

Health and Wellness for Study Policy

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University of Chester

Health and Wellness for Study Policy

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Foreword

This document is separated into three parts:

- The Policy
- The Procedure
- The Appendix

The Policy

This part explains why the University needs to act when due to problems with your health and wellbeing you may need some help or time out from being a student at the University.

The policy part also details who will act on behalf of the university and what they can do in situations; but it also limits the possible actions of some individuals.

The policy also explains what rights you have including your right to have a companion and to see what has been written about you.

The Policy is written in formal language which is intended to give a factual dispassionate account to inform all members of the University (including you).

The Procedure

Part two (2) of this document is the Procedure. This goes in to detail as to what the University will do, how the University will act, who will do it and by when

The Procedure is a guide for both you and University staff as to what should be done to assist you through the process.

The procedure is written in a way that talks to you personally, but at times it may be that formal language is used. So when we say “the Student” we mean “you” or “your”. Other terms such as the “Panel” or references to Job Titles eg “Director of Student Services” are explained in the procedure.

The Appendix

This is a set of useful information that will help either you or other people in the University to seek the support you may need.

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PART 1 – Policy Context

HWS - I. Introduction

- 1 A healthy environment for all students and staff and active promotion of positive health and well-being across the institution are important. The University recognises that many students may experience difficulties related to health and aims to provide support and flexibility to enable students to fulfil their potential. University support services offer comprehensive support to those students experiencing health or any other difficulties.
- 2 The University is a community whose members work and, often, live together, and expects certain standards of behaviour. However, there will be occasions where members of this community may need support in order for them to continue to benefit from and contribute to University life. The University is also part of the wider community of the City of Chester, the Borough of Warrington and the towns of Birkenhead and Shrewsbury and their environs, and it recognises that it has a significant part to play in these wider communities. The University may owe duties of care and responsibility to members of the public and others potentially affected by its activities, and is entitled to protect its name and reputation.

HWS - II. What is Health and Wellness for Study?

- 3 The University defines 'Health and Wellness for Study' as an individual student's ability to fully and satisfactorily engage with their academic studies, life at the University of Chester and associated matters without having any unacceptably adverse or detrimental effects upon themselves, and/or staff, and/or other students and/or members of the University Community.
- 4 In essence a student demonstrates their Health and Wellness for Study through:
 - awareness of their own health and safety and that of others;
 - awareness of the risk of physical danger to themselves and others;
 - the ability to attend, engage with, participate and function independently in, university life and processes as an independent adult;
 - the ability to function independently in the University environment, including in academic, social, residential and community activities;
 - the capacity to avoid impeding other students or staff from doing the same;
 - the capacity to engage with processes, procedures and services as appropriate;
 - the ability to benefit from a programme of study or research and to pursue it for the required period (in most cases) with a reasonable chance of progression;
 - the ability to commit to, and engage appropriately and independently (as appropriate) with academic work;
 - the ability to communicate effectively with fellow students, staff and other professionals. (This would include alternative methods of communication such as, for example, BSL or computer aided speech);

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- the ability to submit coursework within required academic timescales with appropriate adjustments as applicable;
 - the ability to undertake assessment and engage effectively with the assessment process, with appropriate adjustments as applicable.
- 5 There may be occasions where concerns are raised in relation to an individual student's 'Health and Wellness for Study'. In these cases the University will endeavour to provide all the necessary support through its existing provision.

HWS - III. Potential Exclusions from Health and Wellness for Study

- 6 This policy and procedures do not apply to:
- 6.1 general concerns about an individual student's support needs which would be ordinarily satisfied and fulfilled through the use of the regular established University structures and programmes of support;
 - 6.2 any student who renders themselves subject to disciplinary action under the Student Disciplinary or Professional Suitability procedures on the grounds of misconduct if they fail to abide by the Student Code of Conduct or improperly interfere, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of the University, or with the lives of those who work or study at the University, or undertake any action which may otherwise damage the University;
 - 6.3 the entry requirements for a programme of study or the admission of a student to a programme of study;
 - 6.4 matters relating to Academic Integrity where a student has gained, or sought to gain, advantage in assessment contrary to the established conditions under which students' knowledge, abilities or skills are assessed for progression towards, or the conferment of, an award. These matters should normally be dealt with under the 'Academic Integrity Policy' as outlined in Section F of the 'University Quality and Standards Manual'.

HWS - IV. Diversity and Equality

- 7 The University will comply with its obligations under the Equality Act 2010 to avoid discrimination because of any of the following:
- age
 - disability
 - gender reassignment
 - marriage & civil partnership
 - pregnancy & maternity
 - race
 - religion or belief
 - sex
 - sexual orientation
- 8 Under the Equality Act 2010 less favourable treatment of a disabled person may be justified if it is necessary in order to maintain one or more competence standards, i.e.

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an academic, medical or other standard applied by or on behalf of the University for the purpose of determining whether or not a person has a particular level of competence or ability. The University will keep its competence standards under review with a view to ensuring that they remain justifiable as competence standards and are both material to the circumstances of the case and substantial.

HWS - V. What may impair Health and Wellness for Study?

Health Conditions (including mental health conditions)

- 9 The term 'health' or 'health condition' refers to any issue related to health including a physical, mental, emotional, psychological and /or spiritual, health, state or condition.
- 10 Subject to the University's duties under the Equality Act 2010, the following circumstances may be dealt with as matters of impaired Health and Wellness for Study under this Policy:
 - 10.1 if a student develops a health condition or disability while on a programme of a nature and severity where sufficient recovery and/or return to study is not reasonably expected within a reasonable and identifiable timescale;
 - 10.2 if there appears to be significant deterioration in a student's pre-existing health condition or disability while on the programme of a nature and severity where sufficient recovery and/or return to study is not expected within a reasonable and identifiable timescale.
 - 10.3 where a student is unable to study due to a health condition, including for reasons relating to alcohol or substance misuse;
 - 10.4 if a student's behaviour is such that it has been found necessary for any reason to invoke any University procedure relating to behaviour, health, Health and Wellness for Study , or reside in, remain at or attend the University;
 - 10.5 excessive periods of unexplained absence, and/or recurring and frequent explained absences, from the programme or placement, or any absence from any part of the programme or placement which is significant in relation to the student's ability to demonstrate Health and Wellness for Study ;
 - 10.6 where despite the best efforts of the University to implement reasonable adjustments the student is unable or unwilling to engage with the reasonable adjustments;
 - 10.7 where a student self-declares as being unfit to study and/or discloses that ongoing study is having a detrimental impact on the individual student's health;
 - 10.8 where the adjustments required in respect of an individual student's disability have ceased to be reasonable;

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- 10.9 where it becomes clear that a student has not disclosed a health condition or disability where there are no reasonable adjustments which the University can make.
- 11 In all of the above cases where an individual student is referred to the University's Occupational Health Service the student may be requested to provide access to their medical records.

Behaviour and attitudes

- 12 The University may also regard certain behaviours and attitudes as evidence of impaired Health and Wellness for Study under this Policy, including where an individual student:
- 12.1 exhibits a significant deterioration or marked change in attitude, appearance, behaviour, attention or attendance;
- 12.2 demonstrates a disregard for their own or others' health and safety;
- 12.3 demonstrates an inability, lack of insight or refusal to:
- 12.3.i communicate effectively with fellow students, staff and professionals and/or
 - 12.3.ii appreciate risks of physical danger to themselves or others and/or
 - 12.3.iii appreciate the potential impact of their behaviour on self and/or others
 - 12.3.iv engage effectively and independently in lectures, tutorials, support sessions and private study (with appropriate support mechanisms, physical and reasonable study support adjustments as necessary) and/or
 - 12.3.v undertake assessment and engage with the assessment process (with appropriate adjustments as necessary);
- 12.4 demonstrates inappropriate emotional or psychological responses, symptoms or behaviours including difficulties with living communally, disruptive behaviour and/or unrealistic expectations of support from other students;
- 12.5 repeatedly behaves inappropriately within the University living and/or learning community;
- 12.6 repeatedly fails to engage with agreed strategies to manage the impact of their health condition;
- 12.7 engages in behaviour which would otherwise be dealt with as a disciplinary matter, where it is considered the behaviour may be the result of an underlying physical or mental health condition.

Unreasonable demands

- 13 Where an individual's health condition, conduct or behaviour places unreasonable demands on staff, students or other members of our community the University will take necessary action to curb the resultant difficulties being created for others.

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- 14 In all instances if someone's behaviour is causing difficulty, or is in breach of University regulations, and this is a result of a health condition, the matter should be dealt with under this policy, rather than as a disciplinary matter.

HWS - VI. Delegation by, and Definition of Named Post Holders

- 15 The Vice-Chancellor, Provost/Deputy-Vice-Chancellor, Pro-Vice-Chancellor or other named post holders, including the Director of Student Services, may delegate powers and responsibilities, as identified under these Rules and Procedures, to a designated alternate (Nominee) either generally or in respect of a particular case or in relation to any area of their responsibility under this Procedure unless otherwise stated.

- 15.1 Further to the above post holders named as members of a case conference as per HWS - XVI below may delegate their membership to another member of staff with appropriate seniority as necessary.

HWS - VII. Misconduct and Discipline

- 16 The University may take disciplinary measures against any student studying or registered with the University, who fails to abide by the Student Code of Conduct or is found to have engaged in misconduct by improperly interfering, in the broadest sense, with the proper functioning or activities of the University, or with the lives of those who work or study at the University, or who undertakes any action which may otherwise damage the University.

- 16.1 If a student is enrolled on a programme leading to a professional qualification subject to the University's Professional Suitability Procedures, any behaviour which is causing difficulty or is in breach of university regulations should be dealt with under the Professional Suitability Procedures. In these instances, the Health and Wellness for Study Policy may run alongside and form part of the initial stages of the Professional Suitability Procedure, to ensure that appropriate safeguards are put in place at the earliest opportunity.

- 16.2 Any breach of academic regulations will be dealt with under the Academic Integrity Policy and matters relating to malpractice are excluded from this procedure.

HWS - VIII. Issues involving the (Mis)use of Alcohol and other Substances

- 17 The University is committed to providing a safe and supportive learning environment, including seeking to address the risks posed by alcohol or substance misuse. Students who are under the influence of alcohol or any other substances including Novel Psychoactive Substances (NPS) are more likely to experience issues that will have a substantial impact upon their Health and Wellness for Study. The University maintains a policy on alcohol and substance misuse which is available on the University intranet.
- 18 Whilst the University regards a person's dependency on alcohol or other substances as a health matter, and may be considered under this procedure; dependency is distinct

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from the presence or influence of alcohol or other substances in misconduct and will be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

HWS - IX. Access to Medical Records

19 In cases where a student is referred to the University's Occupational Health Service and in order for the Occupational Health professional to make a fully informed assessment and subsequently provide accurate guidance about a student's health and wellness for study including likely return to University; the individual student will be asked to consent to the Occupational Health Service having access to the student's relevant medical records.

19.1 The individual student will be asked to give consent using the appropriate form.

HWS - X. Disclosure 'In Extremis'

20 Ordinarily the University requires written consent to discuss matters regarding an individual student with a third-party including parents, family members and/or significant others.

20.1 However, University support services may disclose concerns regarding a student without consent where:

20.1.i there is a risk to the health and safety of the student or others,

20.1.ii there are concerns that a criminal act has been or may be carried out,

20.1.iii it may be in the public or legitimate interests of the University or a third party to do so.

20.2 A decision to inform the student's Emergency Contact of their situation (a person nominated by the student during online enrolment) will only be made under very specific circumstances, as above. The decision will be made by senior staff within Student Services.

20.3 Where a decision has been made to inform the student's Emergency Contact of the situation the student concerned should normally be informed either prior to or as soon as practicably possible after the disclosure. However, a student may not be informed where, in the reasonable opinion of a senior member of staff within Student Services, to do so may increase any identified risks or cause further harm.

20.4 A record will be kept of the disclosure including the circumstances leading up to the disclosure, the reasons for the disclosure, by whom and to whom the disclosure was made and any other relevant action including whether the student was informed or not and why.

HWS - XI. Compulsory Interruption of Studies, Exclusion from the University and/or Temporary Removal from Placement due to Substantial Risk

- 21 A student who is not fit, on medical grounds, to continue to study should be encouraged to 'interrupt studies' until such time as they become fit. Such a process is dependent on the agreement of the student who must follow the interruption of studies procedure (further information available on the Registry Services Portal page).
- 22 Where the student is unwilling to interrupt studies they may only be compelled¹ to do so where the lack of fitness is such that it can be said, based on substantial evidence, that the student poses a substantial risk of harm to themselves or others.
- 23 In exceptional circumstances a student's ability to manage their health, wellbeing or behaviour could have reached a critical stage and, in these circumstances, senior managers within Student Services will conduct an immediate risk assessment, using all information available to them at that time. This risk assessment could have the following outcomes:
 - 23.1 The level of risk is deemed to be acceptable and the student can continue as they are until a Health and Wellness for Study panel can be arranged;
 - 23.2 The level of risk to the student / others is deemed to be unacceptable and one or more of the following conditions will be put in place until a Health and Wellness for Study case conference can be arranged:
 - 23.2.i A temporary requirement to move rooms within university accommodation
 - 23.2.ii A temporary requirement to leave university accommodation
 - 23.2.iii A temporary requirement not to enter specific areas of campus
 - 23.2.iv A temporary exclusion from all areas of campus / campus life
 - 23.2.v A temporary removal from any placement / volunteering activity currently being undertaken.
- 24 Removal, suspension, or exclusion pending a hearing must not be used, or regarded as a punitive measure.
 - 24.1 The use of the provision to temporarily remove a student from placement, or to suspend, or exclude from the University is designed to protect individual members of the University, the University community in general or members of the public with whom the student may have contact as part of their training or studies. The provision may also be used to protect the individual student(s) who is the subject of a referral.
- 25 Where the student is not from the UK or EU, it is important to consult with the Institutional Compliance Officer before advising the student regarding interruption of

¹ A compulsory interruption of studies is procedurally different from a voluntary interruption of studies.

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studies/withdrawal, in order to clarify the impact of interruption of studies upon their residence or immigration status.

Temporary Removal from Studies in Placement

- 26 A student who is undertaking a placement as part of their programme and becomes the subject of concern may be temporarily removed from the placement by an appropriate member of the programme team. Any such removal will be in line with the relevant placement arrangements within the Faculty, pending a consideration under this procedure and ultimately the professional suitability hearing if the student is on a professional placement.
- 26.1 The power to temporarily remove a student from a placement may be used where an authorised member of the relevant programme team is of the opinion that there is a reasonable need to do so or there may be a risk to the welfare of the public.
- 26.2 Temporary removal from a placement does not preclude any further suspension or exclusion from other academic activities or from the University as necessary.
- 27 Students subject to a removal will be informed of the decision and the reasons for the decision in writing within five (5) working days of the removal taking place.
- 28 A decision to temporarily remove a student from placement, shall be subject to review, in accordance with faculty requirements or where new information becomes available or at the request of the student.

HWS - XII. Representation at Interviews, Meetings and Hearings

- 29 Any student who has been requested to attend a meeting or case conference may be accompanied by a 'Companion' who may be a fellow student, family member, member of staff at the University or external support worker.
- 30 Students are encouraged to inform the Chair of the panel or Assigned Case Worker of the name and status of their companion in advance of the meeting or case conference.

HWS - XIII. Interaction with Other Policies and Procedures

- 31 Action which has been or may be taken under any other relevant University procedure and which has resulted or may result in a student becoming a subject of concern, investigated, or precautionarily suspended or excluded, will not preclude action under this procedure but may form part of the Referral and Investigation Phase of another procedure.
- 31.1 For example, necessary action may be further taken under the Student Disciplinary or Professional Suitability Procedure to proceed to the Formal Stage of the relevant procedure including the arrangement and holding of a Disciplinary/Suitability panel.

PART 2 - PROCEDURE FOR DEALING WITH HEALTH AND WELLNESS FOR STUDY CONCERNS

HWS - XIV. Academic Department, School or Faculty Informal Intervention

- 32 Where a member of University staff believes that your attendance and / or academic progress is being negatively affected by a health condition, or that your behaviour is having a negative impact on other people in the University, then the member of staff should discuss these concerns with the your Personal Academic Tutor (PAT) or Programme Leader (PL) as necessary.
- 33 The relevant PAT/PL should contact you as soon as reasonably practicable to arrange an informal tutorial to ascertain any difficulties that you may be experiencing.
- 33.1 Early intervention by a member of Staff with whom you may already have a positive or working relationship is likely to be of benefit to you and it is hoped decrease the likelihood of additional complications or the situation escalating.
- 34 During the tutorial you and your tutor should talk about the following:
- The reason for the tutorial.
 - What it is about your behaviour that has led to the need for the tutorial.
 - Any relevant University processes that may assist you, including advice regarding the academic arrangements and/or action plans that may be instituted with your agreement.
 - The existence of any other relevant mechanisms in the University that may support you.
 - Review any actions etc that you may have agreed at any previous tutorials.
- 35 You and your tutor should continue to meet as necessary.
- 35.1 You and your tutor should keep notes and records of the meetings, arrangements and agreed action plans; these notes may be important if you are required to attend a Case Conference. .

HWS - XV. Student Services Informal Intervention

- 36 You may be referred to the Director of Student Services where, in the reasonable opinion of a staff member, there is significant concern that your health or behaviour is affecting your attendance and academic progress or that your behaviour is having an adverse impact on other people.
- 37 When the Director of Student Services or designate receives a referral they will be responsible for implementing any necessary action and will agree the most appropriate course of action in consultation with others such as the Proctor and the Deputy Director of Student Services and other relevant parties.

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Case Worker

- 38 Following this consultation the Director of Student Services will appoint a relevant Case Worker. Your Case Worker will be selected based upon your perceived need or the nature of your health issue or behaviour that has caused the concern.
- 39 Your Case Worker will be responsible for communicating and liaising with you and assisting you to identify and collect any evidence and associated matters.
 - 39.1 At times it may be unclear as to whether you do have a health condition, your Case Worker will contact you to obtain any available evidence as to whether you do have a health condition or not and to offer appropriate support.
 - 39.2 Where evidence is ambiguous or further medical information is needed, the Director of Student Services must refer you to Occupational Health who will be able to work with you to assess whether you may or may not have a health condition that is affecting your behaviour.
 - 39.2.i If no evidence of a health condition is found it may be necessary to refer you to the Proctor for investigation under the Disciplinary Procedure.
- 40 Your Case Worker will be your first point of contact; you are advised to keep in touch with them.
- 41 Your Case Worker will work with you to identify appropriate support mechanisms to help you modify any disruptive behaviour. You should both agree appropriate timescales and access the support within these timescales.
 - 41.1 If you refuse to engage with appropriate support or Occupational Health, the University will establish a case conference.
 - 41.2 If you are engaging in support but your behaviour continues to cause difficulties to others, the University will implement further measures and/or establish a Case Conference.
- 42 If you have any questions about the process or you are unsure about anything you can contact your Case Worker for assistance.
 - 42.1 You should also contact your Case Worker if anything about your situation changes.

HWS - XVI. Case Conference

43 A Health and Wellness for Study Case Conference will be chaired by a manager from Student Services. It will also consist of at least a minimum of two other persons (or their designate) from the following list.

- Deputy Director Student Services
- Disability and Inclusion Manager
- Mental Health Clinical Manager
- Student Wellbeing Manager
- Head of Academic Department
- Mental Health Team Leader
- Mental Health Adviser
- University Student Counsellor
- Institutional Compliance Officer
- Others as appropriate

43.1 Your Case Worker will also attend the Case Conference.

44 Where appropriate you shall also be invited to attend the Case Conference. You may bring a companion with you. Where possible, you will be provided with up to 48 hours' notice; sometimes this may not be possible. If you are not given 48 hours notice, the reason for this will be explained to you.

44.1 In some cases based upon an identified level of risk and/or the timescales involved the Health and Wellness for Study Case Conference may go ahead without your attendance.

45 The aim of the Case Conference will be to agree a course of action with you and to assist you to aid your own recovery or to remove barriers to study that you may be experiencing.

45.1 If it is not possible for the Case Conference to agree a course of action, then the panel members will make recommendations for further action to the Director of Student Services. Your views will also be indicated in this report where possible.

45.2 The Director of Student Services will consider these recommendations and may agree to implement them.

46 Options open to the Case Conference include, but are not limited to:

- a) The panel are satisfied that no further action is required under this procedure and the procedure is considered closed.
- b) Current arrangements are in place and no further actions other than monitoring is required at this time.
- c) That the your health condition, the emergence of a disability or other circumstances are so severe as to have an extreme impact upon the your continued studies to the extent that this would warrant a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor that you undergo a compulsory Interruption of Studies for a specified period of time not exceeding two years.

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- d) That you agree to a voluntary Interruption of Studies for a period of time not exceeding two years or to the next appropriate entry point, whichever is sooner.
- e) That you seek appropriate medical and/or other necessary assistance or support.
- f) Agreement and implementation of an action plan in respect of you and your studies to include specific academic and/or residential arrangements.
- g) That you be referred back to Occupational Health for further assessment, in which case the notes from the case conference may be shared with Occupational Health to inform their assessment.
- h) That any necessary reasonable adjustment required by the Equality Act 2010 be made in consultation with you and kept under review.
- i) Advice and assistance to you in the application of mitigation and academic appeal including the provision of necessary evidence as required by the relevant board.
- j) Any other reasonable action as agreed and deemed appropriate by the Case Conference.

47 The Case Conference can **NOT**:

- k) Require or ask you to withdraw from studies;
- l) implement any form of academic penalty;
- m) agree to any form of assessment mitigation including extensions or deferrals to assessment deadlines, other than where you are required to suspend/interrupt studies;
- n) vary the mode of any forthcoming assessment;
- o) vary any marks, grades or awards, irrespective of provisional or finalised status which you have attained.

48 If you do interrupt studies from the University the following people shall be informed, where relevant, of the interruption but not the reason for it:

- Porters
- Domestic Bursar
- Dean of Faculty
- Head of Department
- Bursar
- Registrar
- Director of LIS
- Institutional Compliance Officer (Overseas Students)
- Head of International Centre (Overseas Students)

49 You and your Case Worker will be expected to keep in touch to discuss your progress against any agreed action plan and to provide you with ongoing support as necessary.

49.1 If you have interrupted studies you are not required to have continued meetings or contact with your case worker

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HWS - XVII. Case Conference Review

- 50 At any point you or your Case Worker, or other relevant people may ask for the Case Conference to be re-called so that actions, progress or associated matters may be reviewed.
- 51 If you or someone else asks for a Case Conference Review the process described above should be followed including necessary referrals to Occupation Health Service and the collection of any relevant new evidence.
- 52 So far as possible the same people who were members of the original Case Conference will also be members of the Case Conference Review.

HWS - XVIII. Suspension/Exclusion from Academic Activities or from the University

- 53 The power to suspend or exclude shall be used only where the Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) is of the opinion that it is urgent and necessary to take such action.
- 54 If you are subject to a removal, suspension or exclusion you will be informed of the decision and the reasons for the decision in writing within five (5) working days of the suspension or exclusion taking place.
- 55 If your health or behaviour is the subject of a concern you may be suspended from the University as a precautionary measure following a determination under this Policy.
- 56 If you are Suspended then this means you are not allowed to attend the University or have access to University premises, or take part in University activities.
- 57 If you are Excluded then your attendance at, or access to, the University premises and participation in any University activity will be restricted. You will be informed of the exact details to be specified in writing.
- 58 Suspension should be used only where there are good grounds for deeming exclusion to be inadequate.
- 59 An order of suspension, or exclusion, may include a requirement that the student should have no contact of any kind with a named person, or persons.

HWS - XIX. Return to Study

- 60 Before you will be allowed to return from a voluntary or compulsory period of interruption of studies following a Health and Wellness for Study case conference, the Occupational Health Service must be satisfied that you are fit to return to study and engage with university life. The Occupation Health team will make an assessment on this and shall provide a report to the Director of Student Services to this effect. Additional factors may also be taken into consideration where appropriate.
- 61 In some instances you may be invited to a further case conference to make a determination on your fitness to return to study. You will be expected to set out your renewed ability to study, and where appropriate, how you can live independently.
- 62 The Director of Student Services will make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor if it is deemed that a further interruption, or termination of studies, is required.

END

PART 3 – APPENDICES AND GUIDANCE NOTES

Appendix A - Guidelines for responding to student concerns, incidents and/or crises

Sometimes a student’s behaviour or something they tell a member of staff or another student may cause concern. It is important to respond to such concerns appropriately to support the student, and where necessary ensure their safety and the safety of others. The table below provides a summary of the types of concern and appropriate responses; more detail can be found in the subsequent sections. Students who have been emotionally affected by incidents will be offered support from Wellbeing & Mental Health

| Type of Concern | | Action | Contacts |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|--|
| General student concern | Student’s behaviour seems ‘odd’; they have talked about being depressed or anxious or about previous self-harm or suicide attempt. | Encourage student to make an appointment with Wellbeing & Mental Health and/or contact Wellbeing & Mental Health to discuss concerns. | Wellbeing & Mental Health 01244 511550 ‘When to Refer’ |
| Student Incident | Student threatens to self-harm; student’s behaviour is causing distress to others. | Report incident to Wellbeing & Mental Health, or, if in university accommodation and out of hours, to Residential Living. Wellbeing & Mental Health will then contact the student during working hours. | Wellbeing & Mental Health or Residential Living (via Porters) 01244 511541 01925 534374 |
| Student crisis | Requires immediate response <i>e.g.</i> student has just taken an overdose or has self-harmed. Student appears to be experiencing hallucinations. | If suicide attempt or self-harm suspected, either call an ambulance then inform Porters, or ask Porters to call an ambulance. Inform Mental Health and Wellbeing. If other concerns contact Wellbeing & Mental Health or (if out of hours) Residential Living. | Porters 01244 511541 01925 534374 Emergency Services 999 |
| Student admitted to hospital | Student has been admitted to hospital either on a voluntary basis or under the Mental Health Act. | Inform Wellbeing & Mental Health. | Wellbeing & Mental Health 01244 511550 |

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| Students emotionally affected by any of the above | Any student who has been emotionally affected by any of the above will be offered follow up support from Wellbeing & Mental Health. | Member of staff attending any of the above will take contact details of students affected and advise them that Wellbeing & Mental Health will contact them. | Wellbeing & Mental Health 01244 511550 |
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Concerns about students with mental health difficulties

From time to time there may be concerns about a student and it may be suspected that the student has mental health difficulties. The level of response depends on the nature of the concern.

General student concern

Students may be a general cause for concern to those around them for a variety of reasons which may or may not be the result of a health condition. Students may be withdrawn, anxious, show low mood, appear to be losing weight or generally behaving out of character. It is often appropriate for staff who know the student to raise these concerns with them. Staff from Wellbeing & Mental Health and/or Disability & Inclusion can provide advice about these situations; they will also be able to check if other staff have raised concerns about the student.

In any situation where a student's behaviour is causing disruption or difficulty it is good practice for an appropriate member of staff to discuss this with the student at the first opportunity. During such discussion it is helpful to describe the behaviour that is causing difficulty and ask the student if there are reasons why they are behaving in this manner. In some circumstances the student may not initially be aware of the impact their behaviour is having on others.

If there is no change in behaviour following such a conversation, the member of staff should alert the Student Wellbeing Manager or Disability Services Manager to their concerns.

Student incident

From time to time there may be incidents in which a student's behaviour requires a more immediate response, for example where a student is threatening to harm themselves or take an overdose and there is apparent intent to do so. Where this occurs during office hours the student should be encouraged to contact Wellbeing & Mental Health; if this occurs out of office hours and the student is living in University accommodation the Residential Living team should be contacted via the Porters. In these circumstances the focus of the Residential Living team should be to ensure the student is in a safe place and to provide emotional support to other students. A member of the Ultimate Call-Out team may be contacted to provide advice. Wellbeing & Mental Health should be made aware of the student the next day and they will provide follow up contact in line with internal procedures.

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Student crisis

Crisis situations requiring an immediate response are relatively rare. Examples include where a student has taken an overdose or their behaviour is causing a significant disturbance.

Where a student's behaviour requires an immediate medical response, this should be dealt with as a medical emergency.

To contact an ambulance either ring 999 then inform the Porters or ring the Porters' lodge on:

01244 511541

CHESTER

01925 534374

WARRINGTON

01743 297185

UC SHREWSBURY

The Porters can then direct the ambulance to the right part of campus

Try to gather the following basic information as soon as possible:

- The person's name, and if possible address or programme/subject area. This should be sufficient to locate their details through the student records system.
- Name of their General Practitioner.
- If the person has taken any medication.
- What they have taken, in what quantity and how recently. If the medication container is available this should be given to the Ambulance crew or Police.
- It is also useful to try to establish whether or not the person has had such difficulties before and, if they have, who or what has been helpful.

Student behaviour disturbing others

Where a student's behaviour is disturbing others and staff believe this is as a result of a health condition *e.g.* a student refusing to leave a classroom, staff should contact Wellbeing & Mental Health immediately and/ or the Porters.

Students who are cause for concern on professional programmes

Where a student on a professional programme is a cause for concern, staff should follow the guidance above. If following the staff member's conversation with the student there is no change in the student's behaviour, the staff member may also wish to refer the student to Occupational Health for additional support. If there are concerns that the student may be a risk to self or others, staff must refer the student to Occupational Health. Whenever a student is referred to Occupational Health the staff member must inform the student that they are making this referral.

Student incidents and student crises where the student is on a professional programme

During the initial response to an incident or a crisis the guidelines above should be followed. The staff member should also refer the student to Occupational Health as there may be concerns about professional suitability. Any such concerns will be addressed as per the Professional Suitability Procedures, but the Health and Wellness for Study policy may also be invoked.

Appendix B – Key Contacts

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|--|---|---|
| <p>Dr. Delyth Hughes Director of Student Services</p> | <p>01244 511550 delyth.hughes@chester.ac.uk</p> | <p>To make a referral to the Health and Wellness for Study procedure</p> |
| <p>Jamie Morris Deputy Director of Student Services</p> | <p>01244 511550 jamie.morris@chester.ac.uk</p> | |
| <p>Ryan Miller Disability and Inclusion Manager</p> | <p>01244 511501 r.miller@chester.ac.uk</p> | <p>Concerns about individual students focusing on academic needs/reasonable adjustments</p> |
| <p>Health for Work, Study and the Environment</p> | <p>Sue Rothwell 01244 512045 s.rothwell@chester.ac.uk</p> | <p>Mental Wellbeing promotion</p> |
| <p>Jamie Patterson Mental Health Clinical Manager</p> | <p>j.patterson@chester.ac.uk</p> | <p>Concerns about individual students focusing on Wellbeing & Mental Health</p> |
| <p>Wellbeing & Mental Health</p> | <p>01244 511550 wellbeing@chester.ac.uk</p> | <p>Support for students</p> |
| <p>Occupational Health</p> | <p>01925 534388 occupationalhealth@chester.ac.uk</p> | <p>Support and assessment of students on professional programmes of study.</p> |

Appendix C – Support Mechanisms for Students

In order to facilitate individual student Health and Wellness for Study the University has a range of support services for all students, including those who are experiencing difficulties. Summaries of the support which is offered are briefly detailed below. Further details are available on the individual service webpages.

Module and Personal Academic Tutors

Support relating to academic issues for individual students may be obtained through a number of channels. These include module tutors and programme leaders.

The Personal Academic Tutor PAT role is central to the University's student support system, and its function is to provide academic and pastoral support for students throughout their University career.

The role of the PAT is to:

- Provide academic advice for students on a one-to-one basis (including module choices, pathways, career options and any professional body requirements). PATs are also responsible for reviewing student attendance.
- Provide pastoral advice or referral for students with problems which could inhibit academic progress. PATs can, and are expected to, advise on minor personal problems at their discretion but students presenting with complex issues should be referred to Student Services or other relevant health professionals.
- Provide academic advice on issues arising from non-academic matters by providing information about potential interventions and academic options.
- Provide a consistent point of contact for the student with a member of staff who knows them well, commonly culminating in the PAT writing the student's final reference.
- There are several potential academic interventions that PATs may recommend to their tutees as necessary. These include: Extensions, Deferrals, Interruption of Studies, Change of Programme and Re-admission to a New Programme.

Further information regarding these interventions and the role of the PAT may be found in Handbook J.

Wellbeing & Mental Health

Wellbeing & Mental Health is part of Student Services and can be accessed via the Information Point in Binks005, and we also have a presence at our other campuses and sites on a regular basis (tel 01244 511550).

The Wellbeing & Mental team should be the first point of contact for staff who are concerned about a student. They offer information and guidance to students about university processes and provide assistance with practical difficulties. They also provide emotional support to students experiencing distress. This service is available to all students and offers:

- Information and advice about university procedures such as mitigating circumstances and deferrals.

- Meetings with a member of staff for support.
- A programme of Wellbeing Sessions which includes session on issues such as 'Managing Exam Anxiety' and 'Developing Resilience'.
- Triage to more specialist support such as our Mental Health Advisors or Student Counsellors. Our counselling service provides opportunities for one off and ongoing counselling sessions.

Disability and Inclusion

Disability and Inclusion is also part of Student Services and undertakes to coordinate academic support for students who have a disability. The service coordinates reasonable adjustments to academic programmes for students including technological support, learning and teaching support and exam arrangements. Evidence of a disability may be required before certain reasonable adjustments can be put in place. The service offers:

- Information and advice about applying for Disabled Students' Allowance.
- Recommendation of reasonable adjustments and development of inclusion plans.
- Examination arrangements.
- Liaison with external agencies such as GPs and Mental Health Teams.
- Access to specialist mentoring.
- Meetings with a member of staff for support.

Academic Reasonable Adjustments

Students with health difficulties and/or disabilities may require reasonable adjustments to enable them to fully participate in and benefit from their programmes of study. Reasonable adjustments do not alter the standards of a programme. Recommendations for reasonable adjustments are made by Disability and Inclusion based on evidence of the student's mental health condition/disability and discussion with the student about successful support strategies; in some cases an independent Assessment of Needs report may be available to further inform these recommendations.

Reasonable adjustments may include:

- Provision of a study mentor to help with time management, motivation and anxiety management
- Provision of a study buddy to help with transition to higher education in order to reduce anxiety
- Additional time in examinations, small room sharing with others
- Extended library loans
- Flexible deadlines
- Separate library induction with specific needs librarian
- Feedback on draft work in line with departmental policy

University accommodation/Residential Life

The University has a limited amount of student accommodation which is mostly allocated to first year undergraduate students with a few rooms available for postgraduate students. Returning students who require accommodation for a reason relating to their mental health/disability will also be accommodated wherever possible.

Where a student's health condition means that they have particular accommodation requirements, e.g. being in a quiet room, the University will endeavour to meet these needs within the available accommodation.

Students who have particular accommodation needs as a result of a health condition are encouraged to contact Disability & Inclusion in the first instance to discuss their needs.

The Residential Life team and Porters provide support for students living in university accommodation outside of office hours during term time. It may be helpful for the Residential Life team or Porters to have access to information about a student's health difficulties; Disability and Inclusion or Wellbeing and Mental Health staff may discuss with a student what information they wish to be shared with Residential Life and/or the Porters.

Some students may prefer not to share information about their health with Residential Life and/or Porters. On rare occasions there may be concerns that a student's health condition may impact on their behaviour in university accommodation. Porters are the first point of contact for students out of hours and may need to understand potential impacts of, or key information about, a student's health condition to enable them to support the student effectively if disruptive behaviour occurs. Where there is concern about the potential impact of a student's mental health condition/disability, Disability and Inclusion or Wellbeing and Mental Health staff will discuss this with the student and with their consent will inform the Porters and Residential Life of the information they need to be aware of, should a crisis situation occur. If staff believe there is a risk to the student or others, they will share this information without consent, but wherever possible will inform the student that this is what they are going to do.

Occupational Health Service

The role of the Occupational Health Service is to ensure that students are fit from a health perspective to study on their chosen course of study. Depending upon either the requirements of the programme of study or health matters surrounding an individual student's circumstances and Health and Wellness for Study; the Occupational Health Service:

- Provides pre-entry health screening.
- Ensures applicants are fit for, and placed in, appropriate roles.
- Advises management on factors in the working/learning environment and working practices which may affect health. (No disclosure will be made to management unless the student's condition is deemed to be detrimental to the health and safety of themselves or others).

- Provide early intervention to help prevent students being absent for health-related reasons, and improved opportunities for people to recover from illness whilst continuing to study.
- Access to counselling or psychological services and stress management support.

Appendix D – Confidentiality, Data Protection and Record Keeping

Disclosure of Concerns and Confidentiality

The University encourages students to inform relevant staff of any difficulties they may experience so as to receive the appropriate support.

In order to offer such support students are offered multiple opportunities to inform the University of any difficulties including on application forms, accommodation forms and at enrolment. However, a student may prefer to discuss their situation in person with a member of staff they trust.

Staff are not covered by a duty of confidentiality or the necessary quality of confidence similar to that of a Counsellor, GP or solicitor. Under no circumstances should staff promise to keep confidences or information to themselves.

- Where a student requests that a staff member keep an issue to themselves or confidential the staff member should explain that information will need to be shared to put in place appropriate support. Staff should then contact Wellbeing & Mental Health or Disability & Inclusion to discuss the situation.
- Whilst students should not expect staff to keep information 'confidential'; students should be assured that their information will be kept safe as follows:
 - Various support services have published fair processing/privacy notices under the Data Protection Act 2018. These may be found on the University web site.
 - Information will only be shared in order to put in place appropriate support and all discussion will be purposeful and respectful.
 - Whilst students have the right to request that no information is disclosed to others, this may limit the amount of support offered and the reasonable adjustments and support that can be put in place.

Data Protection

Individuals' confidentiality will be maintained as far as is reasonably practicable. Any records should be confidential and be kept in accordance with the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018. The student(s) concerned may receive copies of any meeting records upon request, although, in certain circumstances information may be withheld, for example to protect a witness, or where otherwise personal data relating to a third party would be disclosed. All letters and correspondence in relation to any student procedure will be handled and stored in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 by those involved in the procedure. Subject to the requirements of confidentiality, the University will maintain and report appropriate statistics on the use of this procedure in order to ensure its effectiveness and incidence in relation to particular equality groups.

Under Data Protection legislation any information relating to an individual student will be regarded as their personal data.

All Staff are further reminded that under the Data Protection Act 2018:

- Students have the right to request access to any information which is held about them.
- Any information or comments made on the SRM, in most instances, will be automatically available to the student through the Chester App.
- Any information and/or comments etc relating to an individual student held in either hard or electronic copy, including in a departmental student file, on a shared drive or in emails will be regarded as personal data and may be open for disclosure to the student upon request.

Record Keeping: Module and Personal Academic Tutors

Academic staff are encouraged to use the Attendance Monitoring Student Relationship Manager to keep records including the outcomes of meetings they have with students in the form of brief factual notes.

Tutors should record the outcomes of meetings using the Meeting Record which can be found on the Attendance Monitoring Student Relationship Manager (SRM).

Record Keeping: Support Services

Individual support services will maintain their records regarding matters raised by students in line with their own protocols.

Students accessing these services will be made aware of the records and protocols; copies of which will be provided upon request.

Appendix E – Access to Medical Records Act – Consent Form



AMRA Consent
Form.pdf