

Student Support Policy Framework

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UNIVERSITY OF
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<p>Summary:</p> <p>There are several interweaving policies and procedures in place to ensure that students are provided with the academic and general support they need to allow them to maximise their learning experience. While the various frameworks are comprehensive, they are not always implemented in an holistic or streamlined way. This document aims to provide an umbrella policy that brings these policies, processes and the areas responsible together to ensure that students and staff are clear on what is available, how things are implemented and the various procedures that deliver this support.</p>	

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1. Existing Framework

- 1.1. In the academic year 2019/20 the personal tutor system was replaced by the Faculty Wellbeing and Employability Tutors (FWETs) scheme. Each student has a FWET (or Personal Tutor where external accrediting bodies mandate this) who are there to support and advice on academic concerns and plan. FWETs are supported by Student Services on mental health issues.
- 1.2. For students who experience a short-term unexpected barrier to submitting assessments the Extenuating Circumstance process exists and again this has been extensively reviewed over the last two academic years. A new process, including student “self-service” is ready to be put into place for 2020/21.
- 1.3. An extensive process to support students with longer term barriers to study also exists, this outlines the process from informal wellbeing focused conversations through all escalations if a student continues to be unable to continue studies. For the 2020/21 ownership and oversight of these processes will move back to Student Services. While it is the responsibility for all staff in the University to actively participate in the newly renamed Support to Study, the process is so critical it requires the overview and quality verification of the Department best suited to ensure consistency and timeliness.
- 1.4. FWETs will still have a central role in supporting students and may initiate most Support to Study activities. The change of ownership of the policy and process does not impact on how the FWETs engage with their students nor does it change the line management of the FWETs who remain Faculty staff.
- 1.5. Following a period of consultation, a new Attendance policy was approved for the 2019/20 academic year. This policy has been revised in the light of changes to pedagogy and delivery necessitated by the pandemic and the new Learning Analytics system. With more sophisticated data available, and with a level of automation for low-level concerns it is possible to target resources at those students at a higher risk of not continuing studies.
- 1.6. If student behaviour causes a serious concern or where a longer-term pattern has not changed then the system will indicate to the relevant FWET / Personal Tutor. There may be occasions when the initial system flag will go to Student Services to offer the advice, support or signposting as appropriate to the issues being articulated.

2. Pulling the framework together

- 2.1. This policy has been drafted to ensure that there is a common approach and understanding of how these processes work together.
- 2.2. The processes that are incorporated into this policy are overseen by different parts of the University with different SMT Sponsors. To ensure consistency and continuity the Deputy Vice-Chancellor will have oversight of the policies and all the Policy owners will meet at least three times each academic year to ensure that any lessons are learnt across the policy landscape and that if one area of process is changing it is reflected across all.
- 2.3. The policies and procedures outlined in the Extenuating Circumstances policy, and the guidance to FWETs are reliant on a robust Support to Study being in place

for issues and concerns to be escalated into. As we implement and better understand the power of learning analytics, we anticipate processes will change. However, the overarching policy Framework continues to deliver consistency.

3. Faculty Wellbeing and Employability Tutors

- 3.1. This role will play an important part in supporting positive student engagement with the University. An engaged Faculty Wellbeing and Employability Tutor will enhance the student experience, facilitate student retention, and will build confidence and aspiration amongst the student body.
- 3.2. It is impossible to separate academic and personal difficulties, particularly as the one often affects the other. Where the difficulties are primarily personal the role of the FWET is to identify which support services may help the student best and make an onward referral.

4. Support to Study

- 4.1. The University welcomes a diverse student body and seeks to support all students throughout their studies. 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.
- 4.2. All members of the University community have a responsibility to support students. Staff are encouraged to address issues through early intervention, positively supporting students through appropriate channels and services. The Support to Study procedures are intended to be supportive and to enable a swift, effective response to concerns.
- 4.3. Support to Study works alongside other procedures, such as the Academic Attendance and Engagement Policy, Extenuating Circumstances, Interruption of study or the University Disciplinary Procedures. These may need to be used in addition to the supportive measures of Support to Study in cases where the student's behaviour has actively disrupted the ability of other students or staff to learn and teach, or where the behaviour is in contradiction of the University values or student conduct policy.
- 4.4. The processes supporting Support to Study are located ([LINK](#))

5. Extenuating Circumstances

- 5.1. The revised processes supporting Extenuating Circumstances are located

[Policy](#)

[Procedures](#)

[Guidance](#)

[Form](#)

6. Attendance and Engagement

- 6.1. We expect all of our students to be fully engaged with their course of study and therefore, we expect students to attend all teaching and seminar sessions, submit all assignments actively engage with online discourse and activities and attend any other activity organized by tutors. We do so because all education research suggests that there is a correlation between attendance and success at University, and at Winchester we want all of our students to succeed in their studies. We also care about our students' well-being and mental health. Disengagement with academic studies is often the first indication that all is not well and we want to make early interventions to ensure that students have access to the right support and advice if they are struggling.
- 6.2. This policy applies to all taught courses at Winchester, unless a Professional Standards Regulatory Body states otherwise.
- 6.3. The processes supporting Attendance and Engagement are located ([LINK](#))