

SUPPORT TO STUDY PROCEDURES

Introduction

1 This document sets out the procedure for implementing the University's Support to Study Policy.

2 These procedures apply to students accepted onto all of the University's programmes. The procedures apply from the point of unconditional acceptance of an offer of a place on one of the University's programmes, throughout the period of the student's registration until they complete their final assessment or formally withdraw from their programme. It applies in relation to all programme-related activities including any placements.

3 There are three stages to the procedures. The stages are based on the seriousness of the concerns, and where relevant, the student's awareness of the impact of their behaviour and the level of the student's cooperation with our response. The procedure will be invoked at stage 1 or 3 as deemed appropriate. Where a student has been detained ("sectioned") under the Mental Health Act, the procedures will be invoked at Stage 3, paragraph 30.

4 For the purposes of these procedures Campus Dean means the person with primary responsibility for the management of a campus, including ULaw Online, or their nominee.

5 If at any stage of these procedures it is deemed necessary that a student be excluded from a campus, other than as a result of a voluntary intermission, a Risk Assessment must be completed outlining the reasons.

Stage 1 – PSL Meeting: Emerging concerns about a student's health, safety or behaviour

6 If significant concerns develop within the University environment, the Cause for Concern Policy should be followed and the concerns reported in accordance with that policy.

7 The Support Team together with the student's personal tutor/academic coach and Programme & Student Lead (PSL) will determine the full scope and nature of the concerns and together they will decide the appropriate person to contact the student

to arrange a meeting. The intention will be to raise and discuss the specific issues and concerns with the student in a supportive way and to offer ongoing support.

8 The student will be given at least five working days' notice of the meeting and that they may be accompanied to the meeting by a family member, friend or a representative from the Students' Union. The accompanying person is not permitted to make representations, ask or answer questions on behalf of the student or attend in any legal capacity. Non-legal representation by a third party may be agreed where there is a compelling reason and it is agreed by the person convening the meeting. The discussion will be conducted in a supportive and understanding manner. The student may, if they wish, make a written submission to the meeting.

9 If the student does not respond to the meeting invitation or does not attend the meeting and has not made a written submission, the PSL or person leading the meeting can decide to proceed in the student's absence or, if the concerns are not urgent, offer the student one further meeting, giving a further five working days' notice. If the student does not respond to the second request, the PSL or person leading the meeting must proceed in the student's absence.

10 During the meeting the PSL or person leading the meeting should:

- Explain the Support to Study Procedures to the student and ensure that they have access to a copy of the Procedures
- Outline the concerns and provide examples, where appropriate
- Explain the impact on the student, and others if appropriate
- Listen to the student's views
- Explain that the Procedure is being followed in order to enable the student to successfully complete their studies and that the student has an essential role to play
- Explain the extent of the University's duty to make any reasonable adjustments
- Remind the student of the availability of the University's Student Support Services throughout the process

11 The actions that may be agreed at the meeting will be determined by the nature of the discussions, along with a review period. Actions which may be agreed at the meeting include, but are not limited to:

- no further action is required;
- seeking and engaging with help and support available from Student Support Services, GP or other external agency;
- engaging with the Disability and Inclusion Service on the creation of a University of Law Inclusion Plan (ULIP);
- seek advice on matters of concern and act upon these;

- reflect on conduct improvement options within the student's control;
- maintain a minimum level of attendance
- consider a voluntary period of intermission for a period of time to concentrate on their health

12 A record of the discussion will be produced together with a list of the agreed actions and length of any review period, which should not exceed six teaching weeks. This will be sent by email to the student by the PSL within five working days of the meeting taking place. During the review period the PSL will consult with relevant colleagues to determine whether there is any continuing cause for concern.

13 If at the end of the review period the concerns have been addressed this will be confirmed to the student and no further steps will be taken. If concerns subsequently re-emerge, the PSL will decide whether or not to invoke Stage 2 or 3 of the procedure.

14 If at the end of the review period the concerns have not been addressed the PSL, will arrange a meeting with the student at which a further review period not exceeding a further six weeks may be agreed or the case will move to the next stage of the procedure.

15 It is hoped that the majority of cases will be resolved at Stage 1 and that students will respond positively to the process and take advantage of the support available to them.

16 Where a student is unable or unwilling to co-operate, the PSL will consult with relevant colleagues to decide whether to progress to Stage 2 or 3.

Stage 2 – Case Conference: Ongoing concerns about a student's health, safety or behaviour

- 17 A Stage 2 Case Conference may be convened if:
- The Stage 1 intervention has not resolved the concern; and / or
 - The student has failed to engage with the Stage 1 process; and / or
 - The concerns are of a more serious and ongoing nature.
- 18 The Campus Dean will appoint a member of staff at manager level or above to lead the Stage 2 Case Conference. In many cases, the lead at this stage will be the PSL who led the Stage 1 process. The aim of the Case Conference is to provide a supportive environment in which the concerns can be discussed with the student and

any actions agreed to support them to re-engage with their studies can be developed and agreed upon.

- 19 The Case Conference will normally be attended by the PSL or their nominee, and any other relevant academic and/or student support staff. A member of the Student Support and Wellbeing teams must also attend the case conference. An additional member of staff may attend the meeting in order to take notes of the case conference.
- 20 To ensure that the student is as prepared as much as possible for the Case Conference, the Chair must notify the student at least five working days in advance of the meeting of the following:
- The date, time and venue (or link to online meeting if the case conference is to take place online) of the case conference;
 - The reason for the meeting and the concerns that will be discussed;
 - Whether the student needs to submit any specific documentation such as medical evidence in advance of the meeting;
 - Who will be attending the case conference and their reason for attending;
- That if the student wishes they may be accompanied to the meeting by a family member, friend or a representative from the Students' Union. The accompanying person is not permitted to make representations, ask or answer questions on behalf of the student or attend in any legal capacity. Non-legal representation by a third party may be agreed where there is a compelling reason and it is agreed by the person convening the meeting.
- 21 Where the student is being asked to provide medical evidence, the Chair will provide the student with a copy of their Programme Demands Document along with a letter to provide to their medical practitioner conducting the assessment explaining the purpose of the request for a medical assessment. The purpose may be to gain an understanding of:
- any medical condition from which the student may be experiencing and any treatment/support they are receiving
 - the extent to which any medical condition which may affect the student's ability to study and/or manage the demands of student life
 - any impact it may have on others
 - any risk it may pose to others
 - what, if any, steps the University could take to enable the student to study effectively and/or manage the demands of student life
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- 22 If the student is requested to seek a medical assessment they will be asked to authorise full disclosure of the results of the medical assessment to the University. They are not obliged to authorise disclosure but any information they do provide will assist us to assess how we will meet our Legal and Statutory obligation in relation to any disability or health condition.

This would constitute “sensitive personal data” under the Data Protection Act 2018, and as such, will be handled in accordance with the higher levels of protection afforded to such information.

- 23 If the student indicates that there will be a delay in gaining the required medical evidence, the case conference meeting can be postponed for a period of up to one month to enable the student to obtain the evidence, unless the student’s conduct and behaviour raises serious concerns, in which case the PSL may decide to proceed without the medical evidence.

- 24 If the student declines to undertake a medical assessment and/or refuses to authorise disclosure, the University may either continue with the Support to Study Procedures or, as per paragraph 10 of the Support to Study Policy, it may address the issues under the Student Disciplinary Procedures.

25 If the student does not respond to the meeting invitation or does not attend the meeting and has not made a written submission, the Chair of the meeting can decide to proceed in the student’s absence or, if the concerns are not urgent, offer the student one further meeting, giving a further five working days’ notice. If the student does not respond to the second request, the Chair should proceed in the student’s absence.

- 26 During the Stage 2 Case Conference, the Chair should:
- Explain the Support to Study Procedures to the student and ensure that they have access to a copy of the Procedures
 - Outline the concerns and provide examples, where appropriate
 - Listen to the student’s views
 - Explain the impact on the student, and others if appropriate
 - Explain that the Procedure is being followed in order to enable the student to successfully complete their studies and that the student has an essential role to play
 - Explain the extent of the University’s duty to make any reasonable adjustments
 - Remind the student of the availability of the University’s Student Support Services throughout the process

- Advise the student of the possible outcomes of the meeting and what they mean for the student

27 The actions that may be agreed at the meeting will be determined by the nature of the discussions, along with a review period. Actions which may be agreed at the meeting include, but are not limited to:

- no further action is required;
- seeking and engaging with help and support available from Student Support Services, GP or other external agency;
- engaging with the Disability and Inclusion Service on the creation of a University of Law Inclusion Plan (ULIP);
- seek advice on matters of concern and act upon these;
- reflect on conduct improvement options within the student's control;
- maintain a minimum level of attendance
- consider a voluntary period of intermission for a period of time to concentrate on their health
- to refer the matter to Stage 3 of the Procedures if an Action Plan would not be appropriate given the seriousness of the matter

28 The Chair of the Stage 2 meeting will write to the student and the Campus Dean within five working days and provide the notes of the meeting and the action plan agreed. A copy of the notes of the meeting and the action plan will be kept by the Chair and the Campus Dean. The Action Plan and Notification to the student should:

- Set out the agreed actions to be taken by the student;
- Outline the expectations on the student to access support, whether internal or external to the University;
- Expectations on the student's conduct
- A date for a meeting with the student and PSL half way through the review period
- Details of the consequences of not adhering to the Action Plan, including the possible referral to Stage 3 of the Procedures.

29 At the end of the review period, the Chair and other colleagues involved in the Case Conference will review the progress against the Action Plan.

- Where the student has met the requirements of the Action Plan, no further action will be required.
- Where the student partially achieves the action plan sufficient to reduce any risk to the student or others, and/or eliminate the disruption to the

learning of others, an extended action plan may be considered for a further period, not in excess of a further six weeks.

- If the student has not met the requirements of the Action Plan, or the concerns are ongoing, the case should be referred to Stage 3 of the Procedures.
- In all cases, the Chair will write to the student to confirm the decision.

Stage 3 – Support to Study Panel: Persistent and/or very significant concerns about a student’s health (including mental health), safety or behaviour; or a student has been detained under the Mental Health Act

30 A Stage 3 Support to Study Panel may be convened where:

- Stage 2 has not been successful; and
- The concerns identified at Stages 1 and 2 are continuing; and/ or
- The student does not agree with the Stage 2 action plan; or
- The risks to the student or others are deemed to be sufficiently serious to warrant starting the procedure at Stage 3 and / or
- The University is aware that the student has been detained (“sectioned”) under the Mental Health Act. In this case, the procedure in paragraph 30 will apply.

31 For any student who is detained (“sectioned”) under the Mental Health Act and therefore unable to interact with the university or engage in the Support to Study Process, the Campus Dean will immediately place the student on a compulsory intermission and a Support to Study Panel meeting will not be required. The Campus Dean must notify the student of the decision within five working days. The notification must include information about the Right of Appeal under paragraphs 57-63 and the Return to Study process to be followed under paragraphs 47 - 56.

32 The decision to start Stage 3 of the Procedures lies with the Campus Dean. In making this decision, the Campus Dean must consult with relevant academic and student support colleagues.

33 Where action is being taken under Stage 3 of the procedure, the Campus Dean may decide to exclude the student’s access to and use of the Campus facilities if they have reasonable grounds to believe that such actions are necessary to protect the student or another member of the University community and / or university property.

34 The Campus Dean will take reasonable steps to ensure that the student is able to access their course of study without access to, or use of the campus. This could include maintaining access to electronic resources, attending telephone and video

appointments in order to access wellbeing or academic support, allowing electronic submission of coursework and / or sitting exams online.

- 35 The Campus Dean will inform the student in writing by email within five working days that Stage 3 of the procedure is being initiated. This notification must include the following:
- The reasons for the procedure being initiated; and
 - where relevant, that they have been excluded and the reasons for the exclusion. Where the student has been excluded they must be advised of their right of appeal against the exclusion under paragraph xx below.
 - That the decision will be reviewed by the Campus Dean at intervals of no more than four weeks, pending a full Support to Study Panel Meeting, and that the student will be notified in writing by email at the outcome of each review.
- 36 The Campus Dean will review their decision to exclude the student at intervals of no more than four weeks and will notify the student in writing of the outcome of each review.
- 37 The Campus Dean will appoint a panel of three members of staff who have not previously taken part in the Support to Study Procedure for the student concerned. The panel shall be drawn from the following:
- Academic Managers and PSLs
 - Heads of Student Information – Campus Operations and Student Information Hub Managers;
 - Wellbeing Services Manager, Safeguarding Manager, Mental Health and Counselling Manager, Wellbeing Advice Manager, Deputy Wellbeing Advice Manager or Disability and Inclusion Manager
 - In addition to the Panel, an additional member of staff shall be appointed to take notes of the Panel meeting.
- 38 The student will be given at ten working days' notice of the Stage 3 Support to Study Panel meeting. The notification must include the following:
- The date, time and venue (or link to online meeting if the Support to Study Panel is to take place online) of the meeting;
 - A reminder of the reason for the meeting and the concerns that will be discussed;
 - Whether the student needs to submit any specific documentation such as medical evidence in advance of the meeting;
 - Names and roles of those attending the meeting;

- That if the student wishes they may be accompanied to the meeting by a family member, friend or a representative from the Students' Union. The accompanying person is not permitted to make representations, ask or answer questions on behalf of the student or attend in any legal capacity. Non-legal representation by a third party may be agreed where there is a compelling reason and it is agreed by the person convening the meeting.

39 The student may be asked to provide medical evidence at Stage 3 and, if so, paragraphs 20 to 23 of these procedures will apply. The student will be informed that they have the right to submit documents to the meeting and will have access to any documents that are submitted on behalf of the University at least three working days in advance of the meeting.

40 If the student does not respond to the meeting invitation or does not attend the meeting and has not made a written submission, the Campus Dean should proceed in the student's absence unless there are circumstances that mean that a delay is appropriate in the student's best interests.

41 The Stage 3 Support to Study Panel meeting will review the documentation and evidence provided and, if the student is in attendance, hear from them and give them the opportunity to ask questions.

42 In cases where the panel considers that any medical evidence provided is not sufficient for the panel to assess the student's ability to successfully engage with their studies and student life, or a risk assessment needs to be carried out to assess the risk to the student or others of their attendance, the panel may adjourn the meeting to enable further medical evidence to be obtained or a risk assessment to be carried out.

43 The panel must give careful consideration to the following when reaching their decision:

- The extent to which the student has engaged with support offered to date;
- Whether any further reasonable adjustments might enable the student to continue with their studies;
- Relevant legislation, in particular the university's duty under the Equality Act
- Medical and other evidence submitted by the student;
- Details of any risk assessment conducted;
- The ongoing impact of the student's behaviour and conduct on the university community;
- The student's academic progress on the course and their likelihood of completion;

- The impact of an intermission on the student, including careful consideration of their personal circumstances, such as their immigration status

44 The panel may decide:

- No further action is required and the student may continue their studies with no further conditions;
- To recommend the student change mode of study, including moving from face-to-face to online study where an online mode of the course exists;
- To recommend the student engage with the Disability and Inclusion Service to draft a University of Law Inclusion Plan (ULIP);
- To devise an action plan for the student to address specified aspects of their behaviour, detailing who is responsible for reviewing progress and timescales and details of the support available;
- That the student, voluntarily or otherwise, intermits their studies for a period not exceeding 12 months;
- That the student's registration with the University be brought to an end.

45 Where possible the Panel will make its decision on a unanimous basis. However where this is not possible, the Campus Dean or Provost and Deputy Vice-Chancellor will have the final decision.

46 Where the student has attended the Panel meeting, the Campus Dean will inform the student (and their representative, if the student is accompanied) of the decision at the end of the meeting. In all cases, including where the student has not attended, the Campus Dean will confirm the panel's decision in writing to the student within three working days. The notification will also include details of the student's Right of Appeal against the decision under paragraphs 57-63 of these procedures. The Campus Dean will send a copy of this decision to the relevant PSL and also to the Head of Student Support Services.

47 Where a student is intermitted the Campus Dean will put in place a plan for keeping in contact with the student which will be included in the notification to the student of the outcome of the Stage 3 Support to Study Panel meeting. The plan will include contact details for named staff or teams who can advise on wellbeing support, employability, disability, financial, academic and (where appropriate) immigration issues.

Return to Study

48 Where a student intermitted their studies as an outcome of the support to study procedure it is hoped that they will be able to return and engage with their studies and student life at the earliest available academic opportunity.

49 At least two months prior to the proposed date of return, a Return to Study Panel should be convened. The Panel shall consist of the following:

- PSL or their nominee
- Head of Student Support Services or their nominee
- Mental Health Advisor, Student Wellbeing Advisor or Disability and Inclusion Advisor who has been involved with supporting the student

50 The Mental Health Advisor (or other student support professional) who has been involved with supporting the student will contact the student to explain the support available to them, the process for returning to study and to seek the student's permission to liaise with the relevant medical professional in order to gain the following:

- An assessment of the student's current health and whether return to study is likely to have any detrimental impact on the student's wellbeing, or the wellbeing of others;
- Written confirmation of whether a return to study is recommended;
- Whether any reasonable adjustments need to be put in place in advance of the student's return to study

51 The panel may make a decision based on the documents and evidence made available and on the advice of the student support professional. If they are unable to make a decision a Return to Study Panel meeting will be arranged.

52 The student will be given five working days' notice of the Return to Study Panel meeting. The notification must include the following:

- The date, time and venue (or link to online meeting if the Return to Study Panel is to take place online) of the meeting;
- Whether the student needs to submit any specific documentation such as medical evidence in advance of the meeting;
- Names and roles of those attending the meeting;
- That if the student wishes they may be accompanied to the meeting by a family member, friend or a representative from the Students' Union. The accompanying person is not permitted to make representations, ask or answer questions on behalf of the student or attend in any legal capacity. Non-legal representation by a third party may be agreed where there is a compelling reason and it is agreed by the person convening the meeting.

53 If the student does not respond to the meeting invitation or does not attend the meeting and has not made a written submission, the panel should proceed in the student's absence unless there are circumstances that mean that a delay is appropriate in the student's best interests.

54 The panel may make any of the following recommendations to the Campus Dean, either on the basis of the evidence available to it, or following a meeting:

- Following a period of intermission, where there are no further concerns about the student's wellbeing or behaviour, to recommend the student returns to study with no further adjustments;
- Following a period of intermission, to recommend the student returns to study with adjustments to either mode or intensity of study or with other adjustments in place;
- That the student is not well enough to return to study and a further period of intermission is required;
- That the student is not well enough to return to study and taking into account all the available information it is in the student's best interests for their period of study to come to an end.

55 The Panel will notify the Campus Dean of their recommendation within three working days of the meeting, along with a copy of the notes of the meeting.

56 When considering the panel's recommendation the Campus Dean will consult with the PSL and colleagues involved in the delivery of the course if the recommendation is for the student to return to their course. The date of the student's return should be timed so that they are not disadvantaged by having missed teaching or assessment points – they should be able to return to their course at the point they intermitted. The Campus Dean will need to liaise with the Disability and Inclusion Service in deciding a return date for the student if any reasonable adjustments are to be implemented or applications for Disabled Students' Allowances are to be made.

57 The Campus Dean will notify the student in writing by email within three working days of making their decision. The notification will clearly outline the decision, any return date and any actions the student needs to take. It will also include details of the right of appeal in accordance with paragraphs 57-63 of the procedures.

Rights of Appeal

58 A student may appeal against a decision to:

- (a) exclude them under paragraph 33 above;
- (b) require them to intermit under paragraphs 11, 27 or 44 above;
- (c) take a further intermission from studies under paragraph 54 above; or
- (d) bring their studies to an end under paragraphs 44 or 54 above.

59 An appeal must be made in writing within ten working days to the Academic Registrar, at the address in paragraph 63 below, setting out the grounds for appeal. Appeals may be made by email from a ULaw student email address or other personal address held for the student in the University's systems. The following constitute grounds for appeal:

- (i) there is new substantive information that has a bearing on the decision; or
- (ii) that there has been significant failure of due process in the making of the decision, which the student believes affected that decision.

60 When submitting an appeal the student should state which ground of appeal they intend to rely on together with all supporting evidence. If the student is unable to submit the appeal within ten working days of receipt of the original decision, they should write to the Academic Registrar with an explanation.

61 On receipt of the appeal the Academic Registrar or their nominee will:

- determine whether the appeal is eligible for consideration;
- appoint an Appeal Panel comprising 3 members of staff at Manager Level or above, to include one member of staff at Executive Manager level or above, to conduct the appeal;
- nominate one member of the Appeal Panel to act as Chair;
- confirm the date, time and location, or electronic meeting details if the hearing is to be conducted via videocall, of the appeal hearing;
- notify the student at least ten working days before the hearing of when and where the hearing will be held; the name of the Chair and members of the panel; the right of the student to provide a written statement of their case and to be accompanied by a friend, family member or Students' Union representative; and
- provide any documents to be referred to at the meeting

62 The panel may proceed in the absence of the student where notice has been given under paragraph 60 above.

63 The Appeal Chair will notify the Appeal Panels decision to the Academic Registrar or their nominee who will then write to the student within five working days . The decision

of the Appeal panel represents the final stage of the University's internal Support to Study Procedures.

64 The address of the Academic Registry is:

Academic Registry (Support to Study Appeal)
 The University of Law
 14 Store Street
 Bloomsbury
 London WC1E 7DE

academic.registry@law.ac.uk.

Office of the Independent Adjudicator

64 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints or appeals. When all the University's internal stages for dealing with Support to Study appeals have been exhausted, the University will issue a Completion of Procedures letter. Students wishing to avail themselves of the opportunity for an independent review by the OIA must submit their application to the OIA within 12 months of the issue of the Completion of Procedures letter. Full details of the scheme will be enclosed with the Completion of Procedures letter.

| Version | Amended by | Revision summary | Date |
|---------|----------------------------------|------------------------------------------|----------------|
| V1.0 | | | September 2018 |
| V1.1 | Registry Officer | Change to coding convention | 24/03/2020 |
| V1.2 | Senior Quality Officer | Further naming convention clarifications | 26/03/2020 |
| V2.0 | Head of Student Support Services | Substantial re-draft | 16/01/2023 |