

Support to Study

Policy and Procedure

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1. Policy Introduction

- 1.1. Aberystwyth University is a caring community in which students will be supported in all aspects of their university experience. As such, the University expects students to be able to live independently, with respect, and in harmony with others. The University recognises that some health conditions including mental health, psychological or emotional distress and/or neuro divergence may lead to behaviours, where a student's conduct is having an adverse impact on themselves and/or others and may also impose risk to self or others.
- 1.2. The University's [rules and regulations](#) set out that students are required to declare any health condition and/or neuro divergence likely to interfere with their studies or the health of other students. There may of course, however, be times when students are unable to recognise or communicate their health condition and/or neuro divergence.
- 1.3. The Support to Study Policy and Procedure sets out a framework to provide a coordinated and supportive approach to students whose circumstances require a balanced and specialised response. Our aim at Aberystwyth is to offer a sensitive and fair alternative to other University regulations and procedures related to progression, engagement, and conduct, which may not be deemed suitable due to the students' circumstances and where quick establishment of additional support can be provided, to enable the student to achieve their best and thrive at Aberystwyth.
- 1.4. In all instances, wherever possible, students are encouraged to engage with the Support to Study policy and procedure as it is designed to enable students and their supporters to assess their needs, so all reasonable adjustments and supportive actions can be agreed and implemented in accordance with the Equalities Act 2010 and the University's duty of care. The overarching aims of the policy and process are to protect the students' academic interests, experience, progression, and outcome. There may be some instances where continuing to attend University is recognised as having an adverse effect on the student. In these instances, a period of withdrawal from study may be considered to be helpful and in the interests of the student's health and wellbeing.
- 1.5. In instances where a student is unable to engage due to a significant level of unwellness, relevant staff will initiate the policy, so that supportive actions to help protect the student's academic interests can be considered, agreed and implemented.
- 1.6. On initiation of the policy and to ensure the right level of response is provided, consideration will be given to the reported concerns, incidents and level of risk associated. Each case will be assessed fairly through the evidence available and advice for university staff implementing the policy can be gained from Student Services. Students engaged with the Support to Study process will be encouraged to

make decisions in what will be reasonably helpful to them, to enable them to progress well.

- 1.7. Any decisions made to escalate and refer a student from one stage to another will require advice and discussion with Student Services. This is to help ensure wherever possible, that concerns are dealt with at a proportionate level and formal process is limited, understanding the psychological and emotional impact that an invite to a formal process can have for a student. If there is any doubt in what University policy and procedure should be implemented, then Student Services will seek advice from the Behavioural Intervention Team (BIT) which will consider complex cases pathways, the risk management and supportive process for each.

2. Scope

- 2.1. This policy is available to any Aberystwyth University student, foundation, undergraduate, postgraduate research or taught, full time, part time, distance, blended, placement, study abroad students. It relates to students whether they are residing in private accommodation or those residing in university owned accommodation.
- 2.2. The policy aims to meet the needs of any student and if any adjustment to the procedure is required to support a student's need, then students are required to contact the Student Accessibility and Inclusion team in Student Services.
- 2.3. This policy does not prevent an appropriate emergency response. Where it is believed that students pose an immediate risk to themselves or others – see Emergencies in 3 below.

3. Emergencies

- 3.1. Where a student's behaviour presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, the Emergency Services should be contacted by dialling 999. Alternative contacts are also listed below for advice on how best to manage a safety concern:
 - Your local GP for an **urgent** appointment:
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/862/directory/gps>
 - NHS Direct Wales: 111 or 0845 46 47
 - Local Accident and Emergency Department:
<http://www.wales.nhs.uk/sitesplus/862/directory/hospitals/104>
 - Dial 999
 - The Samaritans:
Tel: 116 123 (24 hrs a day, 7 days a week)
Welsh Language Line 0300 123 3011 (7pm- 11pm only, 7 days a week)
Email jo@samaritans.org Web www.samaritans.org

The University Crisis flowchart sets out processes in an emergency:

<https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/wellbeing/crisis/>

Whilst Details of the incident and action taken require reporting to the University Health and Safety team: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/hse/proc-prac/incident-reporting/>

- 3.2. It may be necessary to temporarily and without prejudice, suspend the student's studies for recuperation. In line with the University's general policy, suspensions falling within this category must be authorised by the relevant Pro Vice-Chancellor

4. The Role of Student Services

- 4.1. The Student Services Department provides advice to both staff and students on the range of support available to Aberystwyth students. This may be support internal or external to the university. Student Services staff are well positioned to offer appropriate responses to a range of student related issues and incidents, with specialists available to assess and advise on student cases. Providing sensitive assessment to help ensure thorough risk assessment and needs assessment is undertaken whilst supportive pathways are established.
- 4.2. Student Services staff may gain information from other internal or external services to help with thorough assessment of a student case in relation to Support to Study. This will be done in accordance with the University data protection policy and process: <https://www.aber.ac.uk/en/sscs/wellbeing/about-us/data-protection-information/>
- 4.3. Student Services staff are available to advise anyone who has immediate safety concerns. They will advise that the individual follows the emergencies procedure listed above in section 3 and as advised through the crisis flowcharts. This action will help prevent any delay in getting the right help to a safety incident. Following the right help being sought, anyone requesting help is required to notify Student Services along with Health and Safety. This will ensure that all supportive measures and risk management processes can be considered and implemented by the University.

5. Procedure

- 5.1. There are 4 stages of the Support to Study process and any stage can be implemented at any time, with consideration being given to the presenting circumstance and level of concern. The stages are for either, low, moderate or significant levels of concern and are configured to help enable a proportionate response to the presenting issues. Any immediate safety concern will be managed according to the University crisis management requirements. See section 3 of this policy.

5.2. The level of concern and associated stages for Support to Study are shown in the table below. The Support to Study Procedural Flowchart in appendix 1, also sets out details of the procedure for each stage.

5.3 If a student does not attend an assessment without notifying the organiser and with no known exceptional circumstance impacting on their ability to attend, the student will be notified that their case will be progressed to the next stage, if deemed in the students' best interests.

5.4

Following the assessment under stage 2, 3 or 4 of the policy an outcome will be agreed and the student informed. The outcomes are listed below:

A. The student continues to attend, and the case is deemed closed and/or the student should be subject to disciplinary or academic progress procedures

B. The student continues to attend, subject to certain terms and conditions and including a stated period for review or expiry. (These terms and conditions may include a recommendation for temporary exclusion from university residences); Where this can be accommodated within the requirements of the academic course the student may be deemed not fit to attend but may be fit to study

C. The student should not continue to attend and be suspended immediately on health grounds for a temporary period pending improvement in their health. In determining the period of suspension account will be taken of the requirements of the course, the time of the academic year and academic progression regulations. A temporary suspension will usually be no longer than one academic year in the first instance.

D. The student should be subject to disciplinary or academic progress procedures.

Support to Study Level of Concern and Stage

Stage 1 Support Intervention Low level concern	Informal	<p>There are emerging concerns and/or the student has disclosed information to a member of staff that indicates there is a need to talk about any needs and agree helpful support and reasonable adjustments</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>Behaviour which would otherwise be dealt with as a disciplinary matter/academic progress which is considered to be the result of an underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diversity</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU staff member meets with the student to discuss concerns, needs, and agrees supportive plan. Recording this onto student record and confirming this in writing to the student. • A review meeting is arranged. • Additional review meetings can be arranged if required, or progress to Stage 2
Stage 2 Support Intervention Moderate level concern	Informal	<p>Behaviour which would otherwise be dealt with as a disciplinary matter/academic progress which is considered to be the result of an underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diversity</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>The student's disposition is such that it indicates there may be a need to address underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro divergence (for example, they have become withdrawn, aggressive, distressed, irritable, have mood swings or show signs of depression)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AU staff member contacts Student Services to discuss the concerns relating to Support to Study and to plan a meeting with the student. • The AU staff member invites the student and Student Services practitioner to a meeting, along with any support the student may want to bring. • The meeting will discuss concerns, needs, and agree supportive actions and arrange a review meeting. The Agreed Support to Study outcome will be confirmed to the student in writing, along with the supportive actions, recording this onto student record. • Additional review meetings can be arranged or progress/refer to Stage 3 if concerns about progression continue

Referral Into Support to Study

<p>Stage 3 Required Intervention Significant level concern</p>	<p>Formal</p>	<p>The student's disposition is such that it indicates there may be a need to address underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro divergence (for example, they have become withdrawn, aggressive, distressed, irritable, have mood swings or show signs of depression)</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>The student's academic performance or physical behaviour is not acceptable, has been dealt with under disciplinary or academic progress procedures but is considered to be the result of a health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diver and where the student is unwilling or unable to modify their behaviour or actions.</p> <p>And/or</p> <p>Serious concerns about the wellbeing or behaviour of the student emerge from a third party (such as flat mate, member of the public, placement provider or medical professional) which indicate that there is a need to address the student's</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Any AU staff member can complete a Support to Study referral form if concern is ongoing or if significant concerns are emerging and where it is Likely a broad range of staff will be required to assess to ensure all support needs adjustments can be considered. We would advise seeking advice from Support Service prior to completion to ensure it is an appropriate referral. • Student Services receive the Support to Study referral. • The case is considered for Stage 3 appropriateness. Guidance to AU staff provided if Stage 3 not case appropriate. • If referral appropriate Stage 3 progresses. • Student Service arrange an assessment meeting including relevant staff and inviting the student and supporter formally to the meeting. • The assessment meeting will set out the concerns, discuss needs and agree supportive actions, which could include a period of withdrawal, permanent exclusion or period of review. • The agreed Support to Study outcome will be confirmed by the panel and this will be confirmed to the student in writing, along with the supportive actions, along with the detailed notes of the assessment or review meeting, recording this onto student record. • In cases where a withdrawal through an enforced temporary suspension or permanent exclusion is deemed in the students' best interests, the Pro-Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching and Student Experience will be consulted and will write directly to the student. (A meeting will be convened to explain the outcome and offer ongoing support)
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<p>Stage 4 Required Intervention Return to Study</p>	<p>Formal</p>	<p>The student has taken a period of withdrawal, voluntarily or enforced under the Support to Study Policy and has notified the University of their intention to return to study</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Student Services contact the student at the point they inform the University they want to return to study. • The student is requested to provide sufficient evidence from a health/specialist professional clarifying improvement in health wellbeing for a RTS assessment meeting to progress • Student Services invite the student and any supporter along with relevant staff to a RTS assessment meeting. • The Assessment meeting will set out the previous case meeting outcomes and actions, discuss progress whilst withdrawn from study, discuss current needs and agree supportive actions, which could include a further period of withdrawal or period of review. • The agreed Support to Study outcome will be confirmed by the panel and this will be confirmed to the student in writing, along with the supportive actions, along with the detailed notes of the assessment or review meeting, recording this onto student record. • In cases where a continued period of withdrawal is agreed the Pro-Vice Chancellor Learning and Teaching and Student Experience will be consulted and will write directly to the student. (A meeting will be convened to explain the outcome and offer ongoing support)
<p>Appeals</p>	<p>Formal</p>	<p>The student can appeal against a Stage 3 or return to study outcome</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Appeals process is detail in point 7 of this policy

Support to Study Procedure

Emerging concern about a student where Support to Study intervention is required

Stage 1

Support Intervention - Low level concern

Any AU staff member can implement Support to Study

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need:

- Arrange to meet the student informing them of the policy and procedure and confirming who will be in attendance
- Discuss concerns
- Identify needs
- Set out supportive plan
- Set a review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2 weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Meeting 2 - Review:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support
- If required - Set a review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Stage 2

Support Intervention - Moderate level concern

Any AU staff member can implement Support to Study

and request a Student Services practitioner to attend

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need:

- Arrange to meet the student informing them of the policy and procedure and confirming who will be in attendance
- Discuss concerns
- Identify needs
- Set out supportive plan
- Set a review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2 weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Meeting 2 - Review:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support
- If required - Set a review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks)

Stage 3

Required Intervention - Significant level concern

Any AU staff member can complete a Support to Study Referral Form and send to: studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk.

We advise contacting Student Services to discuss the case prior to a referral being made to help consider relevant stage required.

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need:

- Student Services will organise the meeting with all relevant staff and support for student invited, informing the student by formal letter.
- Discuss concerns
- Identify needs
- Set out supportive plan, this will include either a period of withdrawal or a review meeting date
- Set a review date if well enough to continue study, enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2 weeks. Or set out Return to Study Procedure on withdrawal from study. (See Return to Study procedure)
- Record meeting on systems and send formal Outcome letter with the notes to the student

Meeting 2 - Review if relevant:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support
- If required - Set a further review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks). Or close the students Support to Study case
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Support to Study – Return to Study Procedure

Stage 4

Required Intervention – Return to Study

During Stage 3 any withdrawal from study will be supported with the Return to Study procedure set out. The student will be required to send relevant evidence from a health professional confirming the student ability to reengage with academic responsibilities, as and when they feel able to take on, HE responsibilities.

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need:

- Student Services will organise the meeting with all relevant staff and support for student invited, informing the student by formal letter.
- Discuss concerns
- Identify needs
- Set out supportive plan, this will include either a period of withdrawal or a review meeting date
- Set a review date if well enough to continue study, enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2 weeks. Or set out Return to Study Procedure on withdrawal from study
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Meeting 2 – Review if relevant:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support
- If required - Set a further review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks). Or close the

For Advice or Information on the Support to Study Policy or Procedure:

[Add Webpage link](#)

or contact bbc@aber.ac.uk 01970 621761/2081

Stage 1

Support Intervention - Low level concern

This Level would be considered when:

There are emerging concerns and/or the student has disclosed information to any member of staff that indicates there is a need to talk about any needs and agree helpful support and reasonable adjustments.

And/or

Behaviour which would otherwise be dealt with as a disciplinary matter/academic progress which is considered to be the result of an underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diversity

This stage can act as a helpful early intervention and prevention tool. Helping the University work with students to get them 'back on track' quickly, by addressing any difficulty and identifying their needs whilst agreeing supportive actions and any reasonable adjustment we can put in place.

Any AU staff member can implement this stage of the Support to Study policy when an emerging concern is recognised. It may be that the student has become withdrawn, and they have stopped engaging and attendance has reduced. Perhaps there is an awareness of an underlying difficulty that could be contributing. Or the student may tell you about a situation or a condition that is causing them difficulty to engage in university life.

Emerging Concern

When a concern is first noticed and/or when the student discloses a difficulty. Arrange to meet the student as quickly as possible. Offer reassurance that the University is there to help where it can, and we want to discuss support options to help meet their needs

Before the meeting

Check systems and ask colleagues if any concerns or disclosure has been recorded anywhere. There may be reasonable adjustments already in place or supportive actions already agreed with the student, that can be discussed at the meeting

Meeting 1

Assessment of need

- Set out the purpose of the meeting under the University Support to Study Policy and your intention to agree what support can help.
- Discuss the emerging concerns
- Identify the needs of the student
- Agree a supportive plan with the student
- Set a review date. Enabling time for student to progress supportive action and so you can check in on progress with the agreed supportive actions and (approx. 2 - 4weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Meeting 2 (or more)

Review Meeting

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed, (checking in with other areas prior to the meeting if required) Agree any additional support and close the case.
- If required - Set another review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Progress to

Stage 2 or 3?

If the concerns continue and the student is not engaging with the supportive actions or gaining positive affect, then stage 2 of the policy can be progressed.

If a significant deterioration is noted, then a referral into Stage 3 can be discussed with Student Services

Stage 2

Support Intervention - Moderate level concern

This Level would be considered when:

Behaviour which would otherwise be dealt with as a disciplinary matter/academic progress which is considered to be the result of an underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diversity

And/or

The student's disposition is such that it indicates there may be a need to address underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diversity (for example, they have become withdrawn, aggressive, distressed, irritable, have mood swings or show signs of depression)

This stage can act as a helpful early intervention and prevention tool. Helping the University work with students to get them 'back on track' quickly, by addressing any difficulty and identifying their needs whilst agreeing supportive actions and any reasonable adjustment we can put in place. At this stage you may see behaviours which are starting to impact on others University experience, such as distress or aggressive outbursts and a possible dependence on others whilst not engaging with the right support.

Any AU staff member can implement this and request a Student Service Practitioner to attend the meeting with them to help in the assessment of need and with the consideration of the most appropriate support to be agreed. This stage may require

Concerns present

When a student conduct issue is first recognised and/or behaviours indicate an underlying difficulty. Arrange to meet the student as quickly as possible and contact Student Services to request support for the meeting. Offer reassurance to the student that the University is there to help where it can, and we want to discuss support with the most appropriate people. Let the student know they can bring support to the meeting.

Before the meeting

Check systems and ask colleagues if any concerns or disclosure has been recorded anywhere. There may be reasonable adjustments already in place or supportive actions already agreed with the student that can be discussed at the meeting

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need:

- Arrange to meet the student informing them of the policy and procedure and confirming who will be in attendance from Student Services
- Discuss the concerns
- Identify any needs
- Set out a supportive plan
- Set a review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Meeting 2 - Review:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed, checking in with other areas prior to the meeting if required
- Agree any additional support and close the case or
- If required - Set a review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks)
- Record meeting on systems

Progress to Stage 3?

If a significant deterioration is observed, then a referral into Stage 3 can be discussed with Student Services

Stage 3

Required Intervention - Significant level concern

This Level would be considered when:

The student's disposition is such that it indicates there may be a need to address underlying health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diversity (for example, they have become withdrawn, aggressive, distressed, irritable, have mood swings or show signs of depression)

And/or

The student's academic performance or physical behaviour is not acceptable, has been dealt with under disciplinary or academic progress procedures but is considered to be the result of a health condition (including MH) and/or neuro diver and where the student is unwilling or unable to modify their behaviour or actions.

And/or

Serious concerns about the wellbeing or behaviour of the student emerge from a third party (such as flat mate, member of the public, placement provider or medical professional) which indicate that there is a need to address the student's

This stage is necessary for those students who we recognise to have significant difficulties surrounding their behaviours and ability to engage with their university responsibilities. This level of difficulty may also have an impact on others university experience which is also paramount to protect. We advise contacting Student Services to discuss the case prior to a referral into this stage being made, to help ensure the most proportionate response is being delivered. A support to Study Referral Form will need to be completed. Any query or referral form can be made to: studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk 01970 621761

Concerns present

When significant concerns arise and if stage 1 or 2 of the policy have not been affective or are not appropriate, speak to appropriate colleagues about their awareness of concerns and contact Student Services to discuss the case. Complete the Referral Form, adding all relevant evidence to date, meetings advised supportive actions taken and the circumstances and events leading to the level of concern. Send the Referral form to: studentwellbeing@aber.ac.uk
Continue to monitor and record any concern

Referral received

Student Service will assess the Referral and contact you to confirm receipt and acceptance. Student Service will arrange for a Case assessment meeting including all relevant staff and providing the student with at least 7 days' notice to attend wherever possible and with risk considerations being factored

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need

(Chairs responsibilities are set out in Appendix 1):

- The letter will confirm the student can bring support to the meeting.
- The meeting will set out the supportive nature of the policy procedure, and the presenting concerns.
- Identify the needs of the student
- Setting out supportive plan, this will include either a period of withdrawal or a review meeting date along with other supportive actions
- Set a review date if the student is deemed able to continue study, enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks). Or set out Return to Study Procedure on withdrawal from study. (See Return to Study procedure)
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Meeting 2 – Review if relevant:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support needs and actions
- If required - Set a further review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks). Or close the Support to Study case
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Return to Study

If a period of withdrawal or exclusion is processes through stage 3 then the student will be notified at the time of eh outcome being sent, of eh return to study procedure.

Stage 4

Required Intervention – Return to Study

During Stage 3 any withdrawal from study will be supported with the Return to Study procedure set out. The student will be required to send relevant evidence from a health professional confirming the student ability to reengage with academic responsibilities, as and when they feel able to take on, HE responsibilities.

Meeting 1 - Assessment of need:

- Student Services will organise the meeting with all relevant staff and support for student invited, informing the student by formal letter.
- Discuss concerns
- Identify needs
- Set out supportive plan, this will include either a period of withdrawal or a review meeting date
- Set a review date if well enough to continue study, enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2 weeks. Or set out Return to Study Procedure on withdrawal from study
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Meeting 2 – Review if relevant:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support
- If required - Set a further review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks). Or close the students Support to Study case

University receives notification from the student about their intention to return to study.

Student Services contact the student and request supporting evidence from a health professional as per stage 8 of the policy. If the Evidence accepted, then Return to Study case assessment meeting arranged

Meeting 1 – return to Study case assessment meeting

(Chairs responsibilities are set out in Appendix 2):

- Student Services will send a letter to the student confirming the student can bring support to the meeting and details of the meeting.
- The meeting will set out the supportive nature of the policy procedure, and the presenting concerns.
- Identify the needs of the student
- Setting out supportive plan, this will include either an extended period of withdrawal or a review meeting date along with other supportive actions
- Set a review date if the student is deemed able to continue study, enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks. Or set out Return to Study Procedure on withdrawal from study. (See Return to Study procedure)
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Meeting 2 – Review if relevant:

- Discuss progress with supportive actions previously agreed
- Agree any additional support needs actions and outcome.
- If required - Set a further review date enabling time for student to progress supportive actions (approx. 2-4 weeks). Or close the Support to Study case
- Record meeting on systems and send formal outcome letter with the notes to the student

Appeals

A student may appeal the Stage 3 or Return to Study Outcome.

The student is required to appeal in writing against the decision of the assessment, within ten working days from the date of written communication of the outcome of the assessment. The appeal may be made on grounds of process or on information which could not have been known at the time of the assessment. Appeals will only be accepted where there is evidence of Procedural irregularity Bias, or failure to reach a reasonable decision in the handling of the process. Material circumstances which could not reasonably have been expected to have been submitted at the time of the case conference

Students will be provided with the process for appeal within the Stage 3 and Return to Study outcome letters.

The student is required to notify The Director of Student Services

When a student notifies the University of their intention to appeal, within the stated timeframe and detailing the reason and evidence for appeal.

The director of Student Service will organise the appeal panel to hear the case.

The student will be invited to attend the case, with at least 5 working days' notice of attendance being provided and detailing the students support options.

Appeal panel case meeting.

(Chairs responsibilities are set out in Appendix 3):

- An alternative Pro Vice-Chancellor to the Pro Vice Chancellor involved in the exclusion, withdrawal notice will be in attendance along with the Director of Support Services and a representative from the Students' Union
- The PVC will send a letter to the student confirming the student can bring support to the appeal meeting and details of the meeting.
- The meeting will set out the supportive nature of the policy procedure, the possible outcomes and original case concerns, outcomes and consider the evidenced grounds for appeal from the student.
- The appeal case outcome will be agreed by the panel. The appeal will be upheld, and the student is able to attend. The appeal is not upheld and the support to study original outcome will stand.
- The PVC will send the formal outcome letter with the notes to the student and record these on the system. Process to appeal the appeal through the OIA will be provided in the outcome letter to the student.
- The case will be closed.

6. Return to Study

- 6.1 The University aim is to enable return to study without detriment to the wellbeing and safety of the student or others and by using the Return to Study procedure to help assess without prejudice whether it is the right time for them to return.
- 6.2 Any student wishing to return to study must notify the University via the academic registration process or by contacting Student Services directly.
- 6.3 At the point of notification, the student will be asked to provide health professional evidence (those involved in the students care and treatment, e.g., Psychiatrist, GP, MH specialist, Therapist), that details the professional's opinion on the student's ability to return to Higher Education study and student life responsibilities without it having a detrimental impact on their health.
- 6.4 The evidence will be considered by specialists within Student Services and a decision on whether a Return to Study case meeting will be held, will be confirmed to the student. It may be that the student is advised at this point to take a continued period of withdrawal, with options for return to study application dates confirmed and in accordance with module requirements. Additional support options may also be advised

7. Procedures for Return to Study

- 7.1 If the evidence suggests the student is able to return to student responsibilities without significant detriment to their health, then a Return to Study case assessment meeting will be arranged by Student Services and the student will be informed in writing and provided with at least 7 days' notice of the meeting date and time. The letter will detail the opportunity for the student to bring a supporter to the meeting with them.
- 7.2 Process for the meeting and chair responsibilities are detailed in Appendix 2

8. Appeals

- 8.1 A student may appeal in writing against the decision of the assessment to another Pro Vice Chancellor within ten working days from the date of written communication of the outcome of the assessment. The appeal may be made on grounds of process or on information which could not have been known at the time of the assessment. Appeals will only be accepted where there is evidence of Procedural irregularity Bias, or failure to reach a reasonable decision in the handling of the process. Material circumstances which could not reasonably have been expected to have been submitted at the time of the case conference

- 8.2 An Appeal Panel, consisting of an alternative Pro Vice-Chancellor, Director of Student Services and a representative from the Students' Union, will usually hear the appeal within five working days of its receipt by the University.
- 8.3 Where a student remains dissatisfied, he/she will have the right to submit a complaint to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (www.oiahe.org.uk)

9. Procedure for the Support to Study Appeal Case Meeting

- 9.1 If a student's request for an appeal has been accepted, then an Appeal Panel case meeting will be organised by the VC office. The membership of the Panel shall comprise a Pro-Vice Chancellor (Chair) with no previous involvement in the case, the Director of Student Services and an elected representative from the Students' Union who has had no previous involvement in the case. The student will be notified in writing of the meeting date and time, with a minimum of 7 days' notice to attend. The option to bring a supporter (this can be legal representation) will be detailed.
- 9.2 Process for the meeting and chair responsibilities are detailed in Appendix 3

10 Advice and Support

- 10.1 At all stages the student should be advised that advice and information is available from all relevant areas within the University, as well as any relevant external to the University
- [Students' Union – Aber SU Advice Service](#)
 - [Student Services](#)
 - [Student Fees Office](#)
 - [Residence Life](#)
- 10.2 In cases where the student is unable to make the necessary practical arrangements for withdrawal due to the level of difficulty associated with their situation then the University may be required to contact the student's emergency contact in accordance with the emergency contact policy and procedure. Or it may be important for the University to contact other external agencies such as NHS Services, Social Services or the Home office.
- 10.3 Student Services are able to advise any staff member on concerns about a student and provide the most appropriate support pathway information.
- 10.4 Any staff member requiring support to manage their wellbeing can access resources through the University HR webpages on staff [Health and Wellbeing](#)

Version: 1	Publication Date:	Sept 2023
Reason for update:			
Approved:	Academic Board	Effective From:	Sept 2023
Other Stakeholders:			
Contact:	Ian Munton – Director of Student Services		

Appendix 1.

Procedures for the Conduct of a Support to Study Case Assessment and Review

The Chair shall:

- notify the student that they may indicate at any time if they feel they need to take a break from the proceedings
- ask the student and others present to identify themselves and state their role
- ask for declarations of interest that might be perceived to influence the outcome of the assessment e.g., a member of staff might be related to the student
- give an explanation of the boundaries of confidentiality as it applies to the assessment
- clarify that if the student is not being accompanied that they were aware that this was open to them
- confirm whether the student has received a copy of the Support to Study policy, Guidance Notes for Students.
- state that the assessment is not expected to last more than one hour
- explain that a note taker is present, and that the student will be able to receive a copy of the notes once drafted
- that in reaching a decision every effort will be made to reach a voluntary solution

N.B. If the person accompanying a student is their legal representative and the University has not received prior notification (3 days) the Chair shall defer the case conference until further advice has been received from the University.

The Chair shall then explain the sequence of events for the assessment which will be:

- to explain the purpose of the Support to Study procedure
- to present a summary of the reasons why Formal Stage 3 has been invoked (as outlined in the notification letter)
- that the student shall have an opportunity to respond to the concerns
- to clarify the potential outcomes of the assessment e.g., student is able to attend etc (reference 5.4 of the policy)
- to clarify any relevant University's expectations or rules/regulations
- outline the decision-making process i.e., how a decision will be reached/ how the student will be notified of the outcome of the assessment/timeframes for notification/right of appeal etc
- that at the end of the case conference the student will be asked to leave and those present will decide on the outcome.
- To confirm whether the student has any questions about the process

The Chair shall then deal with each of the above in turn.

The Chair has the discretion to declare inadmissible any matter introduced by the student or others if deemed not directly related to the Support to Study concerns/process.

At the end of the case conference the Chair shall then:

- summarise the discussion, outlining the potential outcomes as stipulated by the policy
- ensure the student understands the consequences of the different outcomes
- summarise the student's views/preferences regarding the outcomes and any actions the student now needs to take
- ensure the student is clear about support organisations that are available and how to contact them.
- clarify how the student will be notified of the outcome of the assessment/timeframes for notification
- outline the student's right of appeal
- confirm that the student or those present have no further questions/comments
- confirm the voluntarily agreed outcome of the Assessment

If there are no further comments or questions the case conference shall conclude.

Where it has not been possible to agree a voluntary solution acceptable to all parties the student will be asked to leave, and a decision will be imposed by the University. In such circumstances, due care and consideration will be exercised to avoid, as far as possible, the student being placed in a more vulnerable situation.

- *N.B. In exceptional circumstances, where there is a clear indication that attendance at a full case conference would be seriously detrimental to a student's health/wellbeing the Chair of the assessment may consider the possibility of arranging a two-stage assessment where the student has the opportunity to meet a smaller number of people after staff have held an initial meeting.*

Detailed Notes and formal letter confirming the outcome of the Appeal will be sent to the student at the soonest opportunity, whilst recorded on the student record.

In cases where the student does not attend the case meeting, then the panel can make a decision in the student's absence

Appendix 2.

Procedures for the Return to Study Case Assessment Meeting

The Chair shall:

- notify the student that they may indicate at any time if they feel they need to take a break from the proceedings
- ask the student and others present to identify themselves and state their role
- ask for declarations of interest that might be perceived to influence the outcome of the assessment e.g., a member of staff might be related to the student
- give an explanation of the boundaries of confidentiality as it applies to the assessment
- clarify that if the student is not being accompanied that they were aware that this was open to them
- confirm whether the student has received a copy of the Support to Study policy, Guidance Notes for Students.
- state that the assessment is not expected to last more than one hour
- explain that a note taker is present, and that the student will be able to receive a copy of the notes once drafted
- that in reaching a decision every effort will be made to reach a voluntary solution

N.B. If the person accompanying a student is their legal representative and the University has not received prior notification (3 days) the Chair shall defer the case conference until further advice has been received from the University.

The Chair shall then explain the sequence of events for the Assessment which will be:

- to explain the purpose of the Return to Study procedure
- to present a summary of the reasons why the assessment is being held and the reasons which led to the students withdrawing/being suspended (as outlined in the notification letter)
- that the student shall have an opportunity to respond to the initial concerns and explain why they feel they are now fit to return to their studies
- to clarify the potential outcomes of the assessment e.g., student can return to study, as per outcomes set out in section 5.4 of this policy. And in line with the Return to study outcomes:
 - **the student is able to return, and the case is deemed closed**
 - **the student is able to return, subject to certain terms and conditions and including a stated period for review or expiry. (These terms and conditions may include a recommendation for temporary exclusion from university residences).**
 - **where this can be accommodated within the requirements of the academic course the student may be deemed unable to return but may be able to study**

- **the student remains unable to attend and should continue to be suspended on health grounds for a further temporary period pending improvement in their health. In determining the period of suspension account will be taken of the requirements of the course, the time of the academic year and academic progression regulations.**
- **the student is able to return and should now be subject to disciplinary or academic progress procedures**
- **the student remains unable to attend and should be subject to disciplinary or academic progress procedures.**
 - to clarify any relevant University's expectations or rules/regulations
 - outline the decision-making process i.e., how a decision will be reached/ how the student will be notified of the outcome of the assessment/timeframes for notification/right of appeal etc
 - that at the end of the case conference the student will be asked to leave and those present will decide on the outcome.
 - to confirm whether the student has any questions about the process

The Chair shall then deal with each of the above in turn.

The Chair has the discretion to declare inadmissible any matter introduced by the student or others if deemed not directly related to the Support to study/return to study concerns/process.

At the end of the case conference the Chair shall then:

- summarise the discussion, outlining the potential outcomes as stipulated by the policy
- ensure the student understands the consequences of the different outcomes
- summarise the student's views/preferences regarding the outcomes and any actions the student now needs to take
- ensure the student is clear about support organisations that are available and how to contact them.
- clarify how the student will be notified of the outcome of the assessment/timeframes for notification
- outline the student's right of appeal
- confirm that the student or those present have no further questions/comments
- confirm the voluntarily agreed outcome of the Assessment

If there are no further comments or questions the case conference shall conclude.

Where it has not been possible to agree a voluntary solution acceptable to all parties the student will be asked to leave, and a decision will be imposed by the University. In such circumstances, due care and consideration will be exercised to avoid, as far as possible, the student being placed in a more vulnerable situation.

N.B. In exceptional circumstances, where there is a clear indication that attendance at a full case conference would be seriously detrimental to a student's

health/wellbeing the Chair of the assessment may consider the possibility of arranging a two-stage assessment where the student has the opportunity to meet a smaller number of people after staff have held an initial meeting.

Detailed Notes and formal letter confirming the outcome of the Appeal will be sent to the student at the soonest opportunity, whilst recorded on the student record.

In cases where the student does not attend the case meeting, then the panel can make a decision in the student's absence

Appendix 3.

Procedure for the Support to Study Appeal Case Meeting

I. The Chair shall:

- notify the student that they may indicate at any time if they feel they need to take a break from the proceedings
- ask the student and others present to identify themselves and state their role
- ask for declarations of interest that might be perceived to influence the outcome of the hearing e.g., a member of staff might be related to the student
- give an explanation of the boundaries of confidentiality as it applies to the hearing
- clarify that if the student is not being represented that they were aware that this was open to them
- confirm whether the student has received a copy of the Support to Study policy, Guidance Notes for Students.
- state that the hearing is not expected to last more than one hour
- explain that a note taker is present, and that the student will be able to receive a copy of the notes once drafted

- a. *N.B. If the person accompanying a student is their legal representative and the University has not received prior notification (3 days) the Chair shall defer the case conference until further advice has been received from the University.*

II. The Chair shall then explain the sequence of events for the assessment which will be:

- to explain the purpose of the Support to Study procedure and appeal
- to present a summary of the reasons why Support to Study has been invoked (as outlined in the notification letter)
- that the student shall have an opportunity to respond to the concerns
- to clarify the potential outcomes of the appeal:
The options available to the Panel include
 - **Upholding the appeal – in which situation the case shall be referred back to the case conference with any appropriate recommendations**
 - **Not upholding the appeal and as set out in section 5.4 of this policy and the Support to Study outcome.**
 - **Upholding the appeal in part - in which situation the case shall be referred back to the case conference with any appropriate recommendations**
- to clarify any relevant University's expectations or rules/regulations
- outline the decision-making process i.e., how the Panel will reach a decision/how the student will be notified of the outcome of the hearing/timeframes for notification etc
- that at the end of the case conference the student will be asked to leave and those present will decide on the outcome.
- To confirm whether the student has any questions about the process.

- III. The Chair shall then deal with each of the above in turn.
- IV. The Chair has the discretion to declare inadmissible any matter introduced by the student or others if deemed not directly related to the Support to Study concerns/process.
- V. At the end of the hearing the Chair shall then:
- summarise the discussion, outlining the potential outcomes as stipulated by the policy
 - ensure the student understands the consequences of the different outcomes
 - summarise any actions the student now needs to take
 - ensure the student is clear about support organisations that are available and how to contact them.
 - clarify how the student will be notified of the outcome of the hearing/timeframes for notification
 - outline options available to the student if the appeal is unsuccessful e.g., final review
 - confirm that the student or those present have no further questions/comments

If there are no further comments or questions the hearing shall conclude.

In making a decision the Panel will be exercise due care and consideration to avoid, as far as possible, placing the student in a more vulnerable situation.

- VI. Detailed Notes and formal letter confirming the outcome of the Appeal will be sent to the student at the soonest opportunity, whilst recorded on the student record.

In cases where the student does not attend the Appeal meeting, then the panel can make a decision in the student's absence