

HEALTH, WELLBEING & SUPPORT FOR STUDY POLICY & PROCEDURE

Key contacts

For enquiries about this policy or procedure please use the appropriate email address:

Student enquiries: falmouthhwsfs@fxplus.ac.uk

Staff enquiries: staffhwsfs@fxplus.ac.uk

Key facts

You should familiarise yourself with the entirety of the Health, Wellbeing & Support for Study Policy, and we would particularly draw your attention to the following eleven elements:

Clause(s)	Description
3.1	The Health, Wellbeing and Support for Study Policy should be considered as an alternative or supplement to other means of managing concerns over a student's behaviour, attendance or academic progress, where mental or physical ill health or disability could be a contributing factor or where the behaviour could affect the health, safety or wellbeing of other people.
3.2	Lack of engagement with the responsibility to manage their own wellbeing and to engage with the support and adjustments offered may lead to the University invoking formal disciplinary procedures against the student.
3.3	Where it is deemed appropriate, the University may implement alternative/supplementary procedures (e.g. the Student Disciplinary Policy and Procedure; the Crisis Intervention and Emergency Contact Procedure; the Suspension Policy; the Attendance Monitoring Policy).
4.5	It is good practice to document the main points discussed and any plans agreed between the member of staff and the student in writing (e.g. in an email to the student), so it is clear what has been discussed and agreed. Unless the student has explicitly requested otherwise the student should be asked to give consent for this record to be shared with Student Services (to ensure a joined up approach to support), and a confidential email account exists to enable this to be managed securely: staffhwsfs@fxplus.ac.uk .
5.5	Where the recommendation of the meeting is that a student should intermit from their studies but the student does not agree, the recommendation will be 'suspended' and an action plan be put in place. If the student is then unwilling or unable to meet the requirements of the action plan, they may be required to intermit without reference to Level 3 of the process.
6.1	Persistent and/or serious concerns raised about a student's actions, behaviour, health, safety, or mental well-being that are putting the health, safety, well-being and/or academic progress of their self or other members

	of the University community at significant risk will, exceptionally, cause Level 3 to be initiated without reference to Levels 1 and 2.
6.5	Exceptionally, where it is felt that a student's behaviour is deteriorating quickly an immediate emergency Level 3 meeting may be called without the usual five (5) days' notice. An emergency Level 3 meeting may be held via a conference call, telephonically or electronically as appropriate. Any decision arrived at by the emergency Level 3 meeting must be agreed collectively. An emergency Level 3 meeting may be followed by a further Level 3 meeting, which will normally be held within four weeks of the emergency Level 3 meeting, to review the situation.
6.6	The meeting may require a medical assessment be provided regarding the student's situation, from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner. The student will be asked to authorise full disclosure to the University of the results of any examination. The University recognises that the information disclosed will constitute "sensitive data" for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and it will be handled, processed and stored accordingly. Should the student refuse to undertake a medical examination, or not provide consent for the outcome to be shared with the meeting, the meeting may either continue this procedure based on the information already in its possession, or use another appropriate means to address the issue.
6.10	The meeting may consider various options including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A short-term suspension to allow the student to be assessed by a medical professional, access support services both within and outside the University or for the University to obtain further information. A short-term suspension will be reviewed within four weeks. • Intermittence with conditions for a period of up to two academic years. • A requirement to withdraw – if the meeting concludes, taking into account the individual circumstances of the case and any supporting medical evidence, that there is no reasonable prospect of the student re-engaging with their course within their period of registration, a recommendation will be made to the Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement that the student be required to withdraw. This recommendation should only be made in the most serious cases. Should this occur, it must be reported by the Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement to Academic Board. • Any other action considered to be appropriate and proportionate.
7.2	In cases where the University has any continuing concerns about the individual's health, wellbeing and fitness to study, it may require a second medical opinion. In this case a student may be asked to submit themselves for medical examinations by doctors/specialists nominated by the University, at the University's cost, to allow the situation to be properly

	evaluated. Students will only be permitted to return if, after receiving medical advice, the University is satisfied that the individual is fit to study and able to comply with any conditions imposed on their return.
7.4	In any case where a student returns to study following the implementation of this policy, the University may decide that there should be regular review meetings with the student that can be used to support and monitor a return to study plan and provide staff with an agreed context in which to provide ongoing pastoral care. If so, the student must provide their continued co-operation in this respect and such review meetings may continue for part or all of their remaining time at the University.

Policy

1 What is Health, Wellbeing and Support for study?

- 1.1 The term 'Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Support for study' as used in this policy relates to the entire student experience, and not just a student's ability to engage with their academic studies. The University's academic and other regulations require that students participate in their studies and broader student life in an appropriate manner (with reasonable adjustments where appropriate), without putting their own wellbeing and/or safety at risk and without putting the wellbeing and/or safety of other students, staff, or third parties at risk. Being able to meet these requirements (if appropriate, with reasonable adjustments) demonstrates a student's continuing fitness to study.
- 1.2 Where a student has disclosed that they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term impact on their ability to undertake normal daily activities as a student, the University will make reasonable adjustments to enable them to continue their studies and meet the learning outcomes for their course.
- 1.3 The University recognises that on occasion a student's physical health or mental wellbeing may deteriorate to a point where it becomes impossible for them to be able to continue with their studies. Whilst the University has a general duty of care to all within its community and a responsibility to take action to support those in distress, the University is an academic community and the support and care facilities it is able to provide for its students are those that are appropriate to an academic community. The University does not seek to replace the services provided by statutory agencies such as the NHS, Police or Local Authority.

2 The purpose and scope of this policy

- 2.1 This is a supportive policy which can be used when a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour is having a detrimental impact on their ability to progress academically and/or to function at university. It should be used for any student whose ability to cope with university life, to study or progress on their course in a self-sustaining way (with reasonable adjustments where appropriate) is compromised as the result of their health, wellbeing or a disability. It is an alternative to disciplinary procedures where

there is concern that a student's behaviour may include issues relating to ill-health, mental health, personal stress or disability.

- 2.2 Should a concern regarding a student's fitness to study or wellbeing arise, this policy ensures that any steps taken will consider the best interests of the student and their right to make informed choices about the options available to them and ensure the provision of appropriate reasonable support and adjustments, ensuring a consistent and sensitive approach to managing situations.
- 2.3 Concerns should be acted on promptly as early intervention and support can result in better outcomes for the student and may avoid the situation becoming more complex.

3 When to use this policy

The Health, Wellbeing and Support for Study Policy should be considered as an alternative or supplement to other means of managing concerns over a student's behaviour, attendance or academic progress, where mental or physical ill health or disability could be a contributing factor or where the behaviour could affect the health, safety or wellbeing of other people. Cause for concern may arise from a wide range of circumstances, including (but not restricted to) the following:

- Concerns about the student's wellbeing are raised from a third party, for example academic staff, a friend, placement provider, housemate, medical professional, or Student Services professional.
- A student has told a member of staff that they have concerns about their health, wellbeing and fitness to study.
- A student's disposition is such that it indicates that there may be a need to address an underlying health issue, for example if they have demonstrated mood swings or unusual behaviour; shown signs of depression; become withdrawn, aggressive and/or distressed.
- Behaviour, which would otherwise be dealt with as a disciplinary matter, which it is considered may be the result of an underlying physical or mental health difficulty.
- A student's health difficulties are adversely affecting the health, safety or wellbeing of others.
- A student's behaviour is not acceptable and this is thought to be the result of an underlying physical or mental health difficulty.

- 3.1 Students should be involved in the management of their own wellbeing wherever possible. However, there may be times where a student is unwilling or unable to work within these procedures. Lack of engagement with the responsibility to manage their own wellbeing and to engage with the support and adjustments offered may lead to the University invoking formal disciplinary procedures against the student.
- 3.2 Where it is deemed appropriate, the University may implement alternative/supplementary procedures (e.g. the Student Disciplinary Policy and

Procedure; the Crisis Intervention and Emergency Contact Procedure; the Suspension Policy; the Attendance Monitoring Policy).

Procedure

4 Level 1 - Initial Support and Guidance to Students

- 4.1 Level 1 will usually involve informal discussion(s) between the student and their personal tutor or other course team member, it may also involve a Student Services professional and may be initiated by either the student or the member of staff. The informal discussion(s) should give the student the opportunity to explain their perception of the matter. Concerns should be acted on promptly as early intervention and support can result in better outcomes for the student and may avoid the situation becoming more complex. The key aim of this stage is to ensure early positive, informal action is taken with the student's co-operation and involvement.
- 4.2 Should staff feel that they are not confident about dealing with a situation they are encouraged to seek advice from Student Services (Living Support, ls-team@fxplus.ac.uk, 01326 255341). To ensure appropriate levels of confidentiality, this initial advice may be sought without disclosing details of the student concerned. Additionally the Student Services webpages may be helpful: <http://www.fxplus.ac.uk/study/student-services>
- 4.3 The student should be encouraged to access the Student Services offered by the University. It may also be appropriate to specifically refer the student to the Accessibility team to explore creating an Individual Learning Plan (ILP) with reasonable adjustments to enable the student to study effectively. It should be made clear to students when their needs exceed the usual pastoral role of an academic tutor and they will need to be referred on to specialist support.
- 4.4 The support services available at the University to which students may be signposted if it is felt they will be of benefit are:
- Student Services (via www.compass.fxplus.ac.uk);
 - Chaplaincy;
 - the Students' Union;
 - Accessibility & Inclusive Learning Service; and/or
 - ASK Academic Skills.
- 4.5 It is good practice to document the main points discussed and any plans agreed between the member of staff and the student in writing (e.g. in an email to the student), so it is clear what has been discussed and agreed. Unless the student has explicitly requested otherwise the student should be asked to give consent for this record to be shared with Student Services (to ensure a joined up approach to support), and a confidential email account exists to enable this to be managed securely: staffhwsfs@fxplus.ac.uk.
- 4.6 It is hoped that in most cases issues can be resolved at this informal stage, and that students will respond positively, taking advantage of the support available. Further

meetings may be scheduled to monitor the situation and progress made by the student. If the concerns have not been addressed, support has not been sought, and/or progress has not been made, the case should move on to the next stage of the policy through referral to Student Services.

5 Level 2 – Meeting

5.1 Should the action outlined in section 4 be unsuccessful, and there are continuing and/or further concerns about a student’s ability to cope with university life, to study or progress on their course in a self-sustaining way (with reasonable adjustments where appropriate, and without affecting the safety, wellbeing and academic progress of those around them), Level 2 should be invoked. Exceptionally, where the case is sufficiently serious and urgent, Level 2 may be initiated without reference to Level 1.

5.2 To initiate Level 2, any member of staff with responsibility for the student (for example, personal tutor, module leader, or a Student Services professional) can contact Student Services (by emailing staffhwsfs@fxplus.ac.uk) to request a meeting is convened (at which the student may or may not be present). Student Services will make arrangements for this meeting which will usually include those who can best provide expert and specialist advice on the case being considered and those who need to be there because of their relationship with the student. The meeting will usually include:

- Head of Wellbeing (or nominee), who will chair
- A member of academic staff from the student’s department or an academic representative from the student’s course team as appropriate, who is able to comment on the course requirements and the student’s academic progress.
- A representative from Quality Assurance & Enhancement, depending on the nature of the situation.

5.3 The student will normally be invited to attend the Level 2 meeting. If they are invited to attend the student will usually be given at least five working days’ written notice of the meeting and will be informed of its purpose. The invitation email will include a summary of the reason for calling the meeting and, if available, notes regarding the Level 1 meeting.

5.4 If the student does attend, they may be accompanied by a currently enrolled student of the University, a family member, or an elected member of the Students’ Union. The student may also be accompanied by a support worker (for example sign language interpreter or mental health worker/disability adviser) as appropriate to their needs. The person accompanying the student under consideration will not normally be allowed to make representations on the student’s behalf other than in exceptional circumstances (for example, where the student has a disability which affects their ability to communicate). This must be agreed in advance of the meeting.

5.5 The outcomes available to the Level 2 meeting are:

- No further action required
- To monitor the student formally for a specific period of time. An action plan will be agreed with the student detailing any steps the student will need to take and the support to be provided to the student. Regular review meetings will be arranged with the student and a nominated member of staff. The student should be made aware of what will happen if the action plan is breached, which will normally involve their case moving to Level 3.
- To recommend a specific academic arrangement be put in place. This may include a recommendation for the student to intermit from their studies. Such a recommendation should be agreed by the student's academic department and the student.
 - Where the recommendation of the meeting is that a student should intermit from their studies but the student does not agree, the recommendation will be 'suspended' and an action plan be put in place. If the student is then unwilling or unable to meet the requirements of the action plan, they may be required to intermit without reference to Level 3 of the process. In these cases the circumstances will be communicated by those nominated to monitor the student's progress against the agreed plan to the chair of the meeting. The chair will then determine whether it is appropriate to reconvene the discussion to consider requiring the student to intermit without reference to Level 3 of the process. This discussion may be held without the student being present and may be via a telephone conference call or online meeting as appropriate. Any subsequent meeting will usually include those who attended the previous meeting or their designate to expedite the process where they are not available. If appropriate, the meeting will confirm any specific arrangements for the student's return to study (see section 7).
- To refer the case to a meeting convened under Level 3 of this procedure. This will be appropriate in serious cases, for example where there is evidence of a serious risk to the health and safety of the student or others in the University community. A referral to Level 3 of this procedure would be made when it is considered that intermittence, or withdrawal may be the appropriate course of action.

5.6 A record of the meeting and its outcomes, recording agreed actions, will be made and distributed to all attendees and the student (if they were not present) within five working days. The student will also be informed about sources of advice and support for understanding the outcome.

6 Level 3 meeting

6.1 Level 3 may be initiated due to:

- a referral to Student Services following a Level 2 meeting;
- persistent and/or serious concerns raised about a student's actions, behaviour, health, safety, or mental well-being that are putting the health, safety, well-being

and/or academic progress of their self or other members of the University community at significant risk will, exceptionally, cause Level 3 to be initiated without reference to Levels 1 and 2;

- an urgent notification relating to significant concerns about a student's actions, behaviour, health, safety or mental well-being to the Director of Student & Library Services or designate, Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement, Director of an academic department, Head of Subject, Year Tutor and/or Security.

6.2 Student Services will convene a Level 3 Health Wellbeing & Support for Study meeting by inviting to attend those who can best provide expert and specialist advice on the case being considered, and those who need to be there because of their relationship with the student including their Head of Subject or designate. The meeting will usually include:

- A senior member of staff, who will chair the meeting.
- An academic representative from the student's course team, typically the same member of staff who attended the Level 2 meeting;
- A representative from Student Services, typically the same member of staff who attended the Level 2 meeting;
- A representative from Quality Assurance & Enhancement;

6.3 Wherever possible, the student will be given at least five working days' notice of the meeting in writing, and informed of its purpose. They will also be provided with any documents which will be considered by the meeting, and asked to provide any documentation they may wish it to consider.

6.4 The student may be accompanied at the meeting by a currently enrolled student of the University, a family member or an elected member of the Students' Union. The student may also be accompanied by a support worker (for example, a sign language interpreter or mental health worker/disability adviser) as appropriate to their needs. The person accompanying the student under consideration will not normally be allowed to make representations on the student's behalf other than in exceptional circumstances (for example, where the student has a disability which affects their ability to communicate). This must be agreed in advance of the meeting.

6.5 Exceptionally, where it is felt that a student's behaviour is deteriorating quickly an immediate emergency Level 3 meeting may be called without the usual five (5) days' notice. An emergency Level 3 meeting may be held via a conference call, telephonically or electronically as appropriate. Any decision arrived at by the emergency Level 3 meeting must be agreed collectively. An emergency Level 3 meeting may be followed by a further Level 3 meeting, which will normally be held within four weeks of the emergency Level 3 meeting, to review the situation.

- 6.6 The meeting may require a medical assessment be provided regarding the student's situation, from an appropriately qualified medical practitioner. The student will be asked to authorise full disclosure to the University of the results of any examination. The University recognises that the information disclosed will constitute "sensitive data" for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 2018 and it will be handled, processed and stored accordingly. Should the student refuse to undertake a medical examination, or not provide consent for the outcome to be shared with the meeting, the meeting may either continue this procedure based on the information already in its possession, or use another appropriate means to address the issue.
- 6.7 In the event that student is unable to attend the meeting the University will make reasonable efforts to enable them to do so, for example by moving the meeting to a time or location with which the student feels comfortable.
- 6.8 Alternatively, the student may ask the meeting to consider the case in their absence on the basis of written reports which may include a written statement from the student or their representative.
- 6.9 The meeting may order proceedings at its discretion and may call external professional(s) where required.
- 6.10 The meeting may consider various options including:
- A short-term suspension to allow the student to be assessed by a medical professional, access support services both within and outside the University or for the University to obtain further information. A short-term suspension will be reviewed within four weeks.
 - Intermittence with conditions for a period of up to two academic years.
 - A requirement to withdraw – if the meeting concludes, taking into account the individual circumstances of the case and any supporting medical evidence, that there is no reasonable prospect of the student re-engaging with their course within their period of registration, a recommendation will be made to the Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement that the student be required to withdraw. This recommendation should only be made in the most serious cases. Should this occur, it must be reported by the Head of Quality Assurance & Enhancement to Academic Board.
 - Any other action considered to be appropriate and proportionate.
- 6.11 A record of the meeting and its outcomes, recording agreed actions, will be made and distributed to all attendees and the student (if they were not present) within five working days. The student will also be informed about sources of advice and support for understanding the outcome.

7 Return to study

- 7.1 Each student's case will depend upon the specific circumstances and context out of which concern arose but in all cases return to study will be dependent upon satisfactory medical evidence of fitness to study and the provision of information about appropriate support services with a recommendation of the benefit of continuing to study with support. Evidence submitted should be from a recognised health professional who has sufficient knowledge of the nature and extent of the student's previous problems and the University's concerns about them to be able to make an informed statement of the student's renewed ability to manage the demands of studying at university-level.
- 7.2 In cases where the University has any continuing concerns about the individual's health, wellbeing and fitness to study, it may require a second medical opinion. In this case a student may be asked to submit themselves for medical examinations by doctors/specialists nominated by the University, at the University's cost, to allow the situation to be properly evaluated. Students will only be permitted to return if, after receiving medical advice, the University is satisfied that the individual is fit to study and able to comply with any conditions imposed on their return.
- 7.3 The decision to permit a return to study will be made by the Head of Subject in conjunction with the Director of Student & Academic Services (or designate) and a representative from Student Administration who will be satisfied of the student's fitness to study, compliance with any conditions imposed, compliance with academic regulations and availability of support upon return. The University may require a meeting to be held with the student prior to their return to inform the decision-making process by both the University and the student of the student's fitness to return to study.
- 7.4 In any case where a student returns to study following the implementation of this policy, the University may decide that there should be regular review meetings with the student that can be used to support and monitor a return to study plan and provide staff with an agreed context in which to provide ongoing pastoral care. If so, the student must provide their continued co-operation in this respect and such review meetings may continue for part or all of their remaining time at the University.

8 Appeal

- 8.1 Any student wishing to appeal the decision of a HWSfS meeting should follow the University's appeals procedure. This should be notified to Quality Assurance & Enhancement within twenty working days of the student's receipt of the decision.

VERSION CONTROL

PURPOSE/CHANGE	AUTHOR	DATE
Original document for approved at AQSC.	Student Services/QAE	November 2015
Updates to the clauses below following approval at Academic Board: 6.1; 6.10;	Student Services/QAE	12/07/2017
Updates to the clauses below following approval at Academic Board: 1.1; 1.3; 3.1; 3.2; 3.3; 4.1; 4.2; 4.3; 4.4; 4.5; 4.6; 5.1; 5.2; 5.3; 5.4; 5.5; 5.6; 6.1; 6.2; 6.3; 6.4; 6.5; 6.6; 6.7; 6.8; 6.9; 6.10; 6.11; 7.3; 8.1. Addition of 'key facts' section.	Student Services/QAE	September 2019