

UNIVERSITY OF BATH

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SUPPORT FOR STUDY (HWSS) POLICY

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Purpose

The University of Bath recognises the fundamental importance of student wellbeing and aims to provide a learning environment where every student can succeed.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure the University has an effective, coordinated, and supportive response when:

- A student's health, wellbeing or behaviour is impacting on their ability to engage with the requirements, regulations, and responsibilities of university life as a whole;
- A student's health, wellbeing or behaviour is impacting on their ability to progress academically;
- When the university has concerns about the impact of a student's behaviour on the safety, wellbeing or experience of themselves or others,

and there is no current support plan in place, or an existing support plan is not being engaged with effectively.

The policy aims to:

- Support students to remain on and succeed in their course wherever possible.
- Empower students to take personal responsibility and an active part in the management of their health and wellbeing.
- Promote collaboration between students, staff and third parties to ensure a coordinated and consistent response.
- Ensure the best interests of the student are always considered in relation to their personal situation. Decisions taken against the student's wishes will be made with transparency and openness.
- Enable the University to protect the health and wellbeing of the University community and its members as a whole.

Scope

This policy will be applied to students enrolled or registered at the University of Bath.

When deciding to apply this policy, the University may consider concerns raised by staff, other students, and third parties, as well as information provided by the student themselves.

There are occasions where all options of support have been explored and the student is not well enough to continue their studies. In such instances the procedure

may recommend suspension from studies or withdrawal from the University as the best support outcome for the circumstances.

This policy will also be applied if there were concerns raised under this policy and students are returning to study after any of the following:

- Emergency suspension (precautionary measures)
- Voluntary suspension
- Suspension as an outcome from application of this policy

Policy Interactions

Sometimes, issues are raised that do not fall neatly into the category of just one University policy. Where this is the case, the University will be flexible in its approach of application of policy on a case-by-case basis. The Deputy Director (Community, Response and Resolution) will jointly determine with other relevant Heads of Services whether it's better to use one process after the other (and in what order), to run them at the same time, or to apply the processes more flexibly. It will be explained to all relevant parties how the matters will be investigated, who will coordinate the process, and who will issue the final decision.

In cases involving an emergency, where there is a perceived threat to the health and safety of the student or to other students or staff, the University will consider applying precautionary measures to ensure that any recognised risks can be mitigated before and during the HWSS process (see Student Precautionary Measures Policy, <https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/guidance-for-students-precautionary-measures/>).

Stages of Health, Wellbeing and Support for Study

The procedure has 3 stages:

- Stage 1 – emerging concern
- Stage 2 – significant or ongoing concern
- Stage 3 – persistent or critical concern

The stages are designed to respond to different and changing degrees of concern and/or the perceived seriousness of a situation. If the concerns are not remedied by the actions agreed at one stage, the next stage may be instigated.

The procedure can be entered at any stage but in most cases Stages 1 and 2 should be considered before escalation to Stage 3. Some student cases may stay at the same stage or move between stages.

The Health, Wellbeing and Support for Study Procedure (<https://www.bath.ac.uk/guides/health-wellbeing-and-support-for-study-policy-and-procedure/>) provides further information.

Right of Appeal

A student can use the Student Appeals Policy to submit an appeal (within the bounds of that policy) following notification of the outcome of Stages 2 or 3.

Support for Students

We understand that involvement in a HWSS process can be very stressful for students and are committed to the process being as empathetic and supportive as possible and taking all possible steps to minimise additional concerns and anxieties experienced by the student. All students will be made aware of, and actively encouraged to engage with, the support options that are available to them throughout the process.

We understand that some students may need additional arrangements to fully access this process. Any reasonable adjustments will be considered and put in place where possible.

Procedural Fairness

No person with a conflict of interest will be asked to investigate or make a decision relating to a student's case. A conflict of interest occurs when an individual's professional or personal interests – family, friendships, financial, or social factors – could compromise their ability to apply judgement or act fairly and objectively. A conflict of interest can be actual or perceived.

Roles and Responsibilities

The student is responsible for:

- Engaging with the HWSS process and, with support, taking an active part in the management of their health and wellbeing
- Sharing information about their health and wellbeing from statutory or private individuals/teams who are supporting their wellbeing, with the University

All university staff are responsible for:

- Being aware of and ensuring they understand the University of Bath's HWSS policy and procedure
- Having open and honest conversations about what support a student might benefit from and engaging students in support services at the earliest opportunity to address unmet needs

Staff who are closely involved in student support or academic progression are responsible for:

- Instigating and conducting Stage 1 of the HWSS procedure
- Following completion of Stage 1 and where concerns remain, referring students to the Student Casework Team for consideration of appropriate next steps under the procedure
- Raising concerns about student welfare with the Student Support Department, in line with established processes, where there are immediate concerns or risks
- Attending Stage 2 and Stage 3 meetings as required by the Panel Chair

This includes, but is not limited to: Academic Advisors, Doctoral Supervisors, Student Experience Officers, Case Managers, Wellbeing Practitioners, Disability Advisors.

Student Casework Team (Student Support and Safeguarding Department) are responsible for:

- The operational delivery and administrative support of the HWSS policy and procedure
- Preparing the case report and recommending to the Deputy Director (Community, Response and Resolution) what stage a student's case should be considered at
- Attending Stage 2 and 3 meetings as advisors to the Chair/Panel
- Conducting review check-ins where requiredMonitoring the progression of a student's case and being a central point of contact for students being supported through HWSS
- Coordinating information sharing between Academic Registry and academic departments

Deputy Director (Community, Response and Resolution) is responsible for:

- Overseeing the effective implementation of the HWSS policy and procedure, and their interaction with other safeguarding policies
- Making decisions about what stage a student's case should be considered at
- Chairing Stage 2 meetings, including referral on to another stage
- Providing procedural and case advice at Stage 3 meetings
- Reporting to Senate annually on numbers of student cases supported through the HWSS process, outcomes, common themes and recommendations to improve service standards and academic provision

Any of the functions of the Deputy Director (Community, Response and Resolution) under this policy may be delegated to a member of the Student Support & Safeguarding Leadership Team.

The Chair of Panel HWSS meetings is responsible for:

- Overseeing the proceedings of the panel meeting itself including chairing the discussion, managing attendance and contributions, ensuring a fair and procedurally sound process, and leading the panel in reaching decisions and determining outcomes
- Appointing Stage 3 HWSS Panel members

Stage 3 HWSS Panel Members are responsible for:

- Determination of outcome relating to HWSS cases which are referred to them

- Panel members from the relevant academic department are responsible for providing information regarding a student's academic progress, engagement and academic options within their department.

The Vice Chancellor is responsible for:

- Approval of any outcome recommendation referred to them by a Stage 3 Panel

Senate is responsible for:

- The HWSS policy and approving any amendments to it
- The ratification of the HWSS procedure at appropriate stages
- Appointment Stage 3 Panel Chairs

Monitoring and Record Keeping

Cases handled under HWSS, including decisions made, outcomes and common themes will be recorded and an annual report provided to Senate and its relevant committees.

All records taken under this policy will be held for the recommended period of time for which records should be retained to comply with legal requirements and meet operational needs as defined with the University Records Retention Schedule (<https://www.bath.ac.uk/corporate-information/records-retention-schedule/>).

If you have any feedback on this policy, or on your experience of this policy or process, please email studentpolicy@bath.ac.uk.

Document Control Information

Any such amendments are identified above and will take effect from the date shown.

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