

Health and Wellbeing Policy



**Harper Adams
University**

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's position on mental health support for students and the arrangements by which both mental and physical health concerns are considered in relation to a student's fitness to study, with the aim to help all students realise their full academic potential and successfully complete their studies. The policy applies to all students throughout their period of enrolment with the University and includes students: on campus; engaged in University related activities away from campus (such as placements and field trips); in University accommodation. The Human Resources department is responsible for the policy and procedure for dealing with staff who have health problems.
- 1.2. The University acknowledges that enrolling into higher education is a major event in life and involves a significant number of changes. Students at the University have to allow for such changes as: adapting to a new environment; separation from family and friends; managing financially; and, for international students, adjusting to a new culture.
- 1.3. The University recognises that for the majority of individuals, life as a student is a fulfilling and valuable experience and whilst difficulties may arise, particularly in the first few months of commencing studies, usually these difficulties disappear after talking things through with friends, relatives or staff. However, some problems are more persistent or may be/become a long-term concern.
- 1.4. The University acknowledges that health problems, particularly mental health conditions, can seriously interfere with academic performance, and can lead to periods of confusion and distress for the student, as follows:
 - Minor or short-term problems may impact on a student's immediate capacity to work, resulting in distress and in turn, undermine academic progress.
 - More seriously affected students may cause concern for fellow students and members of staff. A student in a serious mental health crisis is uncommon, with the occurrence of self-harm including attempted suicide of a student being rare. It is acknowledged that this is a response to severe mental distress and it can be difficult for all involved.
- 1.5. In implementing this policy, the University will at all times remain mindful of its legal obligations including its duty of care and its obligations to students under the Equality Act 2010 including, in appropriate cases, its obligation to make reasonable adjustments. The University will also remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of mental health issues and fitness to study matters and its obligations in respect of confidentiality and under the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 1.6. The University welcomes applications from students with disabilities, including mental health difficulties. Disability is defined as a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day to day activities. This includes students with mental illness such as long term depression, schizophrenia and other conditions. Applicants who have experienced or are continuing to experience mental health problems are encouraged to disclose this on their application form to enable the University to consider and, where appropriate, implement additional support and adjustments, in line with the University's Admission's Policy. Students are, however, expected to take appropriate steps to ensure they remain fit to study, once

reasonable adjustments have been put in place, as determined through a study needs assessment report. In these circumstances where a student is unable to engage in support or treatment to maintain or improve their mental health, the University may invoke its Fitness to Study Procedures with a view to specify the circumstances within which a student may be permitted to continue as an enrolled student.

- 1.7. Section 9 outlines the Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures which set out how the University may respond to instances where a concern is raised regarding a student's fitness to study and the type of action the University may take to manage the matter and support the student

2. Access to the service

- 2.1. The Student Services Team has a Student Wellbeing Officer, Counsellor and a Mental Health & Welfare Advisor who are able to provide talking therapies, advice and support for students with mental health difficulties and any associated substance misuse problems.
- 2.2. Students are very much encouraged to refer themselves to this service by calling in to the office, by phone or email. Students normally have a choice of who they wish to see, although this is subject to the demands on the service.
- 2.3. Staff and GPs may also refer students to the service, but only with an appropriate consent from the student involved.
- 2.4. Students and staff can use the service for general advice about mental health conditions (including, for example, to assist in their understanding of mental health conditions and the support which is available). However, the service providers will not be able to disclose any information or data regarding any user of the service (including to confirm or deny whether an individual is using the service) unless an appropriate consent has been given.

3. Confidentiality and Disclosure

- 3.1. The service is confidential and information discussed in the sessions will not be divulged to others without the student's express consent.
- 3.2. In certain situations, including an acute mental health emergency with a serious high risk of self-harm or harm to others, it may be necessary to share information with health, medical and/or emergency services including in order to facilitate care for an individual.
- 3.3. In circumstances where it is considered that the sharing of information may assist in enhancing the student's learning, academic achievement, health, well-being and/or wider student experience, the University will seek a student's express consent to the information being shared. In these instances, information would be restricted to staff who are directly involved in the student's education, health and welfare at the University. With the student's involvement, this could be achieved through face to face discussions with staff and the student in informal meetings as required.
- 3.4. Students will be encouraged to disclose such information themselves and will be made aware of any potential implications of non-disclosure.

4. Service Provision and Roles

4.1 The counsellor and mental health advisor will provide the service Monday to Friday mainly during normal office hours in undergraduate term-time. They will both provide the following:

- Crisis support and advice with continued support as required;
- Informal assessment of the individual's needs;
- General advice and information on coping with, and recovering from, mental health difficulties;
- Onward sign-posting to other agencies for help and support;
- Liaison with mental health services and local doctor;
- Training and education sessions for students and staff to support students.

The counsellor's focus will be to provide informal and formal counselling and other psychological interventions for individuals with mild to moderate mental health difficulties.

4.1. The mental health advisor's focus will be to provide advice, support, informal counselling and various psychological interventions to individuals with moderate to severe mental health difficulties.

4.2. There will be joint working between the counsellor and mental health advisor to be able to meet the individual needs of students and the service.

4.3. The service is based predominantly in the Student Services unit and individuals can visit to book an appointment or email (see section 11). Therapy sessions will generally take place in the Faccenda Centre but other arrangements can also be made to suit the individual or group.

5. What is counselling, and what to expect?

5.1. Counselling is a talking therapy and most people seek it because they are experiencing unhappiness and want to change the way they are thinking, feeling or behaving.

5.2. It can sometimes mean talking about things that have happened in the past, or are happening now. Sometimes students feel that they only need a few sessions to feel better. To work ethically counsellors are committed to getting a client's life and studies back on track.

5.3. The Counsellor and Mental Health Advisor are governed by their respective professional codes of conduct.

Your Counsellor aims to:

- Listen to what you are saying
- Accept you and respect your thoughts and feelings without judging
- Encourage you to focus on yourself and not other people
- Offer you a safe space to express your emotions
- Support you in gaining a deeper understanding of yourself

- Work alongside you in developing answers, and ways of overcoming your difficulties
- Help you to understand and manage your feelings and thoughts
- Offer techniques to help overcome stress and anxiety.

Your counsellor will not:

- Judge you or tell you what to do
- Talk about you to anyone else without your permission (unless in exceptional circumstances if it was felt there was the possibility of serious risk of harm to yourself or someone else)
- Have a relationship with you other than that of a professional counsellor and client

6. Records and Review

- 6.1. The Counsellor and Mental Health Advisor will remain mindful of their obligations in respect of confidentiality and under the Data Protection Act 1998, including in relation to individual written records of the students who they see. These records will include the informal assessment notes and summaries of each session with the student.
- 6.2. These records will be kept in a locked filing cabinet at all times and will be accessed by the staff members of the service only.
- 6.3. These records will be kept by the University in a secure repository, in a sealed envelope marked strictly confidential when the student completes their studies, and retained only for the duration of time specified in the University's Data Management Policy.
- 6.4. The service will also collect and maintain data to assist in monitoring the take up of the service and resource planning. This data may include: the number of students seen, the number of face-to-face contacts with students, the number of face-to-face contacts with staff or fellow students who are concerned about individual students. They will also collect data on the number of students who did not attend a previously arranged appointment.
- 6.5. All records produced by the service are subject to the University's Data Protection Policy.
- 6.6. The service will have a yearly review of its contacts, impact and effectiveness of the service. The mental health policy will also be reviewed and updated to meet the current and future service requirements. The policy is routinely reviewed by the University's Executive.
- 6.7. Placement Counsellors - Harper Adams University works with another university to provide placements for their students who have completed an accredited counselling qualification but who are required to complete their post-qualification, voluntary, counselling contact hours. Voluntary placement counsellors who work with students at Harper Adams are supervised by the senior counsellor employed by the University. They also have on-going supervision that meets the British Association for Counselling and Psychotherapy requirements of ethical conduct and good practice. Whilst on placement they are subject to all policies of Harper Adams University.

7. Helping Students in Crisis

If there is an immediate concern for the safety or well-being of any student, this should be reported to a member of the Student Services team immediately (Contact details are listed in section 13), or alternatively, the emergency services (999).

- 7.1. If any student or member of staff has a serious concern for the health, safety or welfare of a student, this should be reported to the Student Services Manager, Assistant Student Services Manager or Student Wellbeing Officer, who will seek appropriate guidance, make an initial judgement of the student's well-being and, where appropriate, contact appropriate support agencies. The Student Services office is open from 9am until 5pm Monday to Friday and the team operates an evening and weekend on-call service. Contact details are listed in section 13.
- 7.2. A student in crisis may be referred by a member of the Student Services team to appropriate support agencies (for example, emergency services / the GP / out of hours GP / 111 service) which may, depending on the circumstances, refer them to the Crisis Team if it is felt that the student requires immediate specialist help from mental health services.
- 7.3. The Crisis Team will normally make contact with an individual who it considers most appropriate in the circumstances within 4 hours to make an assessment of the student's mental health and personal safety/wellbeing.
- 7.4. In addition to the steps outlined above, a student presenting a serious immediate threat to themselves or others due to their mental health difficulties should be directed to a designated place of safety which could be a hospital or other area deemed as appropriate. The student will be encouraged to voluntarily accept help, although in exceptional circumstances they may be sectioned under the Mental Health Act for their own safety and that of others.
- 7.5. Students presenting less severe or non-immediate concerns may be referred by the GP, or the Crisis Team, to the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT). The CMHT will assess the student and arrange appropriate further support e.g. psychotherapy, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy etc. Any student who has been hospitalised by the Crisis Team will be offered follow up support from either the local or student's home mental health services, following discharge from hospital.

8. Fitness to Study Policy and Procedures

8.1 Introduction

The purpose of this policy is to outline the University's arrangements for ensuring that students who experience poor physical or mental health are fit to study, with the aim to help all students realise their full academic potential and successfully complete their studies. The policy applies to all students throughout their period of enrolment with the University and includes students: on campus; engaged in University related activities away from campus (such as placements and field trips); in University accommodation.

In implementing this policy, the University will at all times remain mindful of its legal obligations including its duty of care and its obligations to students under the Equality Act 2010 including, in appropriate cases, its obligation to make reasonable adjustments. The University will also remain mindful of the confidential and sensitive nature of health issues and fitness to study matters and its obligations in respect of confidentiality and under the Data Protection Act 1998.

Harper Adams is committed to supporting student well-being and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health issues is critical to student learning and academic achievement. The University also has a duty of care to all within its

community and a responsibility to take action to support those in distress, or causing significant concern and presenting a risk to self or others. This will include, for instance, situations where students show visible signs of illness, mental health difficulties, or emotional disorders that may have a negative impact on the health, safety, learning and wellbeing of the student and others. There may be instances where a student's health or wellbeing causes the University concern regarding the student's fitness to study on a course, including within a placement, and/or as a member of the University community. This may arise where, for example, the University is concerned that:

- A student poses a risk to his/her own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of other persons;
- The student's behaviour is or is at risk of negatively affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students;
- The student's behaviour is or is at risk of negatively affecting the day-to-day activities of the University and/or a placement provider.

This procedure sets out how the University may respond to instances where a concern is raised regarding a student's fitness to study and the type of action the University may take to manage the matter and support the student.

University staff dealing with this procedure:

- Will consider what internal and external support is available for students; and
- Are encouraged to seek appropriate guidance from staff with relevant expertise across the University when implementing the procedure.

Any student who is invited to attend a meeting to review their fitness to study may be accompanied by an enrolled student, Students' Union representative or staff member, for support. Students with disabilities may alternatively, choose their support worker, or students undergoing counselling may choose to bring their Counsellor, including the University's Student Counsellor. The University may follow the procedure where a student is unwilling / unable to participate, where it is considered reasonable to do so.

The student remains responsible for maintaining or improving their own fitness to study at all times and if this responsibility is not effectively fulfilled, a student's studies may be suspended temporarily or discontinued permanently. Instances in which a review within the Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure might be implemented include:

- Where there are a number of worrisome third party reports regarding a student's behaviour from friends, flatmates or staff
- Where a student has not engaged in studies for a significant period of time without reasonable cause
- There is concern about how a student might manage whilst on placement, field trip, or studying abroad, where the University might be unable to fulfil a duty of care, have taken into account reasonable adjustments.

This policy promotes good working practices with students in difficulty or with impairments and provides guidance to ensure that problematic situations are managed sensitively and

consistently. The guidance outlines the procedures necessary to respond swiftly to those occurrences when a student presents as unwell and his/her ability to study sufficiently well to succeed may be compromised.

8.2. Procedure and Levels of Concern

The aim is to establish a suitable response by academic and support staff in circumstances where it is not considered appropriate to apply other student procedures in light of the concerns regarding a student's health or well-being. Accordingly, concerns that challenging behaviour, including low engagement with studies, is caused by poor health require considered and sensitive management rather than disciplinary sanction. Notwithstanding this, the University is not prevented by this procedure from implementing other approved procedures in circumstances where there are concerns regarding a student's health or well-being. The procedure also covers circumstances within which a student will be signposted to other agencies, such as a local GP or a voluntary agency which can provide appropriate support and / or practical assistance, dependent on the student's circumstances.

In a situation where there is a perceived imminent danger to the student or others, serious risk of damage to University property or the University's reputation, the Vice-Chancellor is empowered to take immediate action to temporarily suspend the student from their studies and exclude them from the University's property, for a time period to be determined at their discretion. Such an action would invoke the Level 3 Fitness to Study procedures which would be expedited as promptly as possible but normally within seven days of a temporary exclusion or suspension being applied.

Concerns about a student's health or behaviour should be acted upon promptly, as early action/intervention can often prevent a situation from developing into a crisis. This procedure incorporates three levels of concern. The cause for concern can result in the procedure being initiated at any level although it is hoped that most situations can be remedied by action taken at levels 1 or 2. The University reserves the right to vary the procedure as appropriate in the interests of fairness and/ or health and safety concerns for the individual or others. The particular level of concern and associated process to be followed will be at the discretion of the University.

If there are concerns about student confidentiality, staff members should consult with members of the Student Services team without revealing the student's identity. If it is then agreed that a significant / valid degree of concern exists, the staff member, in consultation with a senior manager, will direct the University's level of response. The particular stage of the process to be followed will be at the discretion of the University (depending on the perceived seriousness of any health problem/risk).

Level 1

Concerns emerge about a student's fitness to study

A member of staff who knows the student (including but not restricted to academic or learner support tutors or student services staff) should approach the student in a supportive way and indicate that there is a concern about the student's fitness to study. The member of staff will ask the student to meet with them, giving at least 24 hours' notice and advise the following, along with providing a copy of this procedure:

- That the aim of the meeting is to discuss the concern(s), seek the student's perceptions and response, identify any additional, reasonable, support needs;

- Who else might attend the meeting (such as a representative from student services or the course team);
- That other appropriate members of staff might be consulted to assist with the matter and to provide support;
- That the student may be accompanied as set out in section 9.1.

It should be made clear to the student that it is their responsibility to maintain their fitness to study and that there is a recognised concern within the University.

The student and member of staff should agree on actions to be taken, and the student should be sent an email or letter within 5 working days summarising the meeting and the actions that have been agreed.

In any situation where it is not possible to reach an agreement, the member of staff will determine the appropriate outcomes and actions. The outcomes might include, but not be limited to:

- An action plan being put in place (with the student's agreement, where possible)
- Reasonable support arrangements or reasonable adjustments being put in place
- The matter being referred to another level of the procedure (eg Level 2 or 3).

The student and staff member should also set a time for a further meeting to review the situation. The email or letter to the student should clearly indicate the time and place of this review meeting. The student should also be informed that the same or additional causes of concern could result in their fitness to study being more widely considered by moving to Level 2.

Level 2

Continued concern about a student's fitness to study which has not improved as a consequence of intervention at level 1, or significant initial concern about a student.

The student will be invited to attend a meeting with a staff member with a general responsibility for students' health and welfare (typically either the Student Services Manager or Student Wellbeing Officer or/and Course Manager, although might include other staff who are familiar with the student's situation and their support needs) *and* the member of staff expressing concern. The student should be informed of the purpose of the meeting and advised of any documents they may need to bring. The student should be informed of the meeting in writing at least 24 hours before the due date. The student may be accompanied by an enrolled student, staff member, friend or family member or by a representative from the Students' Union. Students with disabilities may also be accompanied by a support worker appropriate to their needs.

The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the student's perception of the issues identified and also to ensure that the student clearly understands University expectations regarding their fitness to study. It will be important to identify and agree an action plan following the meeting. In any situation where it is not possible to reach an agreement, the member of staff will determine the appropriate outcomes and actions. The outcomes might include, but not be limited to:

- An action plan being put in place (with the student's agreement, where possible)
- Reasonable support arrangements or reasonable adjustments being put in place

- The matter being referred to Level 3 of the procedure.

The consequences of not adhering to the action plan should be clearly outlined to the student. The consequences include suspension or withdrawal from studies. A short summary of the meeting, the agreed action plan and the consequences of non-compliance should be sent to the student within 3 working days of the meeting.

Regular review meetings should be set up with the student.

Level 3

The most serious level of concern can be reached either through progression from Levels 1 and 2 or directly if there are significant and / or immediate concerns about the student's fitness to study

Within the Level 3 procedure, there are normally two elements:

- 1) A meeting between two members of the University's staff (typically one each from the student's course team and Student Services but not necessarily so) and the student to:
 - Discuss the nature of the concern and how it may be managed by the University;
 - Seek the student's perception and allow the student to respond to the concern(s);
 - Seek appropriate input from other relevant members of staff and consider any relevant documents

and

- 2) A case conference (at which the student may at the discretion of the Chair (but will not normally) be present) attended by relevant members of staff and, at the discretion of the University, relevant external professionals to:
 - Discuss the matter, consider any relevant evidence/reports and any potential action
 - Make recommendations, including those as set out in the following, non-exhaustive list:
 - No further action is taken;
 - Matter referred to an earlier stage of the procedure;
 - Reasonable support or adjustments agreed;
 - The student is referred for appropriate medical assessment;
 - The student is withdrawn from placement;
 - An action plan is drawn up and put in place;
 - Student be permitted to continue on a part-time basis;
 - A period of voluntary interruption is recommended;
 - The student should be suspended / excluded / withdrawn.

A case conference will be called by the Chair of the Fitness to Study Panel, the Director of Academic Services (or nominee). The panel will comprise of staff members who are familiar with the student's situation and others who are independent of the student, as determined by the Chair. Typically, this will include at least three of the following, or their nominee, in addition to the Chair, who is deemed to be independent of the student: Student Services Manager; Student Wellbeing Officer, Mental Health and Welfare Advisor; Student Counsellor; Learner Support Co-ordinator and the student's Course Manager or Senior Tutor. The purpose of the panel is to

ascertain the facts of the case and to discuss an appropriate course of action. Witnesses, including from external sources, such as an appropriate practitioner deemed suitable by the Fitness to Study Panel, may be called to provide oral evidence or to provide written statements.

The student may, at the Chair's discretion, also be invited to attend at one point during the proceedings and may have an enrolled student, Students' Union representative or staff member to accompany them for support. Students with disabilities may alternatively, choose their support worker, or students undergoing counselling may choose to bring their Counsellor, including the University's Student Counsellor.

The case conference may consider various options including transfer to temporary or permanent part time study, other reasonable adjustment needs of a student, a period of postponement or withdrawal of the student.

The actions arising out of the case conference will be agreed, documented and circulated to all in attendance and to the student by the Chair of the Fitness to Study Panel who has authority to implement the decision of the panel. All actions should have specific time frames where appropriate and adherence to such time frames will be a condition of any re-entry to programmes of study.

Where withdrawal for the course of study and possibly exclusion from the University's premises is determined, a letter should be sent via registered mail to the address at which the student has most recently confirmed as their home address and their University accommodation. The same letter should be sent to all the student email accounts known to the University.

Appeals against any outcome of the Fitness to Study Panel's consideration of level 3 concerns should be made to the Vice-Chancellor, in writing, within 21 days of the date of notification of the outcome, who will review the evidence considered by the Panel, in conjunction with the appeal lodged by the appellant. Appeals will only be considered on the following grounds:

- Procedural irregularity;
- Unreasonable disproportionate decision;
- New material evidence which was not previously reasonably available

The Vice-Chancellor will review all written documentation and may, at their discretion, invite the appellant to a meeting to discuss any points of contention and consult with other University staff and external appropriate professional. The outcomes of the appeal may include one from the following, non-exhaustive list:

- Appeal dismissed;
- Decision overturned with a different outcome to that agreed by the Fitness to Study Panel, albeit that the student remains not able to study;
- Decision overturned with the appellant permitted to resume their studies within the terms set out by the Vice-Chancellor.

The Vice-Chancellor's decision in relation to the appeal is final and concludes the University's procedures. Once the University's appeals procedure has been exhausted, the student will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter and advised to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) if they are dissatisfied with the outcome. The OIA will determine whether the student's complaint is eligible under its rules.

9. Returning to Study

In the case of a postponement, a student should be informed in the written outcomes of the Panel hearing of the arrangements by which fitness to return to study is agreed.

Each student's case will vary depending upon the context and specific circumstances out of which the original concern arose. In all cases, return to study will be dependent upon evidence of fitness to study and evidence of sustained engagement with appropriate support systems by the student.

Evidence that the panel will consider in making its judgement, may include:

- A statement from the student setting out their desire to return to study, their engagement with treatment to improve and maintain their health, their intentions relating to future treatment, as well as their written permission for the University to request a written statement from the student's key health professional. The student should seek guidance on who the University considers is suitably qualified as the key health professional who should make this assessment.
- A statement from staff outlining any areas of concerns in relation to the student's health about which they specifically seek advice or evidence from a health professional, in relation to the student's ability to cope with the demands of higher education.
- A study needs assessment report
- A statement from the student's key health professional. Evidence submitted from the student's key health professional should have sufficient knowledge of the student and their treatment and the demands of higher education, in order to make an informed assessment regarding feasibility return to study. In particular, specific reference should be made to the student's capacity to return to and commit to study, including an indication of the key health professional's judgement of the student's ability to cope with the following requirements of routine higher education level study:
 - Cognition
 - Pace
 - Persistence
 - Reliability
 - Conscientiousness and motivation
 - Interpersonal functioning
 - Honesty, trustworthiness
 - Stress tolerance
 - Other specific requirements.

Annex 1 illustrates a typical report template that a qualified health professional is normally asked to complete, where a student's fitness to study is a matter of dispute.

The University reserves the right to request its own appointed health professional to provide their independent judgement of the student's ability to cope with the routine demands of higher education study, alongside the associated reasonable adjustment needs.

The decision to allow a student to return to study will be made by the Fitness to Study Panel,

taking into account evidence from the student, staff, health professional(s) and study needs assessment reports. The student might be required to meet with the Panel to clarify aspects of the evidence provided to assist the Panel in making its decision. If the student is required to meet with panel members, or a sub-group of it, they may be accompanied by support worker, enrolled student, Students' Union representative or staff member. The Panel must be assured of fitness to study, taking into account the willingness and capacity of the student to comply with any conditions imposed, and the ability of the University to meet the identified support needs upon return.

The Panel's recommendation will be confirmed in writing, including any conditions of return to study and notified to the student within five working days of the panel hearing.

When a student's return to study is not permitted and the student wishes to challenge this, the student should appeal to the Vice Chancellor within 21 days of the notification, who will review the evidence considered by the Fitness to Study Panel in conjunction with the appeal lodged by the appellant. Appeals will only be considered on the following grounds:

- Procedural irregularity;
- Unreasonable disproportionate decision;
- New material evidence which was not previously, reasonably, available

The Vice-Chancellor will review all written documentation and may, at their discretion, invite the appellant to a meeting to discuss any points of contention and consult with other University staff and external appropriate professional. The outcomes of the appeal may include one from the following, non-exhaustive list:

- Appeal dismissed;
- Decision overturned with a different outcome to that agreed by the Fitness to Study Panel, albeit that the student remains not able to study;
- Decision overturned with the appellant permitted to resume their studies within the terms set out by the Vice-Chancellor.

The Vice-Chancellor's decision in relation to the appeal is final and concludes the University's procedures. Once the University's appeals procedure has been exhausted, the student will be issued with a 'Completion of Procedures' letter and advised to contact the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) if they are dissatisfied with the outcome. The OIA will determine whether the student's complaint is eligible under its rules.

A student's continued fitness to study is the responsibility of the student, although the University will monitor this throughout the continuation of their studies. Regular review meetings should be arranged with the student's Senior Tutor so that a student's progress and attendance can be monitored and student support modified if necessary.

10. Data Protection

- 10.1. All University staff are governed by the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998. Under this act, all data relating to a person's physical or mental health is regarded as sensitive, personal data. The University's Data Protection Policy contains guidance on the use of sensitive information. In general, all personal data of a sensitive nature given to a member of staff by a student should be treated as confidential and should only be disclosed with the student's express consent. Sensitive data, for the purpose

of this policy, is deemed to be information given in confidence concerning, for example, a student's mental health state.

10.2. Confidentiality

In all cases where, in the member of staff's judgment, it would be in the student's best interests to disclose sensitive information in relation to their mental health, (e.g. so that appropriate support may be provided) the student's informed consent should be obtained where possible. It will be necessary to inform the student why there might be a need to disclose sensitive information, who will have access to this information and the likely consequences of giving or withholding consent (for example, in relation to the provision of reasonable adjustments, including examination arrangements). Once consent has been obtained, it is the responsibility of the person passing on the information to ensure it is done on the terms agreed with the student.

If the student chooses not to provide their consent, this decision should be respected. In this scenario, the implications of non-disclosure in terms of additional support and possible impact on academic success and progression should be confirmed with the student.

However, rare occasions exist when the student's consent is withheld, or it is impracticable to try to obtain it, when confidentiality may be broken. These include:

- When the student's mental health has deteriorated to the extent of threatening his/her personal safety
- When the student is at risk of serious abuse or exploitation
- When the student's behaviour is adversely affecting the rights and safety of others
- Where the member of staff would be liable to civil or criminal procedure if the information were not disclosed (for example, if a crime had been committed).

Staff should consult with either the University Secretary, Director of Academic Services, Student Services Manager, Mental Health and Welfare Advisor or Student Counsellor if they believe there is a need to break the commitment to confidentiality unless there is an immediate risk of harm to the individual or others. Other than in a crisis situation, initial discussion should not identify the student until the grounds for breaking confidentiality have been established and agreed.

11. Additional Information

11.1. Categories of Common Mental Health Problems

This section is for information only and should only be used as a guideline. It is NOT designed to be used for diagnosing mental illness. Listed below are some of the more common mental health illnesses and a brief outline of symptoms.

- Anxiety - A state of anxiety that can be persistent and out of control for the individual, which can be very distressing with intense physical symptoms. These can be: agitation, disturbed sleep patterns, a significant change in appetite, digestive difficulties, headaches, shaking, sweating and palpitations or panic attacks.
- Depression - Signified by a persistent low mood, lack of motivation, low self-esteem, withdrawing away from people. Symptoms can be: negative thoughts, sleep disturbance,

problems with concentrating and remembering things. Weight loss or increase in weight due to comfort eating

- Bipolar Affective Disorder or Manic Depression -Symptoms can be: persistent changes of mood that may be extreme in nature with problems in controlling the levels of mood. A distorted perception of self, leading to mood swings and behaving excessively (ranging from being loud and disruptive to being isolated and withdrawn from others).
- Psychosis - Acute psychosis can be caused by traumatic events, substance *mis*use, alcohol problems or a more serious illness such as schizophrenia. It can present with the following symptoms: disordered thoughts, hallucinations, hearing voices, paranoia, and delusional thoughts e.g. persecution or his/her thoughts and actions being controlled by others.
- Phobias - A phobia is an intense fear, usually of one specific focus, such as fear of being with two or more people (social phobia, being in small spaces with the feeling of being trapped claustrophobia).There are many other phobias that can interfere with the individual's everyday life.
- Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) - An abnormal and often delayed reaction to events such as an assault, a period of intense stress, or an accident. Symptoms often include: high anxiety, sleep disturbance, nightmares, loss of confidence and distress.
- Obsessive Compulsive Disorder - Repetition of behaviour patterns or repetitive thoughts, such as the need to check something many times before leaving a room. For example, checking the door is locked many times before going to bed, or having to do a task in a particular order before you feel satisfied.
- Eating Disorders
 - Anorexia Nervosa: Distorted self-image, low self-esteem, and excessive exercise with weight loss
 - Bulimia: Binge eating followed by induced vomiting and /or diarrhoea with weight fluctuations.

12. Contacts

Student Services (including Wellbeing Team)

Rebecca Hayhurst – Student Services Manager

01952 815222 / 07970 494691

rhayhurst@harper-adams.ac.uk

Joana da Silva – Assistant Student Services Manager

01952 815286 / 07964 114234

jdasilva@harper-adams.ac.uk

Lesley Plimbley - Student Wellbeing Officer

01952 815176

lplimbley@harper-adams.ac.uk

Marcia Williamson – University Counsellor
01952 815395
mwilliamson@harper-adams.ac.uk

Mike Dalmeny – University Mental Health & Welfare Adviser
01952 815473
mdalmeny@harper-adams.ac.uk

Learner Support

Jane Hill – Learner Support Manager
01952 815417
jhill@harper-adams.ac.uk

Student Wardens and Residential Officers

Duty Warden (out of hours)
07976 881772

Residential Officers (out of hours)
01952 815334

Final year students are selected every year for the Student Warden Team. They are resident on-campus in each Hall of Residence and act as the first point of contact for resident students. Resident students are introduced to the Wardens and encouraged to familiarise themselves with their Hall Wardens. Two wardens are on duty every night to provide first aid cover and general assistance for student problems.

There are also two alternating Residential Officers, providing out of hours staff presence (and support for Student Wardens) throughout term time.

Chaplaincy

The University has an experienced team of part-time chaplains from a range of denominations, who all have their own places of worship and congregations, as well as caring for the students at Harper Adams. Although the University does not possess a chapel, the chaplaincy team makes weekly visits for informal discussion and prayer, these meetings take place in Faccenda. Students of any denomination, faith, or none at all are all welcome to call.

The Chaplaincy Team aims to:

- Offer friendship, pastoral care and spiritual counsel
- Help build up the community by working in collaboration with the University and local community
- Link with local religious groups and provide information about the different faiths represented in the region
- Encourage spiritual, ethical and moral debate within the University

Members of the Chaplaincy are regularly available, for the weekly drop in, the informal reflection time and at other times. All students and staff are welcome to contact them at the University or at home

Revd. David Hill (Roman Catholic)
Tel: 01952 813004
Email: djhill@harper-adams.ac.uk / david2007hill@hotmail.co.uk

Mr John Fowler (Methodist / U.R.C) Tel:
01952 812458
Email: jfowler@harper-adams.ac.uk

Revd. Edward Ward (Anglican)
Tel 01952 820217
Email: eward@harper-adams.ac.uk e.ward17@btinternet.com

Revd. James Whately (Methodist)
Tel: 01952 813959
Email: jwhately@harper-adams.ac.uk / james.whately@btinternet.com

Doctors

Linden Hall Surgery is based in the nearby town of Newport, and also runs a weekday surgery on-campus; students will be notified of surgery times. The surgery can be contacted directly to arrange an appointment on or off campus.

Linden Hall Surgery
01952 820400
Station Road
Newport
Shropshire

13. Other Resources

MIND

Mind is the leading mental health charity in England and Wales. They work to create a better life for everyone with experience of mental distress.

Tel: 0845 766 0163

<http://www.mind.org.uk/>

Telford Mind 76-83 Severn Walk Telford 01952 588367

Samaritans

Confidential emotional support available 24 hours a day. Tel:

08457 909090 (local call rate)

<http://www.samaritans.org.uk>

SANE

SANE exists to provide emotional support and information to anyone affected by mental illness. Saneline offers 7 days a week, out-of-hours telephone line 6.00 pm to 11.00pm for anyone coping with mental illness, whether they are sufferers, carers, or concerned relatives.

Tel: 0845 767 8000

http://www.sane.org.uk/what_we_do/support/

Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

Tel: 0845 7697555

<http://www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk>

Axis Counselling

A comprehensive, confidential, flexible and high quality counselling service to those in Shropshire and Telford & Wrekin who have suffered childhood sexual, physical or emotional abuse, rape or sexual violence.

Tel: 01952 278000

<http://www.axiscounselling.org.uk/>

The Glade – Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)

The Glade Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) is a local, specialist centre which provides a 24 hour service of care to women and men who have been raped or sexually assaulted.

Tel: **0808 178 2058**

<http://www.theglade.org.uk/>

British Pregnancy Advisory Service

bpas provides help to women with an unplanned pregnancy, or a pregnancy they choose not to continue with.

<http://www.bpas.org/>

CRUSE

A national charity, which offers free, confidential help to bereaved people.

Daytime helpline: 0844 477 9400

Email: helpline@crusebereavementcare.org.uk

<http://www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk>

Depression Alliance:

The leading UK charity for people affected by depression. The charity provides information about symptoms and treatment for depression as well as research, publications and local groups.

Tel: 0845 123 23 20

<http://www.depressionalliance.org/>

beat (Eating Disorders Association)

beat is the leading UK charity for people with eating disorders and their families. beat is the working name of the Eating Disorders Association. The association offers help, advice and support to those suffering from Anorexia, Bulimia, Binge Eating as well as other eating related disorders.

Tel: 0845 634 1414

Email: help@b-eat.co.uk

<http://www.b-eat.co.uk/Home>

London Gay and Lesbian Switchboard

Provides an information, support and referral service for lesbians, gay men and bisexual people from all backgrounds throughout the United Kingdom. Tel:

020 7837 7324 (10am – 11pm)

<http://www.llgs.org.uk>

No More Panic

Website and chat forum for sufferers of panic, anxiety, phobias and Obsessive Compulsive Disorder.

<http://www.nomorepanic.co.uk/>

Rethink (National Schizophrenia Fellowship)

Rethink is the operating name of the NSF exists to help everyone either as a sufferer, carer, family or friend who is dealing with or recovering from severe mental illness.

Tel: 0845 456 0455

<http://www.rethink.org/>

Skill

The National Bureau for students with disabilities. Tel:

020 7450 0621

<http://www.skill.org.uk>

Students Against Depression

A web based support organisation which offers UK students comprehensive information and discussion about all area relating to depression.

<http://www.studentdepression.org>

MoodGYM

A free self-help program which teaches cognitive behavioural therapy skills to people vulnerable to depression and anxiety. A link is provided, in good faith, on the Students Against Depression website, but it is up to the individual to determine whether the site is appropriate for his/her needs. Using MoodGYM should not be seen as a substitute for professional help or therapy, and should be part of a wider strategy for tackling depression. <http://www.moodgym.org/welcome/new/splash>

Carers Trust

Carers Trust works to improve support, services and recognition for anyone living with the challenges of caring, unpaid, for a family member or friend who is ill, frail, disabled or has mental health or addiction problems. Information advice and practical support for carers.

<http://www.carers.org>

APPENDIX 1

FITNESS TO STUDY MEDICAL ASSESSMENT

Information for GP or other appropriate professional:

Harper Adams University's [Student Health and Wellbeing Policy](#) aims to ensure all students can study and perform to the best of their ability, in a safe and comfortable environment.

On occasions, it is necessary to review an individual's fitness to study due to mental and other health related reasons. A medical or professional assessment is then required to help the University assess when / whether a student is fit to continue with their studies, able to cope with the demands of the course (including placement) and university life and whether any adjustments need to be made. The student's consent in Section 1 allows you to provide this information and for us to contact you for further information if required.

Using the information provided by the student (regarding their reasons for postponement), the student's course management team and/or other relevant University staff in section 2 below, please comment on each of the items listed in Section 3. The information you provide will be treated in confidence and in accordance with the Data Protection Act. Many thanks for your support with this assessment process.

Once completed, please return this form to the Interim Student Services Manager.

Mrs Rebecca Hayhurst
Student Services Manager
Harper Adams University
Newport
Shropshire, TF10 8NB

01952 815222 / rhayhurst@harper-adams.ac.uk

SECTION 1 (To be completed by the student):			
Student name			
Date of birth			
Student registration number			
Year of study			
Course			
Student consent			
I agree to my GP/other appropriate professional providing Harper Adams University with a medical assessment of my fitness to resume my studies, both using this form and through follow-up communication, if required.			
Student signature		Date	

SECTION 2 (To be completed by Registry Office/ Student Services/ Course Team):

The student's fitness to study or their return to study (following postponement), is being considered for the following reasons. The University seeks an update of his/her current situation and his/her ability to cope with the demands of academic study, undertaking placements and student life more broadly, including independent living.

Additional comments or concerns to be completed by the student's course management team and /or other relevant University staff, should the student be on or due to commence placement, consideration should be given to the nature of the placement and any perceived risks:

Completed by:

SECTION 3 (to be completed by appropriate medical professional / primary care provider):

Medical assessment of [name of student]:

Date of commencement of care for current health condition:

Date of discharge (unless ongoing):

Frequency / Regularity of Appointments:

1. The nature and extent of any medical / health condition from which the student is suffering:

2. The prognosis:

3. The extent to which the student's condition may affect his/her fitness to study and manage the demands of student life in relation to each of the following:

Psychological Factors	Potential effects on performance in relation to study, work or student life, placement:	Estimated frequency of student support requirements (please circle)			
		No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Cognition	Intelligence, memory, academic skills, and the ability to use and apply these skills.				
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Pace	The ability to perform tasks at a reasonable speed.				
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Persistence	The ability to stay with a task until it is complete.				
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Reliability	Attending lectures or attending work placement every day, on time, in spite of personal or emotional problems.				
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					

Conscientiousness and Motivation	The desire and determination to achieve and persisting until it is accomplished.	No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Stress tolerance	The ability to withstand studying and exam pressures, to meet deadlines and have work scrutinised in a work or study environment.	No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Interpersonal functioning	The ability to accept supervision and to get along with fellow students, staff or colleagues.	No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Honesty	The ability to be truthful, direct, and straightforward, to refrain from such things as lying and manipulation	No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Academic-specific requirements	These typically include presentation skills, conflict resolution skills, "people skills" but may also require course-specific aspects, as listed in section 2.	No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Comments on impact of condition and associated support needs:					
Physical Health Factor(s)		Estimate of frequency of student support requirements (please circle)			
Comments on impact of condition(s) and associated support needs:		No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Additional difficulties which affect thoughts, mood or behaviours		Estimate of frequency of student support requirements (please circle)			
Comments on impact of condition(s) and associated support needs:		No support	Monthly	Weekly	Daily

4. The impact the student's condition may have on, or risk it may pose to, self or others:

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5. Any additional action recommended to be taken by the University in light of the medical condition to enable the student to study effectively, undertake placements and cope with independent living:

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6. On-going medical treatment or support the student will be receiving from the NHS or private provider:

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Details of Appropriate Professional

Name	
Position	
Employer	
Address	
Telephone	
Email	
Signature	
Date	