



ACADEMIC/NON ACADEMIC: NON ACADEMIC

FRAMEWORK AREA: SAFEGUARDING

PROCEDURE TITLE: HEALTH WELLBEING and FITNESS to STUDY

LEAD COLLEGE MANAGER: VICE PRINCIPAL IMPROVEMENT AND EXCELLENCE

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ORIGINATOR: HEAD of SAFEGUARDING & WELLBEING

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Available in large font and other formats on request

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GUILDFORD COLLEGE

STATEMENT OF PROCEDURE PURPOSE

Guildford College Group is committed to supporting students and recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to his or her academic progression. This Procedure outlines the process and procedures to be followed when a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour affects their ability to cope at college, to study or progress on their course or when their health, wellbeing or behaviour poses a risk to the health and safety of self and/or others.

APPLICABILITY

To whom: This procedure applies to all students enrolled at Guildford College Group, any of its outreach centres, including franchises and work placements, that offer qualifications on behalf of the College regardless of their background or protected characteristic which are; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. This Procedure is not intended for use during the interview or Admissions process but during a student's time studying at College.

DISSEMINATION

The Head of Safeguarding & Well-being will ensure that the procedure is distributed to relevant College Faculties and/or Departments. Dissemination within Faculties and Departments to staff and/or students is the responsibility of the respective management teams.

DEFINITION

This procedure should be used for any student whose ability to cope with college life, to study or progress on their course is compromised as the result of their health, wellbeing, behaviour or a disability.

General Procedure Content

1. Introduction

1.1 The College is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health and behavioural issues is critical to student learning and academic achievement. Additionally, the College 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 or 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 or behavioural disorders that may have a negative impact on the health, safety, learning and wellbeing of the student and others.

1.2 These guidelines:

1.2.1 Clarify a suitable response by teaching and support staff in circumstances where it is not considered appropriate to apply disciplinary procedures. This may arise when a student's behaviour requires considered and sensitive management rather than disciplinary sanction.

1.2.2 Recommend a co-ordinated approach to the management of a situation where mental or physical functioning

- may not permit a student to benefit from the educational opportunities afforded to him or her at a particular time or
- is adversely affecting the student experience of others or
- requires support at a level that has extended well beyond that which can reasonably be expected of the College.

1.3 This procedure has three levels of concern. The cause or causes for concern can result in entering the procedure at any level although it is hoped that most situations can be remedied by action taken at stages 1 or 2.

1.4 Concerns about a student's health or behaviour should be acted upon promptly. Early action/intervention can often prevent a situation from developing into a crisis.

1.5 The procedure aims to ensure that:

- The best interests of the student are considered in relation to their personal situation, their health, wellbeing and/or any disability they may experience
- Students are supported to study to the best of their ability, and wherever possible to meet the required learning outcomes and complete their course
- Students who are experiencing difficulties in relation to their health, wellbeing and/or disability are supported to address their difficulties at the earliest appropriate point
- Students are able to make informed decisions regarding options available
- Any reasonable adjustments that the student may be entitled to are considered and where appropriate put in place

1.6 Staff from College faculties and from Student Support work together where appropriate so that students experience a consistent and fair process

1.7 If staff are unsure about whether to implement this procedure, they should seek advice and discuss their concerns with the people listed below in section 8. In order to work within the boundaries of confidentiality and data protection these initial concerns need to be discussed without using the student's name.

2. Stage One

Concerns emerge about a student's health and safety and ability to study based on deterioration in health, appearance or behaviour

2.1 A member of staff who knows the student (e.g. Tutor, Student Wellbeing Advisor) should approach the student in a supportive way and indicate that there is a recognised concern about the student's wellbeing. The nature of the concern should be clearly identified and, if appropriate, information should be provided about support available through the College (e.g. Wellbeing Advisors or the Counselling Service) and the student reminded about external support such as the student's GP. (NB counselling cannot be made mandatory for a student)

2.2 The student and member of staff should agree on actions to be taken and the actions recorded in the student's file and a copy given to the student. A review date should be agreed and included in the file note. Support identified will need to be entered under Student Support on Pro Monitor.

2.3 The staff member should explain to the student that the same or additional concerns for health, wellbeing or fitness to study may lead to their fitness to study being more widely considered in stage two.

3. Stage Two

Continued concern about a student's health, safety and ability to study related to a significant deterioration in appearance, health or behaviour or a significant initial concern about a student. For students under the age of 18 years of age, a parent or guardian will usually be informed

3.1 The student will be invited to attend a meeting with the Head of Learning and Standards or the Director of Faculty and the member of staff expressing concern. If appropriate the Mental Health Facilitator will also attend. The student should be made aware 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 date of the meeting. The student may be accompanied by a friend or family member or by a representative from the Students' Union or Student Services if requested. Students with may also be accompanied by their support worker or external professional as appropriate to their needs.

3.2 The purpose of the meeting will be to outline concerns and ascertain the student's perception of the issues identified and also to ensure that the student clearly understands College expectations regarding fitness to study. It will be important to identify and agree an action plan following the meeting. The consequences of not adhering to the action plan should be clearly outlined to the student. 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. The meeting must be documented and recorded on ProMonitor. Regular review meetings should be set up with the student and the agreed named staff member who will also be the central

point of contact regarding the student. The frequency of these reviews should be agreed at the meeting.

4. Stage Three

The most serious level of concern can be reached either through progression from stages 1 and 2 or directly if there are significant concerns about the risk to the health and wellbeing of the student, safety of self, students, staff or to others. At this stage, parents or guardians would usually be informed if the student is less than 18 years of age

4.1 A case conference will be called by the Director of Faculty or delegated to his / her Head of Learning, to ascertain the facts as known and to discuss an appropriate course of action. The Chair will be the Director of Faculty or Head of Learning. The Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing, Student Wellbeing Advisor, personal tutor, or Head of Accommodation Services (if a student is in College accommodation) and a minute taker may also attend dependent on the circumstances. If appropriate the Mental Health Facilitator will also attend. External support staff and professionals may also be invited to attend. Others may be called to provide information or to provide written statements and notes from previous stages provided to the chair in advance of the meeting

4.2 During the case conference relevant staff, external professionals and the student if appropriate will be invited to outline their concerns

4.3 The student will also be invited to attend at one point during the proceedings and may have a friend or family member or member of the Students' Union accompany them for support. Students may also choose their support worker.

4.4 The case conference may consider various options including a break from study, part time study, study from home, the support needed by a student, a period of interruption or a recommendation for withdrawal or exclusion of the student.

4.5 The actions arising out of the case conference will be agreed, documented and circulated to all in attendance and to the student. The meeting must be documented on ProMonitor. All actions should have specific time frames where appropriate and adherence to such timeframes will be a condition of any re-entry to programmes of study.

4.6 If the case conference considers that withdrawal or exclusion is the best course of action this must be recommended by the chair to the Vice-Principal for Improvement and Excellence for his/her approval. Subject to withdrawal or exclusion being approved by the Vice-Principal, a letter should be sent via registered mail to all the student addresses known to the College. The same letter should be sent to student's registered email account.

4.7 In the event that the student is unable to attend the case conference for whatever reason, the case conference may go ahead in their absence. If appropriate the student may be involved by phone or skype. In exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Vice-principal Improvement and Excellence a hearing may go ahead without the student being on campus where they present a potential risk to themselves

or others. In these circumstances all reasonable efforts must be made to ensure their opinion is fairly represented.

4.8 If an incident occurs where there is an immediate risk to self or others, safeguarding and duty principal procedures should be followed

5. Returning to Study

5.1 Students should be informed of the procedures to be followed for returning to study as soon as possible.

5.2 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 such as a GP's letter and of appropriate support systems. Evidence submitted must be from a recognised health worker such as a mental health professional, doctor or psychiatrist who has sufficient knowledge of the student and the demands of education in order to make an informed decision regarding return to study. In particular, specific reference should be made to the student's capacity to return to study.

5.3 The decision to allow return to study will be made by the Head of Safeguarding and Well-being in consultation with appropriate professional colleagues from the student's faculty and Accommodation Services, if applicable. The Director or Head of Safeguarding & Wellbeing must be assured of fitness to study, compliance with any conditions imposed, regulatory requirements, and the availability of support upon return.

5.4 Regular review meetings should be arranged with the student's faculty so that student progress can be monitored and student support modified if necessary.

5.5 When return to study is not deemed to be an option and the student wishes to challenge this, the existing complaints and appeals policies and processes should be followed.

5.6 If the student is not satisfied with the outcome of the Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study process, including when safeguarding procedures have been invoked, he/she may appeal to the Vice Principal for Improvement and Excellence within 10 working days

6. Consent, confidentiality and data protection

6.1 Data protection

6.1.1 All College staff are governed by the requirements of the Data Protection Acts 1984 and 1998. Under these acts, all data relating to a person's physical or mental health is regarded as sensitive, personal data. The College's policy on Data Protection contains guidance on the use of sensitive information e.g. details about a student's mental health or condition and should be consulted by staff. 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 consent. Sensitive data, for the purpose of this policy, is deemed to be information given in confidence concerning, for example, a student's ill-health or disability, including mental health issues.

6.2 Confidentiality

6.2.1 In all cases where, in the member of staff's judgement, it would be in the student's best interests to disclose sensitive information (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 (e.g. additional support strategies such as reasonable adjustments including additional 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.

6.2.2 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 should be made clear. However, there exist rare occasions 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 (e.g. if a crime had been committed).

6.2.3 Staff should consult with the Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing if they believe there is a need to break the commitment to confidentiality. Initial discussion should not identify the student until the grounds for breaking confidentiality have been established and agreed upon.

7. Related Policies/Documents

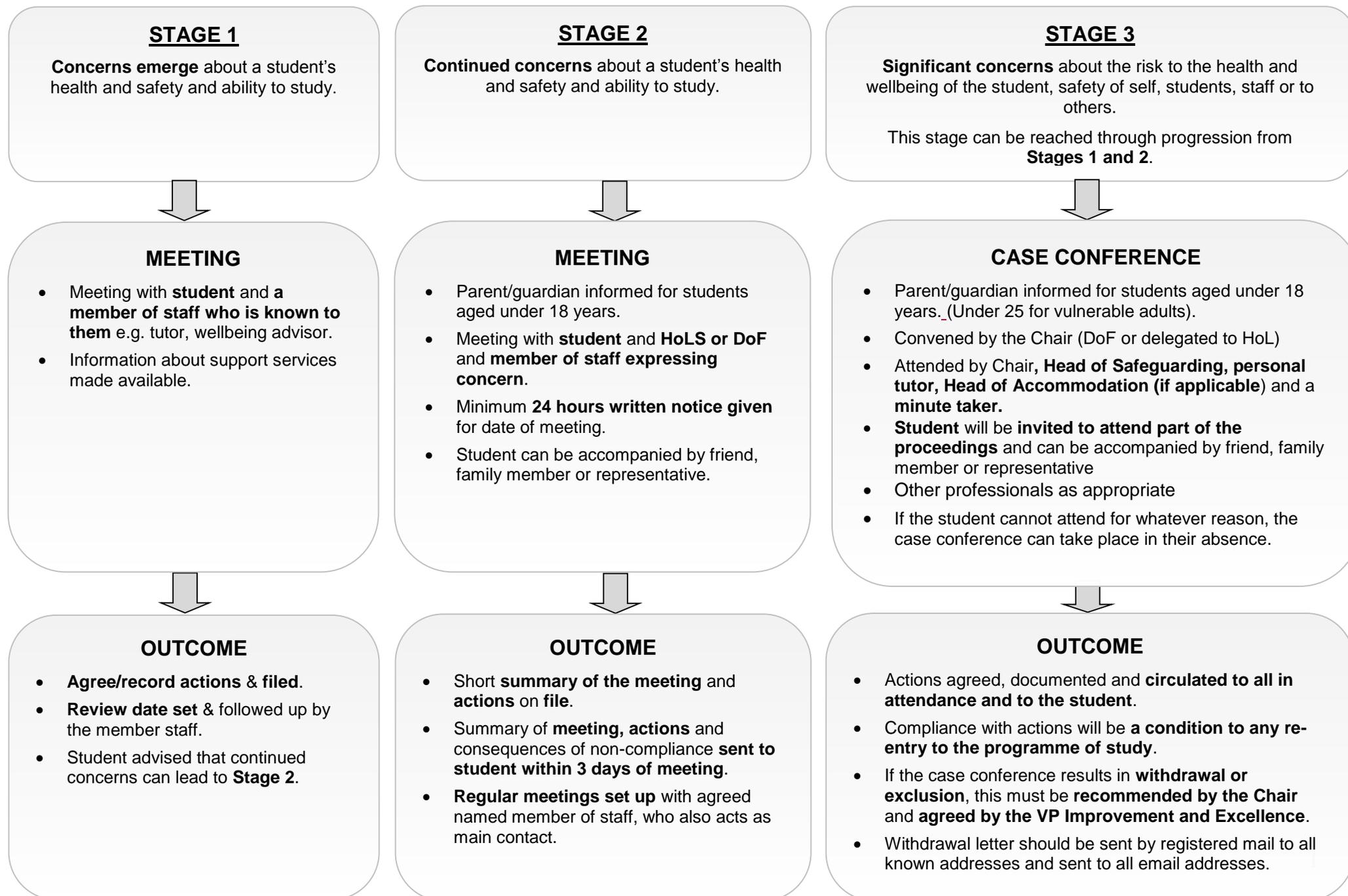
Safeguarding Policy
Equality and Diversity Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Data Protection Policy
Additional Learning Support Policy
Complaints Policy

8. Help for staff

Director of Faculty or Department
Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing
Head of Learning
Line Manager
Student Wellbeing Advisors
Head of Service and Standards Accommodation
Mental Health Facilitator

9. Help for Students

Director of Faculty or Department
Head of Safeguarding and Wellbeing
Head of Learning
Line Manager
Personal Tutor
Student Wellbeing Advisors and Additional Learning Support
Student Counselling
Head of Service and Standards Accommodation or Duty Warden



STAGE 1

Concerns emerge about a student's health and safety and ability to study.



MEETING

- Meeting with **student** and a **member of staff who is known to them** e.g. tutor, wellbeing advisor.
- Information about support services made available.



OUTCOME

- **Agree/record actions & filed.**
- **Review date set & followed up** by the member staff.
- Student advised that continued concerns can lead to **Stage 2.**

STAGE 2

Continued concerns about a student's health and safety and ability to study.



MEETING

- Parent/guardian informed for students aged under 18 years.
- Meeting with **student** and **HoLS or DoF** and **member of staff expressing concern.**
- Minimum **24 hours written notice given** for date of meeting.
- Student can be accompanied by friend, family member or representative.



OUTCOME

- Short **summary of the meeting** and **actions on file.**
- Summary of **meeting, actions** and consequences of non-compliance **sent to student within 3 days of meeting.**
- **Regular meetings set up** with agreed named member of staff, who also acts as main contact.

STAGE 3

Significant concerns about the risk to the health and wellbeing of the student, safety of self, students, staff or to others.

This stage can be reached through progression from **Stages 1 and 2.**



CASE CONFERENCE

- Parent/guardian informed for students aged under 18 years. (Under 25 for vulnerable adults).
- Convened by the Chair (DoF or delegated to HoL)
- Attended by Chair, **Head of Safeguarding, personal tutor, Head of Accommodation (if applicable)** and a **minute taker.**
- **Student will be invited to attend part of the proceedings** and can be accompanied by friend, family member or representative
- Other professionals as appropriate
- If the student cannot attend for whatever reason, the case conference can take place in their absence.



OUTCOME

- Actions agreed, documented and **circulated to all in attendance and to the student.**
- Compliance with actions will be a **condition to any re-entry to the programme of study.**
- If the case conference results in **withdrawal or exclusion**, this must be **recommended by the Chair and agreed by the VP Improvement and Excellence.**
- Withdrawal letter should be sent by registered mail to all known addresses and sent to all email addresses.



Address

Date

Dear

Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study meeting

The College is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health and behavioural issues is critical to student learning and academic achievement.

We would like to invite you to a Health, Wellbeing & Fitness to Study meeting when we will discuss our concerns regarding your well-being at College.

The meeting will be with

If you are unable to attend would you please let(staff member) know as soon as possible. The meeting may still go ahead in your absence.

You are welcome to bring a friend, family member or representative from the Students' Union or Student Services to attend with you.

The meeting is scheduled:

Date:

Time:

Place:

Please come toand we will meet you there.

If you have any concerns about this matter or are unable to attend then please do not hesitate to contact me on

Yours sincerely,