



University of Essex



Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy and Procedure

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Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy and Procedure

1. Introduction

- 1.1 As a student of the University of Essex (UoE), we (the University) want you (our students) to be reassured about the University's commitment to your health, wellbeing, and academic success. Many students receive support whilst completing their studies and we encourage all students to access support from the earliest opportunity, be that from the University or from external services.
- 1.2 The Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy and Procedure provides a framework to support you during your studies when it appears that your health and wellbeing are either disrupting or having a detrimental impact on you or on the people around you.
- 1.3 There may be times when the University becomes concerned about whether you are sufficiently well to be able to achieve your best, or whether you are compromising the ability of people around you to achieve their best. There may also be times when continuing to study may have a detrimental effect on you and your health. At times like this, where your health and wellbeing is the main consideration, the University may use this procedure to help us work with you to decide what to do. For example, in a situation where your actions have a negative impact on you or on the wellbeing of those around you, we recognise the need to be fair and balanced in our response, including where the reported action may be linked to mental health difficulties, psychological or emotional distress or neurological conditions.
- 1.4 We will seek to offer reasonable support and adjustments during your studies to enable you to make your own decisions about your progress. In determining whether the University should engage with you under the terms of this procedure we will consider the context, circumstances, and risk of the situation as it applies to your health and wellbeing, or the effect of your actions on other people around you.
- 1.5 As outlined below, this procedure can be initiated at any stage, depending on the circumstances presented. Each case will be reviewed using a fair transparent assessment of risk to yourself and/or others: including whether your actions have adversely impacted on, or are likely to impact on your health or wellbeing, the health or wellbeing of others around you, or the learning and/or living environment at the University.
- 1.6 There are three stages within this procedure and the corresponding meetings are outlined below:
 - **Stage One** - Initial Support where there are low-risk, emerging, initial concerns about your health or wellbeing

- **Stage Two** - Support to Study where initial concerns do not improve, or where there are more serious concerns about your health or wellbeing which we might refer to as medium risk
 - **Stage Three** - Serious or Continuing Concerns - where concerns persist following a Support to Study meeting, or if there are significant concerns about your health or wellbeing that we deem as high risk, we may move directly to State Three. You'll be invited to a meeting to review your overall fitness to study, support that may be available to mitigate any risk and also consider options such as a period of intermission or, in rare cases, withdrawal from the University
 - **Return to Study** - this is a meeting we may hold when you have requested to return following a period of intermission under this procedure
- 1.7 This procedure applies to all students registered on undergraduate, postgraduate taught or research degrees, or pursuing modules on a full or part time basis, engaging in face-to-face study or via blended learning, on placement, or on a period of study abroad.
- 1.8 If you are a disabled student and require adjustments to this procedure to be able to fully engage with the process, please contact the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service (SWIS) at include@essex.ac.uk to identify any reasonable adjustments which can be made to support your engagement.

A summary flowchart of the full procedure is available in [Appendix 1](#).

2. Aims and scope of the policy

2.1 The aims of this policy are:

- to ensure all students benefit from being a member of the University community and can participate in all aspects of their programme of study and research, succeed in their studies and obtain the award for which they are registered
- to ensure all students can engage satisfactorily in all elements of study, research, training or assessment which may also take the form of placements, fieldtrips, or work-based learning, particularly in a professional setting
- to ensure students whose health, welfare and wellbeing are impacting on their ability to study are offered the appropriate support
- to ensure no student is prevented, hindered, or disrupted from accessing their studies due to the behaviour of another student
- to ensure staff can effectively carry out their duties
- to effectively manage any risks about a student's health, safety and welfare or the health, safety and welfare of other students, staff, or members of the community.

2.2 This policy sets out what we will do when we have a concern that:

- your health is affecting your ability to engage appropriately in University activities; and/or
- your health is impacting on other people, such as other students or staff; and/or
- your health and safety is considered at risk

2.3 The circumstances in which this policy may be applied can sometimes be outside of your control. For example, you may become unwell or experience a deterioration of an underlying health condition or disability. The primary aim of this policy is to support you and all students to engage successfully with your studies whilst maintaining your wellbeing. At every stage of the process, we are committed to ensuring that you have the access to appropriate support to help inform decisions about next steps. This may include support from SWIS or guidance and support from the Students' Union.

Links to other policies

- 2.4 In order to safeguard and promote a safe culture across the University community and to enable our students to realise their full potential in a safe, healthy and inclusive environment, all students at the University of Essex are expected to behave in accordance with our Code of Student Conduct. This Code sets out the standards of behaviour that we expect and the action that will be taken where behaviour falls below these standards. However, it is recognised that mental health, illness, or disability may have an impact on your behaviour, alleged conduct, or both. As a result, any proceedings against you in accordance with the Code may be suspended at any stage if you are being assessed and supported under the Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy or these two processes may run concurrently. Where there is a concern about your wellbeing and it is deemed that disciplinary action may not be appropriate at that time, the Head of Student Services and Wellbeing (or nominee) and the Senior Student Progress Manager (or nominee) will consider the case and, where appropriate, refer the case to the Academic Registrar (or nominee) who will make a decision on whether the proceedings are suspended. In such cases, conduct proceedings will resume once support is in place and/or you are considered sufficiently well to engage with proceedings.
- 2.5 The University has a separate Fitness to Practise Procedure in respect of students enrolled on courses where a practical professional placement is required. Students enrolled on such a course will have additional responsibilities placed upon them regarding not only their conduct but also their professional suitability, as outlined in relevant regulatory and/or professional body codes of practice. This policy therefore does not apply to decisions regarding Fitness to Practise.
- 2.6 The University has a Student Engagement Policy which is intended to maximise the success and achievement of every student through a structured approach based on support and mutual decision making to enable timely and impactful intervention. A student considered under the Student Engagement Policy may be referred for consideration under this policy and procedure if health or wellbeing issues emerge.

- 2.7 The policy is not designed to address academic performance issues (which should be dealt with under the normal assessment procedures), or individual circumstances that can be considered through an Extenuating Circumstances Committee, Board of Examiners or Research Student Progress Board.

3. Urgent concerns for your welfare

- 3.1 In exceptional cases, when there is potential or actual risk to self or others, we will take immediate precautionary action pending careful consideration. In such cases, in order to safeguard yourselves and others, we may decide to enforce a temporary suspension from studies. The decision to enforce temporary suspension from studies is made by the Academic Registrar (or nominee in their absence) following an assessment of risk.
- 3.2 An assessment of risk will be undertaken by the Head of Student Services and Wellbeing (or nominee). The Head of Student Services and Wellbeing may schedule and chair a case conference with colleagues from both the Academic School/Department and Professional Services that hold material information or evidence that is relevant to your case.
- 3.3 Following conclusion of the risk assessment, the Head of Student Services and Wellbeing may make a formal recommendation to the Academic Registrar (or nominee) that you need to be temporarily suspended from your studies. This would be a temporary, precautionary measure until a Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting can take place under Stage Three of this procedure (see Stage Three Serious or Continuing Concerns) which would be convened as soon as possible. Any temporary suspension will be kept under regular review by the Head of Student Services and Wellbeing and where circumstances change the risk assessment and temporary suspension will be reviewed every four weeks. Temporary suspension from your studies means you will not be permitted to attend teaching while a Stage Three meeting is being convened.
- 3.4 If the Academic Registrar supports the recommendation, you will be provided with reasons in writing for the suspension, unless in the interests of your safety it would be more appropriate to discuss this with you in person. You will be invited to a meeting so that the implications of this decision can be explained to you, and appropriate support and information given to you to understand and manage these implications. You will also be provided with information and guidance on how you can continue with your studies through a supported return once well enough to do so.
- 3.5 If the decision of the Academic Registrar is not to support the recommendation made, you will not be temporarily suspended at that time but will be invited to a Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting under Stage Three of this procedure.
- 3.6 For students residing in University-managed accommodation, if the decision is to temporarily suspend you from your studies, you may be required to leave this accommodation due to the unacceptable and significant level of risk that remains if it cannot be mitigated. We will give you notice, as set out in your license agreement, and we will be as flexible as possible. We will

discuss with you suitable alternatives, which may involve you returning home for the duration of the temporary suspension period.

- 3.7 Following a risk assessment, if it is determined that for your safety or the safety of others, you should not attend University premises, you will only be able to visit campus to attend meetings held under this policy, or to access SU Advice, and only with the University's prior agreement.
- 3.8 Where incidents occur and the behaviour of a student tenant residing in university owned accommodation poses a serious risk of harm or threat to life to self or others, this information will be shared with the Head of Security and Campus Safety, (or their nominee), who will determine whether legal action needs to be considered to safeguard the University community.

4. Data protection and confidentiality

- 4.1 The University complies with data protection legislation through the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the Data Protection Act 2018 (together, UK GDPR). We ensure that all personal information is used fairly, lawfully, and transparently, used for specified, explicit purposes, used in a way that is adequate, relevant and limited only to what is necessary, accurate, kept for no longer than is necessary, and handled in a way that ensures appropriate security, including protection against unlawful or unauthorised processing, access, loss, destruction or damage.
- 4.2 We use a number of lawful bases to process and share students' personal data, including special category data (for example, data about your health, ethnic background, race, religion, or sex life or orientation), in order to achieve the purposes described in this policy. These lawful bases are explained in our Student Privacy Notice.
- 4.3 Within the University, access to information about students is restricted to those who need it in order to carry out their roles, including being able to use this policy.

There are also a number of ways we may share your data externally. These are outlined in the Student Privacy Notice. We would normally obtain your consent to share your data.

- 4.4 Personal information obtained under this policy with relevant professionals outside the University who are not listed in the Privacy Notice may be shared with your agreement; however, if there is a significant risk of harm to yourself or others, or if we are required by law to share your data, your personal information may be shared using an alternative lawful basis, depending on the circumstances (for example but limited to, vital interests, legitimate interests or legal obligation, employment, social security and social protection). In these exceptional circumstances, you will be told what information has been shared and with whom.
- 4.5 If you are a student with immigration sponsorship from the University, i.e., if you have a Student Visa, a break from study as a result of intermission or withdrawal could have an impact on your immigration status. Immigration advice will be provided to you at an appropriate time.

- 4.6 If you have consented to us sharing information with your Trusted Contact, we may notify them that you are being supported under this policy. However, it should be noted that there may be exceptional circumstances, such as when we consider it essential for your safety, and it is believed that this action will prevent risk of death or serious harm, when we will consider contacting your Trusted Contact without your consent.

Representation and Support

- 4.7 If you or the University are concerned about your health or wellbeing, we encourage you to talk to someone about this such as a trusted friend and/or parent/guardian or the SWIS. You can also talk to SU Advice which is part of the University of Essex Students' Union for independent and impartial advice.
- 4.8 All students involved in this procedure have the right to be accompanied by a member of staff, or a representative of SU Advice or the Students' Union at any meetings conducted as part of this policy. You may not bring anyone to a meeting who is not a member of the University unless this has been agreed as a reasonable adjustment. Whoever accompanies you must not be involved directly in any incidents or alleged behaviour that may have led to you being considered under this procedure and as this is not a criminal process, legal representatives are not permitted to be present at any stage.

5. Study and Wellbeing Intervention Stages

Stage One - Initial Support

- 5.1 When a member of staff identifies concerns about your health or wellbeing and/or the wellbeing of the people around you as a result of your actions and/or behaviour, you may be invited to an Initial Support Meeting.
- 5.2 An Initial Support Meeting is intended to identify what you and we need to do to support you to continue to study effectively when there are concerns.
- 5.3 We will write to you via email (to your University email address) to invite you to a meeting and inform you of the purpose of the meeting. This would ordinarily be a member of staff within the academic Department/School with primary responsibility and/or knowledge of you (e.g. your Student Advisor or Department/School Manager, and/or your supervisor/Graduate Director if you are a PGR student) together with the Departmental Disability Liaison Officer (if applicable). However, if the concerns arise outside of the teaching environment, then the SWIS should take the lead, in consultation with your Department/School. Should a member of staff require advice or guidance on this they should contact one of the SWIS Managers at fitnesstostudy@essex.ac.uk. Stage One is to understand your needs and to refer to the SWIS to put the support in place.

- 5.4 You will normally be given at least three working days' notice. When invited to this meeting, we would encourage you to contact SU Advice who can support you and talk you through how the policy works, including how meetings take place.

What happens at an Initial Support Meeting?

- 5.5 At the meeting you will be made clearly informed of the behaviour or concerns that have been raised, including, if appropriate, reference to the level of perceived risk presented by you. The member of staff will attempt to resolve the matter through supportive discussions with you. You should be given the opportunity to explain your own views on the matter and be encouraged to think about using one or more of the support services offered by the University or available outside the University. It may also be appropriate to review the possibility of making reasonable adjustments to enable you to study effectively.
- 5.6 It is hoped that in most cases issues can be resolved at this stage, and that you will respond positively, engaging fully with the procedure and taking advantage of the support available.

Outcome of the Initial Support Meeting

- 5.7 An outcome of the Initial Support Meeting may be an informal Support Action Plan (see Appendix 3 for a template) which all parties agree to. A review period should be determined between the staff and you to note progress made. If, however, the concerns have not been addressed, a further review period may be agreed, or your case will move to the next stage of the procedure.
- 5.8 The informal discussions, support, advice and any undertakings made by the Department/School and/or you should be documented for the benefit of both the Department/School and you. The SWIS should be provided with the notes in order to update risk assessments and ensure that all follow-up procedures are in place.
- 5.9 If you do not engage with support or if concerns cannot be addressed through the informal route of Stage One, you may be informed that more formal action under Stage Two of this policy and procedure may be considered appropriate.

Stage 2 - Support to Study

- 5.10 If concerns are not resolved following Stage One, or if the member of staff considers that the risk presented is above the threshold to use that stage of the procedure, the Department/School may inform the SWIS Managers of their concern(s). The SWIS Managers will then take steps to gain an understanding of relevant facts.
- 5.11 We will write to you via email (to your University email address) to invite you to a meeting and inform you of the purpose of the meeting. You will normally be given at least seven working days' notice and will also be provided with any documents which will be considered, and you may be asked to provide any documentation that you may wish staff attending to consider within

a minimum of two working days prior to the meeting. It is important that you attend the Stage Two meeting and all subsequent review meetings so that we can support and advise you, as failure to do so may result in your circumstances being reviewed at Stage Three.

5.12 The purpose of a Support to Study meeting will be:

- to make you aware of the nature of the concerns that have been raised
- to hear and consider your views and to identify what support needs are present
- to agree the best way to proceed and to arrange a support plan
- to ensure that you are fully aware of the possible outcomes if risk remains

Appendix 2 outlines the provisions for conducting a Stage Two meeting as part of this policy.

What happens at a Support to Study Meeting?

5.13 You will attend this meeting with the following members of staff:

- your Student Adviser or the Departmental Disability Liaison Officer (DDLO), who will usually Chair the meeting
- a member of staff from the SWIS, such as an Accessibility and Wellbeing Adviser, acting in an advisory capacity and not as an advocate for you who will take notes of the meeting

5.14 You may wish to bring a representative to accompany you, such as a member of staff, or member of SU Advice who may take notes on your behalf and make representations on your behalf, but may not answer questions on your behalf.

5.15 Once all the evidence and concerns have been presented to, you will have the opportunity to explain your circumstances and share your views on the best way forward. We would like to hear from you so that we can fully understand your circumstances including how you are able and willing to engage with support. This will enable us to work with you to identify the most appropriate next steps to help you moving forwards.

Possible outcome from a Support to Study Meeting

5.16 At a Support to Study Meeting, we will work with you to agree a way forward, the outcomes may include the following:

- The University may place you under formal monitoring for a specified period to support your progress and to address the concerns. During this period of time, the University may also recommend other reasonable adjustments be implemented to assist you. A Support Action Plan will be developed in collaboration with you, setting out the steps you are required to take and the support that will be provide to help you engage effectively with your studies. Regular review meetings will be arranged with a nominated member of staff to ensure that the action plan is being

followed appropriately and that you are receiving the support necessary for effective study. You will also be informed of the potential consequences should you not adhere to the action plan, normally this would result in your fitness to study being considered under Stage Three of this policy.

If the action plan has been successful in addressing the concerns, you will be informed via email that the formal procedure has concluded, and you can continue to access support from Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity.

- with your consent, to agree that you intermit from your studies for a mutually agreed period
- 5.17 A possible outcome following a Support to Study meeting could be that your case be referred to the SWIS Managers for consideration under Stage Three of this procedure. This will only be appropriate in the most serious of cases where for example evidence of a serious risk to either the health and safety of you or others has been identified, and it is thought that taking a period of intermission or, in rare cases, withdrawal could be the most appropriate option to support your wellbeing and academic progress.
- 5.18 If you decide not to attend the Support to Study meeting, we request you provide us with notice as soon as possible.
- 5.19 We may make a decision in your absence to reschedule the Stage Two meeting or escalate you to a Stage Three meeting, depending on the circumstances and information available.
- 5.20 Following your attendance/non-attendance, you will receive a concise record of the meeting within seven working days from the date of the meeting, along with a copy of your support action plan which will also be shared with your departmental representative.

Stage Three - Serious or Continuing Concerns

- 5.21 If the risks associated with your actions remain a concern and cannot be reduced to an appropriate level during Stage Two, or if the risks are significant enough to move directly to Stage Three, a SWIS Manager may convene a Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting under Stage Three of this procedure.
- 5.22 We use Stage Three of the procedure where either:
- a Stage Two Support to Study meeting (including action plan) has not sufficiently addressed the concerns we have about your health or wellbeing; or,
 - you have chosen not to or have been unable to engage with the support offered or complete the action plan, within an appropriate timeframe; or,
 - the concerns we have about your health or wellbeing, or the health and wellbeing of others are more serious or have escalated and we need to discuss your overall fitness to study; or,

- you have been temporarily suspended from your studies (see Section 3) and we need to meet to make a decision about your overall fitness to study. On some occasions this may occur without having previously engaged in Stage One and/or Stage Two of the policy or,
- 5.23 We will write to you via email (to your University email address) to invite you to a meeting normally providing at least seven working days' notice where we will inform you of the purpose of the meeting and share the name of the Chair and other staff members involved as part of the Panel. You will be provided with any documents to be considered at the meeting and are required to provide any documentation that you may wish staff attending to consider within a minimum of two working days prior to the meeting.
- 5.24 We would encourage you to bring a representative to accompany you, such as a member of staff, or member of SU Advice who may take notes and make representations on your behalf but may not answer questions on your behalf.
- 5.25 The Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting will consist of at least three members of staff representing your Academic Department/School and Professional Services. The Panel may include the following staff or their nominee:
- an academic representative such as the Faculty Dean Undergraduate or Faculty Dean Postgraduate or other senior academic (who will usually Chair the meeting)
 - relevant senior staff from SWIS
 - Head of Department/School
 - Student Adviser/Departmental Disability Liaison Officer
 - where relevant representative(s) from other University department(s) may be consulted to support decision-making. For example, if any concerns relate to behaviour within University owned or University managed accommodation, the appropriate colleagues from those areas may be asked to contribute information or advice
 - an Administrator from SWIS to take notes if the meeting is not recorded.
- 5.26 Where it is deemed necessary, and/or in your best interests, we may also invite relevant external parties or agencies to the meeting.
- 5.27 A Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting will consider all the relevant information available regarding your health and wellbeing, to enable an assessment of risk to take place and to assess your fitness to study at that time.

Appendix 2 outlines the provisions for conducting a Stage Three meeting as part of this policy.

What happens at a Serious or Continuing Concerns Meeting?

- 5.28 The Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting will consider the evidence available, including your perception of these concerns and whether you have been able to comply where applicable with any previously agreed action plans that have been in place as a result of Stage two. It will also consider whether any further support and action plans could be agreed to enable you to continue with your studies at the present time.
- 5.29 You will have the opportunity to share your thoughts and wishes about the best way forward and you can share with us what your preferred outcome from the meeting is. We will want to hear about your ability and willingness to engage in support, whether that be from the University or via statutory services.
- 5.30 As well as listening to you, we may require you to obtain additional information from a medical professional, such as a registered health or social work practitioner, if appropriate. This could include a letter from your GP, or a report from a clinical psychiatrist, or other medical professional. The University will make decisions based on the full range of information and will not act upon the specific opinions or recommendations of any single professional. Any information received to inform this decision is treated with sensitivity and confidentiality and is disclosed only to those who need to see it to reach a decision. We will assist you to obtain the additional information if necessary.
- 5.31 The additional information will need to demonstrate your fitness to study and live independently within the University community safely, and evidence the support you are accessing for your health and wellbeing.
- 5.32 A Stage Three Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting may be adjourned pending medical evidence that may assist the Panel in reaching a decision. The meeting will be rescheduled once appropriate medical evidence has been received.
- 5.33 Regardless of the circumstances that have led to Stage Three, unfortunately if your circumstances have had a severe impact on your academic studies, meaning that intermission is the only reasonable option to support you to continue studying when you are fit to do so, you may be intermitted for a period of time. The intermission decision and the reasons for this decision will be communicated to you.
- 5.34 Once all the evidence has been presented, you will be asked to leave the meeting while the circumstances are considered by the Panel. We will try to provide you with the decision or recommendation of the Stage Three Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting in person on the day, but, where this is not possible, we will write to you within seven working days of the meeting. If you have been advised of the decision at the meeting, you will receive written confirmation within seven working days of the meeting. This will set out how you can appeal against the decision if you wish to.

- 5.35 If you do not attend a Stage Three Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting, we will make a decision about your ability to study in your absence and based on the information we have available to us. You will be sent a copy of the notes of the meeting, if it was held in your absence, within seven working days.

Meeting

- 5.36 The Panel will consider all reasonable options to continue with your studies. There are three possible outcomes from a Stage Three Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting as shown below.
- 5.37 **Outcome One** – An existing Support Action Plan may be amended, or a new action plan developed to ensure appropriate support for your continued engagement with your studies. A review meeting will be arranged, and our case will be considered in accordance with the Stage Two Support to Study meeting procedures within an agreed timescale. The duration of the Stage Two support action plan will be determined by the Panel. If, at the end of the review period, the action plan has been followed and the concerns have been addressed resolved, you will be notified by email that the formal procedure has concluded.
- 5.38 **Outcome Two** – If the Stage Three Serious or Continuing Concerns meeting determines that the risks presented remain too high, the Panel may decide that you are not permitted to continue your studies at that time. In reaching the decision, the Panel will consider the risk of harm or other serious consequence to yourself or others and will recommend to the Academic Registrar (or nominee) that you be required to intermit. If you choose to voluntarily intermit whilst undergoing the Stage Three procedure, the Stage Three Panel will proceed even if only to ratify your choice.
- 5.39 If the Academic Registrar agrees that you should be required to intermit, the decision will include the duration of the period of the intermission.
- 5.40 It is important that you understand the implications of taking a period of intermission. It is recommended that you speak to SWIS about some of the practical things you will need to consider.
- 5.41 When we write to you about your period of intermission, we will explain the process you can use to request to return to study (see Section 7). If you do not request to return to study, and do not respond to communications by the given deadline, you will be withdrawn from your programme of study. This does not mean you cannot apply to study at the University again in the future.
- In the same letter we will outline to you the support you can access (see section 6).
- 5.42 **Outcome Three** – At the Stage Three meeting, if it is determined by the Panel that even with support the risks remain too high and there is no clear indication that the risks are likely to decrease, the Panel may recommend to the Academic Registrar that you be withdrawn from the University.

6. Support available to you from the University whilst you are taking a break from your studies (intermission)

- 6.1 Once approval for intermission has been given, your registration status will be changed from full-time to partial registration, which means that unfortunately you will no longer be entitled to attend tuition.
- 6.2 It is important to note that whilst you are on intermission, you will still have access to support from your named point of contact within the Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service, if you wish. SWIS can signpost you to some of the support services available to you which are external to the University and try to answer questions you might have.
- 6.3 You may still access the University Counselling Service whilst you are on a period of intermission.
- 6.4 You will have access to your Essex email address whilst on intermission, and we will use this to keep in touch with you.
- 6.5 You should familiarise yourself with the information and guidance about intermission available on the Student Directory. Your contact in SWIS can help if you have any questions.
- 6.6 If you are a Sponsored student on a Student Visa, we strongly advise you read the important information about what intermission will mean for you.
- 6.7 We strongly encourage and advise you to access support for your health and wellbeing via external statutory, or other, support services, whilst you are on intermission. Your engagement with statutory services including your GP will be beneficial for you during your period of intermission, and also when it approaches your return to study date as you will need to obtain medical evidence which demonstrates your fitness to resume studies.
- 6.8 When you are nearing the end of your intermission period you should look at the information on the Student Directory about returning from intermission and speak to your SWIS contact for advice.
- 6.9 If you have been intermitted under Stage Three of this procedure. SWIS will contact you at least six weeks prior to your return to study date to request you submitting medical evidence demonstration your fitness to resume studies.

Support available following your withdrawal as a student

- 6.10 If you have been withdrawn from the University, you will no longer be a student at the University and unfortunately SWIS will not be able to provide ongoing support. However, SWIS will offer to meet with you initially to support your transition out of University. If you wish to take up the offer of short-term transition support, SWIS will help you to establish any steps needed to secure

ongoing support from statutory services and offer practical help where appropriate. SWIS will also assist you in identifying any relevant and helpful resources within the community.

Information sharing with your emergency contact

- 6.11 In all cases of intermission or withdrawal from university, we strongly encourage you to inform your trusted contact of the withdrawal.
- 6.12 In some circumstances, we may inform, or support you to inform, your listed Trusted Contact regarding your period of intermission if you have not done so yourself. This will be based on the presenting risks to yourself and others, where it is determined that family support will be of benefit to you whilst on a period of intermission.
- 6.13 If you have been withdrawn from the University and it is deemed that you are at risk to yourself or to others, the University may inform your listed trusted emergency contact of the withdrawal.

7. Returning to study after a period of intermission

- 7.1 If, as a result of this procedure, you take taken or been required to take a period of intermission, the University will support you to return to your studies a a time that is appropriate for you and without prejudice.
- 7.2 At the earliest appropriate point when you are considering a return to study, you should inform SWIS, to ensure that any support can be arranged in advance of your return. You are also encouraged to discuss your plans with your Student Adviser and consider the practical aspects of resuming your studies following a period of intermission.

What you need to do

- 7.3 You must provide us with at least 6 weeks' notice, if you want to request to return to study. When you have been required to intermit under this policy, we will work with you to assess your fitness to resume study in addition to the steps outlined in the University's guidance on Returning from Intermission.
- 7.4 Upon hearing from you, we will work with you to assess your fitness to resume studying which could include:
 - you will be requested, via email to complete a Fitness to Study Form or send detailed medical evidence, such as a letter from a registered health professional, social worker, law enforcement professional or anyone else who has been supporting you professionally
 - we may arrange a meeting to discuss your potential return, or we may liaise with you over email/telephone/video conference to collate relevant information and involve relevant colleagues as appropriate.

- Should your return be approved, and you have successfully completed identified actions e.g. registered with a GP/attend medical appointment, you will return under a Stage Two Support Action Plan. Engagement with this stage is mandatory.

What we will do

- 7.5 In addition to requesting detailed medical evidence demonstrating your fitness to return to study, if the issues previously related to living in University-managed accommodation rather than an academic context, the Senior Student Wellbeing Manager (or nominee) will contact the relevant medical professional for an assessment of your ability to live independently and to look after and care for yourself within university accommodation.
- 7.6 Having reviewed the relevant information, the Dean of the relevant Faculty and/or the Academic Registrar (or nominee) may take the decision about your request, following a recommendation from the Head of Student Services and Wellbeing (or nominee). The outcomes will usually be either:
- You return to study under Stage Two with an agreed support plan, or
 - your period of intermission is extended (for example if we do not have enough information on your case or are not confident the previous concerns or risks have been sufficiently resolved); or
 - in some cases, we may decide that the conditions of returning to study are not met, therefore you will not be permitted to re-enrol and may be withdrawn

8. Appeals

- 8.1 You may appeal against a decision to intermit or withdraw you following a Stage Three Serious and Continuing Concerns. You must do so in writing to the Chief Operating Officer or University Secretary via fitnesstostudy@essex.ac.uk within five working days of the date of the official notification of a decision. You must set out your grounds for appeal and send with it all supporting evidence. In choosing to appeal, you are strongly encouraged to contact SU Advice for advice and guidance.
- 8.2 The appeals procedure is not a means of setting aside professional judgements of University staff with respect to your wellbeing in accordance with this policy. You may submit an appeal on the following grounds:
- there is new evidence which for good reason, you were unable to provide at the time that the decision was taken and consequently the action taken is disproportionate under the Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy.
 - that the Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy process was not followed appropriately

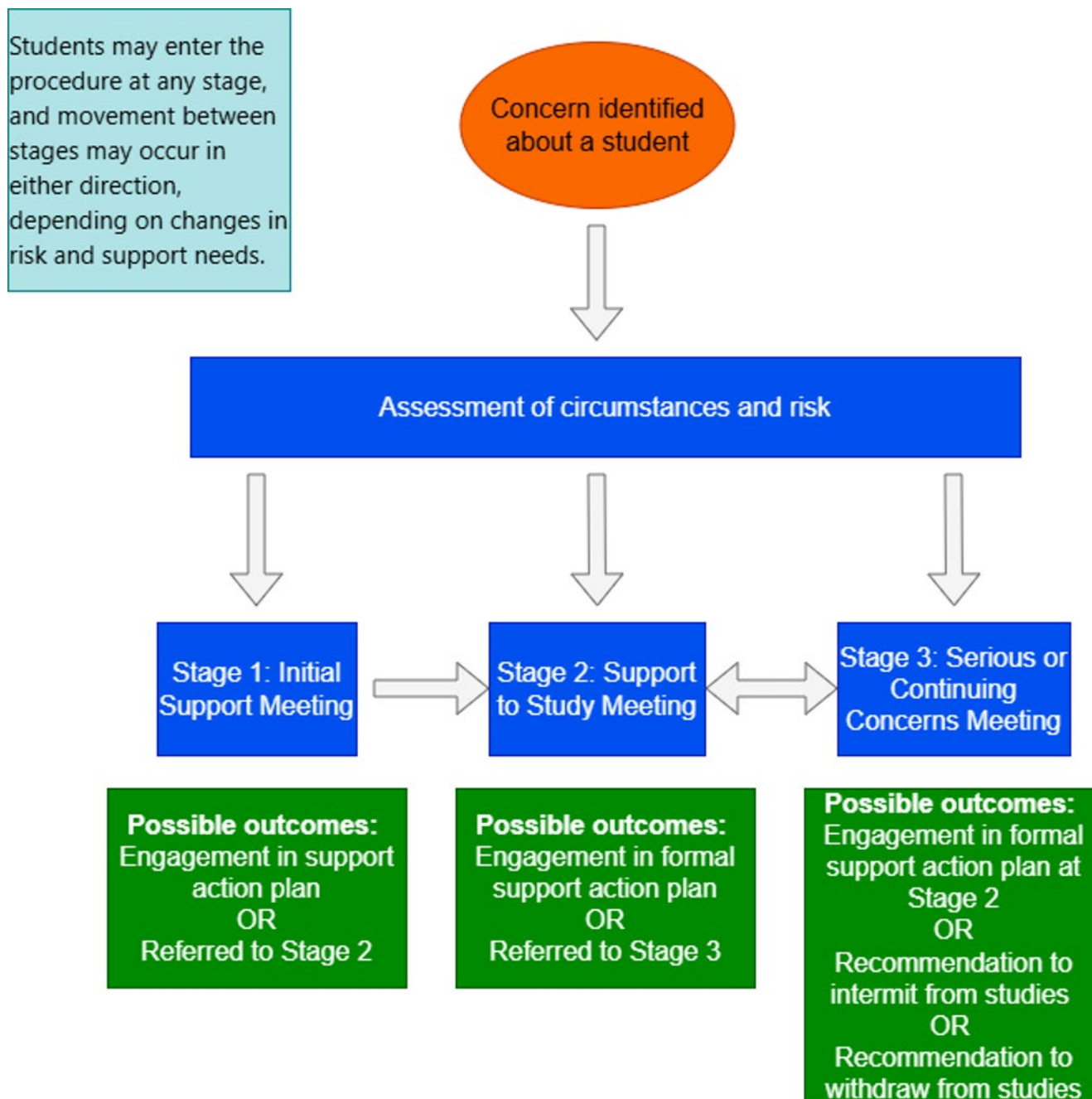
- 8.3 Upon receipt of your appeal, the Chief Operating Officer or University Secretary (or nominee in their absence) will carry out an urgent assessment to decide whether the grounds set out in your appeal have met the published criteria.
- 8.4 If the appeal has not met the published criteria and is unsuccessful, you will be notified of the reasons for this in writing in the form of a Completion of Procedures letter and will be deemed to have completed the University's internal procedures.
- 8.5 You can refer your case, within 12 months of the date of this letter, to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) if you remain dissatisfied.
- 8.6 Where the Chief Operating Officer or University Secretary (or nominee in their absence) determines the grounds for appeal have met the published criteria they will refer the case to a new Stage Three Serious and Continuing Concerns meeting and wherever possible, appoint a Chair with no prior involvement in your case for review.
- 8.7 You will be informed of the Chief Operating Officer or University Secretary (or nominee in their absence) decision, within five working days from receipt of the appeal and informed that the decision taken as a result of the original Stage Three meeting will be paused pending the outcome of a newly convened Stage Three Panel.
- 8.8 You may not subsequently appeal a decision taken following reconsideration of the case at the relevant stage of this policy and will be deemed to have completed the University's internal procedures. You will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter to refer your case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator if you remain dissatisfied.

External Review

- 8.9 The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) provides an independent scheme for the review of student complaints or appeals. When the University's internal procedures for dealing with complaints and appeals have been exhausted, the University will issue a Completion of Procedures letter. If you wish to avail yourself of the opportunity of an independent review by the OIA you must submit your application to the OIA within 12 months of the issue of the Completion of Procedures letter. Full details of the scheme are available on request and will be enclosed with the Completion of Procedures letter.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy flowchart



Appendix 2 – Provisions for conducting meetings at Stage Two and Stage Three of the Study and Wellbeing Intervention Policy

Meeting process

The meeting itself should follow the below structure. If, for whatever reason, these arrangements become impracticable, the Chair has the discretion to vary them provided this does not put the student at a disadvantage:

- the Chair will welcome the Panel Members
- the Student and their Representative (if attending) will then join the meeting
- the Chair will ask the Panel to introduce themselves by name and their role
- the Chair will advise on the below:
 - Whether attendees are in a confidential and comfortable space
 - remain on mute unless invited to speak
 - recognise that the meeting may be difficult/distressing for the student. A brief pause can be requested
- the Chair will explain the purpose of the meeting and the actions that the Panel can take, as outlined within this procedure
- the Chair will present the concern/s that initiated the meeting
- the Chair will invite the Student or their Representative to make a statement and refer to any documentation that they wished to be considered
- members of the Panel will be invited to discuss the situation with the Student, asking open and positive questions to clarify points to gain the fullest picture of the current circumstances
- at each stage the Chair has discretion to allow questioning by all the members of the Panel to each other to create a supportive dialogue that clarifies all matters
- once the Chair is satisfied that the Panel has completed their questioning and that the Student has had a reasonable opportunity to convey information to the Panel, the Student and their Representative will withdraw

- the Panel will then discuss the case with a view to making a decision as per the defined outcomes for both Stage two and Stage three detailed within this policy. Once the Panel has concluded their discussions, they will invite the Student and their Representative back into the meeting to outline the actions to be taken
- if for any reason the Panel requires further clarification on any aspect of the case, the Chair will invite the Student and their Representative back into the meeting while the questioning takes place. When the Chair so determines, they will then leave the meeting again
- the decision, once reached, of the Stage two or Stage three meeting including a record of the meeting must be sent in writing to the student within seven working days of the meeting with a copy kept on the student's record
- should the Panel require additional information on any aspect of the case to reach a decision, the Chair will inform the Student and their Representative of this with any necessary follow up being scheduled
- consideration will be given to requests for reasonable adjustments to the process. At any point the Chair may adjourn the meeting if they believe that this is a useful and appropriate action

Records of the meeting

Whilst notes will be taken to capture the key points of discussion, a verbatim record will not be made. The student will be provided with a copy of the notes of the meeting which they attended/were eligible to attend. This must be sent to the student within seven working days of the meeting.

Appendix 3 – Support Action Plan template and example

Aims:

- for [NAME] mental health to improve
- to enable [NAME] to achieve their full potential in their studies

Action Plan

Aim	Action Examples below	Who is responsible for this action	By when
To provide pastoral, and academic support	■ to have scheduled meetings with the student every two weeks ■ to guide the student on plans catching up with lessons and deadlines missed	Department / Student Advisor	Fortnightly - Starting [DATE]
To provide wellbeing support	■ to have fortnightly or monthly meetings with Wellbeing Adviser ■ Wellbeing Adviser to support with coping strategies ■ Wellbeing Adviser to signpost to specialist services as appropriate	Wellbeing Adviser	Fortnightly or Monthly - Starting [DATE]
To improve mental health	■ to attend the fortnightly/monthly	Student	Ongoing

Aim	Action Examples below	Who is responsible for this action	By when
	support meetings with department ■ to attend the fortnightly support meetings with Wellbeing Adviser ■ to engage with available support from GP and mental health services, such as ...		
To improve mental health	■ to reach out to Wellbeing Adviser, GP or support services if/when needing support ■ to call 111 and choose option 2 if/when needing urgent mental health support	Student	Ongoing
To achieve full potential	■ to provide medical evidence regarding mental health to enable Student Support Notification to be put in place (if consenting for this to be done)	Student	[DATE]
To achieve full potential	■ to provide medical evidence and to complete Individual	Student	[DATE]

Aim	Action Examples below	Who is responsible for this action	By when
	Exam Arrangements (IEA) form to enable IEA's to be put in place		

Progress with your support action plan will be monitored as part of the Study & Wellbeing Intervention Policy and we will liaise with you regarding a review meeting to be carried out on [DATE].

Document Control Panel

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If you require this document in an alternative format, such as braille, please contact the nominated contact at fitnesstostudy@essex.ac.uk.