



SUPPORT TO STUDY REGULATIONS AND PROCEDURE 2024/25

Title: Support to Study Regulations					
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	Position(s)
Owner <i>The position in the University that is accountable for ensuring that these regulations are applied correctly</i>	Director of Student Services
Implementation <i>The person(s) responsible for ensuring that these regulations operate as required on a daily basis</i>	Head of Support and Safeguarding
Delivery <i>Which positions are involved in delivering these regulations</i>	All staff who interact with the student

PART A: REGULATIONS

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The University is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of health, mental health and disability related issues is critical to student learning, academic achievement and to the wider student experience. The University provides a wide a range of academic & professional support services, via which it is expected that the majority of student support needs can be appropriately addressed.
- 1.2. 1.2 The University recognises that there may be instances where health, mental health or disability related difficulties might give rise to broader concerns about the student's ability to engage with their studies and/or to function more widely as a member of the University community. The Support to Study Regulations and Procedure seeks to promote early intervention, active collaboration and consistency of approach in such instances, and sets out how the University can respond and the action that it may take to manage the matter and support the student.
- 1.3. The Support to Study Regulations and Procedure apply to: -
 - All students undertaking a programme of study with USW.
 - Students studying at the Royal Welsh College of Music and Drama (RWCMD). *(NB Any reference made to 'faculties' or 'faculty' in the regulations should be read as 'the College'.)*
 - Students studying university courses at the University's partner institutions.
 - Students studying on work placements or engaged in work-based learning.
 - Apprentices *(NB Any reference to 'student(s)' should also be read as 'apprentice(s)'. Information on the receipt and outcome of extenuating circumstances for apprentices will be provided to the Dean of Faculty (or nominee), who will inform the apprentice's employer.)*
- 1.4. Whilst the regulations and procedure apply to all students, specific consideration will be needed if a concern is raised regarding an international student who is studying under a student visa. Advice will be sought from the Immigration & International Student Advice Team.
- 1.5. The University's [Student Charter](#) states what students can expect and will be entitled to whilst studying at the University of South Wales. The University also has expectations of the student, and these are set out in both the Charter and in the University's [Code of Conduct](#).

2. General Principles

- 2.1. Support to Study concerns may arise where a student is experiencing health, mental health or disability related difficulties, or whose behaviour indicates an inability to effectively engage in studies resulting in:
 - Risk to the student's health, safety or wellbeing and/ or that of others.
 - Unexplained absences, a lack of meaningful and appropriate engagement with the University environment, and/ or issues with academic performance

- Unacceptable behaviour which is (or is at risk of) adversely affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students or the day-to-day activities of the University or a placement provider.
 - Individual support needs which fall outside the scope of the support and other services which the University can reasonably be expected to provide as, primarily, a higher education institution.
- 2.2. Concerns regarding Lack of Engagement (A.2.4 of the Regulations for Taught Causes), where the student is not able to engage appropriately as a result of a health, mental health or disability related difficulty, should be addressed via the Support to Study Regulations and Procedure in the first instance. If the student does not engage in the Support to Study process and engagement concerns persist (but do not meet the criteria for escalation to Support to Study Stage 3), the case will be referred to the Lack of Engagement process, where all attempts to re-engage the student will be deemed complete and the student will be formally notified of the intention to withdraw. Post Graduate research Degree candidates who are deemed 'inactive' according to the [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) (3.6) where the student is not able to engage appropriately as a result of a health, mental health or disability related difficulty, may be referred to the Support to Study Regulations and Procedure.
- 2.3.
- 2.4. Where a [Student Conduct](#) investigation highlights the need for a referral to the Support to Study Procedure the nature and length of the conduct investigation may require adjustment from the usual form or may be suspended pending the outcome of investigations under this Procedure.
- 2.5.
- 2.6. The Support to Study Procedure may run in parallel to the Fitness to Practise Procedure to enable flexibility of student support according to the individual needs of students, enabling students to continue studying on a course with PSRB (Professional or Statutory Regulatory Body) requirements where possible, whilst still ensuring service user safety.
- 2.7. Whilst the University seeks to work with students in a spirit of co-operation, cases may arise in which it may, under these regulations and procedure, be determined that a student is not fit to study at that time and that their registration should be suspended or terminated.
- 2.8. The procedure for dealing with Support to Study cases detailed below has three stages. The action will usually begin at Stage 1; however, depending upon the severity of the situation and seriousness of any perceived risks, action may be initiated at any of the three stages. If it is felt that action should be initiated at Stage 2 or 3 then this should be discussed with the Head of Support and Safeguarding (or nominee).

PART B: PROCEDURE

1. Stage 1 – Faculty Support and Action Planning Meeting

- 1.1. Faculty colleagues (Graduate School staff in the case of Post Graduate Research Degrees) regularly engage in supportive discussions with students as part of their routine interactions within the tutor / student relationship. These key early interventions are crucial to identifying and addressing emerging concerns about the health and/or

wellbeing of a student and the impact that this is having on their academic engagement / progress or other members of the University community.

- 1.2. Stage 1 Support and action planning should be used where a more structured approach is required, to address cases where the risk to the student's health and wellbeing is low; their academic position is vulnerable but recoverable and the impact of their behaviour on others is limited.
- 1.3. The member of Faculty / Graduate School staff who has the concerns / with whom concerns have been raised (Lead person) will discuss these with other appropriate members of staff (i.e., academic course team, the Advice Zone, [Wellbeing Advice](#) or Student Services Advisers), and collate any relevant information.
- 1.4. The Lead person will invite the student to a Stage 1 Support to Study meeting where the concerns will be outlined, and a plan of action discussed. The Lead person will keep a written record of discussions held and will provide a summary of agreed actions and/or recommendations (See Appendix 1 for template document) which may include:
 - Plan to improve appropriate and meaningful engagement with studies (i.e., setting priorities, targets and timeframes to improve attendance, engagement with learning and teaching, engagement with assessments)
 - Signposting to specialist student and learning support internally or externally.
 - Extenuating circumstances.
 - Interruption of studies
 - Change to mode of study
 - Change to programme of study
- 1.5. The Lead Person will set a date for a further meeting to review progress with the student to determine whether the concerns have been significantly reduced and/or eliminated or if further action is required.
- 1.6. There may be times when efforts to improve a student's situation at Stage 1 have been unsuccessful or where the risks involved necessitate escalation. In such circumstances, the case may be referred to stage 2 or 3 of the procedure (as appropriate) via the [Support to Study referral form](#). Referrals should outline the severity and impact of the difficulties and should include evidence of Stage 1 interventions attempted to date.
- 1.7. Following a referral, the Head of Support and Safeguarding (or nominee) will review the case to determine if Support to Study is an appropriate process and at what stage the case should be considered. It might be appropriate and necessary to arrange a case review meeting(s) at this stage to gather additional information and determine an appropriate course of action.

2. Stage 2 – Support to Study Case Meeting

- 2.1 A Support to Study Case Meeting chaired by the Head of Support and Safeguarding (or nominee) will be scheduled with the student and key faculty and professional services staff (including the Lead person) as appropriate.

The student will be given 5 working days' notice of the meeting arrangements and will be informed of the nature of the concerns. The student will be offered the opportunity to submit a written statement and / or to be accompanied to the meeting by a friend,

family member or officer from the Students' Union. The role of an accompanying person is not to represent the student, advocate on their behalf or to speak for them, unless this has been agreed as a reasonable adjustment due to a disability. The student cannot send any other person to the meeting on their behalf. The student must advise the University of the name and status of the person accompanying them at least 48 hours before the meeting.

- 2.2 If the student is not able to attend the meeting, every effort will be made to accommodate reasonable requests to reschedule. However, if this is not possible the meeting will take place in their absence. Any written statement provided by the student will be presented on their behalf by the Chair and recommendations will be made. [The student will be given 5 working days to respond to the Chairs recommendations.](#)
- 2.3 The meeting will be supportive in nature and will encourage open discussion of the current concerns around the student's ability to engage appropriately and meaningfully with the HEI environment. The Chair will outline the concerns and the student will be given the opportunity to ask questions and to respond to the concerns raised. It is important at this stage to establish the student's perception of the situation and how this is impacting on their studies. It is also important to consider risk to the student, their studies and to others.
- 2.4 The aim of the meeting will be to agree a set of actions and strategies that will support the student to improve engagement with their course and potential outcomes. Action plans may include: -
 - Plan to improve appropriate and meaningful engagement with studies (i.e., setting priorities, targets and timeframes to improve attendance, engagement with learning and teaching, engagement with assessments).
 - Appropriate and meaningful engagement with appropriate Student and Learning Support Services.
 - Measures to mitigate risks to self / others (e.g. safety planning).
 - Engagement with GP / NHS provision and /or other appropriate external services.
 -
 - Reasonable Adjustments
 - Extenuating circumstances
 - Change to mode of study.
 - Change to programme of study.
 - Interruption of studies with return to study support review planned.
 - Request to withdraw (if agreed with the student)
 - Referral to Stage 3 of Support to Study procedure
 - Referral to other University regulations/procedures (e.g., Lack of Engagement process (see A.2.2), [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) (3.6) Student Conduct Procedure, Procedure for Misconduct in University Halls of Residence, Fitness to Practise Procedure), as appropriate .
- 2.5 The student will be provided with a copy of the agreed action plan, within 5 working days of the meeting ([see Appendix 1 for template document](#)).
- 2.6 The Chair will set a date for a further meeting to review the action plan as appropriate depending on the circumstances. At the review meeting all key points from the initial meeting should be addressed. Notes will be made which will document one of the following:

- Concerns have been significantly reduced and/or eliminated.. Action plan implementation and review managed at local level within Support Services.
 - Ongoing concerns- further review required.
 - Ongoing concerns - referral to other University regulations/procedures (e.g., Lack of Engagement process (see A.2.2), [Regulations for Postgraduate Research Degrees](#) (3.6) Student Conduct Procedure, Procedure for Misconduct in University Halls of Residence, Fitness to Practise Procedure), as appropriate.
 - Severe and persistent ongoing concerns / significant deterioration / increased risk - Referral to be made to Stage 3 of the Support to Study procedure.
- 2.7 The student will be provided with a copy of the agreed action plan within 5 working days of the meeting.

3. Stage 3 - Support to Study Hearing

- 3.1. Stage 3 will be initiated if it is deemed that the severity or persistence of the situation warrants action to be initiated at this stage, or where Stage 1 and/or Stage 2 has not been successful, and the severity or persistence of the situation warrants further action.
- 3.2. Following a referral, a Support to Study hearing will be scheduled. The Panel will be constituted as follows:
- Director of Student Services or nominee (Chair)
 - A member of staff with no academic or personal connection to the student
 - An officer of the Students' Union

The Chair may invite other relevant staff to attend as appropriate, including (but not limited) to the Lead Person, the Dean of Faculty (or nominee), a representative from a relevant internal or external specialist agency.

- 3.3. The student will be given 10 working days' notice of the hearing (unless circumstances are such that a shorter period of notice is required) and will be provided with copies of any documentation relevant to the hearing in advance in an appropriate format.
- 3.4. The student will be given an opportunity to provide a written statement or additional documentation that they feel is pertinent to their situation. In the event that the student is unable to attend the hearing, every reasonable effort will be made to accommodate. However, if this is not possible the hearing may take place in their absence.
- 3.5. The student will be offered the opportunity to be accompanied by a friend, family member or officer from the Students' Union. Their role is normally not to represent the student, or to advocate on their behalf or to speak for them, unless this has been agreed as a reasonable adjustment due to a disability. The student cannot send any other person to the hearing on their behalf. At least 48 hours before the hearing, the student must advise the University of the name and status of the person accompanying them.
- 3.6. The Chair reserves the right to refuse the attendance of a support person if it is determined that there is a conflict of interest relating to the nominated person.

- 3.7 The Chair reserves the right to accept or refuse a request for a legally qualified support person/representative to attend the hearing, depending on whether a good reason is provided and the complexity and seriousness of the case. Any such requests must be sent to the Director of Student Services at least 48 hours before the hearing. Should such a request be approved, the University reserves the right to also have a legally qualified person in attendance. Legally qualified support persons/representatives will be clearly informed of the nature of the proceedings, i.e., that they are not a legal process and will not be conducted as such.
- 3.8 During the Support to Study hearing, the Chair will outline the concerns, with reference to any relevant documentation, which will have been provided to the student and the Panel no later than 5 working days before the hearing. The student will be given the opportunity to present their perception of the situation, to ask questions and to respond to the concerns raised. Others present at the hearing will be invited to ask any questions or raise any issues that they consider are relevant to the deliberations. Having ensured that all pertinent information has been provided the Chair will adjourn the hearing.
- 3.9 The Support to Study Panel will then consider the information provided. Options for action will include (but are not limited to): -
- Implementation of additional support (internal and/or external).
 - Measures to mitigate risks to self / others (e.g. safety planning)
 - Change of mode of study.
 - Interruption of studies with return to study support review planned
 - Withdrawal
 - Defer the case.
 - Referral to other University regulations/procedures (e.g., Student Conduct Procedure, Procedure for Misconduct in University Halls of Residence, Fitness to Practise Procedure), as appropriate.
 - Dismiss the case
- 3.10 The student will be provided with a written record of the hearing and the outcome, within 5 working days.
- 3.11 Where it is concluded that further documentation needs to be considered, the decision will be deferred to allow this to be obtained. A deadline for obtaining the documentation will be set as appropriate and a further meeting will be arranged.

4. Stage 3 - Request for Review

- 4.1. The student has the right to request a review of a Stage 3 Support to Study outcome on one or more of the following grounds:
- a) That new evidence or extenuating circumstances have become known, which could not have reasonably been made known at the time of the original meeting/hearing/investigation.
 - b) That there were irregularities in the application of the procedure of such a significant nature as to cause reasonable doubt as to whether the same decision would have been reached had they not occurred.
 - c) That there is clear evidence of bias or prejudice in the way that the procedure was implemented.

- d) That the original outcome was disproportionate, given the circumstances of the case.
- 4.2 The request for review should be submitted on the Support to Study Request for Review Form within 10 working days of the decision having been communicated and should be submitted to: studentcasework@southwales.ac.uk.
- 4.3 The request for review must set out clearly the grounds on which it is being submitted and must be accompanied by supporting evidence that substantiates one or more of the grounds as set out above.
- 4.4 A suspension from studies or expulsion from studies will remain in place pending a decision in respect of the request.
- 4.5 The Head of Student Casework (or nominee) will consider the request for review and the accompanying evidence and decide whether to refer it to a Review Panel or whether it should be dismissed as it does not meet the specified grounds.
- 4.6 If the request for review is referred to a Review Panel a hearing will be held. This will be arranged by the Student Casework Unit and the student will be invited to make representations in writing or in person. The student may be accompanied to the hearing (the principles outlined in sections 3.5-3.7 will apply).
- 4.7 The Review Panel will consist of the Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) and another senior member of university staff who has had no previous connection with the case and will be supported by a Secretary from the Student Casework Unit.
- 4.8 The Review Panel may come to one of the following findings:
- a) that the findings of the Support to Study Panel should be confirmed and the request for review dismissed;
 - b) that relevant new evidence that was not available to the Support to Study Panel at the time for valid reasons should be taken into account;
 - c) that there has been a failure to follow the University's regulations and procedures or to follow them with due care such as to deny the student a fair hearing;
 - d) that there was bias or prejudice towards the student in the way the Support to Study Panel reached its findings or in other aspects of the support to study procedure;
 - e) that the decision of the Support to Study Panel was unreasonable and/or that the outcome was not proportionate with the evidence presented in all of the circumstances of the case.
- 4.9 Options available to the Review Panel are:
- a) The outcome of the Support to Study Panel should be upheld.
 - b) The outcome of the Support to Study Panel should not be upheld and that:
 - i. the Support to Study Panel made procedural errors and/or errors of judgement and a new Support to Study Panel should be convened to hear the case afresh. In this case the Review Panel will determine whether the whole case, or just elements of the case, should be reconsidered or

- ii. the findings of the Support to Study Panel should be substituted with its own findings.
- 4.10 The decision of the Panel considering the request for review will be final and the student will be notified of the decision within a period of 5 working days following the meeting. If the request for review is unsuccessful, the student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter.
- 4.11 If the student is unhappy with the outcome of this procedure they may, following issue of a University Completion of Procedures Letter, lodge a complaint with the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA). Details of the OIA and the relevant information in relation to the Scheme can be accessed at www.oiahe.org.uk. Further information and advice can be obtained from the Student Casework Unit.

5. Stage 3 - Return to Study

- 5.1. If a student has agreed to interrupt their studies or been suspended as an outcome of a Support to Study hearing, a review meeting should be arranged prior to their anticipated return to determine whether the student is fit to return to study. Medical evidence may be requested from the student regarding their ability to engage fully with their studies, meet the requirements of the programme and live independently in residences or in the community.
- 5.2. Exceptionally, a further suspension will be arranged where this appears to still be justified by evidence discussed at the meeting.
- 5.3. Where it is concluded that the student is able to return to study a 'Return to Study Plan' will be agreed at the meeting. This should address any specific study-related support need to enable a successful return to studies. It will also be determined who will be responsible for undertaking the necessary action(s) outcome and who may need to be informed of this; dates for any review meetings will also be set. A student will only be permitted to return to studies when an agreed action plan is in place.

Appendix 1 – Support to Study Meeting record template

Support to Study Meeting record – Stage 1 / Stage 2/ Hearing Stage 3 (delete as appropriate)

Date:

Time:

Location:

	Name & Role	Initials
Student		
Chair		
Attendees		

1.	Summary of Concerns	
	<p>Student is experiencing significant physical or mental health difficulties resulting in (delete as appropriate):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk to the student's health, safety or wellbeing and/ or that of others. • Unexplained absences, a lack of meaningful and appropriate engagement with the University environment, and/ or issues with academic performance. • Unacceptable behaviour which is (or is at risk of) adversely affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students or the day-to-day activities of the University or a placement provider. • Individual support needs which fall outside the scope of the support and other services which the University can reasonably be expected to provide as, primarily, a higher education institution. 	
2.	Summary of Discussion	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academic overview – profile of engagement and academic performance • Barriers to engagement / individual support needs • Risks to safety / wellbeing of the student • Impact on the wider University community • Existing support • Potential sources of support / reasonable adjustments / supportive mechanisms (e.g. Interruption of Studies, change to mode of study etc) 	
3.	Action plan	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 	

This document is available in Welsh. Mae'r ddogfen hon ar gael yn Gymraeg.

PUBLIC / CYHOEDDUS

4.	Review date / Outcome	
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