

A young man with short dark hair is sitting at a desk, looking off to the right with a thoughtful expression. He is wearing a dark t-shirt with the word 'VINTAGE' visible. His hands are on a laptop keyboard. The background is a plain wall. The entire image has a teal color overlay.

UNIVERSITY OF THE
WEST of SCOTLAND

UWS

Procedures for supporting students in distress

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An electronic version of this document can be found at

<https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance/>

Section 1

Introduction

These Procedures offer **clear, concise guidance** to any member of staff, irrespective of your day-to-day role within the University, on how to help students in varying degrees of distress, including mental health crisis situations. The guidance will assist you to make an effective initial response if you become aware of a student who is struggling to cope. The approach taken is consistent with recent work by NUS Scotland as part of its 'Think Positive' initiative.¹

The guidance is intended to ensure that a student is promptly referred on to the appropriate specialist services. You are not expected to be an 'expert' in mental health, or to take prime responsibility for the student's mental health difficulties. You are simply asked, in line with the University's duty of care², to use the guidance to make a common sense judgement about **onward referral**. (See **Appendix 1** for a brief guide to mental health and mental health difficulties.)

A **student mental health crisis** may arise for a variety of reasons, but may be defined as:

A state of significant distress in which the student is struggling to cope, or is exhibiting seriously disturbing behaviour, and where they require the timely support of others in order to ensure their own welfare and safety, and possibly the safety of other people too.

A distinction is made between particularly **'urgent'** or emergency situations, and those that are termed **'non-urgent'**. The guidance is applicable to both daytime and evening scenarios.

Urgent situations require **immediate** attention so that the student is referred on to NHS and other emergency services. Urgent situations happen rarely in practice, but responding to them can be challenging and anxiety-provoking. They require decisive action, and may 'stretch' many of us beyond the usual day-to-day activities associated with our individual roles.

'Non-urgent' situations are relatively common, and many of us will already have experience of dealing with such situations on a regular basis. They do not require immediate attention but nevertheless require some form of **prompt response**. This usually involves checking with the student as to whether they are already accessing support, and if not, signposting them to appropriate services, usually within the University.

In all cases, **early intervention** not only supports student mental wellbeing but also ensures that any issues relating to a student's academic progress and retention are also addressed as soon as possible.

When responding to a crisis situation, it is important to bear **confidentiality** in mind. Reassure the student that any information they give will be treated with respect. Information about the student should only be shared with UWS staff and external personnel who need to be directly involved in responding to the situation.

In principle, it is best to consult with a student whenever possible about such information-sharing, and to reach agreement about an appropriate course of action. Exceptionally, there may be some 'urgent' situations where there isn't time to gain explicit consent, or where a student may disagree with the proposed course of action. If there is an immediate risk to life, and/or injury to the student or to others, it may be wisest to take action in the absence of consent, and to address any outstanding issues once the immediate situation has been dealt with. (See **Appendix 2**).

¹ See www.thinkpositive.scot/ for further information.

² In addition to duty of care, the University also has a duty under Equalities legislation to promote the equality of disabled people. This includes students with mental health problems. Furthermore, Health and Safety legislation requires the University to identify and mitigate risks to health, including mental health, in the conduct of its activities.

Section 2

Responding to urgent situations

The situation is **urgent** if you believe the student is at **serious risk of immediate harm to self or others**.

This can be for one or more of the following reasons:

- The student is at risk of **serious self-harm** (or has already self-harmed to the extent of requiring medical treatment).
- The student **expresses suicidal thoughts or feelings**, and you are concerned that they may act upon these.
- The student seems **very disorientated or out of touch with reality**.
- The student is **threatening violence to people or property**.

Urgent situations require **immediate attention**. The **priorities** are to address welfare and safety concerns and to ensure that the student receives appropriate specialist help, usually from the NHS, in relation to their mental health difficulties. The guidance given below is essentially that you **assist the student by contacting Security so that the appropriate emergency services can be called. Security can also arrange First Aid if required.**

Action to be taken:

1. ESTABLISHING CONTACT

In the majority of instances, it is likely that your concern for a student will arise when a student is actually with you. However, this may not always be the case.

If the **student is on University premises** but not physically with you (i.e. you have been contacted by them from elsewhere on campus), ask for their location and contact details (especially phone number). Provided that you judge it is safe for you to do so, arrange to **go to their location** as soon as possible. Ask a colleague to accompany you to help assess how best to respond to the situation. If possible, take a mobile phone with you. (If you are too far away to be able to respond quickly, or if no colleagues are readily available, ask **Security** to assist you - **2222 or 0141 848 3505 for all Scottish campuses and for London Campus contact Reception on 0141 848 3047.**)

If the **student is not on University premises**, do not proceed to their location. Instead, ask for their location and contact details (especially phone number), and assess whether it is possible for them to meet you on University premises. If it is unrealistic or unsafe for the student to do so, advise them to stay in a safe place, and offer to stay in contact with them, preferably by phone. Follow the same steps below as you would for a student who was with you on campus, in order to arrange help from the appropriate emergency services. Ask if there is someone who could come and stay with them until the emergency services arrive.

If the student is an Erasmus student currently studying abroad, i.e. away from the UK at present, please contact the Erasmus Co-ordinator in the relevant School. The Erasmus Co-ordinator should then contact the partner institution to arrange support for the student on the partner campus.

Section 2

Responding to urgent situations

2. Engaging with the student

In urgent situations, and especially where there is a risk of suicide, it can feel challenging to know what to say and how to say it. However, being able to engage with a very distressed student can help promote a sense of safety and control, and can also reduce the student's sense of isolation or hopelessness. Furthermore, simply staying with them and talking helps to 'hold' the situation until specialist help arrives.

Key points:

- **Ask a colleague to help** you respond. Try to stay calm. Act proportionately.
- **Don't leave the student alone.** Engage with the student if possible, **but put safety first. You can request support from Security or a First Aider** by calling Security on - 2222 or 0141 848 3505 for all Scottish campuses and for London Campus contact Reception on 0141 848 3047.
- If the student confirms that they are very distressed, respond with concern and warmth to **encourage them to keep talking** with you. Be willing to listen without judgement, and avoid giving superficial responses.
- Be mindful that a minority of individuals in crisis may not appreciate the seriousness of the situation, or want to co-operate with those who are trying to help. In these instances, it is particularly important to ask a colleague, and/or Security and First Aiders for assistance. You then have back-up for explaining to the student the seriousness of the situation, and why it is important for you to take action.
- Suicide can be prevented by **asking someone directly** whether they have suicidal thoughts or feelings. (It is a common misconception that asking about suicide increases the risk.) Ask now - don't wait if you have serious concerns.
- It is very common for someone who is feeling suicidal to also be clear that they don't intend to make a suicide attempt. This will often be because they are all too aware of the impact of an attempt on significant others in their life. These are important **'protective factors'** to look out for.
- If you judge the student to be at **serious risk of immediate harm to self or others, seek help straight away from the following services (page 6).**



Section 2

Responding to urgent situations

3. Assistance from NHS services & police

Contact should be made as soon as possible with one or more of the following services, as appropriate (see below):

- **Accident & Emergency**
- **Police**
- **GP or NHS24**

ACCIDENT & EMERGENCY – if you judge that the student requires immediate medical assistance, and/or they present a possible danger to their own safety, that of yourself or others, **call Security on - 2222 or 0141 848 3505 for all Scottish campuses and for London Campus contact Reception on 0141 848 3047**. Ask Security to phone for an **ambulance** to take the student to the nearest hospital.

Inform Security of the student's location and the nature of the emergency, so that Security can arrange easy access for the ambulance crew.

Stay with the student, offering reassurance, until medical help arrives, unless you feel your own personal safety or that of others is compromised.

POLICE – if you judge that the student presents a possible danger to their own safety, that of yourself or others, you should **call Security on 2222 or 0141 848 3505 for all Scottish campuses and for London Campus contact Reception on 0141 848 3047**. Ask Security to phone the police so that they can assist in dealing with the situation.

Inform Security of the student's location and the nature of the emergency, so that Security can arrange easy access for the police.

Stay with the student, offering reassurance, until the police arrive, unless you feel your own personal safety or that of others is compromised.

GP OR NHS24 – if you judge that the situation does not immediately require an ambulance or police presence, and if the student is willing and able to co-operate, contact should be made with the student's **GP (in office hours)** or with **NHS24 on 111 (out of office hours)**. The student's GP may be able to provide support at short notice, and/or refer onto other NHS services as appropriate. Similarly, NHS24 staff will assess the situation by phone, and arrange further assistance as appropriate.

4. Transport Arrangements

As a member of staff you are not expected to provide transport for the student. If you are in any doubt of the student's health and safety in getting to their GP, local A&E or mental health services unaccompanied, you should ask Security to phone for an ambulance.

Section 2

Responding to urgent situations

5. Reporting

Report the incident to your Line Manager. They should then consider whether it is appropriate to forward information about the incident to any other members of staff. Consideration should also be given as to whether it is appropriate for the student to be contacted by a member of staff after the immediate situation has been dealt with, and who that should be. Care should be exercised in relation to **confidentiality (see page 3)**.

In certain circumstances, you should also complete an **Accident/incident Report Form** for Resilience & Safety. More specifically, please complete the form if you had help from a First Aider, and/or if the student you were assisting posed a threat to others or had injured anyone else. Where possible, please name the student/s involved in the incident, so that R&S can follow up if appropriate. (If the student/s would prefer not to be identified, R&S will still accept your form on this basis.) A copy of the form can be found on the staff website.³

6. Support for you

Having dealt with the immediate situation, you are welcome to make contact with any of the services listed in **Appendix 2**. Taking a little time for debriefing and reflection can help in various ways. It can provide reassurance that you took appropriate action and can address any outstanding issues. It can also help you 'stand down' after responding to an urgent situation so that you can get on with your everyday roles in work and at home.

³ See <https://uws.awaken-be.com/Secure/UserPages/Accidents/SelectFormType.aspx>

Section 3

Responding to non-urgent situations

Many of us will have experience of being concerned about students who face adverse personal circumstances, or who are struggling academically. In these sorts of situations, it is very common for a student's mental wellbeing to be impaired. For example, they may feel stressed, have panic attacks, worry a lot, or feel depressed about their circumstances.

Sometimes, it can be difficult to judge whether a situation like this is 'urgent' or 'non-urgent'. You might therefore find it useful to refer to **Section 2** again to see whether it meets any of the criteria for treating it as an 'urgent' situation.

If not, proceed with treating it as a **'non-urgent' situation**. This means that it does not require immediate attention, but nevertheless there will be **prompt steps** that you and others can take in order to ensure that a student receives appropriate support as soon as possible. Early intervention is crucial in tackling common mental health difficulties such as stress, anxiety and depression. It can also reduce the impact of adverse personal circumstances on academic performance, and on progression and retention.

The **priorities** are to ensure that:

- The student receives any relevant **support from you** if you have an ongoing role with them, for example if you are their programme leader, personal tutor and/or lecturer.
- The student is **referred on** to other appropriate sources of support, usually within the University.
- **Anyone else** who has become concerned about the student (e.g. a flatmate, or another member of staff) has been reassured that the matter is being addressed.



Section 3

Responding to non-urgent situations

1. If a student seeks your assistance with a problem

Steps you can take:

1. Agree whether you are able to talk the situation through with them straight away, and how much time you have, or whether you need to arrange a time in the near future. Find somewhere appropriate to meet, without interruptions.
2. Try to respond in a concerned, non-judgemental and empathic way to their situation and the distress it is causing them.
3. When talking, give them a bit of space to explain their situation. Ask questions that help clarify what is going on, how it is affecting them, and what the immediate priorities and any longer-term needs are.
4. Avoid rushing in to 'fix' problems. (If, however, in the course of the discussion, urgent issues emerge, please refer back to **Section 2**).
5. Check whether they are already receiving support from family, friends, University services, or external services such as their GP.
6. Agree whether there is support that you can reasonably offer, i.e. appropriate to your everyday role and relationship with the student.
7. For aspects of support that fall outwith your role and expertise, **refer the student on** to other appropriate sources of support, usually within the University. See **Appendix 3** for a list of services, including the **Counselling Service**. If you aren't sure which services are most appropriate, suggest to the student that they contact the Hub to check what might best meet their needs (phone 0141 848 3800 or email hub@uws.ac.uk).⁴ Staff there will be able to refer the student on to relevant services, and also give immediate practical advice as appropriate. Ask the student whether they would be willing to let you know when they have made contact with support services. Emphasise that they do not need to divulge the details of that contact, but that it can simply be reassuring for you to know that they have followed up your advice.
8. Arrange to contact the student again soon to **review** the situation, if this is appropriate to your everyday role with them. Arranging a follow-up discussion demonstrates your genuine concern for the student, and can be especially important if the situation is likely to take a bit of time to resolve. If you are giving support to a student longer-term, remember to look after yourself by remaining clear with the student about what you can realistically help them with and when you need to refer them onto additional sources of support.
9. For additional information, you may find it useful to look at the Charlie Waller Memorial Trust e-learning package (<https://connect.uws.ac.uk/training/SitePages/StaffMgmtDev.aspx>). This is designed to give staff the skills, knowledge and confidence to offer initial support to students who may have mental health issues.

⁴ In relation to the evolving Coronavirus situation, please be assured that services such as the Counselling service are continuing to operate as fully as possible. Counselling appointments are currently available by phone or video call, for example.

Section 3

Responding to non-urgent situations

2. If a student hasn't asked you for help but you are concerned about them

If you have noticed significant changes in a student's appearance, or in their mood or behaviour, this could be an indication that they are struggling to cope with academic or personal issues, and that their emotional wellbeing is adversely affected. Alternatively, someone else (e.g. a friend or flatmate) may let you know that they are concerned about the student.

Personal changes to look out for include:

- **Appearance** (e.g. tired, rapidly losing or gaining weight, decline in personal hygiene).
- **Mood** (e.g. sad, down, depressed, anxious, worried, panicky, angry).
- **Behaviour** (e.g. unusually quiet or withdrawn, unable to focus or concentrate, irritable or argumentative, acting in an unpredictable or erratic way).

Academic changes to look out for include:

- Fall in attendance levels.
- Withdrawal from participation in class or in groupwork settings.
- Failure to hand in coursework or turn up for assessments.
- Falling grades.

Steps you can take:

1. Sometimes it can be useful to **consult with another member of staff** who knows the student, to see whether they also have cause for concern. (Be mindful of confidentiality.)
2. **Share your concerns directly but sensitively with the student.** Say that you are concerned about them. Ask if something is wrong, and if so how they are feeling and whether or not they are managing to cope with the situation.
3. If the student isn't coping well, and is **willing to accept support, follow steps 1 to 9 on page 9**, in order to help the student tackle the situation.
4. Occasionally, you may find that a student is **unwilling to accept help**, or is unwilling to acknowledge that they may be experiencing difficulties. In general, it is best to avoid trying to force the student to accept help, as they may just become defensive. Gently restate your concern for them, and let them know that they can return to talk with you at any point in the future. If possible, tentatively suggest that they consider any relevant support services in **Appendix 3**, including the **Counselling Service**. You might also want to consult any of these services for further advice about supporting the student, especially if you have been monitoring the situation and think it may be worsening over time.

3. Reporting

When you are dealing with a 'non-urgent' situation, you should consider whether or not it would be useful to pass on information to your Line Manager or to other staff in order to enhance the support available to the student. Care should be exercised in relation to **confidentiality** (see **page 3**).

4. Support for you

Having dealt with the immediate situation, you are welcome to make contact with any of the services listed in **Appendix 2**. Taking a little time for debriefing and reflection can help in various ways. In cases where a student was willing to accept help, it can provide reassurance that you took appropriate action and can assist you in addressing any outstanding issues. If the student was unwilling to accept help, you may be left feeling concerned about them. In these instances, a debrief may help you to realise that you have done all that can reasonably be expected at the present time.

Section 4

Suspension of a student

UWS is committed to developing and embedding a culture of wellbeing among our staff and students. The university takes seriously its duty of care to all members of our community and seeks to maintain an environment that is conducive to teaching, learning and research. We welcome a diverse student body and aim to support all students through their studies. Unfortunately there may be instances where a student's behaviour leads to a cause for concern for their mental wellbeing.

This may include behaviour that poses a direct risk to health and safety, or makes unreasonable support demands of other members of the University community. In all situations staff are encouraged to work collaboratively with the student, making them aware of university support services and options to interrupt their studies to benefit their wellbeing.

There may be occasions where a student seems unable, or unwilling, to adequately manage their health and wellbeing. This procedure provides a student-centred framework to support a student of concern and makes provision for proceeding without the consent of the student. This procedure should be followed when other interventions i.e. student disciplinary or fitness to practice processes are not the appropriate course of action due to the detrimental effect that they may have on the student's wellbeing.

In summary – the wellbeing suspension procedure is recommended when

- A student's mental health difficulties are adversely affecting the health, safety or wellbeing of themselves or others.
- The student's academic performance or personal conduct is not acceptable and is known to be, or suspected to be, the result of a mental health condition.

Schools and/or relevant department will ensure that all supportive options are offered before the wellbeing suspension procedure is implemented. The student will be invited to discuss their concerns in a supportive manner and given the opportunity to explain their situation.

Possible outcomes of this discussion are:

- No follow-up action necessary
- Referral to appropriate support service – e.g. GP, student counselling service, disability service
- Voluntary change in student status e.g. interruption of studies or a transfer to part-time study (with consideration on any financial/VISA implications)
- The student's agreement to change their behaviour, with a review period stipulated. A review is then undertaken by the student's personal tutor/supervisor/student support staff member etc.

The majority of cases can be resolved this way.

Stage 2 – Wellbeing suspension meeting

This stage will be implemented if a student's unacceptable behaviour continues following a Stage 1 intervention. The Programme Leader or Head of Department should contact the Head of Student Services (or their nominee) who will convene a wellbeing suspension meeting. The student's teaching and student support staff should be in attendance. The student should not attend but will be informed that the meeting is taking place.

Section 4

Suspension of a student (continued)

Possible outcomes of a wellbeing suspension meeting are:

- continuation of studies (with or without adherence to an Action Plan)
- suspension
- withdrawal

Where a student is able to continue their studies (with/without action plan) the Head of Department (or their nominee) should be responsible for communicating the outcome of the wellbeing suspension meeting to the student.

Wellbeing suspension

The decision to suspend a student would be made by the Vice-Principal Learning, Teaching and Students following a recommendation from the wellbeing suspension meeting. The student will be notified of the decision and advised of when the suspension will be reviewed. If relevant, medical evidence can be requested to ensure that the student is fit to resume their studies.

Where a student is living in university accommodation and their behaviour is negatively affecting other students' living and working conditions, the Residence manager, in consultation with a wellbeing suspension group, can require the student to move to alternative accommodation.

Where the student's next of kin/emergency contact is not able to be involved in the practical arrangements (e.g. to assist the student in making arrangements to return home) the Residential Life Team will endeavour to provide a reasonable level of support in carrying out these tasks.

Wellbeing suspension review

A review will be arranged on a case-by-case basis and will take account of duty of care to the student and that of the whole university community.

Possible outcomes include

- continuation of the wellbeing suspension
- return to study plan is put in place with clear requirements for engagement and conduct.
- withdrawal - in the event of withdrawal, the student will be invited to meet with an appropriate academic staff member (normally Head of Department) who will communicate the decision, this will be followed up in writing.

Appendix 1

Brief guide to mental health & mental health difficulties

In recent years, there has been much effort at national policy level to de-stigmatize mental health issues, and in particular to promote an awareness that mental health and physical health are equally important to our overall wellbeing.

The language around mental health issues is also changing – ‘mental health’ and ‘emotional wellbeing’ are often used interchangeably, while ‘mental health difficulties’ or ‘mental distress’ may be viewed as less stigmatising terms than ‘mental illness’ or ‘mental disorder’.

A key message is that many mental health difficulties are relatively common (e.g. anxiety and depression), and that in many cases recovery is eminently possible. Some mental health difficulties may endure but, with appropriate support and treatment, it is perfectly possible for someone to live a fulfilling life. The Mental Health Foundation offers a useful overview of current thinking.⁵

The World Health Organisation defines **mental health** as:

‘not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.’⁶

By contrast, **mental health difficulties** can range from the worries and grief we all experience as part of everyday life, to the most bleak, suicidal depression, or complete loss of touch with everyday reality. If you would like to learn more about student mental health issues, the signs to look out for and key helping skills, you can access an invaluable e-learning package at <https://connect.uws.ac.uk/training/SitePages/StaffMgmtDev.aspx>. The package consists of 6 sessions, each lasting 20 minutes.

⁵ www.mentalhealth.org.uk/your-mental-health/about-mental-health

⁶ http://www.who.int/features/factfiles/mental_health/en/

Appendix 2

Staff debriefing and support

Having assisted a student with a mental health crisis, you might appreciate the opportunity soon afterwards to have a short, confidential debrief with an appropriate person. This can be particularly useful if you found the incident stressful, if you had to take quick action to deal with an unfamiliar situation, or if you have leftover thoughts or feelings that you would like to reflect on.

You can seek support from the following sources within the University:

- Your **Line Manager**.
- **Student Counselling Service** - www.uws.ac.uk/counselling/ The Counselling Service can be contacted for any campus via the Hub on 0141 848 3800 or email Hub@uws.ac.uk
- **Resilience and Safety** – <https://connect.uws.ac.uk/organisation/SitePages/ResilienceandSafety.aspx>
Contact details: ResilienceandSafety@uws.ac.uk, 0141 849 3922, Room A213, Barbour Building, Paisley Campus

You can also seek support from the University's **Employee Assistance Programme**. The EAP is provided by an independent external organisation called 'Health Assured'. There is a single sign-on desktop icon on all staff PC's. Alternatively, you can download a free app called My Healthy Advantage from Google Play or the App Store - when prompted, enter the employer code MHA008428. You can call the telephone helpline 24 hours a day, any day of the year – the number is 0800 028 0199. Your call will be answered by a qualified counsellor, and anything you discuss is confidential. If you need additional support, the EAP offers up to 8 sessions of structured telephone counselling.

There are also online support tools – just go to www.healthassuredeap.co.uk.

The log-in details are as follows:

Username: University

Password: WestScotland

Appendix 3

Student support in non-urgent situations – list of services

'Non-urgent' situations, as defined in **Section 3**, do not require immediate action. Nevertheless, it is important that students are **promptly referred** onto one or more of the support services listed below for help in relation to their **mental wellbeing, personal circumstances** or **academic progress**. Staff seeking advice regarding a student may also want to consult one or more of these services.

The services are listed under 3 headings:

- **University services**
- **NHS services**
- **National helplines & self-help websites**

Appendix 3

1. University Services

The Hub deals with enquiries on all campuses, in relation to those services marked with an asterisk below.* You can contact the Hub by phoning 0141 848 3800 or by emailing hub@uws.ac.uk. In relation to the evolving Coronavirus situation, please be assured that services are continuing to operate as fully as possible. For example, student appointments can take place by phone or video if staff are working remotely.

| Type of support | Service | Contact details |
|--|-----------------------------|---|
| Academic skills development. | Careers and Skills* | www.uws.ac.uk/careersandskills/ |
| Academic & pastoral support – Programme Leaders, and Personal Tutors/Education Guidance Advisers/Research Supervisors. | Schools | www.uws.ac.uk/schools/ |
| Accommodation. | Accommodation | www.uws.ac.uk/university-life/accommodation/ |
| Careers, vacancies, part-time & summer work, volunteering. | Careers and Skills* | www.uws.ac.uk/careersandskills/ |
| Disability (including mental health difficulties). | Disability* | www.uws.ac.uk/disabilityservice/ |
| Emotional wellbeing & self-help information. | Counselling* | www.uws.ac.uk/counselling/ |
| Exams & assessment, enrolment, maintaining the student record, ID cards. | Student Administration* | https://connect.uws.ac.uk/organisation/SitePages/StudentAdministration.aspx |
| Finance (paying tuition and accommodation fees). | Finance* | https://epayments.uws.ac.uk/ |
| Funding (advice about tuition fees, loans, bursaries, trusts, childcare, benefits, budgeting, resits). | Funding & Advice* | www.uws.ac.uk/money-fees-funding/funding-and-advice-team/ |
| International students (visas, relatives' visits, welfare, financial queries). | International* | www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-health-wellbeing/international-student-support |
| New students (informal support from current students). | Buddy Programme | www.uws.ac.uk/university-life/student-support-wellbeing/supporting-you |
| New students (online information). | Student Roadmap | www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/student-roadmap |
| Personal support (regardless of religious affiliation). | Multifaith Chaplaincy Team* | www.uws.ac.uk/current-students/supporting-your-health-wellbeing/multifaith-chaplaincy/ |
| Sports, clubs & social activities. | Team UWS & Students' Union | www.uws.ac.uk/university-life/sports-social/ www.uwsunion.org.uk/societies/list/ & http://cucsa.org.uk/ for Dumfries Campus |
| Welfare (support in relation to appeals, extenuating circumstances, plagiarism, disciplinary hearings, fitness to practise, complaints, accommodation, emergency funding and hate crime, etc). | Students' Union | www.uwsunion.org.uk/advice/ |

Appendix 3

2. NHS Services

In addition to the direct support available from **GP's**, referrals can also be made by a student's GP to specialist mental health services within each Health Board area. GP's may also refer students onto the University Counselling Service, especially as appointments are often available relatively quickly.

Out of office hours, contact should be made with **NHS24 on 111**.

3. National helplines & self-help websites

It can be useful to offer students the option of national telephone helplines and self-help websites as a source of support. These can be particularly useful as a 'first step' to seeking help if a student feels unsure about seeking face-to-face support.

While organisations such as the Samaritans and Breathing Space are clearly available to offer support to individuals in extreme distress, they are also nowadays available to anyone seeking support in relation to everyday mental health difficulties.

- **Samaritans** – phone 116 123 or email jo@samaritans.org. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. See www.samaritans.org/ for further details.
- **Breathing Space** - phone 0800 83 85 87. Available on Mondays to Thursdays 6pm – 2am, and at weekends from Fridays 6pm to Monday mornings 6am. Alternatively, you can use the webchat service. This is available Mondays to Fridays 6pm to 10pm. See <http://breathingspace.scot/> for further details.
- **Shout** - for anyone who would prefer to text for help, this crisis text helpline can be contacted by sending a text to 85258. Available 24/7. See <https://www.giveusashout.org/get-help/> for further details.
- **Self-help websites** - All UWS students (and staff) can access SilverCloud (<https://uws.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>). This is a free and confidential interactive resource, comprising several programmes on a range of topics. Users can explore practical strategies for tackling stress, anxiety, depression, body confidence and other issues. The following organisations offer guidance to students on a wide range of topics: Student Minds (<https://www.studentminds.org.uk/>), NUS Think Positive (<https://www.thinkpositive.scot/>) and Students Against Depression (<https://www.studentsagainstdepression.org/>).

Appendix 4

Overview of Procedures for Supporting Students in Distress

IS THE STUDENT?

At serious risk of immediate harm to self/others:

- Risk of serious self-harm?
- Risk of suicide?
- Very disorientated or out of touch with reality?
- Risk of violence to people/property?

Proceed as 'URGENT'

Establish contact:

- Student already with you? – proceed to **'Engage with student'** box below.
- Student elsewhere in University?
 - Ask for location and phone number.
 - If safe, go to student's location, accompanied by colleague or Security (see **'Assistance'** below).
- Student not in University?
 - Ask for location and phone number.
 - If safe and realistic, ask them to meet you on University premises.
 - If not, stay in phone contact.

Engage with student:

- Ask a colleague to help you respond.
- Stay with student if safe to do so.
- Encourage student to talk while you are waiting for additional help to arrive.

Assistance: As appropriate, contact one or more of:

- Security – phone 2222 or 0141 848 3505 (all Scottish Campuses) for London 0141 848 3047
- First Aider – as above
- Ambulance – as above
- Police – as above
- Student's GP in office hours
- NHS24 out of office hours 111

Reporting and staff support:

- Report incident to your Line Manager.
- Complete an online Accident/incident Report Form for Resilience & Safety as appropriate.
- Support yourself – see **Appendix 2**

Not at serious risk of immediate harm to self/others, but nevertheless you are concerned about their mental wellbeing:

- Stressed or panicking?
- Anxious or worried?
- Down or depressed?

Proceed as 'NON-URGENT'

Student is seeking your assistance?

Yes

Yes:

- Agree when and where to talk.
- Respond with concern and empathy.
- Give them time to explain their situation.
- Ask questions to identify immediate priorities.
- Are they already receiving support from family, friends, University services, or external services like their GP?
- Is further support required, either from you, and/or from the services in **Appendix 3**?
- Arrange to review with student soon.

No, but you or others are concerned about changes in the student's appearance, mood or behaviour, and/or in their academic progress:

- Consult a colleague who knows them.
- Share your concerns with the student.
- If the student is willing to accept support, follow steps in **'Yes'** box above.
- If not, say they can return to you later. Try to mention relevant **Appendix 3** services.

Reporting and staff support:

- Contact your Line Manager if appropriate.
- Support yourself – see **Appendix 2**.

A full version of the Procedures can be viewed at <https://www.uws.ac.uk/about-uws/policies-procedures-guidance>



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