTE and Student FTE calculations,
- archives evidence for internal and external review.

9. Corrective and Preventive Actions

9.1 Corrective Actions (when thresholds are exceeded)

Where SSR exceeds targets or thresholds, GMBS may implement:

1. Reinforcement of teaching capacity (tFTE)



- engagement of additional lecturers/tutors,
 - increasing consultation hours,
 - strengthening tutoring capacity.
2. Strengthening grading and feedback capacity
- allocating additional capacity for assessment and feedback,
 - adjusting assessment processes to maintain timely feedback.
3. Adjusting delivery structure
- splitting cohorts into smaller groups,
 - increasing tutorial groups,
 - strengthening structured asynchronous academic support.
4. Managing supervision capacity
- setting maximum supervision loads,
 - assigning co-supervisors,
 - adjusting thesis/capstone intake and allocation.
5. Enrolment management
- intake caps for programmes/modules,
 - staggered intake scheduling to protect quality delivery.

9.2 Preventive Actions

- proactive intake capacity planning,
- annual evaluation of programme workload and resource needs,
- early warning checks during enrolment periods,
- continuous monitoring of teaching performance and support adequacy.

10. Reporting and Evidence

SSR monitoring results and corrective actions are documented in:

- Annual Programme Monitoring Reports,
- Annual Institutional Quality Assurance Report,
- teaching capacity allocation records and workload planning documentation,



- programme improvement plans where applicable,
- supporting evidence for external evaluation and accreditation.

11. Review of the Policy

This policy is reviewed:

- at least annually, and
- whenever significant changes occur in enrolment trends, programme structure, assessment strategy, or delivery model.

Updates must be formally approved by the competent GMBS governance body and communicated to relevant stakeholders.