Support to Study Procedure

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Effective from: 1 September 2026

PRIFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Date	Supersedes	Description of Change
27 August 2026	2023 Version 1.0	Revision to clarify scope and responsibilities, strengthen safeguarding and risk-management arrangements, and align with sector best practice and OIA guidance.
12 April 2023	2021 Version 01	Update to include professional, statutory, or regulatory bodies, or sponsors.
1 October 2021	2018 Version 2.4	Updating job and department titles in line with the restructure. Stage 3 now lies within the remit of Governance Services. DVC and PVCs are now included in Panels.
1 February 2021	2018 Version 2.3	Minor changes to timescales.

Document Owner	Approved By	Date Approved	Review Frequency
Director of Student Life	Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee.	27 August 2026	Every three years.

Note: In exceptional circumstances, and subject to approval by the Chair of the Senate Regulations and Special Cases Committee, responsibilities assigned to Schools, Heads, of School, School Officers or School Committees in these Regulations may be assumed by the College, Head of College, College Officers or College Committees respectively, as appropriate.

Support to Study Procedure

This Procedure outlines how concerns about a student's health and wellbeing may be raised and supported, and details support which may be offered to the student.

PRIFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Introduction

1. This procedure applies where a student's health or wellbeing raises significant concern, presents a risk of harm to the student or others, or is significantly affecting the University's ability to deliver its services or support other members of the University community – even where the student's own studies are not otherwise affected.
2. Concerns about a student's health or wellbeing may be prompted by:
    - concerns about a student's progression or attainment that may relate to their health;
    - a student being unable to attend the University due to their health;
    - a student's behaviour negatively affecting the University, other students or colleagues;
    - a risk of harm to the student or others;
    - a student's financial wellbeing resulting in health issues or unsafe living conditions;
    - a student spending a period of time as a hospital inpatient.
3. The procedure must not be used for the following:
    - Approved short absences (e.g. short-term illness), which should be treated as authorised absences, with background work, electronic resources and coursework extensions available as needed.
    - Situations covered by the procedures for extenuating circumstances.
    - Extensions to enrolment periods, which are considered under the procedures for extending a period of study.
    - Disciplinary cases, considered under The Student Discipline Procedure.
    - Academic misconduct, considered under the Academic Integrity Procedure.
    - Voluntary interruption of study on health or other grounds prior to, or at, Stage 1, considered under the Procedure for Approving Interruption of Studies.
    - Termination of studies for low commitment or engagement, considered under the Termination of Studies Procedure.
    - Academic progress considered by Examination Boards under the Regulations for Taught Programmes or Regulations for Postgraduate Research Programmes.
    - Suspension or termination of studies under procedures specific to a course's approval or validation, including conditions imposed by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies, or sponsors.

4. Financial difficulty or debt on its own, with no accompanying health or wellbeing concern, falls outside this procedure and should be referred to the University's financial support services. A student's debt or financial circumstances do not exclude them from support under this procedure where those circumstances are affecting, or are affected by, their health or wellbeing.
5. The University has a duty of care to respond appropriately to substantial concerns about a student's health and wellbeing, and the impact this may have on the student's ability to study or on other members of the University community.
    - Being able to study effectively means a student is able to:
        - attend the University when needed;
        - retain information provided in class or through research;
        - attend and complete assessments as required;
        - progress through their course/programme within prescribed timescales;
        - participate in activities without a substantial adverse impact on others;
        - meet all professional elements of their course/programme where required;
        - do so without preventing the University from delivering its services and functions to other students, staff and the wider community.
6. Where students experience difficulties, the University will take a supportive approach, promoting positive principles towards physical or mental ill health. Its starting position is always to support students to remain on, or return to, their studies wherever possible. This procedure sets out that support, including where a student may be at risk of harm to themselves or others, and is designed to ensure a consistent and supportive approach.
7. Concerns about a student's health or wellbeing can be raised by staff, students or a member of the community.
8. Staff should support situations within the parameters of their professional role and should consult the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity if there is significant concern or they need advice on how to proceed.
9. Where a student is enrolled on a professional programme, any finding under this procedure that impacts professional suitability will be referred to the Fitness to Practise Officer. Support to Study measures may run in parallel with Fitness to Practise procedures where appropriate.
10. This policy should not be used in crisis or emergency situations – for example where a student is threatening to harm themselves, has harmed themselves, or has been injured. In an emergency, the emergency services should be called.

Principles

11. The purpose of this procedure is to support students and staff in handling situations that cause significant concern. It has three stages, determined by the level of

perceived risk and how the student responds to intervention. Cases may progress through all three stages if concerns are not remedied by agreed actions or may begin at any stage.

12. Communication is paramount when assessing risk to a student's health and wellbeing. Early intervention and recommendations for support can prevent crisis situations from occurring.
13. Students are encouraged, wherever possible, to take an active role in maintaining their own wellbeing. Where a student is not able to do so, concerns may still be raised and appropriate steps taken in their interests.
14. A student who interrupts their study while being supported under this procedure may still be required to fulfil the Return to Study requirements set out below.
15. Where a student's condition significantly impacts their ability to live independently, or the safety of the residential community, the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) will coordinate with the Halls Management Team. Support to Study focuses on academic continuity but may trigger a parallel assessment under the Fitness to Reside Policy; where possible, a single case conference should support both aspects together.
16. Engagement under this procedure is a shared process. The University will communicate clearly, offer flexibility where possible, and adjust its approach to meet individual needs.

Stage 1 – Early, informal support

17. Stage 1 is early, informal support and an open conversation, not a disciplinary process; disciplinary matters are handled separately. It is used when concerns about a student's health or wellbeing are first emerging.
18. A student concerned about a fellow student should discuss this with whoever they feel most comfortable with – a tutor, senior tutor, Residential Support Manager, administrator, Students' Union officer, or other staff member. That staff member will make an appropriate referral or discuss it directly with the student; the student will not be expected to handle it themselves.
19. A staff member who identifies a concern should raise it with the student compassionately, explaining the concern about their ability to study effectively. Staff may contact the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) to discuss whether this procedure is appropriate.
20. Stage 1 should clearly identify the nature of the concern and encourage the student to discuss it, including the potential impact on themselves and others. The student should be told the University has a duty of care to support their health and wellbeing, and given information on accessing professional support (e.g. the Wellbeing and Inclusivity Service, their GP).
21. The student and staff member should agree to meet again within 10 working days to review progress (the Stage 1 review meeting). Key points and agreed actions should be recorded, sent to the student within 5 working days (Appendix 1), and logged in the case management system; a copy also goes to the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) for monitoring.

22. The student should be told that if concerns continue, or current support isn't meeting their needs, the University may move to Stage 2.
23. If there is no response to contact, or the level of concern increases, the staff member should seek advice from the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee), which may include a decision to escalate to Stage 2.

Stage 2 – Coordinated and structured support

24. Stage 2 provides more structured and coordinated support where concerns are ongoing.
25. Stage 2 is carried out by the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee), working with other professional services and School staff. The Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) takes the final decision on whether to initiate Stage 2, after receiving information from relevant staff. Stage 2 will normally be initiated within 10 working days of that decision.
26. Initiation of Stage 2 requires a formal Stage 2 Support Letter, which should state:
    - that the student is now supported under Stage 2;
    - the specific reasons for enhanced support;
    - what may happen if the University is unable to put support in place.
27. The student will be invited to meet with the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) and the member of staff who raised the issue. Engaging with Stage 2 is essential; if engagement remains difficult, the University may need to consider Stage 3.
28. The University adopts a trauma-informed approach. Students may request that meetings take place in a neutral venue (not a corporate boardroom) or online. In sensitive cases (e.g. involving gender-based violence), the University will endeavour to accommodate requests about the gender of staff present for the Stage 2 meeting.
29. The purpose of the meeting is to understand the student's perception of the issues identified, including the impact of ill-health and/or behaviour on the student and/or the University community.
30. The student should be told the purpose of the meeting and advised of any documents needed. They may be accompanied – for example by a member of the Students' Union, a member of staff acting pastorally, a friend or family member. Disabled students may also be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. a sign language interpreter or mental health worker). At the meeting, the student will contribute to an action plan and formally agree actions to work towards. The Action Plan (Appendix 2) will be developed collaboratively, recognising the student's circumstances, capacity, and any barriers to engagement.
31. If an action plan cannot be agreed at Stage 2, the University may move to Stage 3 to ensure appropriate safeguarding and enhanced support.
32. A report of the meeting and its outcomes will be recorded by the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) and disseminated as appropriate.
33. The student should be told that if the Action Plan is not adhered to, or further cause for concern arises, their case could progress to Stage 3.

Stage 3 – Enhanced support and safeguarding

34. Stage 3 brings together enhanced support and safeguarding measures where risk of harm remains significant.
35. The Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) will contact the Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar (or nominee) to discuss the case. If a decision is made to proceed to Stage 3, the following applies.
36. The student will be informed in writing that their case will be reviewed under Stage 3, in a formal 'Notice of Stage Progression' that states the specific reasons for additional support.
37. The Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar (or nominee) will request that an Extraordinary Support to Study Panel be convened. The Panel will normally be convened within 10 working days of the request.
38. Before the Panel meets, the student will be told who will sit on it. If the student has a specific, reasoned objection to a panel member's involvement – for example, a genuine conflict of interest, or prior involvement in their case – they may raise this in writing with the Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar (or nominee), who will decide whether to accept the objection and adjust membership accordingly. A general preference against a member attending is not itself grounds for objection.
39. Those present at the Panel meeting would normally include:
    - Deputy or Pro Vice-Chancellor [Chair]
    - The Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar (or a nominated representative)
    - The Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee)
    - Relevant Academic/School representative(s)
    - Appropriate representatives from Student Services and Administration teams
    - The Students' Union President (or nominee)
    - Appropriate members of the Student Life directorate (including, where relevant, Accommodation Services)
    - The Head of Governance Services
    - An appropriate medical representative, where relevant and recommended by the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee)
    - A secretary, selected from the Student and Academic Services Directorate
40. The Panel will determine an agreed outcome, which will normally be one of the following:
    - No action is taken;
    - The student is permitted to continue on their course/programme, or an alternative course/programme, with or without conditions on their continued attendance (for example relating to behaviour or engagement with support) and/or additional support being put in place;

- An enhanced Action Plan is produced, outlining steps to improve the situation and any conditions on the student. Where possible this should be agreed with the student and formally documented in writing, including the implications of not adhering to it. This will be overseen by the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee);
- The student agrees to take a period of voluntary leave of absence;
- Suspension of studies on health and wellbeing grounds.

41. If the Panel recommends an enhanced Action Plan, the student will be invited to meet with the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) to discuss and agree the recommended actions, and may bring someone to support them. The plan will have a specified review date, and the implications of not adhering to it will be made clear. A copy will be sent to relevant staff in Student Services and Administration, relevant staff in other Professional Services (e.g. Accommodation Services), and the Senior Tutor.
42. Any suspension is intended to be temporary, proportionate, and focused on supporting the student's eventual return. The Panel must specify the expected duration of the suspension when it is agreed.
43. Where it becomes necessary to extend a suspension beyond its stated period, the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) will review whether it remains necessary and proportionate before it is extended (with Deputy or Pro Vice-Chancellor approval), regardless of whether the student has challenged it. This is in addition to the review that applies where a suspension extends beyond one academic year, set out under Return to Study, below.
44. Suspension of studies has practical consequences the student should be made aware of at the point of decision, including: eligibility for student finance in the current and future academic year(s); for international students, the impact on visa status, since the University is required to report changes in status to the Home Office; continued eligibility for University accommodation; and tuition fee liability. The University will signpost the student to the relevant specialist advice (financial support, immigration advice, accommodation services) alongside the decision.
45. If the agreed outcome is suspension of studies, the student will be notified in writing by the Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar (or nominee). In some cases, it may be necessary to inform the student verbally that the suspension is immediate, with a formal letter to follow.
46. Suspension of studies will only normally be used where all avenues of support have been exhausted, the student will not interrupt their studies voluntarily, or has not engaged with agreed support. It is intended to give the student time to address health and wellbeing issues before returning to resume study.
47. Where there is a current and significant risk of harm to the student or others, the Panel may agree suspension immediately, regardless of what support has previously been tried or how far through the stages the case has progressed. Speed matters in these cases, and this route exists precisely so that suspension is not delayed until other options have been attempted.

Return to Study

48. The Return to Study process is intended to support a sustainable and confident return, not to assess or challenge a student's health condition.
49. The University will make first contact with the student around 6 weeks before their suspension is due to end, to explain the Return to Study process and the evidence required.
50. A student wishing to return should notify the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) in writing, and by no later than 3 weeks before the suspension is due to end, provide information from a qualified professional (for example a GP, mental health practitioner, or other supporting professional) confirming what support or adjustments may be needed. Where possible this should use the standard Return to Study form.
51. A mandatory return meeting will then take place, normally within the final 3 weeks before the suspension ends, so that any adjustments are in place before the student resumes study. The purpose is to support the student's return, not to assess or challenge their medical condition.
52. The University will make every effort to allow the student to continue their studies, within the limits set by University Regulations. This may include repeating periods of study; whether this is feasible and reasonable will be decided case by case.
53. If the Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity considers the student is not able to return because they cannot meet these requirements, they can apply to the Deputy or Pro Vice-Chancellor to authorise an extension of the period of suspension.
54. A suspension, or series of suspensions relating to the same case, will normally trigger a review of whether the student can be supported to continue their studies where it extends beyond one academic year, or where the student does not engage at the return to study stage. Other circumstances may also prompt a review. The review will consider whether the current approach remains workable or whether the case should move towards withdrawal from the University. The student will be informed in writing of the outcome, with the right of appeal set out below.

Appeal Procedure

55. The appeal process exists to ensure fairness, proportionality and transparency in decision-making. Appeals against a decision of the Extraordinary Support to Study Panel (paragraph 40) may be submitted to the Vice-Chancellor, in writing, within 10 working days of the student receiving notification of the decision.
56. Appeals will only be considered on the following grounds:
    - there was a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the Panel that could have affected its decision;
    - exceptional personal circumstances related to the Panel's decision, and the appellant can explain why these were not made known to the Panel beforehand – circumstances that could have been reported but were not cannot later be cited as grounds for appeal;
    - the decision was one that no reasonable Panel could have reached on the evidence available, or the outcome was manifestly disproportionate to the circumstances of the case.

57. The Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) will investigate the concerns in whatever manner is appropriate to gather full and relevant information before deciding the appeal, normally within 10 working days of receiving it.

58. The Vice-Chancellor may reach one of the following conclusions:

    - The appeal is not upheld. The Vice-Chancellor will write to the appellant to confirm this and that the University's procedures are concluded.
    - The appeal is upheld. The Vice-Chancellor will arrange a further Extraordinary Support to Study Panel, normally with different membership, and will identify the grounds on which the appeal was upheld.

59. The decision of the Vice-Chancellor is final.

60. The Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) runs an independent scheme to review student complaints, which Bangor University is a member of. If a student remains unhappy with the outcome of this procedure, they may ask the OIA to review the case: https://www.oiahe.org.uk/students

61. Students must complete all steps in this Procedure before referring the matter to the OIA. A 'Completion of Procedures Letter' will be issued when a student reaches the end of these processes with no further internal steps available. If an appeal is not upheld, this letter will be issued automatically, normally within 28 days of that decision. If an appeal is upheld or partly upheld, a student can still ask for one if they want it.

62. To bring a complaint to the OIA, a student must submit a completed OIA Complaint Form within 12 months of the University's final decision (usually the date of the Completion of Procedures Letter).

Disciplinary Action

63. This Support to Study Procedure and the Student Discipline Procedure will normally run in parallel, rather than one taking precedence over the other. Where the available evidence indicates that the behaviour is linked to a health or wellbeing condition, and does not involve serious misconduct or a risk of harm to another person, this Support to Study Procedure may take priority; the University reserves the right to switch between procedures if new evidence comes to light.

64. Where an allegation involves serious misconduct, a risk of harm to another person, or a safeguarding concern, the Student Discipline Procedure and any interim measures (including suspension, exclusion or a no-contact requirement) will proceed regardless of any parallel Support to Study process. A student's account of a health or wellbeing condition does not delay or override disciplinary or safeguarding action in these cases, though it may still be considered within the Disciplinary Procedure itself.

Monitoring

65. Data will be collected on the use of this procedure as follows:

    - numbers of cases at each stage of the procedure,
    - numbers of suspensions of study,
    - final outcomes e.g. return to study.

66. All the above information will be monitored by reference to college and school, and by gender, ethnicity, disability, age, religion or belief, and sexual orientation where possible, to ensure a fair and consistent application of the procedure.

67. The Head of Wellbeing and Inclusivity (or nominee) will collect this data and will raise any issues which arise with the Director of Student Life.

Appendix 1

PRIFYSGOL BANGOR UNIVERSITY

Record of concern for a student's health and wellbeing		
Date:		
Students' name:		ID Number: 500_____
Contact details:	Local address:	
	Tel:	
	E-mail:	
Student's trusted contact:		
Students' GP: (if appropriate)		
Concern discussed with: (i.e. staff member)		
Summary of concerns:		

Any other information/ Comments:	

Declaration:

This declaration confirms shared understanding of the support being offered and next steps.

1. I understand the nature of the concern(s) raised by the university, as has been explained to me and outlined in this document, and the possible impact that this/these concern(s) may have upon my own ability to study at this time. I have participated in this meeting and had the opportunity to discuss the concerns raised regarding my wellbeing.
2. I acknowledge that the Action Plan above is designed to support my continued study, and I agree to work towards these goals.
3. I understand that if I am unable to engage with this support, or if risk of harm increase, the University may need to take further steps under the Support to Study Procedure (Stage 2/3) to ensure my safety and that of the community.
4. Data Processing Notice: I understand that this record will be stored confidentially. I acknowledge that in high-risk situations, the University may share necessary information with relevant internal services or external agencies (e.g., NHS, Emergency Services) where strictly necessary to protect my vital interests or the safety of others, in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018.

I am also signing to agree to attend a review meeting at the agreed time, in order to review the progress I have made.

Student's name_____ Signature_____

Staff member _____ Signature_____

Date _____ Review date_____

Appendix 2

Action Plan

Date:

Student Name: _____ **Staff Lead:** _____ **Student ID:** _____ **Supporter Present:** _____				
Summary of Concerns: ***Briefly outline the health/wellbeing concerns discussed and their impact of ability to study or the university community.***				
Statement of Objective/Goal				
What are the key needs of the student?				**How will success be measured?**

Student Signature: _____ Staff Signature: _____

Date: _____ Date: _____