



# Policy Statement and Guidelines for Student Mental Health Support

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# Student Mental Health Support – Policy Statement and Guidelines

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## **1.0 Background and Prevalence**

Student mental health remains a prominent issue within the higher education sector, supported with the publication of a number of sector guidance documents including most recently, for example, Step Change – Mentally Healthy Universities (Universities UK 2020), and Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education – Good Practice Guide (Universities UK 2015) . The increase in the number of students with complex and enduring mental health difficulties entering higher education continues and accompanying this increase is the ongoing level of national concern regarding the general mental well-being of students in higher education today.

With the majority broadly falling into the 17-25 age range, university students span an age range in which a broad spectrum of mental illness is seen. This age span also coincides with the transition from adolescence to adulthood and dependence to independence. It is recognised as a high-risk period for the onset of conditions such as schizophrenia and bi-polar disorder. People falling into this age group are also among the youngest to develop illnesses related to alcohol and drug misuse (Royal College of Psychiatrists, 2011).

## **2.0 Rationale**

Students arriving at Liverpool Hope University for the first time are likely to be adapting to significant changes in their lifestyle at a time when they are themselves adjusting to study. These may include moving to a new area, separation from family and friends, establishing new social networks amongst a diverse variety of people and living in new surroundings. Managing changed financial circumstances, living on a greatly reduced income and taking loans out for the first time is likely to be an alien experience for many students. For non-UK students this will also include living in a new country, adjusting to a different culture and communicating in a language in which they are not fluent. It is also likely that students will have to adjust to new teaching methods and ways of learning.

University life requires students to very quickly apply considerable personal discipline and self-motivation in order to successfully follow their chosen programme of study. For many students, these challenges are seen as stimulating and exciting opportunities, which may well have been one of the attractions of going to university. However, the speed and intensity of university life can place a strain on students' mental health, and so for some, these changes can give rise to stress, anxiety, isolation and distress. In addition, students may arrive at university with a pre-existing mental health problem, either declared or undeclared.

Mental health problems can beset students at any point in their academic career. The underlying causes vary from person to person and may not be directly related to their higher education experiences. Nonetheless, particular aspects of the higher education experience and environment can cause stress for some, which left untreated can seriously impair academic performance and lead to confused or disturbed behaviour.

Minor problems that interfere with a student's capacity to work may result in uncomfortable levels of distress and undermine academic progress. A more seriously disturbed student however, may experience emotional or psychological difficulties which are more persistent and which significantly inhibit their ability to participate fully in higher education without the appropriate professional support. Such students may cause anxiety and concern to fellow students, lecturers and other university staff. In the most serious cases, the suicide or attempted suicide of a student is an extreme (but fortunately rare) response to mental distress and a very disturbing event for all concerned, especially for those close to the individual involved.

## **3.0 Policy Statement Aims**

Consistent with its mission and values, Liverpool Hope University is committed to providing a supportive environment for all its students that is accessible and inclusive, enabling the opportunity for the personal development and education of the whole person, irrespective of physical capacity.

This policy statement aims to articulate a coherent institutional approach that will help students experiencing mental health difficulties to realise their academic potential, meet the requirements of their programme of study and get the most from the University experience. (Diagrams providing a summary overview of the University's

approach to student mental health, and a support process summarising the management of student mental health at LHU, form Appendix 6 and 7 respectively).

The University seeks to achieve these aims by:

- Providing a range of specialist support services including a Student Counselling Service, Mental Health & Well-being Service, Disability and Learning Support Service
- Providing a cross-university network of pastoral care including Residential Life Team (assisted by the Student Well-being Officer), Chaplaincy Team, and Personal Tutor arrangements within faculty departments
- Ensuring that the availability of support is widely publicised to both prospective and current students
- Encouraging both prospective and current students to disclose a disability, providing opportunities for disclosure at all points across the academic year
- Encouraging students with mental health difficulties to seek help and advice
- Establishing and periodically reviewing consistent university procedures for assisting students experiencing mental health difficulties
- Meeting the support and study needs of students experiencing mental health difficulties, through the provision of reasonable adjustments where appropriate
- Signposting/referring students to external services/agencies where appropriate, e.g. GPs, NHS services, voluntary sector services
- Respecting the confidentiality of personal and/or sensitive information provided by students experiencing mental health difficulty
- Providing mental health awareness-raising opportunities to university students and staff
- Providing consultation, guidance and appropriate training to university personnel involved in the teaching, pastoral care and support of students
- Providing a weekly programme of social activities to engage students outside of their studies
- Providing an annual programme of health and well-being events and activities
- Supporting a culture in which mental health difficulties are recognised and not stigmatised

#### **4.0 Limitations**

It is important to acknowledge that whilst the University is committed to providing a supportive environment, it recognises that its student well-being provision is not a mental health facility, nor is it a therapeutic community. University support services aimed at enabling students to remain engaged with their academic studies must not be confused with the treatment, therapy or on-going support that are the responsibility of the NHS and local health service provision. There are limits to the extent of the support available and the University is not responsible for the provision of services that may or may not already exist within the local community. University support provision is also not a crisis service, in that it is not available 'out of hours'.

With few exceptions, the students of Liverpool Hope University are adults and therefore primarily responsible for themselves and their actions, with the right to determine whether they make use of the support and advice services made available to them.

#### **5.0 Mental Health Definitions**

'Mental health' can be defined as the emotional and spiritual resilience which enables a person to enjoy life and deal with the pain, disappointment and sadness that the challenges and obstacles of life present. 'Mental illness' is a term which is generally used in a diagnostic capacity, and as a means of identifying illness in order to provide treatment.

The term 'mental health difficulty' is commonly used to describe temporary reactions to a painful event, stress or external pressures, symptoms of drug or alcohol use, lack of sleep or physical illness. This terminology has also been used to describe long-term psychiatric conditions that may have significant effects on an individual's functioning.

It is important to acknowledge that many people experience some of the symptoms of mental health difficulties at some points in their lives (e.g. disturbed sleep patterns, lack of motivation, stress, low mood, anxiety etc.) and indeed, some are typical reactions to a range of common life events. The degree of severity is reflected by the intensity of the symptoms, their duration and the impact on the individual's capacity to function. In addition to mental health conditions such as anxiety, stress, depression, schizophrenia, and eating disorders etc. deliberate self-harm and attempting suicide may also be considered as indicators of mental health difficulties.

For the purpose of this policy statement, the term 'mental health difficulty' refers to:

- Long term mental illnesses or psychiatric conditions which may be classified as a disability under the Equality Act (2010)
- Emerging mental health problems which may later develop into conditions which require ongoing support or intervention
- Temporary debilitating mental health difficulties or reactions which may impact on a student's ability to remain engaged with their studies or fulfil their academic potential

This policy statement is concerned with the needs of (and responsibilities to) any student attending Liverpool Hope University whose mental health difficulty, be it long term or temporary, may inhibit their ability to participate fully in higher education and/or reach their full academic potential.

## **6.0 Legal Considerations**

Whilst the University has a legal duty of care to all students, those who have disclosed their mental health needs are likely to fall within the legal definition of 'disabled'. The Equality Act (2010) recognises that people with substantial and enduring mental health problems amounting to a disability require reasonable adjustments to be made by the institution or body serving them. Such adjustments apply where a disabled person is placed at a substantial disadvantage in comparison to a non-disabled person (Equality Challenge Unit, 2012).

In addition to this, the Act places a responsibility on institutions to develop an 'Anticipatory Duty', requiring that general support mechanisms are in place for all prospective and current students who may have such a disability/difficulty. There is the potential for litigation if reasonable adjustments are not made in relation to students with a disability.

In summary, the University is required to:

- Have in place processes that are anticipatory of the needs of prospective and current students with a mental health difficulty that is identified as a disability
- Exercise a duty of care in supporting students with a mental health difficulty
- Make reasonable adjustments to support students with a mental health difficulty that is identified as a disability
- Take positive steps to promote students' mental well-being and reduce stigma around mental health

## **7.0 Responding to Students with Mental Health Needs**

### **7.1 Pre-admission, Entry and Induction**

The University encourages prospective students to disclose any disability and/or additional support need they may have, including a mental health difficulty, during the application stage or as soon as possible thereafter. Doing so ensures that prospective students are directed to the University's Learning Support Team, who will assist applicants in identifying any support needs and entitlements as quickly as possible.

The University also hosts various open and applicant visit days throughout the year where the Learning Support Team deliver disability support presentations and offer individual consultation appointments. This is a further opportunity for prospective students to receive information about the mental well-being and learning support Liverpool Hope University can offer its students.

If a prospective student discloses their mental health difficulty as a disability at the application stage, this information then becomes available to the Learning Support Team via university information systems. The Learning Support Team will then make initial contact with the applicant and provide them with information about the support the University can offer along with advice about eligibility and application for Disabled Students' Allowances.

Once the prospective student has communicated with the Learning Support Team, either prior to starting or upon arrival at the University, the Mental Health & Well-being Adviser will make contact with the student to offer advice on the support available and will arrange to meet with the student to assess their needs where appropriate.

Initial contact with the student often culminates in the production of a Learning Support Plan (LSP), where appropriate. The plan identifies the student's support needs, including any reasonable adjustments the University will enable to support the student throughout their studies. Once the student has approved the LSP and given consent to share, it will be made available to those responsible for enabling the adjustments and support identified within the LSP.

Once registered, all students are invited to attend various university induction activities. Specific information detailing what support is available regarding student mental well-being and disability services is covered during various university induction activities. Such activities include the Student Support & Well-being induction talks to all new students, information stands at the Fresher's Fair, and pop-up information stalls throughout the first week of term. Information regarding university support services is available to prospective and current students via the Liverpool Hope webpages. Support service information leaflets are also available online and from the Student Development & Well-being department.

It is important that from the outset, accurate information regarding the extent of the support available is given to those who disclose their additional needs. Therefore, to ensure effective information, advice and guidance is provided, it is essential that all published and web-based materials accurately reflect the support available by clearly outlining the University's support services. University promotional materials, admissions personnel and lecturers who have contact with prospective students should all encourage early disclosure of a disability and/or additional support need.

Where a member of staff is unclear regarding the type and/or extent of support available, rather than providing incomplete or inaccurate information to prospective or current students, the student should instead be signposted to Student Development & Well-being for further assistance.

Placing sole responsibility on the student to disclose at pre or post application stage is not enough. Support services and faculty departments should endeavour to offer a positive and supportive environment in which both applicants and students are encouraged and feel comfortable disclosing a disability or additional need.



## 7.2 Disclosure of Information

Duty of care, confidentiality and data protection responsibility ultimately lies with the University as an institution and unified body, rather than within its composite parts. By registering on a course, the student effectively enters into a contract with the whole university. The University is not in a position to guarantee absolute confidentiality in relation to student information. However, the rights of the individual will be respected, taking into account both the Equality Act and current data protection legislation, balanced against the interests of both the individual and wider university community.

## 7.3 Data Protection

A student's personal data includes practically any information about, or correspondence relating to a named student. Anyone working or volunteering for the University whose duties may include the handling of students' sensitive/personal data is required to observe current statutory data protection legislation and protocols. Data protection legislation applies to all formats in which information is kept and used. For example, in printed format, IT equipment, portable hard drives, pen drives, emails, handwritten notes or in any other way. Whilst verbal information is not directly addressed, certainly, discussions where personal or sensitive information regarding a student, and any written notes arising from such discussions, are subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act. All such information must, therefore, always be handled, processed and stored securely, following University protocols.

The University's Data Protection Policy and General Data Protection Regulations clearly defines the expectations placed upon university personnel. Further information can be found at:

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/media/gateway/itservices/documents/Data%20Protection%20Policy.pdf>

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/aboutus/governance/generaldataprotectionregulations/>

## 7.4 Confidentiality

Everyone has the right to privacy and confidentiality. However, maintaining confidentiality alongside appropriate disclosure of information is sometimes difficult to manage. When supporting a student who is experiencing mental health difficulties, situations may arise when it is necessary for a staff member to discuss the situation with a third party. As a general principle, if a student refuses or does not give consent, then information cannot be shared. However, there may be exceptional circumstances where there is a need to act without a student's permission, for example, where there is concern regarding an immediate risk of harm to the student or others.

In general, all personal data of a sensitive nature given verbally or otherwise 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 purposes of these guidelines is information given in confidence concerning, for example, a student's domestic or economic circumstances, personal or relationship issues, ill-health/mental health, or disabilities. It does not include, however, personal data that other university personnel would require in order to carry out their normal everyday duties, such as date of birth or home address.

In any situation where the duty of care to an individual, others, or any responsibility that is in the public interest, outweighs the commitment to maintain confidentiality then the necessary information should be shared. Where possible, try to obtain the student's consent but if they refuse, inform the student that due to the nature of the situation, you are required to share limited information. Advise the student what information you intend to share, the reason why, and whom you intend sharing it with.

Examples of the circumstances where it may be necessary to share information without consent, or it is impracticable to try to obtain it, include:

- Where the immediate welfare and/or well-being of a student, staff member or person(s) linked to that student

- Where there are serious grounds for concern regarding the student's mental well-being
- Where the student or others may be at risk of serious abuse, exploitation or extremist radicalisation
- Where the student's current or predicted behaviour, or health needs compromise the University's responsibilities to outside professional bodies and partner institutions (e.g. initial teacher training/social work/ partner placements etc.)
- Where there is immediate concern regarding the welfare and/or well-being of any person(s) under the age of 18
- Where there is immediate concern regarding the welfare and/or well-being of any person identified as vulnerable
- Where there is a possible threat to public safety/national security;
- Where to do so would result in the prevention of crime and/or acts of terrorism
- Where the student's behaviour is adversely affecting the safety/rights of others, especially university staff and students
- Where disclosure is required by law

### **7.5 Managing the Sharing of Sensitive Information**

Where it is practicable to do so, staff should always seek advice before sharing personal/sensitive information without consent, as full consideration of the particular circumstances is required and the advice of senior university staff may be necessary. Whenever in doubt, advice can always be sought without divulging the student's identity in the first instance.

Extreme caution is advised when sending emails containing information of a sensitive or personal nature regarding a student. Copying a multitude of colleagues into such emails is likely to be unnecessary and risks breaching confidentiality and data protection protocols. A student has the right to request to see any personal information held about them, including that which may have been disclosed to others, including information contained within email(s). Staff should, therefore, ask themselves a number of questions before sharing sensitive student information via email:

- Do all the people copied into the email really need to know this information?
- Was it made clear to the student who the information would be shared with and why?
- Did the student give their consent to share this information with all these other people?
- Will the student's immediate welfare/safety be at increased risk by not sharing the information with all these people?

If the answer to any of these questions is 'no' then staff are advised to either seek the student's consent, or take further advice before sharing any personal/ sensitive information without consent.

Staff are advised to inform a Head of Department or supervising manager in writing regarding any interaction with a student where there has been a disclosure of a sensitive or concerning nature, including any decisions or actions taken. Following the above guidelines will help maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality. All personal information should be stored securely, marked 'confidential' and should not be easily accessible to others. Although not recommended, if sending sensitive/personal information in printed format, the information should be sent in a sealed envelope marked 'private and confidential'.

### **8.0 University Student Support Services**

The University provides a range of services, advice and support to students experiencing mental health difficulties in a variety of ways. These services are located within and delivered by Student Development & Well-being and consist of several different areas of support.

## **8.1 Mental Well-being Services**

The mental well-being services consists of a team of Mental Health & Well-being Advisers and Counselling Therapists. The services they provide seek to enable students experiencing emotional/psychological difficulties to remain engaged with university life with minimal disruption to their studies.

## **8.2 Mental Health & Well-being Advisers**

The Mental Health & Well-being Advisers are professionally trained mental health practitioners offering direct, practical assistance to students experiencing mental health difficulties. These advisers are responsible for providing mental well-being assessments, advice, and where necessary, ongoing support to students. Advice and liaison between the student and wider university staff is also available from the Mental Health & Well-being Advisers and university staff working with students experiencing mental health difficulty can also access consultation support from these advisers.

Where liaison with external mental health and community services is necessary to ensure an adequate and appropriate response to student mental health needs/concerns, the Mental Health & Well-being Advisers are responsible for engaging in this role. Whilst liaison with external services is sometimes necessary, the Mental Health & Well-being Service at Hope is not a substitute for existing local services, but works in collaboration with other services in the wider community, where appropriate.

The Mental Health & Well-being Advisers also have a role in helping to maintain an inclusive university culture in which mental health difficulties are recognised positively and not stigmatised.

This is achieved in part by the delivery of mental health awareness-raising opportunities to university students and staff alike (e.g. mental health training workshops to university staff, campus wide publicity events to celebrate national Mental Health Days).

## **8.3 The Student Counselling Service**

The Student Counselling Service offers support to all registered students of the University. The Service also provides consultation to staff who may be concerned about a student's emotional or mental well-being. It is an open access service and all students are entitled to an initial meeting with a member of the Counselling Team. Should therapy be considered appropriate, time-limited interventions will be offered on an individual basis, employing a variety of counselling approaches including cognitive behavioural, integrative and humanistic therapies.

Counsellors are responsible for signposting students to appropriate services should the need arise during an initial consultation meeting or at any point during or after the end of ongoing therapy. The Student Counselling Service does not offer open-ended therapy, home visits or any other type of intervention that would be best dealt with by the relevant NHS or other external services. Students requiring longer-term therapy will be provided with information and advice about where they may access such support within the local area.

## **8.4 International Student Support Manager**

The International Student Support Manager is located within the International Unit and is responsible for providing both practical and pastoral advice and support to international students attending the University. Where there is concern regarding the emotional and/or mental well-being of an international student, the International Student Support Manager is responsible for signposting students to, or liaising with the Student Development and Well-being Team to enable appropriate support for any such student.

## **8.5 Liverpool Hope Students' Union**

The Student Union provides information, advice and guidance to students in areas including welfare benefits, student finances, academic appeals, and housing. Students facing financial or housing problems can often

experience high levels of stress and anxiety, which if left unchecked over a sustained period of time could significantly impact on the student's state of mental health and ability to engage fully with their studies. The Students' Union works in collaboration with Student Development and Well-being to support students experiencing such difficulties.

## **8.6 The Learning Support Team**

The Learning Support Team is responsible for the co-ordination of support for students with a disability, specific learning difference or enduring health condition. The Team, on behalf of the University actively encourages students to discuss any disability-related issues, including mental health difficulties, in order that support can be facilitated in a timely manner following disclosure. The Team adopts a person-centred approach to ensure that support is tailored to meet students' individual and changing needs. The Team is responsible for referring any student who discloses a mental health difficulty to the Mental Health & Well-being Team.

Learning Support Advisers may liaise with Mental Health & Well-being Advisers, International Student Support Manager, Counselling Service and faculty staff in order to facilitate appropriate guidance, support and reasonable adjustments for those experiencing a mental health difficulty. The type of support varies but may include:

- The production of a Learning Support Plan (an information source to help inform the relevant university staff of a student's specific support needs)
- Liaison with academic departments and placement teams
- Support for students in accessing Disabled Student Allowances
- Communicating student support needs to a variety of university services including the Exams Team, library staff and Accommodation Team

## **8.7 The Student Well-being Officer**

Based in Student Development & Well-being, the Student Well-being Officer (SWBO) provides welfare and well-being advice and assistance to students. Working in collaboration with the Residential Life Team, the SWBO provides an essential link between residential life and university support services. They are responsible for ensuring that any students experiencing a well-being and/or welfare difficulty are signposted to the appropriate support service within the University.

To support the general mental and physical well-being of the student population at Liverpool Hope, in collaboration with both university colleagues and external agencies, the SWBO is also responsible for enabling an annual schedule of health and well-being activities and events. Some of the activities include university mental health awareness days, personal health and fitness activities, advice and workshops on healthy eating and awareness raising activity around drug/alcohol abuse.

## **8.8 Well-being Drop-ins**

Any student who is experiencing difficulty with their mental well-being has access to a Well-being Drop-in. These drop-ins take place Monday to Friday during term-time and provide students with quick access to a brief consultation session with a mental well-being professional, without the need to wait for an appointment. During the drop-in, an assessment takes place in order to identify any immediate well-being risks and/or concerns. Depending on the outcome of the drop-in, students will be offered the appropriate mental well-being support from the Counselling and/or Mental Health and Well-being Service. In cases that are more serious or urgent, a student may be referred for support external to the University (e.g. local hospital mental health crisis team, or General Practitioner).

## **8.9 Monitoring Students Identified as Vulnerable or At Risk**

Mental well-being practitioners from Student Development & Well-being, representation from local NHS mental health services, and the Student Well-being Officer form the Risk Management Group. This group meets weekly

during term-time to discuss any associated risk factors relating to students identified as vulnerable or potentially at increased risk of harm. Such students may include, for example, those who have engaged in serious self-harm, expressed suicidal ideation, are in an abusive relationship, and/or are displaying ongoing signs of significant mental distress. Risk mitigation, further support actions and referral pathways are discussed during these meetings with the aim of minimising the risk of harm to such students and ensuring adequate monitoring, support, and where appropriate, onward referral.

## **9.0 University Staff Involved in Pastoral Support Activity**

In addition to the specialist services provided within Student Development & Well-being, other key university personnel have a pastoral responsibility that may lead to them encountering students experiencing emotional or psychological distress at varying levels.

### **9.1 Personal Tutors, Lecturers and Faculty Senior Academic Advisers**

Academic pressures can create significant stress and anxiety in students and it is often Personal Tutors, Lecturers or Faculty Senior Academic Advisers (FSAA) who students approach for advice and support when experiencing such difficulties. A strong relationship can often develop between students and their tutor, so when a student starts to display signs of significant emotional or psychological distress, it is often their tutors who are first to identify such problems.

Lecturers, Personal Tutors and FSAs are required to recognise their duty of care responsibility when identifying and responding to students in distress by encouraging the student to discuss the matter, making them aware of university support services and signposting the student to Student Development & Well-being where appropriate. Section 10 of this document provides further guidance on the roles and responsibilities of staff when responding to a student experiencing emotional or psychological difficulties.

### **9.2 Residential Life and Chaplaincy Teams**

A key role of the Residential Life Team is to offer pastoral support to students under their supervision who reside in university halls of residence. Senior Resident Tutors strive to maintain an environment and culture within halls that is supportive, inclusive and that provides students the opportunity to voice their needs and concerns.

From Arrivals Day to Graduation, Senior Resident Tutors develop an ongoing relationship with students where a sense of trust is established. This enables students to feel confident in turning to their Resident Tutor when they are in difficulty or where they have a particular pastoral or welfare need.

Resident Tutors and Chaplains may work one-to-one with vulnerable students, including those experiencing emotional or psychological distress, providing a listening ear when needed. Both are clear in their responsibility to support and signpost students to the appropriate specialist service within Student Development and Well-being in situations where there is concerns regarding a student's emotional or psychological health. Senior Resident Tutors also have a responsibility to support students when dealing with critical incidents occurring within halls of residence outside of normal university business hours. Further details of this responsibility are provided within Appendix 4 of this document.

### **9.3 Student Union - Vice-President Welfare**

Students experiencing emotional or personal difficulties may also approach the Students' Union (SU) for advice and support. The Vice-President Welfare (VPW) in the SU is responsible for ensuring that appropriate advice is provided to any students requesting assistance. The VPW will liaise with Student Development & Well-being where necessary to ensure that both they and students accessing the SU are fully aware of the specialist support services available within the University. The VPW is responsible for ensuring that all students accessing the SU in need of further support are signposted to Student Development & Well-being, where appropriate.

## 10.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Staff

Responsibility for the well-being of students is defined in general by a 'duty of care' of the institution for the safety of students. Liverpool Hope University exercises its duty of care in respect of all students, including those with mental health difficulties and to the staff involved in supporting students.

All University staff should respond to students experiencing mental health difficulties in a non-discriminatory, non-stigmatising and supportive manner. It is essential that staff are aware of, and make themselves fully familiar with the internal support services available within the University. Information regarding these services is available from Student Development & Well-being and within the University webpages via the Staff and Student Gateway.

The following guidelines are intended to provide university staff with suitable interventions to deal with a range of situations. However, certain situations, especially crisis situations, are not always straightforward and can be difficult to deal. A flexible approach is therefore essential, always seeking appropriate advice where necessary. If a staff member becomes aware of, or a student discloses a mental health difficulty or significant emotional/psychological distress, it is vital that the staff member takes any disclosure seriously and acts swiftly on their concern. Avoiding the situation or pretending nothing is wrong is likely to perpetuate the issue and could lead to more serious problems if left unchecked.

When dealing with a mental health disclosure, staff should listen to the student in order to quickly identify whether the matter requires any further action. A flowchart guide on responding to students experiencing mental health difficulties can be found in Appendix 1 of this document. A text-only version of the staff information leaflet, Student Mental Well-being - a Guide for Staff, can be found in Appendix 5 of this document.

In non-urgent situations, staff should encourage the student to discuss the problem, reassure the student and make them aware of the University's support services. Staff should then signpost the student to Student Development & Well-being in a timely manner. Doing so is likely to reduce the potential impact on the student's academic performance and general feelings of well-being.

Students sometimes find it difficult to take the first step to accessing support services, so where a student is happy to accept help, staff should do what they can to assist the student with this process. This could involve assisting the student to contact Student Development & Well-being, or communicating on the student's behalf. When assisting students in this way, it is always helpful to provide them with details of where they need to attend or who to contact.

It is advisable and good practice to engage in follow-up activity to check that the student has accessed further assistance. This is best achieved by arranging a follow-up meeting with the student to review the situation. If the student is unwilling to accept the offer of help at this point, it should be made clear to them that help is still available should they change their mind. The student should also be advised of the potential academic and personal implications of not seeking appropriate support. The staff member should then continue to monitor the situation whilst avoiding unnecessary intrusion.

In cases where a student is unwilling to accept the offer of help but the staff member has concerns regarding the student's current state of mental well-being, advice should be sought from Student Development and Well-being at the earliest opportunity. This can be done without identifying the student's identity in the first instance to preserve the student's anonymity. However, should further action be required, additional information regarding the student may be required.

Staff with significant concern regarding the immediate safety/well-being of a student should avoid simply signposting or referring the student to Student Development & Well-being. They should instead deal with the matter as an urgent priority. Inform the student of your concern and your intention to share your concerns with Student Development and Well-being.

## **10.1 Urgent Situations**

Although mental health emergencies happen infrequently, it is important for all staff to be aware of how to respond should such a situation occur. Whilst not an exhaustive list, urgent/emergency situations may arise when:

- There is an immediate risk of student self-harm, or harm to others
- The student expresses ideas of suicide
- The student exhibits rapid, extreme changes in behaviour and/or mood
- The student expresses ideas not based on reality
- There is a severe lack of personal functioning
- There is a severe and/or sudden personal withdrawal
- The student becomes a serious threat to staff and/or students

These situations are outside the remit of university employees' normal duties and require the involvement of the University's Mental Well-being Team, Campus Security, or in some cases, the emergency services.

When dealing with an urgent situation or emergency during normal business hours, if the student is with the staff member and is readily accepting support, where possible, the staff member dealing with the situation should keep the student with them whilst contacting Student Development & Well-being for assistance. Alternatively, where appropriate, the staff member may accompany the student to Student Development and Well-being, on the first floor of the Gateway Building for assistance.

Where a student is reluctant to stay with or accept help, staff should avoid compromising their own or others' personal safety whilst dealing with an urgent situation and the appropriate steps should be taken in order to remain safe, seeking assistance from a colleague where possible and contact campus security.

If the student is not with the member of staff (e.g. communication is via telephone or video call, etc.), it is important to ascertain the exact location of the student, advising them to remain where they are whilst further assistance is sought. If on a video call, ideally, where possible, try to stay on with the student whilst contacting Student Development and Well-being. If on a telephone call with the student, inform them that you, or someone from Student Development and Well-being will ring them back. Then contact Student Development and Well-being immediately for further advice on 0151 291 3427 / 0151 291 3000.

In the unlikely event that you are unable to make contact with Student Development and Well-being, contact the emergency services for assistance.

## **10.2 Emergency Situations Outside of Normal Hours**

In the event of an emergency situation that takes place outside of normal business hours where there is an immediate threat to the safety of a student or others, ascertain the exact location of the student and contact the emergency services. Student Development and Well-being should be informed of the incident at the earliest opportunity.

## **10.3 Emergency Situations in Halls of Residence Outside of Normal Hours**

In the event of an emergency situation occurring within university halls of residence outside of normal hours, the Campus Security Team will contact the Senior Resident Tutor on duty for assistance and where necessary, the emergency services. Outside of the Senior Resident Tutor duty hours, the Campus Security Team will be responsible for dealing with the situation, contacting the duty Senior Resident Tutor, who in turn will contact the Designated Manager for further advice regarding the incident.

Further information regarding critical incidents occurring in halls of residence can be found in the Guidelines for Critical Incidents Occurring Outside of Office Hours (Appendix 4).

#### **10.4 Requirements for Field Trips, Placements and Study Abroad**

Field trips and periods of study abroad may present a range of challenges for students with a mental health difficulty. Where a student with an identified mental health difficulty is following a programme of study that involves field trips/period(s) away, the required risk assessment process should be followed. In addition to this, where necessary, the relevant member of staff within the school/department should liaise with Student Development and Well-being in order to ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are identified and in place for the event. Ideally, discussions and planning should take place at the earliest opportunity and least 2 months prior to a field trip and at least 6-12 months prior to a year abroad.

With regard to work and practice placements, the placement provider has a duty of care whilst students are at the placement location. However, the relevant member of university placement staff responsible for allocating and supervising students in their placement should engage in the necessary risk assessment process. Where the student has an LSP, the placement staff member should liaise with Student Development and Well-being to ensure that any ongoing support that may be required is in place during the placement.

Staff must pay due regard to confidentiality/data protection issues and always seek the student's consent to share information with relevant third parties. It should be made clear to the student the need to share limited information, what information will be shared and why. Where a student refuses to give consent to share information, the duty of care to the student and/or others must be considered.

If by authorising the student's attendance on a field trip, placement or study abroad -without making prior arrangements regarding the student's mental health difficulty/disability- the student or others would be placed at a foreseeable risk of harm, then any decision must be delayed and further advice sought from the relevant manager.

#### **10.5 Recognising Professional Boundaries and Limitations**

It is important for staff to understand and recognise the professional boundaries and limitations of their role. Staff are not required to assess or diagnose a mental health problem, nor are they required to take sole responsibility for supporting the needs of students experiencing mental health difficulty.

Non-specialist staff attempting to support a student experiencing mental health distress, without seeking the relevant advice, may inadvertently do more harm than good. Staff should, therefore, always seek advice from Student Development and Well-being if they have concerns about a student's mental well-being and any ongoing support needs the student may have.

#### **10.6 Staff Well-being**

In order to be effective in recognising, guiding and supporting students who are experiencing mental health difficulties, staff themselves need to have the personal resilience, guidance and support to help them undertake their role. Staff are therefore encouraged to take the necessary steps in order to maintain their own personal well-being and to seek advice where appropriate. The University's Personnel Team can assist any staff member who may require advice or assistance in relation to their own personal well-being and/or health.

#### **11.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Students**

All students have a part to play in maintaining their mental health and well-being. This includes developing self-awareness regarding their own mental health needs, taking responsibility for their self-care, especially in respect of adequate nutrition, rest, sleep, and social activities. This is supported by an annual schedule of health and well-being activities coordinated by the Student Well-being Officer.

Students are under no legal obligation to disclose a disability or ongoing medical/mental health condition/difficulty (unless this is a specific requirement of professional courses, e.g. certain Education and Social



Work courses). However, non-disclosure may result in the student not receiving appropriate support, which in turn, could affect both their personal well-being and academic progress.

If a student experiences any form of mental health difficulty throughout the course of their studies, it is in their best interests to seek assistance at the earliest opportunity. They can do this by making contact with Student Development and Well-being, who will provide them with appropriate advice and support. (See also, 'Where to go for help and support' - Appendix 2).

Students experiencing mental health difficulties may be eligible for Disabled Student Allowances (DSA). Where a student may be eligible for DSA, it is their responsibility to make an application in a timely manner. This will ensure that appropriate support is in place at the earliest opportunity, thus minimising any disruption to their studies and/or university experience.

In cases where a student requests specialist mental health support from the University that would normally be provided via DSAs, the student will be required to apply for DSA whilst a decision to provide interim support is considered.

The University will endeavour to make reasonable adjustments in order to support the learning and teaching of students with a mental health disability/difficulty. The Learning Support Team in Student Development and Well-being is responsible for providing information, advice and guidance to prospective and current students in relation to DSAs and any reasonable adjustments and support that may be available. Students may be asked to provide medical evidence to support their request for reasonable adjustments and/or additional support. This will normally be in the form of a letter from their GP or other medical practitioner with knowledge of the student's medical diagnosis/history.

Both prospective and current students are expected to be proactive in seeking help at the appropriate time and should familiarise themselves with both university and local support services. This is particularly important for prospective students who are already engaged with mental health services in their home location and need to transfer support to NHS mental health services local to the University.

Students experiencing mental health difficulty should always keep the relevant university staff informed where they are unable to fulfil their academic commitments, as in many cases, support and assistance may be available.

As GP's are often the first point of contact if a student becomes unwell or requires or specialist medical referral, it is recommended that all students take up the opportunity to register with a local GP practice during Arrivals Day, or at the earliest opportunity, (see 'Where to go for help and support' - Appendix 2).

Students who become concerned about a fellow student's mental well-being should let them know about the support available within the University and encourage them to seek help at the earliest opportunity. Where the concern relates to the immediate safety or well-being of that student, this should be reported to Student Development and Well-being at the earliest opportunity. Concerned students can seek advice in confidence from an appropriate member of university staff, e.g. a Personal Tutor/Lecturer, Chaplain, Student Development and Well-being, or if living in university halls, a Senior Resident Tutor.

## **12.0 Absence from University Due to Continued ill Health**

There may be occasions when a student's mental health deteriorates to such a degree that they are unable to engage in university life appropriately. If this occurs, the student, or their main carer, should be encouraged to keep university staff informed of their progress in order that appropriate support can be arranged. Both the student and relevant university staff should consider alternative options to enable the student to remain engaged with their studies, wherever possible.

## **12.1 Student Admission to Hospital**

Should a student's mental health condition become such that admission to hospital is required, Student Development and Well-being should be informed of the situation. The Senior Mental Health & Well-being Adviser will endeavour to maintain contact with the student for as long as practically possible whilst they remain in hospital. With the student's consent, the Mental Health & Well-being Adviser will liaise with the relevant university staff regarding the student's progress and plans to return to university. The Adviser will also liaise with faculty staff to enable the student to continue with their university work, wherever necessary.

If a student returns to university following an extended period of absence due to hospitalisation, their reintroduction onto the course should be managed sensitively. Hospital staff can normally be expected to contact general practitioners about students discharged from the Accident & Emergency Department or inpatient wards with significant mental health difficulties. Student patients will often be willing for hospital staff or GPs to contact university well-being staff as appropriate. Where this is the case, the University's Senior Mental Health & Well-being Adviser will liaise with the GP and/or other community mental health services in order to aid the ongoing support of the student.

Where the student is still in a period of recovery and may require additional support, the Senior Mental Health & Well-being Adviser will be responsible for meeting with the student to:

- Discuss their support needs
- Arrange a meeting with the Learning Support Team where appropriate to discuss any reasonable adjustments that may be required, including the production of a LSP
- Enable supported transition back into their studies.

## **12.2 Interruption of Studies**

If it becomes clear that a student's mental health condition is seriously affecting their ability to engage fully with their academic work and/or university life, interrupting studies on ill-health grounds may be considered as an option. The University will respond both supportively and flexibly to any request to suspend studies on the grounds of ill-health and it is usually possible for a student to interrupt his or her course of study to enable a period of rest and recovery. A student will not be disadvantaged on the resumption of his/her studies because of an agreed interruption due to mental health difficulty.

An appropriate period of recovery can be negotiated but any interruption will usually be granted for a maximum of one year. The University may require medical evidence to confirm that the student is fit and able to return to the academic demands of university life upon their return.

Before deciding to interrupt studies, change programme or withdraw from their studies, students should be encouraged to take advice from as many sources as possible. The Faculty Senior Academic Adviser will be a particularly useful source of help and advice and will be able to explain any implications for assessment and accumulation of credit towards the student's qualifications. Faculty staff may also be able to advise on part-time modes of study or transfers to other programmes within the University, if available.

In addition, advice can also be sought from the Mental Health & Well-being Team, the Learning Support Team, Student Finance Team and the Students' Union. The Student Finance Team and the Students' Union will also be able to provide information on the possible financial implications of the various options available.

If, having taken advice, a student decides that the best thing is to interrupt studies, change or withdraw from a programme of study, where possible, the student is required to meet with their Faculty Senior Academic Adviser to formalise this decision. The FSAA is responsible for guiding the student through the process and ensuring that the proposed arrangements are managed and recorded appropriately.

### **12.3 Temporary Exclusion/Suspension in Serious Situations**

In serious situations where a student's ongoing mental health difficulties are having a significant and adverse effect on themselves and/or others in the university community, a voluntary temporary leave of absence or temporary suspension/exclusion may be considered. In some cases, the University's Fitness to Study process may be enabled. This is a supportive process which focusses on ensuring that the student and others concerned are supported appropriately. Due care and consideration for the student's welfare and well-being will be exercised during the process, and where possible, the student will be involved as much as possible in any decisions that need to be made.

Further information regarding the University Fitness to Study process can be found here:

[https://www.hope.ac.uk/media/gateway/studentgateway/supportandwellbeing/studentadministrationdocuments/t4\\_631632\\_Media.pdf](https://www.hope.ac.uk/media/gateway/studentgateway/supportandwellbeing/studentadministrationdocuments/t4_631632_Media.pdf)

### **12.4 Returning From an Interruption of Studies**

Returning to the pressures of academic work and university life whilst or after recovering from a mental health illness can be difficult. Students should be advised to make contact with the University Mental Health & Well-being Team and their academic department in good advance time ahead of their return from an interruption of studies. The Senior Mental Health & Well-being Adviser will take responsibility for liaising with the relevant support services, and where appropriate the academic department, to ensure a smooth transition back into studies for the student. Students can also access help and advice from university support services and their academic staff regarding any support needs they have upon their return.

### **13.0 Fitness to Practise**

Professionally oriented programmes (e.g. Social Work/Initial Teacher Training) are subject to their own fitness to practise requirements as specified by the bodies that govern the respective professions (i.e. Department for Education and the Health and Care Professions Council). Applicants for professional qualifications are therefore required to comply with the relevant fitness to practise requirements.

Where a prospective or current student's mental health gives rise to concern about their suitability to undertake a particular professional programme, the University may refer the student for a formal Occupational Health Assessment, conducted by an independent third party occupational health service provider. The Occupational Health advice provided following the assessment will be discussed with the student, senior faculty staff and the Senior Learning Support Adviser from Student Development & Well-being. The aim of discussion is to consider suitability for the programme and any reasonable adjustments that can be made to support any additional needs the student may have.

Further information regarding the University Fitness to Practise Policy can be found here:

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/media/gateway/studentgateway/supportandwellbeing/studentadministrationdocuments/Fitness%20to%20Practise%20Policy%20Apr2017.pdf>

### **14.0 Disciplinary Procedures**

All students attending Liverpool Hope are subject to the University's Code of Student Discipline. However, the management of potential disciplinary matters involving a student with mental health difficulties presents a further dimension to the disciplinary process. There is a requirement to consider all of the factors involved in the disciplinary matter prior to instigating any procedures, including those directly related to the mental health difficulty, whilst respecting confidentiality issues regarding the individual's health.

Although normally not party to the disciplinary process, the Senior Mental Health & Well-being Adviser is available to assess the student's mental health status and can give an opinion as to whether this has been a contributing factor. In such cases, alternative actions may be considered, including reviewing the level of support required

regarding the student's mental health needs. In all cases where a student is identified as having mental health difficulties, university staff involved in the disciplinary process are advised to pay regard to the particular circumstances and seek advice from the Mental Health & Well-being Adviser.

Whilst every effort is made to help and support students in need, the duty of care owed by the University to the wider student and staff body takes priority where the behaviour of a student with mental health difficulties causes significant disturbance or distress to others. Where a student's support has been appropriately enabled in relation to their particular mental health needs, should the student's behaviour persist, the University Fitness to Study process and/or further disciplinary procedures may be considered.

### **15.0 Training and Support for staff**

The University is committed to promoting and supporting positive mental health amongst the student and staff population. Specific training and consultation is provided for staff involved in key pastoral support roles. The Mental Health & Well-being Team are all qualified practitioners who engage in regular continuing professional development activities to remain effective in their roles. The University also enables regular professional supervision for all members of the Mental Health & Well-being Team. Mental health awareness training is also offered to staff in the wider university community via the Personnel CPD offering.

#### **References:**

Universities UK (2015) - Student Mental Wellbeing in Higher Education – Good Practice Guide.

<http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Pages/student-mental-wellbeing-in-higher-education.aspx>

Universities UK (2020) - Step Change: Mentally Healthy Universities

<https://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/policy-and-analysis/reports/Documents/2020/uuk-stepchange-mhu.pdf>

Royal College of Psychiatrists (2011) - Mental Health of Students in Higher Education

[https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/better-mh-policy/college-reports/college-report-cr166.pdf?sfvrsn=d5fa2c24\\_2](https://www.rcpsych.ac.uk/docs/default-source/improving-care/better-mh-policy/college-reports/college-report-cr166.pdf?sfvrsn=d5fa2c24_2)

Equality Challenge Unit (2012) Equality Act 2010: Implications for colleges and HEIs.

<http://www.ecu.ac.uk/publications/equality-act-2010-revised>

Policy Statement and Guidelines last updated - Dec 2020

**Is the matter an emergency?**

(i.e. do any of the following apply?)

- The student may be at risk of harming themselves or others
- There is a concern regarding risk of suicide
- The student expresses ideas not based on reality
- The student is exhibiting uncharacteristic/strange behaviour
- There is a severe lack of personal functioning
- There is a severe and/or sudden personal withdrawal
- The student presents a serious threat to other students/staff.

Y  
E  
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Normal office hours?

NO

Y  
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**In an emergency:****If you are with the student:**

☑ Try to keep them with you and contact Student Development and Well-being for assistance on: \* (0151) 291 3427.

Or

☑ Accompany the student to Student Development & Well-being (1<sup>st</sup> floor Gateway Building) for help

☑ If the student is in a heightened state of distress and/or is reluctant to receive your help/stay with you, seek the assistance of a staff colleague where possible and try to keep the student with you, if it is safe to do so. Contact the relevant Security Lodge immediately for assistance; then contact Student Development and Well-being for further advice on: \* (0151) 291 3427.

**Security Lodge Tel. No's****Hope Park** 0151 291 3800**Creative** 0151 291 3700**Aigburth** 0151 727 7262 or 07736 106 185**If you are not with the student:**

☑ Ascertain their exact location, ask the student to remain where they are and contact SDW on: \* 291 3427. If on a Zoom call, ideally, stay on with the student until further advice is received; if on a telephone call, tell the student that you, or someone from SDW will ring them back, then contact SDW immediately for assistance.

NO

**Out of hours:****For students residing in halls of residence:**

Contact the relevant Security Lodge for assistance. They will contact the relevant SRT/manager and emergency services, where necessary.

**Security Lodge Tel. No's****Hope Park** 0151 291 3800**Creative** 0151 291 3700**Aigburth** 0151 727 7262

or

07736 106 185

**For students living off-campus:**

Ensure that you have the exact location of the student and contact 999 emergency services. Report the incident to Student Development and Well-being at the earliest opportunity.

**Non-emergency:**

(i.e. where there is no concern about an immediate risk of harm to student or others)

**If the student will accept help:**

- Listen to the student's concerns
- Reassure the student that they have done the right thing sharing their concerns
- Inform the student about the University support services available within Student Development & Well-being
- Advise the student to make an appointment with Student Development & Well-being at the earliest opportunity; **OR** ask the student if they would like you to make a referral on their behalf
- Arrange a follow-up meeting with the student to check the situation and monitor the situation
- Contact Student Development and Well-being on ext: 3427 or sdw@hope.ac.uk

**If the student will not accept help:**

- Make it clear to the student that help is available should they change their mind
- Seek further advice from the Student Development and Well-being
- Monitor the situation without intrusion

**Good practice:**

- Try to seek the student's consent to share your concerns with SDW (although consent is not essential where there is significant concern about immediate risk of harm)
- Seek the help of a colleague/campus security if necessary
- Manage any sensitive information carefully. If there is a need to share information, limit what is shared and who it is shared with, on a 'need to know basis'
- Monitor the situation and keep Student Development and Well-being informed
- Seek support from [Personnel](#) if you have been affected by the situation (0151 291 )

**\* During periods of lockdown:**

Ring: 07734 879 015 for Student Development and Well-being

Or

Main switchboard (0151) 291 3000 if the mobile number is unavailable.

## Appendix: 2

### Where to go for help and support at Hope

**Student Development & Well-being** - Gateway Building (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JD.

**Tel:** 0151 291 3427

**Email:** [sdw@hope.ac.uk](mailto:sdw@hope.ac.uk)

Student Development & Well-being provide a number of specialist services to support the development, health and well-being of the student population at Liverpool Hope. These services range from careers and employability, counselling, mental health support, welfare benefits advice and learning/ disability support. Services are usually offered on an appointment basis and all of the well-being services provide short daily drop-in sessions also.

**Student Well-being Officer** - Gateway Building (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JD.

**Tel:** 0151 291 3427

**Email:** [sdw@hope.ac.uk](mailto:sdw@hope.ac.uk)

The Student Well-being Officer is the main liaison/advisory link between the Residential Life Team and University well-being support services and is responsible for providing advice, risk assessment/risk monitoring and support interventions to students residing in halls of residence. The Student Well-being Officer is also responsible for the planning and delivery of an annual programme of events focussed on increasing student awareness and behaviour in relation to the maintenance of positive health and well-being. The Student Well-being Officer is also the named contact for students who are identified as being care leavers, estranged, or adult carers.

**Mental Health & Well-being Service** - Gateway Building (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JD.

**Tel:** 0151 291 3427

**Email:** [sdw@hope.ac.uk](mailto:sdw@hope.ac.uk)

The Mental Health & Well-being Adviser provides advice and ongoing support to students experiencing a wide range of common mental health conditions including, depression; stress; anxiety disorder; low self-esteem; sleeping problems; feelings of isolation; eating/body image disorders; and self-harm issues. The service also provides advice and support to staff who may be working with students with a mental health condition.

**Student Counselling Service** - Gateway Building (1<sup>st</sup> Floor), Hope Park, Liverpool L16 9JD.

**Tel:** 0151 291 3427

**Email:** [sdw@hope.ac.uk](mailto:sdw@hope.ac.uk)

The Student Counselling Service provides help and advice to students who may be experiencing personal and/or emotional issues. The service can help with a wide range of issues including, academic worries/pressure; relationship problems; feelings of isolation; confidence issues; panic attacks; bullying/harassment; and family problems.

**Learning Support Team**

**Tel:** 0151 291 3427

**Email:** [sdw@hope.ac.uk](mailto:sdw@hope.ac.uk)

The Learning Support Team can provide advice and support for students with a mental health difficulty, whether the condition is temporary or more enduring. The Team can assist students in a number of ways including, providing guidance with applications for the Disabled Students' Allowances; creating a Learning Support Plan to inform lecturers of students particular needs in relation to their condition; arranging additional support where necessary, e.g. study coach, note-taker etc.

**International Student Support Manager**

**Tel:** 0151 291 3274

**Email:** [CRAWFOC2@hope.ac.uk](mailto:CRAWFOC2@hope.ac.uk)

The International Student Support Manager is responsible for supporting all international students, providing information, advice, signposting and assistance covering a range of areas including: orientation; pastoral support; medical/health issues; accommodation; social/cultural events; trips and visits off-campus.

**The Chaplaincy Service/Listening Service****Tel:** 0151 291 3545**Email:** [chaplaincy@hope.ac.uk](mailto:chaplaincy@hope.ac.uk)

University Chaplains come from different Christian denominations and support all students who encounter a range of emotional and life issues including separation from home, personal and relationship issues, pressures from peers groups, disappointments, isolation and conflicts. Chaplains live out the University values of 'faith, hope and love' and express this in a particular way by listening to students who want to talk about life issues which include social, intellectual and spiritual matters. The Chaplaincy also provides a listening service for students who simply wish to talk to someone who is able to listen objectively and without judgement. The listening service is not counselling or therapy and many students find the service very helpful and supportive when they need somebody to talk to.

**Liverpool Hope Nightline**Instant Message service available at: <https://liverpoolhopenightline.carrd.co/>

Liverpool Hope Nightline is a listening and information service, run by students for students. They provide a confidential, anonymous; non-judgemental, non-directional and non-advisory service. Until local restrictions are relaxed, they will be operating as an IM service with the intention of our phone lines returning once safe to do so. Nightline runs every Friday-Sunday, from 10pm to 2am, during term time.

**The Local GP Surgeries linked to Liverpool Hope who attend each campus to register students during University Arrivals Day:**

Students residing in Austin, Kitty Wilkinson, Oscar Romero, Josephine Bhakita, Catherine Booth, St Julie's and Josephine Butler Halls are encouraged to register with:

**Rutherford Medical Centre**

1 Rutherford Road  
Mossley Hill  
Liverpool  
L18 0HJ  
T: 0151 722 1803

Students residing in Angela, Newman, Teresa, and Wesley Halls are encouraged to register with:

**Valley Medical Centre**

75 Hartsbourne Avenue  
Liverpool  
L25 1RY  
T: 0151 722 2744

Students residing at Creative Campus are encouraged to register with:

**Islington House Medical Centre**

45 Everton Road,  
Liverpool,  
L6 2EH  
T: 0151 317 8600

## Appendix: 3

### External Support Agencies/Helplines

#### **Student Space**

Student Minds have developed a new platform, Student Space, collaboratively with services, higher education professionals, researchers and students to make it easier for you to find the support that you need during the coronavirus pandemic.

Phone: [0808 189 5260](tel:08081895260) (3pm-midnight)

Text: Text 'STUDENT' to 85258 (24hr)

Email: [students@themix.org.uk](mailto:students@themix.org.uk) (24hr, response within 24hrs)

Webchat: <https://studentspace.org.uk/support-services/webchat-support> (4-11pm)

Website: <https://studentspace.org.uk/>

#### **The Samaritans**

Confidential support for people experiencing feelings of distress or despair.

**Phone:** 116 123 (24-hour helpline)

**Text:** 07725 90 90 90

**Website:** [www.samaritans.org.uk](http://www.samaritans.org.uk)

**Email:** [jo@samaritans.org](mailto:jo@samaritans.org) (aims to respond within 12 hours)

#### **Saneline**

A national out-of-hours telephone helpline for anyone coping with mental illness, whether they are sufferers, carers, or concerned relatives or friends.

**Phone:** 0300 304 7000 4:30pm to 10:30pm

**Website:** [www.sane.org.uk](http://www.sane.org.uk)

#### **PAPYRUS, HOPElineUK**

PAPYRUS supports teenagers and young adults who are feeling suicidal.

**Phone:** 0800 068 41 41 (9pm-midnight, 365 days a year)

**Website:** [www.papyrus-uk.org](http://www.papyrus-uk.org)

**Email:** [pat@papyrus-uk.org](mailto:pat@papyrus-uk.org)

**Text:** 07860 039 967

#### **The Mix**

The Mix is the UK's leading support service for young people. They aim to help provide help and advice covering a broad range of issues. The Mix can be contacted in a number of ways via their online chat, email and text platforms, or their confidential helpline.

**Phone:** [0808 808 4994](tel:08088084994) (every day between 4pm-11pm)

**Text:** 'THEMIX' to 85258 (24hr)

**Website:** [themix.org.uk/get-support](http://themix.org.uk/get-support)

#### **Students Against Depression**

Sometimes the world can overwhelm us. Students Against Depression provides you with a calm environment and the resources to help you find a way forward - a website offering advice, information and guidance to those affected by low mood, depression and suicidal thinking. **Website:** [www.studentsagainstdepression.org](http://www.studentsagainstdepression.org)



## YoungMinds

The YoungMinds Crisis Messenger text service provides free, 24/7 crisis support across the UK. Free to use and confidential.

**Text:** YM to 85258

## CALM – Campaign Against Living Miserably

The Campaign Against Living Miserably (CALM) is leading a movement against suicide. Every week 125 people in the UK take their own lives. And 75% of all UK suicides are male. CALM exists to change this.

**Phone:** 0800 58 58 58 (5pm-midnight, 365 days a year)

**Webchat:** <https://www.thecalmzone.net/help/webchat> (5pm-midnight, 365 days a year)

**Website:** <https://www.thecalmzone.net/>

## Self Injury Support

Support for women and girls affected by self-injury, trauma and abuse.

**Phone:** 0808 800 8088

**Email:** [tessmail@selfinjurysupport.org.uk](mailto:tessmail@selfinjurysupport.org.uk) (7pm-9:30pm, Tue-Thur)

**Text:** 07537 432444 (7pm-9:30pm, Tue-Thur)

**Webchat:** <https://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk/Pages/FAQs/Category/webchat-support> (7pm-9:30pm, Tue-Thur)

**Website:** <https://www.selfinjurysupport.org.uk>

## James' Place

(Liverpool based, male-only service) Open Monday to Friday 9am-6pm.

**Phone:** 0151 303 5757 (24/7)

**Text:** JP to 85258

**Website:** <https://www.jamesplace.org.uk>

## NHS 111

Available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

NHS 111 is a fast and easy way to get the right help, whatever the time. You can call 111 when you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency. Calls are free from landlines and mobile phones.

### **Call 111 if:**

- you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency
- you think you need to go to A&E or need another NHS urgent care service
- you don't know who to call or you don't have a GP to call
- you need health information or reassurance about what to do next

## Local Accident & Emergency

In case of an emergency present yourself at your local A&E Hospital or ring 999.

## Appendix 4

### Guidelines for Responding to Critical Incidents Occurring Outside of Office Hours

#### **Definition:**

For the purpose of this guidance, a critical incident is described as a situation which warrants the calling of the emergency services to a campus in relation to a student residing in University halls of accommodation. A critical incident may include:

- A serious medical emergency (including mental health emergency)
- An incident involving a serious traumatic assault of a student
- Any other emergency incident or situation where there is a risk of serious harm, or where serious harm has resulted.

#### **1. Who should be advised of the situation?**

If an ambulance is required as a result of a critical incident, the Security Lodge must be informed immediately and they will be responsible for contacting the emergency services. The on-call Senior Resident Tutor (SRT) should be contacted.

The SRT dealing with the incident is then required to contact a designated manager, providing a detailed and accurate summary of the incident. Once contacted, the designated manager will make a decision whether to attend the campus or be kept updated regarding the well-being of the student involved in the incident.

Brief summary details of the incident and any actions taken should be recorded within the daily incident log by the Campus Operative/SRT, including details of which hospital the student was taken. Details of the ward the student was been admitted to should also be recorded where this information is available. The incident should be followed up as soon as possible the next day by the relevant SRT/ Student Well-being Officer or Residential Life Coordinator.

#### **2. Supporting a student who has been the victim of a sexual assault**

If emergency assistance is required as a result of a sexual assault the on-call Senior Resident Tutor (SRT) should be contacted.

Staff need to be aware that sometimes the student may not want to report the incident to the Police. Staff should, therefore, never assume that reporting the incident to the Police is always the correct action to follow. It is good practice to advise the student of all of their options and full information is available via the Student Gateway information webpages.

Rather than sending the student to a hospital A&E or contacting the Police, with their consent, the student can be referred to the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (also known as Safe Place Merseyside). Safe Place work in collaboration with the Police and have staff available on-site able to provide the required medical support and advice following sexual assault. Safe Place can be contacted on **[0151] 295 3550** 24/7 and will normally arrange free return taxi transport for the student to and from the centre.

Where the student doesn't wish to attend Safe Place, the student should be advised that they can also visit their local walk-in centre or hospital A&E if they have sustained any injuries. Where the student doesn't wish to access any external support, they should be regularly monitored until the Student Development & Well-being team assume responsibility for support follow-up.

Where a student requests or gives consent to seeking medical treatment, ideally, they should be escorted by a friend but only if the friend is accepting of this. Brief summary details of the incident and any actions taken should be recorded within the daily incident log by the Campus Operative/SRT, including details of whether the student attended a location for medical/Police assistance.

### **3. Significant mental health concerns that constitute a medical emergency**

Where significant concerns regarding the current mental health state of a student come to light, the Security Lodge must be informed immediately and they will be responsible for contacting the emergency services. The on-call Senior Resident Tutor (SRT) should be contacted.

Brief summary details of the incident and any actions taken should be recorded within the daily incident log by the Campus Operative/SRT, including details of which hospital the student was taken, where applicable. Details of the ward the student was admitted to should also be recorded where this information is available. The incident should be followed up as soon as possible the next day by the relevant SRT/Student Well-being Officer.

### **4. Supporting the student once discharged from emergency services following a critical incident**

Once the hospital/referral centre/ Police discharge the student back to campus, the following actions should take place promptly:

- The Designated Manager is to be informed, where deemed necessary
- The SRTs/ Campus Operatives will be pro-active in regularly monitoring the well-being and safety of the student until the commencement of normal business hours
- Update the daily incident log with any further relevant information
- Advice should be sought from the Student Well-being Officer regarding appropriate ongoing support for the student
- Advise the student of the University support services available within Student Development & Well-being

### **6. Supporting others involved in the incident**

The Head of Residential Life in collaboration with the Head of Student Welfare & Well-being will advise on the support of other students and staff who may have been affected by the critical incident, offering pastoral and specialist support where appropriate.

### **7. Managing confidentiality**

It is important that SRTs/ Campus Operatives at all times remain aware of the need to maintain maximum levels of confidentiality when involved in such situations. Staff are not required to disclose information relating to the incident outside of that which is identified within this guidance; this includes when sending email communications. Failure to maintain appropriate levels of confidentiality may be deemed as a breach of university Data Protection requirements.

### **8. Communicating with parents, guardians or family members**

Extreme caution is advised should SRTs/Campus Operatives receive telephone contact from anyone requesting information regarding an incident. It is always best to take down the person's contact details, advising them that they will be contacted by the relevant manager asap. Advice should be sought from a designated manager where it is felt that communication with parents, guardians or family members is required as a matter of urgency.

When taking the caller's details always confirm the following:

- Full name and contact number(s) of the person
- The person's relationship to the student
- Confirm that they are the identified Next of Kin (this can be done via the student's record on MyHope. If the person is not the registered NoK, politely confirm the reason for their enquiry avoiding sharing any information at that point?)

If in any doubt, staff should always seek the advice of a designated manager before sharing any information with a caller.

### Designated Manager Contact Details

	Designated Manager	Landline	Mobex (external) / (internal)	Office
1	Wendy Bignold	N/A	0774 017 4022 / (6042)	0151 291 3017
2	Penny Haughan	N/A	07720 072 774 / (6009)	0151 291 3544
3	John Ryan	N/A	07734 879 015 / (6131)	0151 291 3289

### Responding to non-critical student pastoral issues outside of office hours

Responding to pastoral/ support issues with a student in halls that is neither critical or an emergency should be dealt with using a rational, supportive and considered approach. Always ensure that any potential or foreseeable harm or danger is avoided by taking appropriate and proportionate action to remove or reduce any risk. It is impossible to prescribe what such actions might include as they will differ with each situation or circumstance but staff should use measured judgement to support the student, seeking advice where necessary.

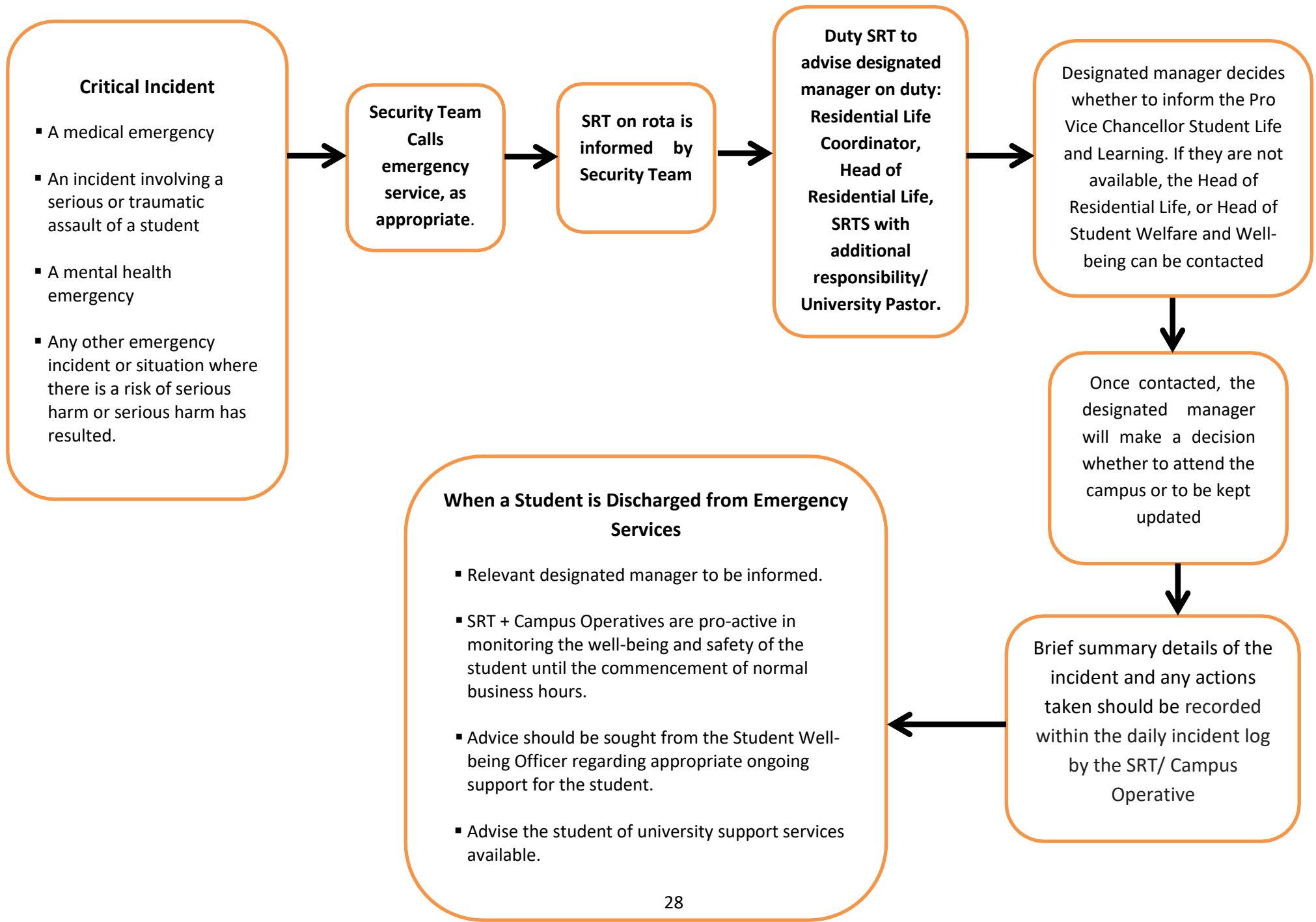
Always be vigilant to the signs and symptoms of meningitis and act swiftly if a student displays these symptoms.

Periodically checking on a students' condition throughout the evening where there is concern of any kind is always a positive action that meets a reasonable duty of care.

Students will likely look out for each other in halls and this can be helpful. However, whilst students may volunteer to monitor and support friends who may be in difficulty or distress, staff should avoid placing sole responsibility with students. Individual staff should, therefore, continue to take responsibility for monitoring any such situation, ensuring that all concerned are aware of the requirement to contact the security lodge or an SRT when they or their friends require assistance.

It is advisable to view each situation on its individual merits, assessing whether there is a risk to the students' immediate safety or well-being that requires urgent action. If that is not the case, staff should endeavour to re-assure students and monitor the situation until normal business hours commence or university support services/SRT assumes responsibility.

**It is not necessary to contact SRTs when dealing with non-critical or non-emergency situations** but always advise students of the university support services available. Make sure the incident log is completed appropriately as this will alert SRTs/hall managers and the Student Well-being Officer of the need to follow-up with any students where concern remains.



**Critical Incident**

- A medical emergency
- An incident involving a serious or traumatic assault of a student
- A mental health emergency
- Any other emergency incident or situation where there is a risk of serious harm or serious harm has resulted.

**Security Team Calls emergency service, as appropriate.**

**SRT on rota is informed by Security Team**

**Duty SRT to advise designated manager on duty:  
Residential Life Coordinator,  
Head of Residential Life,  
SRTS with additional responsibility/  
University Pastor.**

Designated manager decides whether to inform the Pro Vice Chancellor Student Life and Learning. If they are not available, the Head of Residential Life, or Head of Student Welfare and Well-being can be contacted

Once contacted, the designated manager will make a decision whether to attend the campus or to be kept updated

Brief summary details of the incident and any actions taken should be recorded within the daily incident log by the SRT/ Campus Operative

**When a Student is Discharged from Emergency Services**

- Relevant designated manager to be informed.
- SRT + Campus Operatives are pro-active in monitoring the well-being and safety of the student until the commencement of normal business hours.
- Advice should be sought from the Student Well-being Officer regarding appropriate ongoing support for the student.
- Advise the student of university support services available.

## Appendix 5

### Student Mental Well-being – A Guide for Staff

#### Mental Health and Well-being

National research suggests that an increasing number of students at university are experiencing mental health difficulties that impact not only on their academic work, but also on other aspects of their university life. Mental health problems have implications not just for the student involved, but often also for those around them; staff, fellow students and family.

To enable effective support for those affected by mental health challenges, the University provides confidential, professional support and advisory services to students who are concerned about their own, or another student's mental health. The Counselling and Mental Health Services are situated within Student Development and Well-being.

Working with or supporting someone who is experiencing mental health difficulties can often be difficult and challenging and staff should never feel alone or unsupported in such situations. Student Development and Well-being (SDW) can provide advice to staff who may be working with or supporting a student who is experiencing mental health difficulty. For assistance, simply contact SDW on [sdw@hope.ac.uk](mailto:sdw@hope.ac.uk) or 0151 291 3427.

In addition to the help and advice available from SDW support services, there is a staff counselling service available to staff who are struggling to manage their own mental well-being.

#### Signs and Symptoms: Recognising Mental Health Distress

It is important to understand that mental health difficulties can present in a wide variety of ways, depending upon the individual and their personal circumstances. What is important to consider is how a person seems in relation to how they usually are as sudden or gradual changes in a person's presentation, manner, and/or behaviour can provide important indicators as to how they may be feeling. Here are some signs and indicators to be aware of:

#### Academic

- Formal notification that a student has a mental health disability (through a Learning Support Plan)
- Absence from classes or persistent failure to attend scheduled meetings
- A sudden or significant drop in academic performance and/or assessment grades
- Repeated requests for extensions
- Failure to respond to academic communications i.e. emails/texts/letters/calls

#### Emotional/behavioural

*Student appears:*

- Anxious, tense, tearful, angry or agitated
- Lethargic, low in mood or lacking in motivation
- Socially withdrawn or spending a considerable amount of time alone, when this is not their usual behaviour
- Distracted, preoccupied or excessively suspicious
- Any other behaviour that seems out of character for that person or something not normally expected

#### Physical

- Deterioration in personal appearance and/or personal hygiene
- The student themselves approaching you, or friends of the student/other staff sharing their concern
- Significant weight loss/ gain

## What you can do to help

### DO's:

- Empathise and try to convey that you both hear and understand what the student is saying and feeling by:
  - Accepting that their feelings, experiences and values may be different to yours
  - Listen without interrupting
  - Ask questions so that you are clear on what is being said
  - Summarise facts and feelings
  - Sitting quietly but attentively through periods of silence
- Understand the boundaries of your role and the limits of your capacity to help – always seek advice from a mental health professional as necessary
- Provide positive feedback – let the student know that you are glad they have approached you, affirming that they have done the right thing
- Inform the student about the support available within Student Development & Well-being and advise them to attend a well-being drop-in session (12-2pm, Mon – Fri during term time)
- Contact Student Development & Well-being at the earliest opportunity to discuss any serious concerns you have regarding the immediate safety or well-being of a student
- Talk to a representative from Personnel or the Staff Counselling Service if your own personal/mental well-being starts to become affected as a result of assisting a student experiencing mental health difficulties.

### DON'Ts:

- Make any dismissive statements or imply that their concerns are insignificant in any way
- Make any promises that you cannot keep
- Don't Panic! Try to remain as calm as possible throughout. Remember that most situations will not be urgent and that there is professional mental health support available for students within the University
- Try to provide ongoing support for a student yourself - always seek advice from a professional within SDW.

### **What if the student declines support?**

- Make it clear to the student that help is available within the University should they change their mind
- Seek advice from Student Development and Well-being on 0151 291 3427 if required.

## **Responding to a mental health emergency**

Although mental health emergencies happen infrequently, it is important for staff to be aware of how to respond should such a situation occur.

An urgent situation may arise when, for example:

- The student has self-harmed or expresses immediate plans to harm themselves
- The student has attempted suicide or expresses immediate plans to end their life
- The student exhibits rapid, extreme changes in behaviour which cause significant concern
- The student expresses ideas not based on reality
- The student becomes a serious threat to other students and staff

These situations always require the involvement of specialist staff such as a Mental Health & Well-being Adviser, or in some cases it may be necessary to contact the emergency services. Never compromise your own personal safety or that of other students/staff when dealing with a mental health emergency situation.

If you feel a student is at immediate risk of serious harm to themselves or others, take the following steps:

**During normal working hours:**

- **If you are on campus with the student:** keep them with you and contact Student Development and Well-being (SDW) for further advice and support on 0151 291 3427 / 291 3000 or, accompany the student to SDW in the Gateway Building for help
- If the student is in a heightened state of distress and/or is reluctant to receive your help/stay with you, seek the assistance of a staff colleague where possible and try to keep the student with you, if it is safe to do so. Contact the relevant Security Lodge immediately for assistance; then contact SDW for further advice on 0151 291 3427 / 291 3000.

**Security Lodge Tel. No's**

Hope Park 0151 291 3800

Creative 0151 291 3700

Aigburth 0151 727 7262 or 07736 106 185

- **If you are not with the student:** ascertain their exact location, ask the student to remain where they are and contact SDW on: 291 3427 / 291 3000. If on a Zoom call, ideally, stay on with the student until further advice is received; if on a telephone call, tell the student that you, or someone from SDW will ring them back, then contact SDW immediately for assistance. In the unlikely event that you are unable to make contact with SDW, contact the emergency services for assistance.

**Outside of hours:**

- **For students residing in halls of residence:** contact the relevant Security Lodge for assistance. They will contact the relevant designated manager and, where necessary, the emergency services
- **For students living off-campus:** ascertain the exact location of the student and contact 999 emergency services. Inform Student Development and Well-being about the incident at the earliest opportunity.

**AVOID:**

- Delaying your response to any serious concerns
- Using your own car to transport a student to hospital
- Trying to deal with the situation on your own without seeking advice and support

**Confidentiality**

Although everyone has the legal right to privacy and confidentiality, when supporting a student who is experiencing mental health problems, there are situations where it may be necessary to share limited personal or sensitive information about that person with others. These include:

- Where there are serious grounds for concern regarding the student's mental well-being
- When the student's immediate health or safety is at risk (or somebody linked to that student)
- When the student (or someone linked to that student) is at risk of serious abuse or exploitation
- When the student's behaviour is adversely affecting the rights and safety of others, especially university staff and students
- When you become aware of an unlawful act about to be or having been committed
- When the student is infringing university regulations
- When the student's current or predicted behaviour, or health needs compromise the University's responsibilities to outside agencies, including practice placements, and partner institutions



The normal boundaries around levels of confidentiality between you and a student may need to be compromised in such circumstances. You are advised, therefore, not to promise to keep information completely confidential. Instead discuss the need to involve others to help the student and try to gain their consent to do so. Where the student is unwilling to give consent, information can still be shared where it is deemed in the public interest to do so.

Any information you do share should be limited, proportional and justifiable in relation to the incident/issue you are dealing with. Decide who needs to know and share the information with them only, unless advised otherwise.

Staff are advised to always seek advice before taking any action to disclose personal or sensitive information on any of the grounds listed above, as full consideration of all the issues is required and senior members of university staff may need to be involved in making such decisions.

### **Support for university staff**

Supporting someone who is experiencing mental health difficulties can often be difficult and challenging, staff should never feel alone or unsupported in such situations.

If you experience difficulties with your mental health, or become personally affected when helping a student, it is important to be aware that support is also available for you as a university employee.

You can contact the staff counselling service on 0151 285 3777 to refer yourself and make an appointment or ask your line manager or HR Manager to make one for you.

The staff counselling service is provided by Counselling Solutions North West. Your appointments will take place at their offices based at: Fifth Floor, Hanover House, 85 Hanover Street, Liverpool, L1 3DZ, or via remote communication methods where deemed necessary.

The Education Support partnership also provides a 24-hour free and confidential helpline for everyone working in education. Call: 08000 562 561 or text: 07909 341 229 (texts are answered within 24 hours)

<https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/>

### **Useful contacts**

Senior Mental Health Adviser Josie Davies	0151 291 3427 <a href="mailto:Daviesj2@hope.ac.uk">Daviesj2@hope.ac.uk</a>
Student Counselling Service	0151 291 3427
	Drop-in sessions <b>Hope Park</b> Monday-Friday 12-2pm <b>Creative Campus</b> Tuesday & Thursday 12-1pm
Campus Security	<b>Hope Park</b> 291 3800 <b>Creative Campus</b> 3700 <b>Aigburth Park</b> 727 7262
Staff Counselling Service Fifth Floor, Hanover House, 85 Hanover Street, Liverpool, L1 3DZ	0151 285 3777 <a href="#">Staff Counselling Leaflet</a>

## **Further information**

Visit Student Support and Well-being information webpages at:

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/staff/studentssupportandwell-being/>

Fitness to study process:

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/media/gateway/studentgateway/supportandwellbeing/studentadministrationdocuments/Fitness%20to%20Study%20Policy%20v10Jun19.pdf>

Student mental health concern escalation process:

<https://www.hope.ac.uk/gateway/staff/studentssupportandwell-being/howtoraiseastudentwell-beingconcern/>

# Liverpool Hope University Approach to Student Mental Health

( - -Fitness to study support - - )

Referral to GP/ other external support services

Week Risk Management Group  
monitoring activity

Study: Course-Linking support **7**

Mental Health Advisor support **J**

Mental Well-being daily drop-in service

Halls of residence pastoral support / drop-in sessions

Learning Support team

Personal Tutors/ FSAAs

**Resident Tutor Team**

, Campus Operatives

[LHU SU Welfare Officer](#)

Student Well-being Officer

Inter-national Welfare Officer

University Chaplains

Student finance / hardship support

Learning Support Plan mental health@altn support@altn

Residential life pastoral support / social activities

Mental health staff CPD programme

Arrival/Day GP registration arrangements

Personal Tutor system

Hope Sports/gym facilities

Student/shiff mental well-being information webpages & social media

Annual programme of student health@altn and well-being activities/events

Cross university mental health awareness - raising events/activity

Academic writing/study skills advice and support

LHU Chaplaincy Listening Service

Salvo volunteering program

LHU SU social media/campaigns

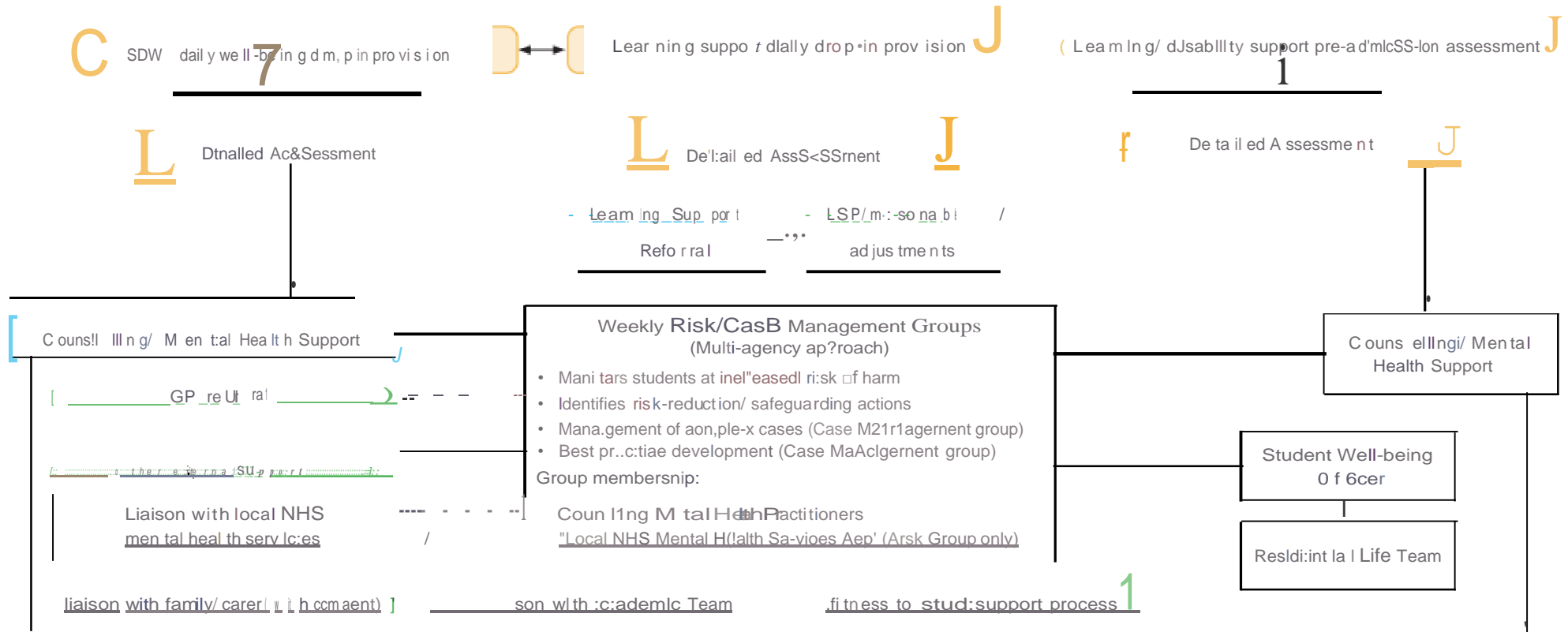
'Hope Social' activity calendar

Local GP links

# The Management of Student Well-being at LHU

Enquiry / Referral / Concern-raising channels

Lecturer | Self/other student | Residential Life Team | SDW / SSW | Campaigning | Family member | GP/other health agency/service | LHU SJJ | Campus Operatives | Admissions



Additional university provision monitoring / supporting positive student mental health

Arrivals Day GP registration | Well-being drop-in sessions of residential life pastoral support / social activity | LHU Campaigning / Listening Service SU  
 i.l'vel fura Office@r SU Societies | Annual programme of student health and well-being, wellbeing activities / events | Hop@ Social activity calendar | Personal Tutor system  
 Hop@ Park Sports/ gym facilities | Student Financial advice / hardship support | Mental health staff CPD training | SALA volunteering programme | Local GP links  
 Mental wellbeing information website / social media | Academic writing / student skills advice & support | Cross-university mental health awareness raising events.