

# Extraordinary Support for Study Procedure

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## A. INTRODUCTION

If there is any **immediate concern for the safety or wellbeing of any person**, this should be reported to Security immediately on 01895 266943 or, alternatively, the emergency services (dial 999).

1. This Procedure outlines the ways in which the University will manage concerns about a student's ability to study effectively due to their health and/or wellbeing; and should be read in conjunction with University's [Senate Regulation 11](#).
2. In responding to and managing situations where there is a concern about a student's ability to study effectively, the University remains mindful of its duty of care and obligations under the Equality Act 2010; including, in appropriate cases, its duty to make reasonable adjustments. In dealing with matters the University also remains mindful of its obligations under the Data Protection Act 2018 and the [Brunel University Data Protection policy](#).
3. Whilst it envisages that such cases will be exceptional, the University reserves the right at any stage of this Procedure to vary the process it follows in the interests of fairness and/or health and safety (for example, where it is concerned that the attendance of the student at a meeting/case conference or the provision of information to the student could result in harm being caused to the student, for example, if the student is self-harming or in hospital).
4. In implementing this Procedure, the University will ensure that it offers and encourages students to seek appropriate support from the outset, for example by referring students to internal sources of support or to external support such as a local GP or health care professional. In addition, any student engaging with this Procedure will be entitled to be accompanied and/or represented at any stage by a staff member, friend, relative, representative from the Student Advice Centre within the Union of Brunel Students, health care professional, disability support worker or advocate. As the purpose of the procedure is to offer support in the interest of the student's health and wellbeing, legal representation is not usually required or permitted.
5. When implementing this Procedure, the University will work with the student concerned in a spirit of support and cooperation; and will seek to reach a mutually agreeable outcome wherever possible. Each matter will be dealt with on the basis of its individual circumstances. Any decision reached will be made wherever possible through an inclusive process involving the student and other individuals as appropriate in the circumstances, such as College or Department staff, health care professionals and University Services.
6. Should a student be unwilling or unable to participate in any stage of the Procedure, the University may nonetheless follow the Procedure where it is reasonable to do so. In addition, the University will consider any request from a student to proceed with a meeting/case conference in their absence on the basis of written reports and/or a written statement from the student or their representative.
7. A student may be referred at any stage of the Procedure to the University's Occupational Health Physician for a consultation to assess their circumstances and to gain further medical recommendations for support. Any such referral will be made through Student Services.

## B. REPORTING A CONCERN

If there is any **immediate concern for the safety or wellbeing of any person**, this should be reported to Security immediately on 01895 266943 or, alternatively, the emergency services (dial 999).

8. Concerns about a student's health or wellbeing should be acted on promptly. Early intervention and support can minimise risk of further deterioration in health and wellbeing.
9. Any member of staff to whom a concern about a student's ability to study effectively is reported, or who themselves has a concern, should report those concerns promptly to the Student Support and Welfare team, Student Services. In doing so, the member of staff will remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of the matter being discussed.
10. Any member of staff who is in doubt about what to do in the event of a concern arising should contact the Student Support and Welfare team, on 01895 267045 or by emailing [studentsupport@brunel.ac.uk](mailto:studentsupport@brunel.ac.uk), who will offer advice in regards to appropriate steps that should be taken.
11. Circumstances that give rise to concerns regarding a student's ability to study effectively will vary according to the particular facts of a matter. Examples may include, but are not limited to:
  - a) knowledge of deterioration in a student's physical or mental health, changes in their appearance, or behaviour which suggests deterioration in mental or physical health;
  - b) when there are concerns about a student's progression towards their expected award, which might be contributable to their health;
  - c) where there are concerns that a student is not able to attend university or engage with their studies due to their health;
  - d) where there are concerns that a student's behaviour is having a negative impact on the university, or is affecting other students or colleagues;
  - e) where there are concerns that a student may cause harm to themselves, or others;
  - f) where a student is required to spend a period of time as an inpatient in hospital or other healthcare setting for treatment.
12. Concerns can be reported directly to the Student Support and Welfare team via the following methods. However, if there is concern of an immediate risk to safety this should also be reported to Security immediately on 01895 266943:
  - Raise a Welfare Concern via the Staff Intranet  
<https://intra.brunel.ac.uk/s/student-welfare-team>  
  
This form will generate an automatic email to the Student Support and Welfare Team informing them of your concerns. The Student Support Team will investigate concerns as outlined in paragraph 13.
  - Tutor Dashboard

<https://evision.brunel.ac.uk/>

Personal Tutors can raise a concern about their individual Tutees via eVision. Only forms submitted with “*Welfare Concern*” selected as Type of Concern will generate an email to the Student Support and Welfare Team. Forms with “Academic Concern” selected will be automatically directed to the College Education Office.

- Report and Support

<https://reportandsupport.brunel.ac.uk/>

Students, staff and third parties can raise a concern about themselves or another individual at the University via our online Report and Support platform. This will generate an email informing the Student Support and Welfare Team of your concerns. Reports can also be made anonymously.

### **C. REVIEW OF SUPPORT FOR STUDY**

13. The Student Support and Welfare Team will acknowledge receipt of all concerns received, investigate the circumstances to provide appropriate support to the student; and will provide you with feedback on the outcome, although they may not always be able to provide specific details.
14. When investigating initial concerns about a student’s ability to study effectively, the Student Support and Welfare team will consider:
  - the nature of the concern;
  - the severity of risk posed by or to the student;
  - the student’s perception of their behaviour and its implications;
  - the student’s academic progress and records of attendance at required classes or engagement with online teaching resources where applicable;
  - engagement with any support currently, or previously, accessed;
  - whether there is, or is likely to be, an impact on any placement of professional course requirements that needs to be communicated with the relevant College Education Manager (see paragraph 64).
15. The Student Support and Welfare team will arrange to speak to the student as soon as practically possible (and where appropriate in person) in a supportive, sympathetic and understanding manner. Where appropriate, it may be arranged for another member(s) of staff to participate in the discussion, such as a member of the Counselling and Mental Wellbeing or Disability and Dyslexia Team, in order to support the student.
16. The staff member calling the meeting should indicate clearly to the student the nature of the concern raised; and that the purpose of the discussion is to establish the student’s perception of the concern and support they may require to ensure that their current and future studies are not unduly impacted. This may include, but is not limited to:
  - a) Review of the Student Support Profile, if one is in place and/or support or

- reasonable adjustments the student has previously, or is currently, engaged with;
- b) Self-reflection or statement from the student about their progress in their studies and the support being offered;
  - c) Request for additional medical information through the University Occupational Health Physician or the student's GP or treating physician;
  - d) Review records of academic progress, attendance, engagement or access to University systems, if available;
  - e) Gathering of any other information which may be available, i.e. from the residences and security teams and third parties.
17. The staff member may liaise with other relevant members of staff (for example from the student's Department, Residences, Student Services and Security Team as appropriate) in order to review the matter.
  18. As part of this Procedure, concerns about the student's ability to study effectively will normally be discussed at the Student at Risk meeting. The purpose of the discussion is to provide a holistic view of the best options available to support the student, and to consider recommendations and actions to mitigate any associated risk. The meeting will include the appropriate members of staff, such as representatives from the Counselling and Mental Wellbeing, Disability and Dyslexia, Residences, and Security teams. Other relevant members of staff, such as the student's Personal Tutor, may be invited to attend the meeting in consideration of a specific case. It is not normally expected that the student would be invited to attend these meetings.
  19. The Student Support and Welfare team will make recommendations to the student of any support provisions and/or action plan that may be appropriate to improve their situation. This may include but is not limited to one or more of the following:
    - a) Decide that no further action is required;
    - b) Refer the student for an appointment with the Counselling and Mental Wellbeing and/or Disability and Dyslexia team to create a Student Safety Plan, put support arrangements in place, or for review of current support and/or reasonable adjustments;
    - c) Create an action plan outlining steps to be taken to improve the situation;
    - d) Recommend that the student take a period of voluntary abeyance, a temporary break from their course, to allow them to return when they feel able to study more effectively.
  20. The staff member should notify the student in writing that if there is a continuation of the same, or any additional concern, in regards to their ability to study effectively, the University will reconsider recommendations to support them in line with Section D below.
  21. The staff member should ensure that a date is arranged to review the situation with the student and consider if there has been any improvement or deterioration in their ability to study effectively.

#### **D. EXTRAORDINARY SUPPORT FOR STUDY PROCEDURE**

22. Where there are serious, persistent and/or critical concerns about a student's ability to study effectively, or the student has failed to comply with agreed actions to improve their situation, the student will be invited to a meeting with the Student Support and Welfare Manager (or their nominee) to discuss the concern further.
23. The student will be informed in writing at least 48 hours prior to the meeting of the date, time and place of the meeting, the purpose of the meeting, the nature of the concern and that the matter is being dealt with under the Extraordinary Support for Study Procedure. The student will be requested to notify the University in advance of the meeting whether or not they will be attending, and the identity and role of any person(s) who will be accompanying and/or representing them at the meeting.
24. The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the concern with the student, their response to any steps that have so far been taken to manage the situation, discuss additional support that may improve the situation; or consider whether a break in studies would provide time for the situation to improve and ensure that their current and future studies are not unduly impacted. Records of information obtained from any previous meetings or action plans under this Procedure may be referred to at the meeting.
25. The staff member may liaise with and/or ask other relevant members of staff to attend the meeting (for example from the student's department, Residences, Student Services, Security Team or the University Occupational Health Physician), as appropriate in order to deal with the matter.
26. When considering extraordinary support for students on professional courses, the department will be informed, so that they may consider any impact in regards to professional suitability as a separate matter (see paragraph 64).
27. If following the meeting, the staff member remains concerned that a student's ability to study effectively is impaired or may become impaired, they may take such action as is appropriate in the circumstances, including but not limited to one or more of the following:
  - a) Decide that no further action is required;
  - b) Put in place arrangements for support and/or reasonable adjustments for the student;
  - c) Recommend that the student take a period of voluntary abeyance in order to improve their situation before returning to study.
  - d) Refer the student to the University's Occupational Health Physician for consultation and further recommendations from a medical perspective.
  - e) Create and action plan outlining steps to be taken to improve the situation and any conditions to be placed on the student (e.g. in relation to their behaviour or the support they should engage with).
  - f) Call a Case Conference to consider further investigation of the concerns and any potential courses of action, including suspension or termination of the student's record.
28. The staff member will notify the student in writing, with reasons of the decision, and provide the student with a copy of any action plan, normally within 5 working days of the discussion. A written record of the meeting and a copy of any action plan will be

sent to the Head of Student Services normally no more than 5 days after the meeting.

#### **E. REFERRAL TO THE UNIVERSITY OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PHYSICIAN**

29. Where there is a concern that a student's ability to study effectively is impaired or likely to become impaired, a referral may be made to the University's Occupational Health Physician for medical consultation. The purpose of the consultation is to assess the student's circumstances, in order to advise the University on their health status in relation to their ability to study effectively and complete course requirements, so that the University can make informed decisions regarding appropriate support.
30. The University's Occupational Health Physician will meet with the student (in person where possible) to complete the assessment and produce a report outlining their medical opinion with recommendations for additional support where appropriate. A copy of the outcome will be provided to the Student Support and Welfare Manager (with the consent of the student) and may be shared with other appropriate members of staff as required to facilitate recommendations.
31. Should the University Occupational Health Physician advise that the student's ability to study effectively is impaired or may become impaired, the student will be encouraged to take a voluntary period of abeyance to undergo any recommended treatment, and/or a Case Conference will be called to discuss the matter in line with the Extraordinary Support for Study Procedure. The University is not obliged to follow medical opinions although they can be used for guidance.

#### **F. CASE CONFERENCE**

32. Any case conference will be chaired by the Head of Student Services (or their nominee) and attended by relevant members of staff such as a representative from the student's Department and from any service such as the Counselling and Mental Wellbeing, Disability and Dyslexia, Residences and/or Security teams. Relevant external professionals (for example psychiatrist, GP, health care professional, probation officer) may also be invited to attend. Provision may also be made for the production of written reports (for example medical reports).
33. Although the student may be invited to attend the case conference, it is not expected that this would normally be the case. A case conference may be held prior to and/or following any meeting with the student.
34. The Case Conference may consider options for the management of the matter, dependent on the individual circumstances of the case, and make recommendations for action. Recommendations may include, but are not limited to, one or more of the following:
  - a) no action is taken in the matter;
  - b) support arrangements are put in place and/or reasonable adjustments made for the student;
  - c) the student be referred to the University's Occupational Health Physician for a medical consultation and recommendations.
  - d) the student be withdrawn from a placement;
  - e) the student be permitted to continue on their course, or on an alternative course,

with or without conditions being placed on their continued attendance (for example in relation to their behaviour and/or engagement with support) and/or support being put in place for the student;

- f) an action plan be produced to outline steps to be taken to improve the situation and any conditions to be placed on the student. Where possible, this should be with the agreement of the student and formally documented in writing, including any implications of the student not adhering to the plan. The Head of Student Services will notify the student that if any conditions set out in the action plan are not complied with, and/or if there is a continuation of the same or any additional concern, their ability to study effectively may be further investigated and further action taken.
  - g) the student be permitted to continue on a part-time basis with any appropriate support being put in place;
  - h) the student takes a period of voluntary abeyance;
  - i) a recommendation be made to the Vice-Chancellor (or their nominee) pursuant to [Council Ordinance 7E](#), that the student be suspended, excluded or expelled, with or without conditions regarding any return to study.
35. It is for the Head of Student Services (considering all relevant circumstances including those discussed at any previous meeting and/or Case Conference, and in light of any professional opinion provided as part of the consideration of the matter), to determine whether a student's ability to study effectively is impaired, or may become impaired, and what outcome there should be in line with the Procedure. In determining outcomes, the Head of Student Services is not limited to the outcomes set out in paragraph 34.
36. The decision and outcome of the Head of Student Services will be notified to the student in writing, with reasons and a copy of any action plan, normally within 5 working days of the decision.
37. The Head of Student Services will arrange a date to review any action plan and consider if there has been any improvement or deterioration in the student's ability to study effectively. The normal length of an action plan will be a period of 3 months, or until the end of the academic term, whichever is shorter. The Head of Student Services will determine following the review, if the action plan should continue, and if so, whether it should be amended. The outcomes of the review meeting will be recorded in writing and communicated to the student.
38. If appropriate, a copy of the decision and the action plan will be sent to other relevant members of staff, for example the Student Support and Welfare Manager, Head of Residences, Security or Personal Tutor in order to facilitate support. A written record of the meeting, case conference and a copy of any action plan will be retained by the Head of Student Services.

## **G. TEMPORARY EXCLUSION AND SUSPENSION**

39. Where the Vice-Chancellor (or their nominee), reasonably believes that there is a risk to the health, safety and/or wellbeing of a student and/or to other persons, and/or that the student's behaviour is or is at risk of negatively affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students and/or the day-to-day activities of the University and/or a placement provider, that requires immediate action they may, in accordance



with Council Ordinance 7E, determine one of the following outcomes pending the completion of any process under this Regulation:

- a) to temporarily exclude the student from all or specified areas of the University and/or a placement and/or from using any of the University's facilities or services for a specified period as is reasonable in the circumstances of the matter;
  - b) to temporarily suspend the student from his/her studies and/or a placement for a specified period as is reasonable in the circumstances of the matter
40. Where the Vice-Chancellor acts in accordance with paragraph 39, they will review at regular intervals whether it is reasonable for the temporary exclusion or suspension to continue or whether it should be revoked, amended or extended. In addition, as part of their determination of the outcome, the Vice-Chancellor will consider whether in the circumstances of the particular case specific arrangements should be made, for example, to permit the student to take and/or submit any examinations and/or assessment.
41. Where the Vice-Chancellor temporarily excludes or suspends a student in accordance with paragraphs 39 and/or 40, the student will be notified in writing normally within 3 working days of the decision. The student may within 28 working days of notification of the decision, appeal against the decision on one or more of the grounds set out in paragraph 50. The student must submit any appeal in writing to the Registrar (or their nominee) and the matter will be dealt with in accordance with section I below. Any Review Panel convened may come to one of the following decisions:
- a) dismiss the appeal in which case the suspension will continue, or
  - b) uphold the appeal, in which case the suspension will be lifted, and the case will be referred to the Registrar for consideration of what, if any, further steps may need to be taken to deal with the matter under this Procedure.
42. Any temporary exclusion or suspension made under paragraphs 39 and/or 40 is a neutral act and is not a determination under this Regulation regarding the student's ability to study effectively.
43. In all cases where the Vice-Chancellor acts under paragraphs 39 and/or 40, their decision will be notified to Senate at its next meeting.

#### **H. RETURNING TO STUDY**

44. The University is committed to assisting students to return to study when appropriate, and to supporting students in such a return. A return to study from temporary suspension or exclusion, will be dependent upon the student satisfying the Head of Student Services, in accordance with this Procedure, that they are able to study effectively; and satisfying any conditions attached to their return. The Head of Student Services may reasonably require the student to produce satisfactory medical and/or other evidence of their ability to study effectively (for example from the University Occupational Health Physician, psychiatrist, GP or mental health support worker).
45. A student should notify the Head of Student Services in writing of any request to return to study from temporary suspension or exclusion. The particular process to be followed in dealing with a request by a student to return to study will be at the discretion of the Head of Student Services, and will depend upon the circumstances of the matter (for example, the seriousness of the student's situation and the extent of any risk posed).

However, the Head of Student Services will normally invite the student to meet with them (or their nominee) to discuss the matter in person.

46. The decision to permit a return to study will be made by the Head of Student Services in consultation with relevant staff and/or external professionals; including, if practicable and appropriate, the original members of any case conference held under the Procedure. In deciding, the Head of Student Services will consider whether the student is able to study effectively; and whether they have complied with any conditions previously imposed on any return to study and with any relevant academic regulations. If the Head of Student Services determines that the student is able to study effectively and may return, they may attach conditions to the student's return such as those relating to the student's behaviour or support that they should seek.
47. In addition, in reaching a decision the Head of Student Services will consider, in consultation with appropriate members of staff (such as the academic department, College Education Manager and/or those from the Disability and Dyslexia or Counselling and Mental Wellbeing teams), the student's support needs including whether reasonable adjustments need to be made in relation to any return to study. The Head of Student Services will nominate the Student Support and Welfare Manager to be responsible for ensuring that arrangements are put in place for providing support identified for a student returning to study, and for that support to be reviewed at such intervals as is appropriate in the circumstances.
48. The decision of the Head of Student Services, with reasons, will be notified to the student in writing normally within 14 working days of the student's written request to return to study.
49. The decision of the Head of Student Services is final. If in the opinion of the student the matter remains unresolved, they may request an appeal under the grounds outline in Section I.

## **I. GROUNDS FOR APPEAL**

50. A student may, within 28 working days of the date of notification of any decision of the Head of Student Services and/or the Vice-Chancellor under the Procedure, whichever is the latest, request an appeal of the decision(s) on one or more of the following grounds only:
  - a) there has been procedural irregularity;
  - b) there was prejudice or bias on the part of the decision maker;
  - c) the decision of the Head of Student Services and/or the Vice Chancellor is unreasonable and/or disproportionate;
  - d) new material evidence has become available which was not previously reasonably available during the process.
51. Any request for an appeal must briefly outline the grounds for appeal, and must be submitted in writing to the Registrar (or their nominee). The Registrar (or their nominee) will consider, normally within 10 working days of receipt, the request for appeal and will determine whether or not sufficient grounds are disclosed:
  - a) if no sufficient grounds are disclosed, the Registrar (or their nominee) will inform the student of this in writing, normally within 12 working days of receipt of the

- request for appeal;
- b) if sufficient grounds are disclosed, the Registrar (or their nominee) will inform the student in writing normally within 12 working days of receipt of the request for appeal, and will invite the student to submit detailed written submissions in support of the appeal. The Registrar (or their nominee) will assemble a Review Panel.
52. In considering a request for an appeal, the Registrar (or their nominee) may for good cause, for example if the student is in hospital, extend the time period in which the student may request an appeal.
53. A Review Panel will consist of three members of Senate, one of whom will be a student. One of the academic members of the Review Panel will be appointed as Chair. No member of Senate directly involved in the matter under consideration may be appointed to the Review Panel.
54. The Chair of the Review Panel will determine the process to be followed for dealing with the appeal in light of the circumstances of the matter (for example, if the student has a mental health problem, the extent of the problem and whether the student may find a formal review meeting unduly stressful). However, the Review Panel will normally invite the student to meet in person to discuss the appeal. In order to deal with the appeal, the Review Panel may also invite to appear before it (at the same time as the student or separately) any other person who the Review Panel considers appropriate according to the circumstances of the case (for example members of staff involved in the matter previously or with the student generally or external professionals such as medical professionals). Alternatively, or in addition, the Review Panel may ask for written evidence to be submitted by such individuals.
55. The Review Panel will be provided with copies of the decision being appealed together with any submissions provided by the student in support of the appeal and any other relevant information relating to the matter (for example in connection with the Extraordinary Support for Study Procedure or in the form of medical reports previously submitted in respect of the student). Such documentation will be circulated to the Review Panel and copied to the student normally not less than 5 working days before the meeting.
56. Where the Review Panel wishes to meet with the student, the student will be informed of the date, time and location of the meeting, normally not less than 10 working days in advance of the meeting. The student may be accompanied by a staff member, friend, relative, representative from the Student Advice Centre, health care professional, disability support worker or advocate.
57. The Review Panel will deliberate in private.
58. (This paragraph does not apply to appeals in relation to a temporary exclusion or suspension decision) Following its deliberations, the Review Panel may come to one of the following decisions:
- a) dismiss the appeal;
  - b) overturn the decision(s) being appealed and refer the matter back to the Head of Student Services under the Extraordinary Support for Study Procedure for reconsideration;

- c) overturn the decision(s) being appealed and refer the matter to a new Head of Service to consider the case afresh under the Extraordinary Support for Study Procedure.
59. The Registrar (or their nominee) will ensure that a record is kept of the proceedings of the Review Panel.
60. The decision of the Review Panel, with reasons, will be notified to the student in writing by the Registrar (or their nominee) normally within five working days of the Review meeting. The decision of the Review Panel is final. If in the opinion of the student the matter remains unresolved, they may request a completion of procedures letter in order to pursue their concern with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education.
61. Decisions taken under this Procedure may be eligible for review by the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA), which is an independent body set up to review student complaints. More information about the OIA can be accessed at <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/>. The OIA can be contacted at 0118 959 9813 or [enquires@oiahe.org.uk](mailto:enquires@oiahe.org.uk).

## **J. ALTERNATIVE UNIVERSITY PROCESSES**

62. This Procedure has been developed by the University as an alternative to its student disciplinary Procedures set out in [Senate Regulation 6 Student Conduct \(Academic and Non-Academic\)](#) . It is intended to be used in circumstances where, in light of concerns regarding a student's health and/or wellbeing, the University considers it inappropriate to deal with the matter as a disciplinary one.
63. Where it is determined in accordance with this Procedure that the concerns about a student's ability to study effectively is not directly related to the student's health and/or wellbeing (e.g. behavioural and/or misconduct); and/or the student has failed to comply with conditions in line with the Procedure, the matter may be referred for consideration under disciplinary procedures set out in [Senate Regulation 6 Student Conduct \(Academic and Non-Academic\)](#).
64. This Procedure should not normally be used when determining issues of professional competence. Those issues should normally be dealt with in accordance with [Senate Regulation 14 Professional Suitability](#).
65. In addition, students who are resident in University accommodation are subject to its [Residence Regulations and Policies](#)
66. There may be circumstances where it is appropriate for the University to invoke Senate Regulation 6 and/or Senate Regulation 14 and/or its Residence Regulations notwithstanding that there are concerns about the student's health and/or wellbeing. If there is any uncertainty as to which University process should be implemented, advice should be sought promptly from the Head of Student Services.

*(Updated December 2021)*