

1. Introduction

On occasions students experience difficulties which have an impact on their studies and require support beyond the normal levels of pastoral care. The supported study procedures will be invoked following serious concerns expressed over a student's health, wellbeing or behaviour, which has led to:

- Doubts from staff over the student's fitness to study at the College and/or within a placement, and/or
- The disruption of the teaching, learning or support of other students.

Students who present the College with difficulties due to their physical, mental or emotional wellbeing should wherever possible be considered from a supportive perspective rather than a disciplinary one. This procedure has been developed as an alternative to the Investigatory / Disciplinary Procedures. However, the College reserves the right to invoke either the Investigative or Disciplinary procedures where students' health or behaviour poses a risk of harm to either themselves or others, or where students do not positively respond to more supportive interventions.

This procedure has three stages, based on the seriousness of risk posed by the behaviour or health of a student. The three stages reflect the level of difficulty or disruption highlighted, as well as the response of a student to any intervention.

An independent contact from the Student Committee will be offered to the student to act as a supportive mentor through the process.

It is possible that concerns raised over the health, safety, conduct or emotional wellbeing of a student are of such significance that these procedures can be commenced at any of Stages 1, 2 or 3. Should a student be unwilling to play a part in these procedures, then the process should continue in their absence, with the ultimate suspension in studies still being able to be invoked where it is deemed appropriate and necessary.

2. Stage 1 – Emerging Concerns

Emerging or initial concerns about an individual student's health, safety or mental or emotional wellbeing are raised.

A member of staff with primary responsibility and/or knowledge of the student (e.g. Tutor, Disability Adviser, etc.) should approach the student in a supportive and understanding manner.

The nature of the concerns should be clearly identified to the student and s/he should be encouraged to discuss the issues (it is possible that s/he will not have realised the impact of his/her actions). If appropriate, information should be provided about sources of support within the College that the student can access (e.g. Counselling).

It is likely that the student will respond positively and, where appropriate, co-operate fully and access the available support or modify behaviour.

Should the student be unable to respond positively then staff must discuss the situation with the Director of Community. It may then be an outcome that Stage 2 is invoked:

3. **Stage 2 – Continuing Concerns**

Continuing or serious concerns about an individual student's health, safety or mental or emotional wellbeing are raised.

The student will be invited to meet a Tutor or the Director of Community to discuss the issues. Together they can assess the student's perception of the impact of his/her ill-health and /or behaviour is having upon him/herself and/or the College community.

An Action Plan will be devised to put in place support for the student (where appropriate) and formally agree expectations for the student to observe. These may include academic expectations, the expectation to engage with support as well as conduct-related expectations.

This Action Plan will have a review date from the outset, and the consequences of not adhering to the Action Plan will be made clear.

A record of the meeting will be made, with a copy sent to the student and to the lead staff member for Stage 2. A copy of the agreed Action Plan will be submitted to the Director of Community and the student's Tutor.

It is hoped and expected that the student will respond positively to the Action Plan and as such co-operate fully, access the outlined support or modify his/her behaviour accordingly.

Should the student not respond positively then staff must discuss the situation with the Director of Community. It is then likely that either Stage 2 needs to be revisited with the involvement of other staff or professionals or that Stage 3 is invoked:

4. **Stage 3 – Significant or Unresolved Concerns**

Significant or persistent concerns are raised about an individual student's actions or behaviour that are putting the health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress of his/her self or other members of the University community at significant risk.

The Director of Community will discuss the matter with the Director of Teaching & Learning and/or the Director of Research & Innovation and, if in agreement, will call a 'Case Conference' to discuss the situation. Present at the Case Conference will be at least 4 from the following:

- Director of Community
- Director of Teaching & Learning
- Director of Research & Innovation
- A GP or other relevant professional (with student's consent)

As well as relevant staff from:

- Appropriate Students' Committee elected representative
- Other relevant staff members (e.g. Tutors)

The Case Conference will determine an agreed action from below:

- Development of an enhanced Action Plan

Or

- Recommend to the Principal a suspension of the student's studies

The student will be invited to meet with the Director of Community to receive and discuss the recommended actions from the Case Conference. The student will be invited to bring along a person to support them at the meeting.

The Director of Community should inform the Director of Teaching & Learning and/or the Director of Research & Innovation of the outcome from the Case Conference.

If the recommended action is that of an enhanced Action Plan, this plan will have a review date from the outset, and the consequences of not adhering to the Action Plan will be made clear. A copy of the agreed Action Plan will be submitted to the Director of Community. It is likely that the members of the Case Conference panel will need to review the progress made once the enhanced action plan has been agreed and implemented. This review should take place at an appropriate time, based on the plan and the timings of the academic year.

If the agreed recommended action is a suspension in studies, the Director of Community will temporarily suspend the student with immediate effect. The Director of Teaching & Learning or The Director of Research & Innovation will then inform the student in writing of the decision in regards to the suspension; and subsequently inform the Principal and the Board of Trustees within 10 working days.

In cases of suspension the following must be informed:

- The Student Administrator - to ensure that any student records are amended accordingly, and to advise on academic status and any current module registrations
- Chief Operating Officer

If the student wishes to appeal against the outcome from the Case Conference, s/he must write within 14 working days to the Principal.

Upon receipt of the letter the Principal will respond to the student within 10 working days. The decision of the Principal (after consulting with expert opinion) will be final.

Any suspension in studies will be subject to periodic review by the Principal in the light of any developments with reports made as appropriate to the Principal. Such periodic review will include consideration of medical evidence from a relevant professional body and academic advice from the Director of Teaching & Learning and/or the Director of Research & Development (Academic Frameworks).

5. **Crisis Situations**

It is possible that a student's mental wellbeing is so extreme that s/he needs emergency assistance outside of these procedures. In such cases the College Leadership Team will make such decisions as are necessary at the time.

6. **Investigatory & Disciplinary Procedures**

There are occasions where a student who is being supported through these procedures may break aspects of the 'Student Code of Conduct'. In such cases, they will not necessarily be exempt from investigatory procedures being invoked or from any subsequent disciplinary action being taken.