

**SUPPORTED STUDY
APPROVED PROCEDURES**



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<p>Summary:</p> <p>This paper, previously known as 'Fitness to Study Policy', outlines the procedures to be taken by university staff if they have concerns that a student's behaviour and wellbeing that may be or are adversely affecting their own or other students' health, wellbeing or ability to participate in student life.</p> <p>* Ownership transferred from Student Services to Academic Quality & Development in 2015/16 and changed to Public Access as a result of changes to the <i>Disciplinary Procedures for Students</i> in January 2016.</p>	

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SUPPORTED STUDY APPROVED PROCEDURES

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 What is Supported Study?

Supported Study relates to an individual's capacity to participate fully and satisfactorily as a student, in relation to academic studies and life generally at the University of Winchester.

The University is committed to supporting students' wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health is important to student learning and academic achievement.

1.2 The purpose and scope of these Procedures

These Approved Procedures are invoked where there are concerns regarding a student's Supported Study. These concerns may arise in any one of a wide range of circumstances, including (but not restricted to) the following:

- a) Behaviour which would usually be dealt with as a disciplinary matter, which may be known to be or suspected to be the result of an underlying physical or mental health difficulty;
- b) A student's physical or mental health difficulties are substantially adversely affecting the physical or mental health, safety or wellbeing of themselves or others;
- c) The student's academic performance or personal conduct is not acceptable and may be known to be or suspected to be the result of an underlying problem, which may include a physical or mental health problem.

The aim is to sustain the progress of the student in a supportive environment while being mindful of the need to ensure all are safe.

These Approved Procedures:

- are intended to provide a suitable and co-ordinated response where other internal procedures have been explored and either deemed inappropriate (eg *Disciplinary Procedures for Students*) or exhausted (eg *Extenuating Circumstances Policy*).
- are intended to empower staff to make a positive intervention at the earliest sign of concern about an individual student's well-being.
- are not punitive but are designed to support students. They may include an action plan and support to enable the student to continue their studies. It may require the student to suspend their studies but with a clear plan of the conditions under which a 'return to study' can be considered
- do not relate to fitness to practise – certain professional programmes have fitness to practise procedures which operate outside the scope of this policy and should take precedence.

Students absenting themselves from the process may have an 'independent witness' (usually from the Students' Union) allocated to attend the key meetings to protect their procedural interests and raise any concerns.

1.3 Levels of intervention

There are three levels of intervention.

- 1 **Level 1 Action** – Initial Concerns where a student’s behaviour or wellbeing causes concern that they may be adversely affecting their own or other students’ studies or personal physical or mental health and wellbeing
- 2 **Level 2 Action** – Continuing or Serious Concerns where a student’s behaviour is not improving despite a level 1 intervention OR they are refusing to access support OR their behaviour is adversely affecting their own or other students’ studies or personal physical or mental health and wellbeing
- 3 **Level 3 Action** – Significant or Persistent Concerns that a student’s behaviour is not improving, despite a level 2 intervention OR a student’s behaviour is seriously adversely affecting their own or other students’ studies or personal physical or mental health and wellbeing

In cases of emergency, please call Security:

Main Campus security,

01962 827666 (Internal 7666)

And, if necessary, the emergency services on 999.

West Downs security

01962 827667 (Internal 7667)

This tiered approach operates on the basis of the perceived level of risk to the physical or mental health and safety of the student or others posed by the behaviour or health of a student caused by ill-health or disability. Ideally, issues would be identified early enough that action can begin at Level 1 but this does not always happen so these procedures may be initiated at any of the levels, and may result in the student staying at a particular level, or progressing up or down through the levels depending on whether the cause for concern escalates or is remedied as a result of actions taken.

Staff, who have any level of concern about a student’s physical or mental health or behaviour, shall consider use of this procedure to explore the students’ behaviour/ health and agree supportive action rather than enter into a disciplinary procedure. If staff are unsure about whether to initiate this procedure, they should seek advice and discuss their concerns with the Head of Wellbeing or Director of Student Services. This may be done anonymously and in general terms, if preferred.

Early intervention in student health/behaviour and recommendations for support can avoid a crisis situation.

1.4 Maintaining Confidentiality

All staff and students involved in these Approved Procedures shall be subject to Data Protection legislation and/or professional codes of confidentiality (eg medical and counselling staff). To this end, all relevant papers personally concerning the student shall be shared with the student. Sharing of information between staff shall be kept to the minimum in all cases and the student shall be consulted about who needs to be kept informed.

2. ADVICE AND SUPPORT: FOR STUDENTS

Any student who is involved at any stage of this Policy may seek advice and support from the Student Union who are able to offer independent advice and, if necessary, representation and support for the student through the procedures.

In addition, Student Services is able to offer a range of support in relation to physical or mental health, wellbeing, immigration issues, financial advice and liaison with the student's faculty and programme.

Student Services is also able to provide practical advice and assistance to students who may require reasonable adjustments to these Approved Procedures as a result of a disability.

3. WHEN TO RAISE CONCERNS

These Approved Procedures shall normally be invoked when a person has concerns about an individual student's physical or mental health, safety, behaviour or mental well-being that they believe may affect the student's capacity to participate fully in their academic studies.

Examples could include:

- a) A number of third party reports about a student, from teaching or support staff in the University or from friends of a particular student, which are felt to be cause for concern.
- b) A student has not engaged with study for a period of time without reason given and is not responding to contacts from Programme Administrators.
- c) Concerns about how well a student may manage their learning experience on a year abroad/ exchange programme/ placement/ field trip. Even if a student is already be receiving support, staff may be concerned as to how well a student may cope in an unusual environment.
- d) Concerns about the effect a student may be having on the physical or mental being of other students.

4. WHO MAY RAISE CONCERNS

The procedure may be initiated by anyone who has a sufficient level of concern about a student's physical or mental health, safety and mental wellbeing. This includes:

- a) academic or administrative staff working in Faculties or Professional Services;
- b) students;
- c) a member of staff at a placement provider or equivalent.

However, neither students nor staff working at another organisation shall be expected to manage these situations - they should always approach a member of University staff or a representative of the Winchester Student Union (as appropriate) who may initiate these Approved Procedures or otherwise deal with the issue, as appropriate.

5. WHAT ACTION

These concerns should be reported to the following:

Behaviour causing concern by:	Shall be reported to:
students on taught programmes or the pre-Thesis stage of a ProfDoc	relevant Faculty Manager
students studying at a Collaborative Partner	Programme Leader
PGR students working on their Thesis	RKE Office (via PGRadmin@winchester.ac.uk)

Based on the information provided, staff responsible for taking the action forward shall determine which Level of Action to initiate based on the descriptions given in paragraph 1.3 above. If they are unsure, they shall consult the Head of Wellbeing in Student Services or the Director of Student Services.

In some cases, students may have absented themselves because they have withdrawn from studies but haven't officially communicated this to anyone as required by the Academic Regulations. For details about to do if it is suspected that a student has unofficially withdrawn, please see Appendix 1.

6. LEVEL 1 ACTION - INITIAL CONCERNS

6.1 Nominated Person to Lead the Action

The Faculty Manager (or equivalent at a Collaborative Partner) or the RKE Administrative Team shall nominate an appropriate person to approach the student to raise and discuss the specific issues with them in a supportive and understanding manner. This will normally be the relevant Personal Tutor, Programme Leader, Faculty Study Skills Advisor, Head of Academic Department or Faculty Head of Research or equivalent, as appropriate

6.2 Role of the Nominated Person

The Nominated Person shall attempt to resolve the matter in a sympathetic and understanding manner, via a formal discussion with the student: either in person or if this is not practicable or the student won't agree to meet, then via phone or Unimail. Disabled students may bring a support worker, as appropriate for their needs, to the meeting.

At the meeting or in the email, the Nominated Person shall:

- a) indicate the nature of the concerns and these concerns have been registered via these procedures
- b) encourage the student to discuss the concerns (as it possible that they may not be aware of the impact of their behaviour)
- c) provide information about sources of professional support and advice available within the University and encourage them to make use of them¹;
- d) provide a copy of or a link to these Procedures on the website and explain the potential consequences should the concerns not be resolved;
- e) remind the student that it is their responsibility to be fit to study;
- f) invite the student to assist in determining what Action would be appropriate to resolve the concerns raised;

The intention is to encourage the student to engage with their studies, their life as a student and with other fellow students, to access available support and/or modify behaviour, as appropriate.

Depending on the circumstances, the Nominated Person may also make specific academic arrangements or draw up an action plan, to be agreed with the student. This shall include any arrangements for study abroad, exchange programme, placement or field trip. Arrangements relating to any disability shall be arranged in conjunction with the Wellbeing Team

¹ Details of the types of support available and contact details are listed in the current Programme Handbook for the University or Collaborative Partner, as appropriate.

In all cases, the Nominated Person shall document the key points and agreements, including action points arising from the discussion and a review date on the Record of Concern Form (see section 16). This Form shall be emailed to the student with a request that they sign the Declaration and return this to the Nominated Person.

6.3 Reviewing the Action

At each review point, the Nominated Person shall decide whether to:

- a) close the Action;
Where the concerns are deemed to have been fully resolved, the Action shall be closed. The Nominated Person shall verbally inform the student and shall follow up the meeting with written confirmation of the decision. Copies of the decision shall be forwarded to anyone involved to ensure that everyone is aware that the matter is now closed.
- b) keep the Action open for further monitoring or amend the Action (this shall include setting another review date); or
- c) escalate the Action to a higher Level.²

6.4 Keeping Records

Written records of all conversations with the student, taken by the Nominated Person, and any email correspondence relating to the Action or changes to the Action Plan shall be forwarded to the student and copied to:

- Head of Wellbeing, for information and record keeping purposes³

Balancing the need to provide co-ordinated support with the need to maintain confidentiality, the Nominated Person may also forward copies of the records to one or more of the following, as appropriate:

- Faculty Manager/RKE Office or equivalent for Collaborative Partners (as appropriate)
- Personal Tutor
- Module Tutor
- Programme Leader/Head of Academic Department
- Programme Administrator
- Head of Housing
- Other members of staff, as appropriate

² In such cases, the Nominated Person may seek advice from the Head of Wellbeing to determine whether the matter should be escalated and to what level.

³ See Section 12 for details about Records and Monitoring

7. LEVEL 2 ACTION - CONTINUING OR SERIOUS CONCERNS

7.1 Case Review Panel to Lead the Action

The Faculty Manager (or equivalent at a Collaborative Partner) or the RKE Administrative Team shall convene a Case Review Panel to meet with the student. The Case Review Panel shall consist of the following members of staff:

for students on taught programmes or the pre-Thesis stage of a ProfDoc	Head of Academic Department (Chair) Programme Leader Head of Wellbeing
for students studying at a Collaborative Partner	Head of Department or Director/Principal of the Partner or equivalent (Chair) Programme Leader Head of Wellbeing or equivalent ⁴
for PGR students working on their Thesis	Director of PGR Students (Chair) Director of Studies Head of Well-being

A Note taker, nominated by the Chair above shall also be present.

7.2 Role of the Case Review Panel

The Case Review Panel may require additional members of staff to join them, as appropriate. (For example, the Programme Leader for 2nd subject (for students on a Combined programme), another member of Student Services, a Housing Officer or the student's Personal Tutor).

The student shall also be invited to attend. If the student does attend, they may bring a supporter from the Students' Union to the meeting (see Section 2). Disabled students may also bring a support worker, as appropriate for their needs.

All those invited shall be given at least 5 working days notice and details of the concerns to be discussed.

Where the student is unable to attend in person, they shall normally be offered the option to participate via a video conference call or similar arrangement.

If a student is unable to attend the Panel meeting due to extenuating circumstances, for which evidence has been provided, has refused to attend, or they do not appear and no reason is given, the Panel shall invite a member of the Winchester Student Union to attend as an 'independent witness'. It may be that the Panel is unable to determine a full programme of supportive Action but it is preferable to start the process and amend it subsequently, when the student is able to engage with the process.

The Case Review Panel shall (attempt to) assess the student's perception of the impact that their physical or mental health and/or behaviour is having on themselves and/or the University community. This may require a medical assessment to be sought, normally from the student's GP or medical professional (see Section 15). The student shall be encouraged to consent to the assessment, where the Panel feel this would be helpful.

If the student withholds their consent, then the Panel may still be required to make a decision based on the information available.

⁴ Normally the person responsible for pastoral care of students at the Partner. If no such post exists, the Chair may nominate someone else, as appropriate.

The student shall be able to submit documents for the Panel to consider and shall be given a copy of any documents seen by the Panel.

The Panel may seek information or advice from others within or outside the University.

The Panel may discuss with the student whether it would be appropriate for them to interrupt their studies, via Leave of Absence (up to three weeks) or Interruption (normally for a semester or year of study). Where the student wishes to voluntarily interrupt their studies at this stage, this should be favourably considered by the Panel with the provision for a review of the physical or mental health and wellbeing of the student at the end of the interruption period as a condition of their return to studies (see Section 18).

The Panel shall address any concerns about how well a student may manage their learning experience on a year abroad/ exchange programme/ placement/ field trip. Students may have been receiving support and staff may be concerned as to how well a student may cope in an unusual environment even when support issues have been addressed.

The Panel shall order its proceedings as it sees fit and may call witnesses if necessary.

The outcomes available to the Panel are:

- a) no action required;
- b) downgrade the Action to Level 1. In these cases, the Panel shall nominate an appropriate person⁵ to meet with the student with a view to proceeding as defined in Section 6 above;
- c) devise an Action Plan to support the student (where appropriate) and formally agree expectations for the student to observe. This shall include any arrangements for study abroad, exchange programme, placement or field trip. This Level 2 Action Plan shall normally detail different actions to any plan previously agreed and they may be academic and/or conduct-related. Regular review meetings shall be arranged with the student and a nominated member of staff. The student shall be made aware of what will happen if the action plan is breached or the concerns are not resolved within the timeframe set in the Action Plan. This may result in escalating the Action to a higher level;
- d) escalate the Action to a higher level on the basis of evidence or information received.

Within five working days of the meeting, the Note taker shall write up notes of the discussion on the on the Notes of Case Review Panel Meeting Form (see Section 17). Once approved by the Chair, these shall be circulated to the student (and supporters, where appropriate), all members of the Case Review Panel and to other members of staff, where this is agreed as part of the Action Plan. This student shall also be asked to sign the Declaration and return this to the Chair.

The intention is to encourage the student to respond positively to the Action Plan and, as such, co-operate fully, access the outlined support and modify their behaviour accordingly, as appropriate.

Should the student not respond positively, then the Chair shall discuss the situation with the other member of the Panel with a view to determining whether the Action should be escalated to a higher level.

7.3 Reviewing the Level 2 Action Plan

Each time the Action Plan is reviewed, the Panel shall decide whether to:

⁵ This will normally be the relevant Programme Leader, Faculty Study Skills Advisor, Head of Academic Department or Faculty Head of Research or equivalent, as appropriate.

- a) close the action;
Where the concerns are deemed to have been fully resolved, the Action shall be closed. The Chair shall verbally inform the student and shall follow up the meeting with written confirmation of the decision. Copies of the decision shall be forwarded to anyone involved to ensure that everyone is aware that the matter is now closed.
- b) the Action Plan should be continued or extended/amended; or
- c) escalate the Action to a higher level.⁶

7.4 Keeping Records

Written records of all relevant conversations with the student by members of staff involved in the Action Plan, shall be forwarded to the student and copied, together with any email correspondence relating to the Action or changes to the Action Plan, to the:

- Chair; and
- Head of Wellbeing, for information and record keeping purposes ⁷

Balancing the need to provide co-ordinated support with the need to maintain confidentiality, the Chair may then forward copies of any documents or correspondence to members of the Panel, members of staff involved in the Action Plan and other staff, as appropriate. For example

- Faculty Manager/RKE Office or equivalent for Collaborative Partners (as appropriate)
- Personal Tutor
- Module Tutor
- Programme Leader/Head of Academic Department
- Programme Administrator
- Head of Housing
- Other members of staff, as appropriate

⁶ In such cases, the Chair shall discuss the situation with the Head of Wellbeing to determine whether the matter should be escalated and to what level.

⁷ See Section 12 for details about Records and Monitoring

8. LEVEL 3 ACTION - SIGNIFICANT OR PERSISTENT CONCERNS

8.1 Supported Study Panel to Lead the Action

The Faculty Manager (or equivalent at a Collaborative Partner) or the RKE Administrative Team shall convene a Supported Study Panel, which shall consist of the following

for students on taught programmes or the pre-Thesis stage of a ProfDoc	Head of Academic Department (Chair); Head of Wellbeing Programme Leader Health & Safety Officer(where there are any concerns over H & S)
for students studying at a Collaborative Partner	Director/Principal of the Partner or equivalent (Chair); Head of Wellbeing or equivalent ⁸ Programme Leader Health & Safety Officer or equivalent (where there are any concerns over H & S)
for PGR students working on their Thesis	Director of PGR Students (Chair) Head of Wellbeing Director of Studies Health & Safety Officer(where there are any concerns over H & S)

A Notetaker, nominated by the Chair above, shall also be present.

8.2 Role of the Supported Study Panel

The Supported Study Panel may require additional members of staff to join the Panel, as appropriate (For example, the Programme Leader for a second subject where students are studying an interdisciplinary award, Housing Officer or the student's Personal Tutor).

The student will be informed of the Panel meeting by email and invited to submit written representations to the meeting. At the discretion of the Chair, the student may also be invited to attend the meeting.

The Panel may also discuss with the student whether it would be appropriate for the student to interrupt their studies, via Leave of Absence (up to three weeks) or Interruption (normally for a semester or year of study). Where the student wishes to voluntarily interrupt their studies at this stage, this should be favourably considered by the Panel with the provision for a review of the physical or mental health and wellbeing of the student at the end of the interruption period (see Section 18).

The Panel shall also address any concerns about how well a student may manage their learning experience on a year abroad/ exchange programme/ placement/ field trip. Students may have been receiving support and staff may be concerned as to how well a student may cope in an unusual environment even when support issues have been addressed.

The Supported Study Panel shall consider the impact that the student's physical or mental health and/or behaviour is having on themselves and/or the University or Collaborative Partner community and determine whether one or more of the following actions are appropriate:

⁸ Normally the person responsible for pastoral care of students at the Partner. If no such post exists, the Chair may nominate someone else, as appropriate.

- a) an enhanced Action Plan, which may include a full and, where appropriate, professional assessment of the situation (see Section 15) and/or a risk assessment by the H&S Officer. This shall include any arrangements for study abroad, exchange programme, placement or field trip;
- b) a recommendation to the Dean that the student should be temporarily suspended (see Section 9 below);
- c) the Action be downgraded to a lower Level or upgraded to Level 4 Emergency Action;
- d) in rare cases, where the Panel believes that the University is unable to provide any further support or interventions and those that have been tried have proved to be ineffective, they may recommend to the Dean that the matter is referred to the *Disciplinary Procedures for Students*.
- e) the Action be closed.

Within five working days of the meeting, the Note taker shall write up notes of the discussion and an enhanced Action Plan, where appropriate, on the Notes of Supported Study Panel Meeting Form (see Section 17) and, once approved by the Chair, these shall be circulated to the student, their supporter(s) where appropriate, members of the Panel and to other members of staff, where this was agreed as part of the Action Plan. The student shall also be asked to sign the Declaration and return this to the Chair.

The intention is to encourage the student to respond positively to the Action Plan and, as such, co-operate fully, access the outlined support and modify their behaviour accordingly, as appropriate.

Should the student not respond positively then the Panel shall review the level 3 Action Plan, with a view to determining whether the concerns should be escalated to a higher level.

8.3 Reviewing the Level 3 Action Plan

Each time the Action Plan is reviewed, the Panel shall determine whether to:

- a) close the action;
Where the concerns are deemed to have been fully resolved, the Action shall be closed. The Chair shall verbally inform the student and shall follow up the meeting with written confirmation of the decision. Copies of the decision shall be forwarded to anyone involved to ensure that everyone is aware that the matter is now closed;
- b) downgrade the Action to a lower level and proceed as described in the relevant Section above;
- c) the Action Plan should be continued or extended/amended; or
- d) escalate the Action to a higher level.⁹

8.4 Keeping Records

Written records of all relevant conversations with the student by members of staff involved in the Action Plan, shall be forwarded to the student and copied, together with any email correspondence relating to the Action or changes to the Action Plan, to the:

- Chair; and
- Head of Wellbeing, for information and record keeping purposes¹⁰

⁹ In such cases, the Chair shall discuss the situation with the Head of Wellbeing to determine whether the matter should be escalated.

¹⁰ See Section 12 for details about Records and Monitoring

Balancing the need to provide co-ordinated support with the need to maintain confidentiality, the Chair may then forward copies of any documents or correspondence to members of staff involved in the Action Plan or other staff, as appropriate. For example

- Faculty Manager/RKE Office or equivalent for Collaborative Partners (as appropriate)
- Personal Tutor
- Module Tutor
- Programme Leader/Head of Academic Department
- Programme Administrator
- Head of Housing
- Other members of staff, as appropriate

9. TEMPORARY SUSPENSION OF A STUDENT UNDER SUPPORTED STUDY

9.1 Where the Chair of Supported Study Panel believes that a student poses a risk to their own physical or mental health, safety and/or that of others or that previous steps taken to address behaviour that is adversely affecting their own or other students' wellbeing or ability to participate in student life have failed, they shall make a recommendation to a Dean that the student be temporarily suspended. The Dean, acting under delegated authority from the Vice-Chancellor, may:

- a) suspend the student for a specified time;
- b) exclude the student from University premises and/or University managed accommodation for a specified period of time.

pending the outcome of action taken under these procedures.

9.2 Normally no student shall be suspended unless they have been given the opportunity to make representation to the Supported Study Panel, either in person or in writing. Such representations may be put forward by the student or a friend/representative (not acting in the legal capacity, and with the written consent of the student)

9.3 In cases deemed to be urgent, particularly if the safety of others is perceived to be at risk, a student may be suspended with immediate effect, and before being given the opportunity to make representations. In this instance the student or their representative shall be permitted to put forward representations at the earliest possible opportunity after the suspension.

9.4 Suspension of studies shall only be recommended in the most serious of cases, and normally when all avenues of support have been exhausted, or the student has not taken up such support. The suspension is intended to give the student time away from studies to address physical or mental health and wellbeing issues, in order to enable them to return to the University and resume their studies. A student who is suspended may be wholly or partly prohibited from entering University premises and from participating in University activities, including working at the University or Winchester Students Union, or exercising their functions or duties of any office or committee membership in the University or the Students' Union.

9.5 As part of their discussion, the Panel shall consider whether specific arrangements could be put in place for the student to minimise the impact of the outcome on their studies by enabling them to complete particular assessments, attend an exam or practical assessment or continue their studies from home. This shall be arranged in discussion with the Programme Leader or Director of Studies, as appropriate.

9.6 Where the Dean confirms the decision to suspend the student, this decision shall normally be conveyed by the Chair of the Case Review Panel or Supported Study Panel at a meeting with the student (and representative if required). This meeting SHALL include a consideration of issues arising from suspension eg financial, academic and Student Services shall offer appropriate support and referrals in this case.

9.7 The Chair shall then email the student confirming the reasons for the decision and the terms of the suspension including conditions for return to study.

9.8 If a decision to suspend impacts upon a student's tenancy in University Accommodation, Accommodation Services shall consider whether a temporary or permanent change to a student's accommodation arrangements is required.

9.9 A student may, within twenty working days of the date of the written notification of the decision, appeal against the decision to suspend them, on the grounds that the University has not followed its own procedures (see Section 10 below).

10. STUDENT APPEAL AGAINST THE DECISION TO SUSPEND OR EXCLUDE THEM

10.1 A student may appeal in writing against the decision of the Panel or the Dean within ten working days of the issue of notification confirming the decision. The appeal should be submitted in writing via email to the Director of Academic Quality and Development or nominee. Valid grounds for appeal are limited to the following:

- a) that evidence is available which, for good and reasonable cause, the student was unable or unwilling to bring to the attention of the Panel previously;
- b) that there has been a relevant and significant error in the operation of procedures of the Supported Study policy that has disadvantaged the appellant;
- c) that the decision was unreasonable and/or a disproportionate sanction was imposed that was inconsistent with normal implementation of these procedures;

The date of the submission of the appeal shall be the date on which it is received by the Director of Academic Quality and Development.

The appeal shall comprise a complete statement of appeal setting out, in writing and in English, the grounds for and the nature of the appeal; no additional grounds may be cited, nor substantive points made, at any later time in the consideration of the appeal.

10.2 The Director of Academic Quality and Development may reject an appeal if, in their view, it is out of time, or not lodged in accord with the allowable grounds, and shall report that decision to the student, the Dean and the Panel.

10.3 If not rejected, Quality Office shall respond to the student within 10 working days, and will convene a Supported Study Appeal Panel within 20 working days.

10.4 The Supported Study Appeal Panel shall consist of:

- Chair: the Director of Academic Quality and Development or their nominee;
- One experienced member of academic staff (for taught programmes); a Faculty Postgraduate Research Coordinator (for postgraduate research programmes); an ALO (for collaborative programmes)
- the Winchester Student Union President or nominee;
- Secretary (non-voting): Nominee of the Director of Academic Quality and Development

10.5 None of the Panel members shall have a close personal or academic connection with the appellant or previously been involved in the Supported Study procedures relating to the appellant.

10.6 So far as is practicable, the Panel shall include at least one member of the same gender as the appellant. If it appears that the case may raise particular cultural or other sensitivities, the Chair may co-opt an additional member able to advise on these issues, or otherwise seek advice as they see fit. In the event of any disagreement about the suitability of any Panel member, the decision of the Chair shall be final.

10.7 The Academic Appeal Panel shall make every attempt to conclude its proceedings at the one meeting.

10.8 The membership of the Academic Appeal Panel shall remain constant throughout the hearing of any particular case, and the Chair shall be present throughout. However, should the Panel find it necessary to adjourn its proceedings, no more than one of its members may be absent when it is reconvened; when such a member is absent from a meeting, that member may not subsequently rejoin the proceedings.

10.9 The Supported Study Appeal Panel may dismiss an appeal without a full hearing if it considers that the appeal, although not rejected by the Director of Academic Quality and Development previously, was in fact lodged other than in accord with the allowable grounds or was out of time.

10.10 The Panel can decide to uphold or withdraw the suspension.

11. RETURNING TO STUDY

- 11.1 Following a period of absence from the University, it may be appropriate for the student to return to resume studies.
- 11.2 The University shall require the student to produce appropriate confirmation of their physical or mental health and ability to resume studying. What is deemed appropriate confirmation in any individual case shall be decided upon by the members of the Supported Study Panel or Case Review Panel depending on the level of action reached at the time of the student's suspension, interruption or leave of absence. Normally this shall include at least one 'Request for medical evidence in relation to the student's Supported Study' to be completed and submitted to the Panel (see Section 15).
- 11.3 If the student is required to live away from home in order to study, the Housing Officer should be invited to join the Supported Study Panel. The University may wish to encourage the student to live in a particular type of University housing in order to ensure that the best support is available, even if the student is not in their first year of study.
- 11.4 The Programme Leader shall draw up a 'Return to Study Plan' in consultation with the student, once the appropriate confirmation of their physical or mental health and ability to resume studying has been received and approved by the Supported Study Panel or Case Review Panel and the Head of Wellbeing. This plan shall address the specific study-related support needs of the student in returning to university studies including:
- a) the support which is reasonably required in the short term;
 - b) involvement of and liaison with external agencies (where appropriate);
 - c) any longer term support or adjustments that are reasonably required;
 - d) any conditions that might or will apply to provision; and
 - e) a schedule for regular review meetings to be arranged with a member of academic staff, for the remainder of the academic year.
- 11.4 The Return to Study Plan shall incorporate a risk management plan that takes account of the experiences that led to the student initially interrupting their programme and any other information that is known to be relevant. Any return to study shall be subject to the student's co-operation with this process and adherence to any agreements made.
- 11.6 Other members of staff within student support services shall be available to provide advice and support to facilitate the student's transition back into the programme, particularly in relation to any action that might be required under the Equality Act 2010. This shall be arranged with the direct involvement of, or in consultation with, the Wellbeing Team within Student Services.
- 11.7 The Return to Study Plan shall be shared with the Supported Study Panel or Case Review Panel, as appropriate. At the end of the academic year in which the student returns to study, the Panel shall review the student's progress to determine whether the Return to Study Plan should be extended for another year. The students shall be invited to attend the meeting but may opt not to attend and submit a written response instead.
- 11.7 Supported Study is an ongoing responsibility of the student and the University and may be considered throughout the remaining period of study to ensure that students study with support to enable them to succeed and for staff to have an agreed context in which to work with the student.

12. RECORDING AND MONITORING REFERRALS TO THESE APPROVED PROCEDURES

The Head of Wellbeing shall be responsible, on behalf of Senate Academic Development Committee (SADC), for the assurance of quality and standards in the operation of these Approved Procedures.

They shall retain records of each referral for the duration of the student's programme. After which they shall be disposed of.

They shall also monitor the consistency of decisions and submit a suitably anonymised annual report to SADC detailing the number of referrals, what level of action was taken, the outcome of resolved actions, and any issues relating to the principles, process or procedure.

13. INVOKING DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES FOR STUDENTS

There are occasions where a student who is experiencing mental ill health may behave in such a way as to invoke the *Disciplinary Procedures for Students*. In such cases, they shall not necessarily be exempt from investigation and potential disciplinary action. Each case shall be considered on its own merits, with due regard given to issues relating to mental ill health.

14. CRITICAL ILLNESS OF STUDENTS

From time to time there may be a situation where a student is severely incapacitated, eg through injury or critical physical or mental illness.

In such a situation, where it would be unreasonable to expect a student to apply for an interruption of study, it would be reasonable to act in accordance with a request to interrupt the student's programme from the student's duly authorised representative, eg parent or partner.

15. REQUEST FOR MEDICAL EVIDENCE REGARDING SUPPORTED STUDY

Where a medical report is requested by a Case Review Panel or Supported Study Panel:

- a) the student shall be asked to provide the contact details of their GP or medical advisor to the Head of Wellbeing;
- b) the Programme Leader(s) shall be asked to complete Appendix 1 and copy it to the Chair of the Panel and the Head of Wellbeing;
- c) the appropriate staff shall be asked to complete Appendix 2 and copy it to the Chair of the Panel and the Head of Wellbeing;
- d) the Head of Wellbeing shall complete the form below, attach a copy of Appendices 1 and 2, as appropriate, and any other documentation deemed relevant by the Panel, and forward it to the GP or medical advisor, with a request that it be returned as soon as possible.

**Request for medical evidence in relation
to Supported Study arrangements**

Name and address of GP or medical professional	
Date	

Dear

The University of Winchester has concerns over my Supported Study arrangements and I should be grateful if you could please complete the following and return this form to:

Postal address: **Head of Wellbeing, University of Winchester, Winchester SO22 4NR**
Email: **Health@winchester.ac.uk**

Name of student	
Signature	

This student's programme places rigorous demands, both academic and physical, on the student as outlined in the attached **Appendix 1**.

Appendix 2 outlines our concerns

Through the Disabled Student Allowance, the following support is in place for the student:

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Head of Wellbeing (name and signature)	
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Please could you complete the following:	Please delete as appropriate
In the light of my knowledge of the student, I feel they are mentally and physically able to meet the demands of the programme	Yes / No
I consider a break in studies would be in the best interests of the student	Yes / No
I would anticipate the student may be fit to return to study in:	September (year) OR January (year)

I wish to add the following information to assist your decision regarding the student's Supported Study.	
Name:	
Position	
Date	

Thank you very much for your assistance in helping us to determine the best way to support this student.

Appendix 1 – Outline of the programme demands on the student, both academic and physical

To be written by the Programme Leader(s)

Appendix 2 – Summary of the University's concerns

To be written by the Student Services, Housing, Security or concerned party, as appropriate

16. RECORD OF CONCERN FOR A STUDENT'S HEALTH & WELLBEING

To be completed by the Nominated Person

Name of student		Student No.	
Programme			
Concern raised by		Date	
Nominated Person			
Date of meeting			
Brief outline of concern			
Summary of discussion			
Agreed action points			
Record to be shared with the following members of staff as agreed with the student (this shall always include the Head of Wellbeing)			
Date of next meeting			

Declaration:

I understand the nature of the concern(s) raised by the University, which has been explained to me and outlined in this document and the possible impact and consequences that this may have upon my own Supported Study and upon the community of staff and fellow students who are working and studying at the University and to which I belong.

I have agreed to work towards the action plan outlined above, which has been developed to support me.

I understand that if I am unable or unwilling to carry out the action plan, the University will need to consider taking appropriate or remedial actions, or referral as my situation will require.

I understand and consent to information surrounding my Supported Study being shared with other relevant services within the University. A copy of this action plan will therefore be submitted to the Faculty Manager/RKE Co-ordinator (as appropriate) and disseminated to relevant staff. I am aware that this report and its outcomes will also be recorded by the Health & Wellbeing staff.

I realise that any non-attendance can be reported to the appropriate service and acted upon.

Whilst I understand that the University has a duty of care to support me, ultimately I am responsible for my own health and wellbeing and it is my responsibility to be fit to study.

I am also signing to agree to the situation being reviewed as outlined in this document.

Name of student	
Signature	

17. NOTES OF CASE REVIEW PANEL MEETING/SUPPORTED STUDY PANEL MEETING

To be completed by the Nominated Person

Name of student		Student No.	
Programme			
Concern raised by		Date	
Members of Case Review Panel			
Student present?	Yes / No	Student accompanied	Yes / No
Name and role of others present at the meeting, if any			
Date of meeting			
Brief outline of concern			
List of documents considered at the meeting (to be numbered 1, 2, 3, etc and attached to this form)			
Summary of discussion			
Agreed Action Plan			
Notes to be shared with the following members of staff as agreed with the student (this shall always include the Head of Wellbeing)			
Date of next meeting			

Declaration:

I understand the nature of the concern(s) raised by the University, which has been explained to me and outlined in this document and the possible impact and consequences that this may have upon my own Supported Study and upon the community of staff and fellow students who are working and studying at the University and to which I belong.

I have agreed to work towards the action plan outlined above, which has been developed to support me.

I understand that if I am unable or unwilling to carry out the action plan, the University will need to consider taking appropriate or remedial actions, or referral as my situation will require.

I understand and consent to information surrounding my Supported Study being shared with other relevant services within the University. A copy of this action plan will therefore be submitted to the Faculty Manager/RKE Co-ordinator (as appropriate) and disseminated to relevant staff. I am aware that this report and its outcomes will also be recorded by the Health & Wellbeing staff.

I realise that any non-attendance can be reported to the appropriate service and acted upon.

Whilst I understand that the University has a duty of care to support me, ultimately I am responsible for my own health and wellbeing and it is my responsibility to be fit to study.

I am also signing to agree to the situation being reviewed as outlined in this document.

Name of student	
Signature	

18. RETURN TO STUDY PLAN

To be completed jointly by the Head of Wellbeing and Programme Leader(s)

Name of student		Student No.	
Programme			
Expected Return Date			
Programme Leader(s)			
Details of the modules to be (re)taken in full or in part and whether marks are capped or uncapped			
Academic support arrangements (including who is responsible)			
Study Skills support arrangements (including who is responsible)			
Other comments: this may include Housing arrangements, future progress, terms and conditions of return and action to be taken if			
Record to be shared with the following members of staff as agreed with the student (this shall always include the Chair of the Case Review Panel/Supported Study Panel)			
Date of review			

Declaration:

I understand the arrangements that have been made to support and the terms and conditions of my return to study. I have agreed to work towards the schedule outlined above, which has been developed to support me.

I understand that if I am unable or unwilling to continue my studies under these terms, the University will need to consider taking appropriate or remedial actions, or referral as my situation will require.

I understand and consent to information surrounding my Supported Study being shared with other relevant services within the University. A copy of this return to study plan will therefore be submitted to the Faculty Manager/RKE Co-ordinator (as appropriate) and disseminated to relevant staff. I am aware that this report and its outcomes will also be recorded by the Health & Wellbeing staff.

I realise that any non-attendance can be reported to the appropriate service and acted upon.

Whilst I understand that the University has a duty of care to support me, ultimately I am responsible for my own health and wellbeing and it is my responsibility to be fit to study.

I am also signing to agree to the situation being reviewed as outlined in this document.

Name of student	
Signature	

19. APPENDIX 1 – ACTION WHEN STUDENTS MAY HAVE UNOFFICIALLY WITHDRAWN/INTERRUPTED

Twice a year Registry shall ask Faculties and RKE Centre to confirm which students may have unofficially withdrawn or interrupted study (normally in mid October and mid-February). In accordance with the University's statutory responsibilities, Registry shall then write to those students, via Unimail, asking them to confirm officially whether they wish to withdraw/interrupt formally or intend to proceed with their studies.

These communications remind students of their responsibilities and the fact that unless they formally withdraw or interrupt their studies, they shall continue to remain registered for their programme and liable for fees.

If a Faculty or RKE Centre believes that a student may have unofficially withdrawn outside the dates above, they shall email the student asking them to confirm their status using Template Email below. This email shall be sent to the student's Unimail account, in accordance with the Academic Regulations.

If no reply is received from the student within two weeks, they shall send a letter to the student's term-time address and home address, using Template Letter below.

If the student still doesn't reply, the Faculty or RKE Centre need take no further action to contact the student directly.

Template Email - to student from Faculty or RKE Centre:

Dear (name)

I am writing because the University is concerned about your recent absence from learning and teaching sessions on your programme. If you are experiencing problems that are preventing you from attending or submitting work, please let me know as I can put you in touch with staff in the Faculty, Student Services or the Winchester Student Union who may be able to help. The University also has Supported Study Approved Procedures and an Extenuating Circumstances Policy designed to support students who may be struggling. This includes cases where students wish to keep the details confidential.

On the other hand, it may be that you have simply decided to withdraw unofficially from or wish to interrupt your studies. If that is the case you must complete and submit the official paperwork to confirm your decision. This will ensure that you and the University meet our respective statutory responsibilities. Please note that you will continue to be liable for tuition fees until your withdrawal or interruption form has been received and processed.

If I do not hear from you within two weeks of the date of this email, I shall write one last time to your term-time and home addresses. If I do not hear from you after that, I shall have to assume that you have unofficially withdrawn and shall advise Registry accordingly at the next census point or at the Exam Board, whichever date comes sooner*. Registry will then write to you but please note that you will continue to remain liable for fees until that happens and they may not write to you for some months.

* Letters from Registry are normally sent in November or March and Exam Boards letters are normally sent in early July.

I hope the above is clear but if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Template Letter - to student from Faculty or RKE Centre:

Dear (name)

I am writing to your term-time and home address because I did not receive a reply to an email sent to your Unimail account in which I explained that the University is concerned about your recent absence from learning and teaching sessions on your programme.

If you are experiencing problems that are preventing you from attending or submitting work, please let me know as I can put you in touch with staff in the Faculty, Student Services or the Winchester Student Union who may be able to help. The University also has Supported Study Approved Procedures and an Extenuating Circumstances Policy designed to support students who may be struggling. This includes cases where students wish to keep the details confidential.

On the other hand, it may be that you have simply decided to withdraw unofficially from or wish to interrupt your studies. If that is the case you must complete and submit the official paperwork to confirm your decision. This will ensure that you and the University meet our respective statutory responsibilities. Please note that you will continue to be liable for tuition fees until your withdrawal or interruption form has been received and processed.

If I do not hear from you within two weeks of the date of this letter, I shall assume that you have unofficially withdrawn and shall advise Registry accordingly at the next census point or at the Exam Board, whichever date comes sooner*. Registry will then also write to you but please note that you will continue to remain liable for fees until that happens and they may not write to you for some months.

* Letters from Registry are normally sent in November or March and Exam Boards letters are normally sent in early July.

I hope the above is clear but if you have any queries, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely