

Support to Study Procedure

The aim of this procedure is to provide a supportive approach where University staff have become concerned about a student or doctoral researcher's level of engagement with their studies and have identified that there may be a risk to their academic success and/or well-being, or to the well-being of other members of the University community.

The interventions outlined below are intended to enable access to support and, where applicable, reasonable adjustments to enable students and doctoral researchers to re-engage fully with their studies at the earliest opportunity in a way which is safe for them and others.

The procedure operates in conjunction with:

- [The Student Charter](#)
- [The Policy on Attendance and Engagement](#)
- [The Fitness to Study Procedure](#)
- [Regulation IX – Registration, Attendance, Leave of Absence, Withdrawal and Transfer.](#)

1. Scope of the procedure

This procedure applies to all registered students and doctoral researchers, with the exception of PGCE students for whom there are specific engagement and professional expectations. The aim is to support those who are identified by their School as having difficulty engaging successfully with their programme in line with University expectations (set out in the Student Charter and Policy on Attendance and Engagement). It may also be used where aspects of the individual's behaviour are a concern in relation to their well-being, the well-being of other students, staff and/or University partners and other procedures for addressing the situation are not appropriate. Concerns of this nature may be raised by staff in the student's School or by staff in Professional Services. An external partner should normally report any concerns to the student's School in the first instance.

2. When should this procedure be used?

- a. Concerns should be acted upon promptly as early intervention and support are likely to result in better outcomes for the individual and may avoid the situation becoming more complex.
- b. This procedure will typically be initiated in the following circumstances (this list is not exhaustive):
 - i. The student or doctoral researcher's attendance and engagement has been identified as unsatisfactory under the Policy on Attendance and Engagement.
 - ii. There are major concerns about a taught student's academic performance in assessments, or their ability to meet the programme's Intended Learning Outcomes (ILOs) or other requirements for professionally accredited programmes, where some time will elapse before the relevant Programme Board (e.g. at the end of Semester 1).
 - iii. A member of School, Student Services or other staff has identified for another reason that the student or doctoral researcher's behaviour is of concern for one of the other reasons summarised in paragraph 1. above.

3. Stage 1: Initial Intervention

- a. An appropriate member of staff, usually from the relevant academic School, will arrange a meeting with the student or doctoral researcher to discuss the concerns and develop a plan of action in agreement with the student/doctoral researcher, including any specific support arrangements. Relevant staff from Professional Services (e.g. SWAI) may be involved if there is a known disability, mental health or well-being issue or the student would find this

supportive. Agreed actions will be measurable, proportionate, appropriate and time-specific, and should be intended to advance the academic progress of the student or doctoral researcher.

- b. A written record of the meeting and agreed actions will be shared in draft form with all those present at the meeting and a final approved version be kept in Co-tutor.
- c. A review date will be set and agreed with the student/doctoral researcher (normally no more than 4 weeks from the initial meeting).
- d. If all agreed actions have been met (e.g. engagement has returned to a satisfactory level), no further meeting may be needed and the Support to Study process will be concluded with a record of the outcome kept in writing. However, where the individuals involved consider that a discussion would be supportive, a meeting will be timed in line with the review date and any ongoing expectations and arrangements finalised.
- e. Where all agreed actions have not been met, the situation will normally be escalated to Stage 2 below.
- f. Where the student/doctor researcher does not attend the initial intervention meeting, an appropriate member of staff will develop a plan of action for the student/doctor researcher to complete. Agreed actions will be measurable, proportionate, appropriate and time-specific, and should be intended to advance the academic progress of the student or doctoral researcher and evidence that the student/doctoral researcher remains actively engaged with their programme.
- g. The agreed actions for a student/doctoral researcher will usually include the requirement to attend the review meeting.
- h. The actions will be communicated with the student/doctoral researcher and kept in Co-Tutor.
- i. A review date will be set which will typically be 1 week from the date the actions are communicated to the student/doctoral researcher, and not more than two weeks.
- j. Where all actions have not been met, and the student/doctoral researcher does not attend the review meeting the University will usually commence the termination of studies procedure unless there are significant known extenuating circumstances in which case the situation will be escalated to Stage 2 below.
- k. Where all actions have not been met, or the student/doctoral researcher does not attend the review meeting without reasonable explanation, the situation will normally be escalated to Stage 2 below.

4. Stage 2: Formal Intervention

- a. In the case of unsatisfactory attendance and engagement where no significant extenuating circumstances are known to the University, if the student does not attend the review meeting or the review meeting suggests setting further expectations is unlikely to result in the required improvement, the situation will be escalated by the academic School to the termination of studies procedures in the relevant section of the Attendance and Engagement Policy.
- b. Where there are known significant extenuating circumstances or where the concerns do not relate to attendance and engagement, the following procedure will apply:
 - i. The student/doctoral researcher should be formally notified in writing that the Formal Support to Study Procedure is being instigated and should be provided with a link to this procedure. The nature of the specific concerns should be outlined to them in this communication and they should be advised that they may be accompanied to a meeting with a member of staff who is already involved in their support. The student/doctoral researcher should normally be given 5 working days' notice of the meeting unless there is an urgent reason to call it in a shorter timescale.
 - ii. The meeting will be with one or two members of staff from the School, nominated by the AD(E&SE) or AD(R&I) (as appropriate) and usually a member of staff from the

Student Wellbeing and Inclusivity (SWAI) team in Student Services where this is assessed as appropriate by Student Services.

- iii. At the meeting, the specific concerns regarding the student/doctoral researcher's ability to live and study at University will be discussed. The focus of the meeting should be on their best interests, how the concerns can be alleviated and the options available. If the student/doctoral researcher wishes to continue their studies in the short term, targets should be set and these may be more restrictive than those identified in Stage 1 above, including binding attendance and engagement requirements, academic output requirements and/or evidence of substantial behaviour change. Further adjustments by the School or University may also be agreed.
- iv. Detailed records of the meeting should be shared in draft form with all those present at the meeting and then be kept (in Co-tutor) as an agreed record of actions and targets.
- v. A review date should be set (with a reasonable timeframe (e.g. 1-2 weeks) given the actions identified and in any case within 4 weeks, defined as term time for taught students and working calendar weeks for doctoral researchers) and agreed with the student.
- vi. At the review meeting progress against actions will be measured. Four options are available:
 - 1. No further action required beyond continued monitoring. Adjustments are working effectively and staff have been satisfied that the student/doctoral researcher is on track to successfully complete their studies. Depending on the circumstances, continued monitoring arrangements and milestones may be agreed, which might include further meetings.
 - 2. Where ongoing support is effective and the student/doctoral researcher has met targets over an extended period, the Support to Study intervention may be drawn to a close (which will be confirmed in writing). If any concerns emerge subsequently the process can be restarted at either the initial intervention stage or this formal stage as appropriate to the context.
 - 3. Resetting of targets. This may be appropriate where targets have been partially met or where further, relevant targets are helpful to maintain progress, and these have been identified during the review meeting.
 - 4. Where there is not a serious health, disability or wellbeing issue, referral for termination of study for non-engagement as outlined in Regulation IX if the student does not wish to take a voluntary leave of absence.
 - 5. Where there is a serious health, disability or wellbeing issue, and lack of engagement is the primary concern, referral to the Academic Registrar to place the student on an enforced Leave of Absence under paragraph 23 and/or 34 of Regulation IX if the student does not wish to take a voluntary leave of absence.
 - 6. Escalation. In exceptional cases, for example, where the support to study process is being used to manage challenging behaviour and the student's health, disability or well-being issues mean the student discipline process is not appropriate, the case should be escalated to the Fitness to Study process.