

Guidance for the University Community in supporting students causing concern.

Introduction

Being a student at university can be really helpful for wellbeing – it offers the opportunity to learn new skills and knowledge, provides routine, and helps us to connect with friends and others. However, at times, students at the university can face difficulties, which challenge their sense of wellbeing. There are a variety of support services at the university available to consider, ranging from peer support, through to specialist off campus services. The University seeks to maintain an environment, which is safe and conducive to teaching, learning, research, and the well-being of all. There may be instances where a student's health or well-being causes the University concern. This guidance outlines the process and support available to both students and staff, when there are concerns for a student's safety and wellbeing. This document is limited to guidelines on process, as the appropriate response to any situation will be informed by the professional knowledge of the Enabling Services practitioners, on a case-by-case basis.

The University has a duty of care to respond appropriately to situations where there are concerns relating to visible signs of illness, mental health difficulties, psychological, personality or emotional disorders and the detrimental impact on the functioning of the individual student and/or other members of the University community. This guidance links closely to other policies of the University such as, Student Support Review (formerly Fitness to Study), Fitness to Practice, Special Considerations and the Progression regulations.

What do we mean by concern?

Concern regarding a student may be identified through direct contact, or a third party referral. A student may be at risk of:

- Abuse or violence – at the hands of another person or people
- Self-harm
- Violence from, or towards another person or other people
- Suicide

It is important that all cases of concern for a student be referred to Enabling Services. The University has a duty of care to all students and information **can** be freely shared with Enabling Services on a need to know basis, especially where there is concern about a student's wellbeing. Enabling Services can offer practitioner expertise and have a working relationship with local services who can potentially offer support to the student.

Note: If the student is under 18 then the matter should be referred to the University Principle Safeguarding Officer in line with the University's Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy.

Levels of concern

It is helpful to be able to establish what level of concern exists around a student, and the following offers some guidance around this:

Score	Level of concern:
1	Mild concern
2	Moderate concern
3	Extreme concern

1 - Mild concern

What may be observed: Recent change in behaviours, for example missing lectures and deadlines, reduced self-care, changes to eating and sleeping routine. Reduced academic engagement, some social withdrawal. This may include threats of suicide or self-harm being made.

Interventions to consider:

- Referral to Enabling Services to signpost student to relevant support services
- Enabling Services will arrange relevant appointment (First Support/GP/Student Life check in)
- Confirm engagement – attempt to contact/offer First Support appointment
- Arrange to follow up with student and Enabling

2 - Moderate concern

What may be observed - This may include personal, emotional or health problems impacting on ability to study, social isolation, moderate emotional distress, some unusual behaviours, poor attendance, withdrawal. This may include possible threats made to end their life, but lacking a specific plan, exhibiting public distress, some incidents of self-harm (with self-care).

Interventions to consider:

- Advise them to see their GP, speak to a mental health practitioner (if they have one), contact the Samaritans
- Contact Enabling Services to ask for follow up with the student.
- Refer any indications of current plans or significant concern to First Support
- Consider fitness to study and if a Student Support Review meeting is needed

3 - Extreme concern

What may be observed: This may include: specific threats made to end their life, emotional dysregulation, engaging in risky behaviours, substance misuse, student being deficit in skills that regulate emotion, cognition, self-care, feeling of hopelessness, poor attendance and lack of

engagement with academic study. Student unable to keep themselves safe and engaging in 'risky' behaviours.

Interventions to consider:

- Emergency GP appointment/A&E/999 (police and/or paramedic) – If too elevated for campus based services – First Support can advise, as can Security.
- Escalate to First Support for support and advice
- Notify Safeguarding Lead in Department if relevant
- Consider if Urgent Student Support Review case conference needs to be convened and request either by telephone or completion of Student of Concern form.