

Student Support Protocol

1. Introduction

As per Queen's University "[Student Wellbeing Strategy](#)" (2017–2021), the University believes that wellbeing is fundamental to a positive student learning experience. It is widely recognised that students who are happy, confident and able to establish meaningful relationships are better placed to achieve their full potential.

The University is committed to promoting a safe and supportive environment for students in which they can thrive and grow in independence, and which celebrates equality, diversity and inclusivity.

The Student Support Protocol supports the University to deliver against this commitment. The protocol was originally brought forward by the Students at Risk Review Group in 2007, and is subject to on-going review by Student Wellbeing Services. Student Wellbeing are part of the wider Disability and Student Wellbeing service. The Student Wellbeing team acts as a central co-ordinating point between Schools and Services, to implement this University-wide Protocol that:

- (a) Supports us to promote wellbeing and self-care to students while they are studying at Queen's.
- (b) Sets out a clear process for responding to concerns raised about students within Schools or service areas, and
- (c) Establishes the steps taken when a student is identified as being at risk of harm to self or others.

The Protocol is intended to sit alongside School procedures for addressing student academic progression and student well-being, ensuring appropriate communication and support within the School, and identifying key points of contact and ways to co-ordinate support within the wider University, particularly with professional support areas.

2. Principles of the Protocol

The following principles underpin the development and implementation of Queen's Student Support Protocol:

- Information can be appropriately be shared between colleagues about a student about who there are concerns in line with Queen's [Student Privacy Notice](#). In addition, if the student engages with Disability and Wellbeing Service, support will be provided following consent to the service's [Student Support Agreement](#).
- As adult learners, students should be supported in making decisions about their wellbeing. The University will only disclose information on their behalf if there is a perceived risk of harm to the student and/or others. In such instances, information may be shared with other health and social care professionals, parents and/or next of kin. This action will always be taken in consultation with senior management.
- Decisions on a student's academic progression is led by Schools through their established procedures. Students are encouraged to disclose personal circumstances that may be affecting their academic progression so these can be considered when progression decisions are being made.
- Every situation and student is individual, and therefore there is no one solution to a concern or crisis. The Protocol attempts to ensure appropriate staff involvement and flexibility to respond to circumstances.

- This Protocol may be overtaken by the [University Protocols and Major Incident Plan](#), though it is intended that the processes are able to sit within the wider University response as much as possible.

3. Student Disability and Wellbeing Team

The Student Disability and Wellbeing Team comprises of specialist staff that offer advice, support and guidance to students and staff to support the management of a diverse range of students issues and concerns.

Support for Students

Students can contact the service directly to arrange a 1:1 appointment with an appropriate member of the team or avail of the term time drop in, (dates can be found on the webpage). The Student Wellbeing [webpage](#) also includes a range of self-help resources, materials, information and guidance that students can use independently for their own benefit.

Support for Staff

Staff can access the Student and Disability website for information, advice and guidance that can help them to support students. Alternatively, if there is a specific or immediate concern they can contact the service directly through the following means

- Email - Studentwellbeing@gub.ac.uk
- [Staff Formmail](#)
- Telephone 028 9097 2893

Records and case files relating to students or staff consultations are held in line with record and retention schedule within Students Disability and Wellbeing, in line with the University data protection guidelines.

4. Identifying and Acting on Concerns

As noted in Section 2 “Principles of the Protocol”, the University recognises that each situation is unique. Responses must take into account the individual circumstance faced by the student and/or those who have raised concern about the student’s wellbeing.

Table 1: Concerns, Interventions and Supports sets out a range of risk indicators, and should be used as a reference to respond appropriately to support students with wellbeing issues. This guidance is equally applicable to students who are engaging with support and those who are not. Further guidance is available for staff on the Student Wellbeing website under the [“What to Do If”](#) section.

Concern indicators are categorised into High, Medium and Low level risk, however it is important to note that where there are multiple concern indicators, risk level is likely to increase. University staff identifying and acting on concerns can consult with Student Wellbeing Service for advice, guidance and support.

The Student Wellbeing Service may complete a Student Risk Assessment Proforma (Appendix 1) to establish level of risk. This assessment will inform an agreed course of action and support(s) to be offered to the student and may also initiate action under alternative University processes, such as Fitness to Study, Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults policy.

TABLE 1: Concerns, Interventions and Supports

Level	Concerns	Possible Interventions	Supports Options	Monitoring
High	<p>One/several of:</p> <p>Missing (out of contact with friends / family)</p> <p>Self-harm actions</p> <p>Violent threat to others</p> <p>Anti-social behaviour (repeated)</p> <p>Criminal Conviction (not previously dealt with)</p> <p>AND</p> <p>Student thought to be at immediate risk of harm to self or others.</p>	<p>School to make immediate contact with student via telephone and email / face-to-face contact to ensure immediate well-being of student. (24hr response)</p> <p>Contact Student Wellbeing Service to discuss specific case and agree next steps.</p> <p>If required, engage in Major incident plan</p> <p><u>Student Engaging:</u> Student Support Meeting arranged – member of Student Wellbeing should attend. Student Wellbeing can lead on meeting without involvement with School if student prefers School not to be involved. - establish issues - identify level of risk (with support from counselling/wellbeing if needed) -discuss support issues including Occupational Health referral if concerns about Fitness to Study / Practice, counselling, GP, International Student Support - Keep a file note of discussion with student, noting how concern was raised and agreed actions. - Email student after meeting with agreed actions and support options including emergency contact details.</p> <p><u>Student Not Engaging</u> Establish key facts, e.g. last point of contact, last time student was seen and any attempts made to contact student. Contact Student Wellbeing. Options may include contacting next of kin, house visit, PSNI, etc.</p>	<p><u>Internal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Service – 24/7 • Student Wellbeing • International Student Support • Disability Services • Learning Development Service • Graduate School • Accommodation • Occupational Health • Students’ Union (including Advice SU) • Community Engagement • Chaplaincies <p><u>External:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifeline • Samaritans • GP / Out of Hours • Emergency Services • Parent • Friend 	<p><u>Student Engaging</u> Determine appropriate follow-up (initially within 24hrs)</p> <p>Ongoing follow-up (e.g. daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) for at least 3 months to ensure student continues to engage with identified and agreed supports.</p> <p>At 3months review level of concern: If level of concern has reduced, agree end of monitoring, reminding of importance of engaging with supports if circumstances change.</p> <p>If level of concern remains High agree on-going monitoring arrangements and discuss with Student Wellbeing to agree future steps.</p> <p><u>Student Not Engaging</u> Agree monitoring and next steps with Student Wellbeing.</p>

Medium	<p>A combination of: Poor attendance at scheduled classes Absence from formal exams Change in personal appearance and behaviours Poor performance in assessments / exams Recurrent sickness Breach of Conduct Regulations Recurrent Accident Reports Non-payment of Tuition fees Visa difficulties Absence from Halls of Residence or private accommodation</p>	<p>School to make contact with student via email and/or telephone within 48hrs of concerns being identified.</p> <p>If relevant, contact Student Wellbeing Service to discuss specific case and agree next steps.</p> <p><u>Student Engaging</u> Student Support meeting to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish issues • Identify level of risk (with support from counselling/wellbeing if needed) • Discuss support issues including Occupational Health referral if concerns about Fitness to Study / Practice, counselling, GP, International Student Support and support from Student Wellbeing • Keep a file note of discussion with student, noting how concern was raised and agreed actions. • Email sent to student after meeting with agreed actions and support options including emergency contact details. <p><u>Student Not Engaging</u> If student chooses not to attend Student Support Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with relevant staff in School and Student Wellbeing to agree next steps, which could include; send email and letter from appropriate member of staff in School outlining concerns and relevant support options as well as consequences of non-engagement, such as presumed withdrawn. 	<p><u>Internal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Service – 24/7 • Student Wellbeing • International Student Support • Disability Services • Learning Development Service • Graduate School • Accommodation • Occupational Health • Students' Union (including Advice SU) • Community Engagement • Chaplaincies <p><u>External:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lifeline • Samaritans • GP / Out of Hours • Emergency Services • Parent • Friend 	<p><u>Student Engaging</u> Determine appropriate follow-up within 1 week</p> <p>Ongoing follow-up (e.g. weekly, monthly) for at least 2 months to ensure student continues to engage with identified and agreed supports.</p> <p>At 2months review level of concern: If level of concern has reduced agree end of monitoring, reminding of importance of engaging with supports if circumstances change.</p> <p>If level of concern remains Medium, agree ongoing monitoring arrangements (e.g. weekly, monthly) and discuss with Student Wellbeing Service to agree future steps.</p> <p><u>Student Not Engaging</u> Agree monitoring and next steps with Student Wellbeing</p>
---------------	--	--	---	---

Low	<p>Examples:</p> <p>Sporadic attendance at class</p> <p>Missing assessment deadlines</p>	<p>Staff member that has identified concerns should send email to student outlining low levels of concerns and relevant support options within 5 days.</p> <p>If relevant, request the student to contact School to arrange a Student Support Meeting.</p> <p><u>Student Engaging</u> Student Support Meeting to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish issues • Discuss support issues including Occupational Health referral if concerns about Fitness to Study / Practice, counselling, GP, International Student Support and support from Student Wellbeing • Keep a file note of discussion with student, noting how concern was raised and agreed actions. • Email sent to student after meeting with agreed actions and support options including emergency contact details. <p><u>Student Not Engaging</u> If student chooses not respond or chooses not to attend Student Support Meeting:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liaise with relevant School staff and agree next steps, which could include; sending an email and letter from appropriate member of staff in School outlining concerns and relevant support options as well as consequences of sporadic attendance and missed deadlines. 	<p><u>Internal:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Counselling Service – 24/7 • Student Wellbeing • International Student Support • Disability Services • Learning and Development Service • Graduate School • Peer Mentor • Accommodation • Occupational Health • Students' Union (including Advice SU) • Community Engagement • Chaplaincies <p><u>External:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GP • Parent • Friend 	<p><u>Student Engaging</u> Determine appropriate follow-up within 2 weeks</p> <p>Ongoing follow-up (e.g. fortnightly, monthly) for at least 6 weeks to ensure student continues to engage with identified and agreed supports.</p> <p>At 6weeks review level of concern: If level of concern has reduced agree end of monitoring, reminding of importance of engaging with supports if circumstances change.</p> <p>If level of concern remains Low, agree ongoing monitoring arrangements (e.g. fortnightly, monthly) and agree next review period within 4 weeks.</p> <p><u>Student Not Engaging</u> Agree next steps with Module Coordinator, Academic Advisor of Studies, etc.</p>
------------	---	--	---	--

5. Factors to Consider

As previously noted, this Protocol is intended to work as an extension to School procedures for monitoring academic progression. It is recognised that School and Support Service Staff will monitor and manage certain levels of concerns before escalating to Student Wellbeing or other supports.

This protocol provides School staff with a clear mechanism to communicate concerns to students and offers guidance on appropriate supports to address a range of student situations as well as when and how to escalate concerns to relevant parties. Factors to consider include:

- Be Aware of Boundaries

It is important that staff are aware of the boundaries and limitations around their roles, and seek support and guidance from Student Wellbeing when necessary. Student Wellbeing Services can provide additional support for staff in complex student situations.

While Schools or support services may be supporting a student to manage a particular situation, the University Student Wellbeing Service often have an overview of the range of difficulties a student may be facing. This ensures appropriate actions, particularly relating to risks or concerns of Fitness to Study.

- High levels of Concern ***

As soon as a High level of Concern is identified, it is important that all attempts are made to **immediately** establish contact with the student. Communication should initially be by phone, where possible, and followed up by email outlining the High level of concern and the need to meet with the student.

If the student cannot be contacted by phone, the initial email needs to specify a cut off time for response (ideally within a **24hr** period during Monday to Friday) and outlining if no response is received by the specified time, their next of kin from QSIS will be contacted.

When communications cannot be established with the student within a 24hr period, Head of Disability and Wellbeing or equivalent should be informed. At this stage the next steps e.g. house visit, contacting Next of Kin will be discussed along with other options.

- Don't delay

Student Wellbeing service operate during normal office hours, 9-5 Monday to Friday. It is important that staff contact the service when they first have serious concerns, to allow Wellbeing to offer timely support, advice or guidance.

- Trust your instincts

While it is important to weigh facts and consider all options, where you have concerns about a student it is advisable to act. A range of "What to Do If" scenarios are included on the Student Wellbeing website to assist staff. Alternatively, contact the Wellbeing Service for advice, guidance or support.

- Record Keeping

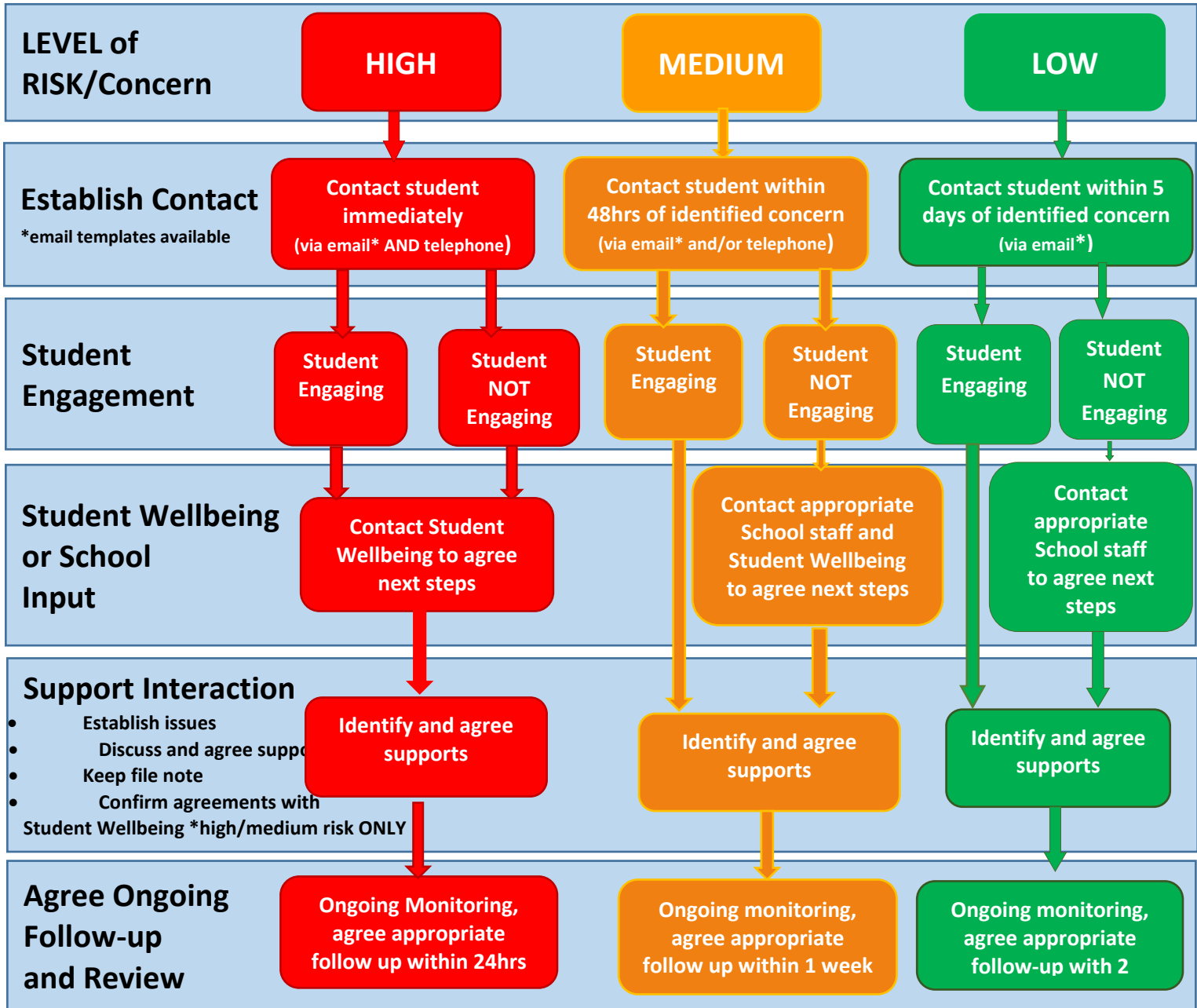
Any staff member supporting a student with a wellbeing issue, is advised to maintain relevant records, this is in line with the University's Data Protection policy and Student Privacy Notice. These should be factual based notes of each student interaction, including supports offered, any agreed actions and responsibilities.

Records should be disposed in line with the relevant School / department's Record Retention schedule.

- Meeting follow up

It is also good practice to follow up a meeting with a student, with an email highlighting any agreed actions and responsibilities. This should include details of appropriate support information e.g. Inspire, Wellbeing, Lifeline, Samaritans.

STUDENT SUPPORT PROTOCOL PATHWAY



Key Contact details:

Student Wellbeing	x 2893	24hr Counselling (freephone)	0808 800 0016
Security	x 5099	International Student Support	x 3899
Accommodation @BT1	x 8919	QSI (student emergency information)	x 2884
Accommodation @BT2	x 6441	Advice SU	x 1049 x 1135 x 1166
Accommodation @BT9	x 4525		

STUDENT RISK ASSESSMENT PROFORMA (Student Disability & Wellbeing Service)

Name: _____ Student ID: _____ Course: _____ Year: _____

Referred by: _____ Wellbeing Adviser: _____

Student Support Agreement Completed Yes / No

Parent/Guardian/Next of Kin Name: _____ Relationship: _____ Contact No: _____

Every situation and student is individual, and therefore there is no one solution to a concern or crisis. Examples of risk indicators to consider when supporting students with wellbeing issues have been identified in the Concerns, Interventions and Supports Section of the **Student Support Protocol**. The Student Risk Assessment Proforma can be used to establish the level of risk and key actions to take in response.

What is the risk?	Who might be harmed and how?	High Mod Low	Actions	By whom Student/ SWS/School, etc	Review Risk no longer applicable

Wellbeing Assessment Officer Approval: _____

Reviewed with Wellbeing Manager/HoS: _____

Date: _____

Meeting attendees: _____

Date: _____

Review Date: _____

Copy sent to: _____

For Office Use Only:

Follow up / Actions for Student Disability & Wellbeing :

Other Follow up / Actions:

Risk Matrix:

		CONSEQUENCES				
		Insignificant	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
LIKELIHOOD	Almost Certain	Low	Moderate	High	High	High
	Likely	Low	Moderate	Moderate	High	High
	Possible	Low	Low	Moderate	High	High
	Unlikely	Very Low	Low	Moderate	Moderate	Moderate
	Rare	Very Low	Very Low	Low	Low	Moderate