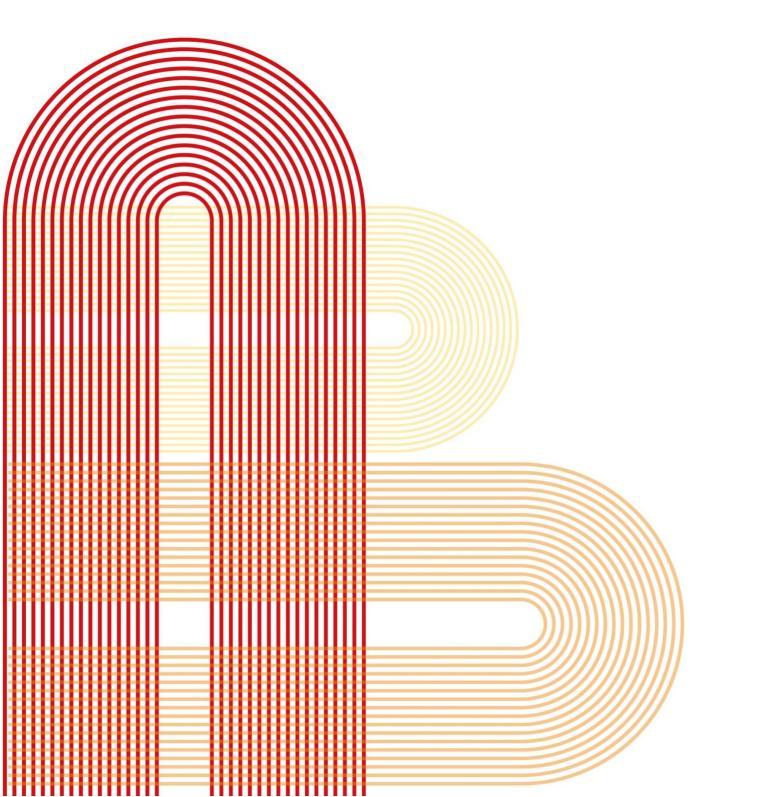


# STUDENT SUPPORT PROTOCOL

**MAY 2025** 





#### 1. Introduction

As per <u>Queen's University 2030 Strategy</u> and our <u>#QUBeWell Mental Health and Wellbeing policy</u> 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 is managed and reviewed by Student Wellbeing which is part of the wider Student Wellbeing And Accessible Learning Support Service. The Student Wellbeing team acts as a central coordinating point between Schools and Services, to implement this University-wide Protocol that:

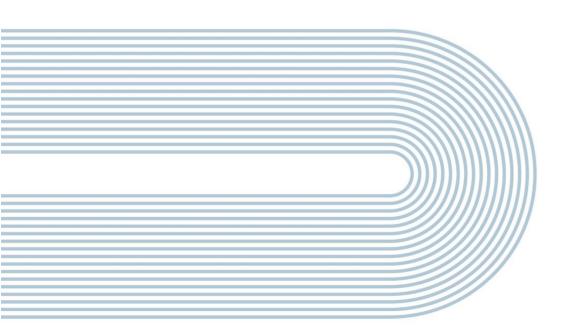
- (a) Supports us to promote wellbeing and self-care to students while they are studying at Queen's.
- (b) Sets out a clear process for responding to concerns raised about students within Schools or service areas.
- (c) Establishes the steps taken when a student is identified as being at risk of harm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

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

## 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 in line with GDPR between colleagues about a student about
who there are concerns in line with Queen's <u>Student Privacy Notice</u>. In addition, if the student engages
with Student Wellbeing and/or Accessible Learning Support, support will be provided following consent
to the service's <u>Student Support Agreement</u>.



- 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 themselves,
  to others or from others. In such instances emergency services, students' GP and other health care
  professionals may be contacted. Due to the university's duty of care, information about risk may also be
  shared with parents/guardians and/or a Trusted or Emergency contact.
- 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's serious incident protocols though it is intended that the processes are able to sit within the wider University response as much as possible.

The Student Support Protocol may also run alongside other protocols or procedures.

### 3. Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning Teams

The Student Wellbeing and Accessible Learning Teams comprise of specialist staff that offer advice, support and guidance to students and staff to support the management of a diverse range of student issues and concerns.

#### Support for Students

Students can contact the service directly to via the online <u>Contact Us form</u> or avail of the <u>Drop In</u> service. Further information on self-help resources, materials, information and guidance that students can use independently for their own benefit can be found on the <u>Student Wellbeing website</u>

#### Support for Staff

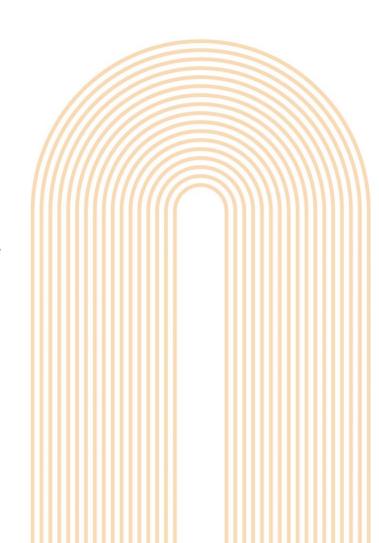
Staff can access the <u>Student Wellbeing</u> and <u>Accessible</u> <u>Learning Support</u> websites for information, advice and guidance that can help them to support students. Alternatively, if there is a specific or immediate wellbeing concern they can contact the service directly through the following means:

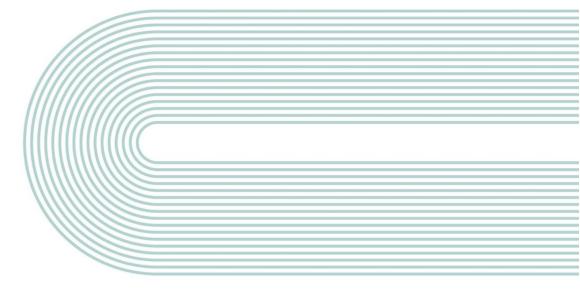
## • Staff Contact us Form

This Staff contact us form/referral form is the most secure and confidential method of communicating sensitive information to Student Wellbeing however, we can also be contacted at:

- Email Studentwellbeing@qub.ac.uk
- Telephone 028 9097 2893

All information shared by staff about students is recorded in line with GDPR and could be requested by the student under Freedom of Information.





## **Identifying and Acting on Concerns**

- 1. The Stepped Matchcare Model (Appendix 1) is a visual aid which outlines the various supports students may require depending on their identified Tier of support need.
- 2. The Risk Matrix table (Appendix 2) is more detailed information on risk, protective factors and possible recommendations considered by Student Wellbeing when supporting students.
- 3. The School Concerns and Intervention and Monitoring Recommendations table (Appendix 3) 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.
- 4. Referrals to the Student Wellbeing Services should be made in collaboration with the student where possible. Staff may wish to contact Student Wellbeing if they need any advice about making a referral. Student Wellbeing Services can provide additional support for staff in complex student situations and may have insight into services that the student is currently involved in. This ensures appropriate action is taken and/or potential use of the Support to Participate Fully in Studies/and or University Life Policy is considered.

Student Wellbeing service operate during normal office hours, 9-5 Monday to Friday. Circumstances permitting, it is important that staff contact the service, as early in the day as possible, when they first have serious concerns to allow Wellbeing to offer timely support, advice or guidance.

While it is important to weigh facts and consider all options, where you have concerns about a student you have a responsibility to act, Appendix 4 details the University's See, Say, Signpost whole university approach to supporting student mental health and wellbeing. A range of "What to Do If" scenarios are also included on the Student Wellbeing website to assist staff, call us on 028 90972893 or complete the Staff Contact us Form

Where wellbeing issues are identified staff should ensure that records of meetings, interventions and communication are stored in accordance with GDPR. Follow up review meetings may be necessary with Wellbeing Services and/or the student.



## **Appendix 1 STEPPED MATCHCARE MODEL**

#### Tier 2 Tier 3 Tier 1 Assessment, Risk Management, De-Tier 0 **Supportive Guidance** Consultation & **Preventative and** escalation and Crisis and Signposting Therapeutic **Protective Support** Interventions 1:1 Wellbeing consultations Healthy habit building based Internal Wellbeing Recovery Action Plan Support from the team In on Take 5 e.g. move, connect, person and/or online to connect (WRAP) and guided self help Risk Management sleep, eat well. with campus, be a healthy Low level CBT De-escalation support #QUBWell - Healthy Campus & learner and avoid isolation Counselling referral and 24/7 Safety planning Flag Days Drop-in Clinic - One Elmwood helpline Links with Trusted Contacts Assessment Support Hub and in Faculty (UG/PG) Support at Student Progress Inspire Support Calls Transitions Skills support for Walk and Talk sessions meetings QUB Accommodation checknew students Social Prescribing referral for Support to Participate Fully in Self-help Resources through Active Campus, Jump In Study and University Inspire Hub and Student volunteering, etc life, meetings and review In liaison with Wellbeing website In School Mental Health Safe and Healthy Relationship Student Mental Health Peer support groups e.g. ASD, Ambassadors guidance Service (BHSCT) PG Wellbeing Wednesday Support to (re)engage with Referrals to external partners Inspire Wellbeing Student-led events e.g. Mind Schools Occupational Health GP's & CPN's Your Mood, International Report and Support referrals assessment & recommendations Mental Health Liaison Teams Student Guides, Clubs and Other support service referrals Multi disciplinary Student of Community Mental Health Societies e.g. LDS, SU Advice, Accessible Concern support Teams Psycho-education workshops Learning, Careers Reasonable Adjustments with CAMHS e.g. Look After Your Mate, Accommodation support Accessible Learning Support, Active Bystander, Consent, "Keep In Touch" contacts including working diagnosis Dealing with Grief GP appointment support Support for short term Accommodation events impairments GP registration 1:1 Support provider



## **Appendix 2: Risk Matrix - Risk and Protective Factors**

Risk Level	Exploration	Risk factors	Protective Factors	Possible Recommendations
No/Low Risk I'm managing and functioning well in general	Self-care routine No history of MH issues No self-harm or history Some low mood or mild Stress or situation having a minor impact on mood Has a small number of risk factors currently	Risk to Self Factors:  Presenting issues not significantly impacting on mental health  Occasional / mild symptoms of low mood  Reduced motivation  Mild Signs of procrastination  Low level anxiety  Increased level of stress  Worried about studies or home life  Isolation  Reduced motivation  Problems sleeping (too much/too little)  Some problems eating  Risk to Others  No indicators  Risk From Others  No Indicators	In the main:  Motivated and positive outlook  Healthy study and home life  Well supported by family and friends  Engaging in studies  Healthy study/work/life balance  Good School support	<ul> <li>Tier 0 and Tier 1 Supports</li> <li>Continue with healthy, balanced approach</li> <li>Signpost to relevant services</li> <li>Early intervention support</li> <li>Assessment Support Hub</li> <li>Inspire self-help hub</li> <li>Learning and Development</li> <li>Engage in WOW events</li> <li>School support meeting <ul> <li>signpost to AOS or P/T</li> <li>for academic guidance or queries</li> <li>Clubs and Societies</li> <li>Chaplaincies</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Low to Medium Risk I'm mainly functioning well but this issue is starting to impact my health, wellbeing and/or studies	Feeling overwhelmed by pressure of course Feeling confused, isolated, lack of focus Frustration/reduced self-esteem which may present as scratching skin, pulling hair, being overly self-critical Some low mood and/or increasing levels of anxiety Avoidance behaviours Out if character behaviours	Risk to Self Factors:  Losing interest studies/hobbies  Feeling disconnected  Becoming overwhelmed  Worried and over thinking  Lack of motivation  Risk taking behaviour  History of TLNWL (6 months ago or more) but not current  Recent fleeting TLNWL – (3 months ago) not ongoing and no intent or plan  Risk to Others  No indicators  Risk From Others  No Indicators	<ul> <li>Supportive family - able to talk to them</li> <li>Feels able to confide to friends</li> <li>Good School support</li> <li>Engaging in supports offered</li> <li>Accesses GP/health services appropriately</li> <li>Engaging in Disability &amp; Wellbeing</li> <li>Engaging in wider university supports</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Tier 0, 1, 2 Supports</li> <li>1:1 meeting with WA for wellbeing strategies</li> <li>Student Support meeting with School</li> <li>Learning and Development</li> <li>PWP CBT</li> <li>Assessment Support Hub</li> <li>Inspire HUB</li> <li>Inspire guided self-help</li> <li>Inspire counselling</li> <li>Support to Register with Accessible Learning</li> </ul>
Medium Risk This issue is causing me distress and impacting on several areas of my health, wellbeing/and or studies	Combination of a high number of low-risk factors or some medium-risk factors coupled with low protective factors	Risk to Self Factors:     Managed self-harm as a positive coping strategy     History of self-harm (6mths ago or more)     Thoughts of self-harm – no intent     Poor academic performance	Explore where student sits in terms of protective factors  • Supportive family - able to talk to them  • Feels able to confide to friends  • Good School support	Tier 1, 2, 3 Supports Consult - Actions agreed:  1:1 meeting with WA for wellbeing strategies  GP - Student to arrange appointment (unless there is a special request) follow up letter can be sent by student wellbeing

Self-Harm: Thoughts of self- harm or compulsion to selfharm or self-harming currently TLNWL (No intent): Talking to friends about thoughts of ending life and reading articles online about it. Explore when and where thoughts of LNWL occur Ask about plan or intent Plan can be thinking of ways but would never do it i.e.crossing the road could get hit by a car – but no intent Looking for ways of SI online but stating no intent

- Unhealthy coping mechanisms (alcohol, drugs, etc)
- International student with limited connections
- TLNWL recent (past 6 months) without plan or intent
- Feelings of hopelessness/helplessness, worthless, ambivalence to living, withdrawn, concerning language
- Symptoms of impulsivity, aggression (risk taking behaviour)
- Sleep significantly impacting daily routine
- Depressed, with current low mood and poor coping strategies
- High level of anxiety impacting ability to function and look after self
- Managed Dysfunctional eating/Eating Disorder impacting on mental health
- Excluding self from social contact/interactions and activities and routines
- Avoidance behaviours
- Severe procrastination
- OCD and severe perfectionism

- Engaging in supports offered
- Accesses GP/health services appropriately
- Engaging with Disability & Wellbeing
- Engaging in wider university supports

- Trusted Contact Encourage / support
  student to link with TC
- School Support student to engage with School
- STCS Consider Level 1
- Inspire consider counselling and self refer through Hub
- Student Mental Health discussion to consider referral
- 24/7 Helpline information

   clear information on how
   access out of hours
   supports.
- Keep in contact with student to get updates on actions including GP contact and TC involvement

## Consult and/or R&S Consult

- R&S Support
- Social Services
- PSNI



/			
	<ul> <li>Unmotivated, negative outlook</li> <li>Unhealthy study and home life</li> <li>Not supported by family and friends</li> <li>Not Engaging in studies</li> <li>No healthy study/work/life balance</li> <li>No School support</li> <li>Risk to Others</li> <li>Impulsive acts/Aggression to others, impact on others</li> <li>Child protection/safeguarding issues</li> <li>Risk From Others</li> <li>Safe &amp; Health relationships issues</li> <li>Safeguarding for U18's and vulnerable students</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Engaging in supports offered</li> <li>Accesses GP/health services appropriately</li> <li>Engaging with Disability &amp; Wellbeing</li> <li>Engaging in wider university supports</li> </ul>	Consult and/or R&S Consult  R&S Support  Social Services PSNI

# Med/High Risk I am not functioning well and/or am using unhealthy coping strategies to manage the issue

# One or more med/high risk factors present coupled with low protective factors

Explore statements made about SI – when and how often do the thoughts come. How strong and immediate is the intent How long do the thoughts last and what do they do to relieve the negative thoughts, what stops them acting on thoughts

### **Risk to Self Factors:**

- Strong TLNWL, more intense & consistent thoughts of ending life & intent to end life
- Ongoing unmanaged self-harm, strong feelings about significant self-harm alarming the student
- Any previous undisclosed suicide attempt
- Mood significantly impacted by bereavement/serious illness of another
- Previous close bereavement by suicide,
- Recent attempts of suicide (past 6 months)
- Persistent suicide ideation with plan
- Dysfunctional eating/Eating
   Disorder impacting on mental
   health not accessing support
- Signs of psychosis, paranoia or previous history of same
- Does not want to burden family/issues related to family dynamics

## Explore where student sits in terms of protective factors

- Supportive family able to talk to them
- Feels able to confide to friends
- Good School support
- Engaging in supports offered
- Accesses GP/health services appropriately
- Engaging in Disability & Wellbeing
- Engaging in wider university supports

## Tier 2, 3 Supports Consult – Immediate Safety planning

- GP WA to contact GP (possible follow up letter)
- UHC request for urgent/temporary registration and risk reported
- Trusted Contact WA to contact TC or student with WBA support within session.
- TC declined consult
- Liaise with current primary care provider
- Inspire or Lifeline checkin
- Flag to accommodation providers
- Accommodation Checkins if QUB
- School Support student to engage with School





<ul> <li>Friends are not supportive</li> <li>Culture – mental health is a stigma</li> <li>No local support</li> <li>Reluctant to talk to anyone/lack of trust</li> <li>Not engaging with GP/not registered with GP</li> <li>Risk to Others</li> <li>Impulsive acts/Aggression to others, significant impact on others</li> <li>Significant Child protection/safeguarding issues</li> <li>Risk From Others</li> <li>Safe &amp; Health relationships issues</li> <li>Safeguarding for U18's and vulnerable students</li> </ul>	STCS - Consider Level 1/2  Inspire counselling referral discussion  Student Mental Health — discussion to consider referral  24/7 Helpline information —  1:1 meeting and follow up with WA  Wider university supports  Consult and/or R&S Consult R&S Support Social Services PSNI
	Consult and/or R&S Consult  R&S Support Social Services PSNI





## High Risk

I am having extreme difficulty in coping and my health, wellbeing and/or studies are at risk

## One or more high risk factors present

Ask direct questions about the thoughts, plan and intent. "Do you intend to end your life?" How do you intend to end your life?"

"What has stopped you taking your life in the past?"

"Can you keep yourself safe today?"

## **Risk to Self Factors:**

- Suicidal thoughts with urgent/ imminent plan and intent
- Reporting they can't keep themselves safe or unable to confirm that they can
- Unable to agree a safety plan
- Signs of psychosis, paranoia or previous history of same
- Struggling to identify a trusted contact or someone to contact for support
- Poor/no relationship with family
- Extremely isolated/no local support network

## In the act of suicide Student at immediate risk who leaves during appointment Risk to Others

- At immediate risk of harming others
- Safeguarding/child protection requiring immediate action from Statutory Body

## **Risk From Others**

 At immediate risk of harm from others

# Explore where student sits in terms of protective factors

- Supportive family able to talk to them
- Feels able to confide to friends
- Good School support
- Engaging in supports offered
- Accesses GP/health services appropriately
- Engaging in Disability& Wellbeing
- Engaging in wider university supports

# Consult where possible before ringing 999 for emergency service

- Taxi to hospital (must be arranged via a consult) using Wellbeing taxi account, if friend or TC not able to accompany, consult re: ambulance
- Contact Trusted Contact with student permission / or consult with Head of Services if permission not given
- Ring 999 then consult
- Contact student and ask that they return immediately otherwise contact emergency services and consult
- Consult if possible but do not delay in contacting Emergency Services
- Consult if possible but do not delay in contacting Emergency Services

**Appendix 3: School Concerns, Recommended Interventions and Recommended Monitoring** 

Concerns	Concern Level	Recommended Interventions	Recommended Monitoring
One/several of:  Missing/non- engagement (out of contact with school/ friend/ family)  Suicidal Ideation with plans and/or intent  Significant and recent self-harm  Significant risk to others or from others  High risk-taking behaviour	High	School to make <b>immediate</b> contact with student Wellbeing via staff contact form, telephone <b>or</b> email  Student Engaging with the School: Student Support Meeting/Support to Participate Fully in Studies/and or Stage 1 or 2 meeting arranged – Student Wellbeing can offer guidance on which is appropriate on a case by case basis  Student Not Engaging with the School: 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 trusted or emergency contact, Welfare check through PSNI or Accommodation team.  Where there is significant risk to others, the Major incident plan may be invoked	Student Engaging Determine appropriate follow-up (initially within 24hrs)  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 and actions  Disengagement pattern repeats Flag with Student Wellbeing immediately.
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	Medium	School to make contact with student via email and/or telephone within 48hrs of concerns being identified.  If relevant, contact Student Wellbeing Service to discuss specific case and agree next steps.  Student Engaging with the School: Student Support Meeting/Support to Participate Fully in Studies/and or Stage 1 or 2 meeting arranged – Student Wellbeing can offer guidance on which is appropriate on a case by case basis	Student Engaging Determine appropriate follow-up (initially within 48hrs)  Ongoing follow-up (e.g. daily, weekly, monthly, etc.) for at least 1 month to ensure student continues to engage with identified and agreed supports and actions  Disengagement pattern continues Flag with Student Wellbeing and follow normal school process around progression /presumed withdrawal implications

Non-payment of Tuition fees Visa difficulties Absence from Halls of Residence or private accommodation		Student Not Engaging with School If student chooses not to attend any agreed meeting  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.	
Examples: Sporadic attendance at class Missing assessment deadlines		Staff member that has identified concerns should send email to student outlining low levels of concerns and relevant support options within 3 days.  If relevant, request the student to contact School to arrange a Student Support Meeting.	Student Engaging Follow normal School process around follow up  Disengagement pattern continues Follow normal school process around attendance
	Low	<ul> <li>Student Engaging with School</li> <li>Arrange a Student Support Meeting to:</li> <li>Establish issues</li> <li>Discuss support options</li> </ul>	and submission and request a non-urgent reach out to student from Student Wellbeing via staff contact us form
		Student Not Engaging with School  If student chooses not respond or chooses not to attend Student Support Meeting:  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.	

## SEE



Do you see a change in behaviours or actions?

- Increase in absences (class, tutorials, social events)
- Change in performance
- Mood swings
- Not replying to messages, or being distant
- Change in appearance
- Tearful
- · Excessive use of alcohol or drugs
- Appearing restless or agitated

Some signs might not be visible - life events, bereavement, sleep issues, low self esteem, suicidal thoughts. It is always good to check in and ask how others are doing





## SAY



If you notice or have concerns, say something.

- Reassure the person it is okay not to be okay
- Remain non-judgemental and express empathy
- Use open ended questions
- Take time to talk to the person and consider further supports
   Use phrases of control and safety:
- "Have you spoken to anyone else about this?"
- "I can see how difficult it must be for you."
- "I am here to help you get the support you need."
- "I am sorry to hear about your loss, how are you?"
- "Do you feel you can keep yourself safe?"

## **SIGNPOST**



There are a range of supports available. When supporting a student it is important to consider which services are best suited to support with their mental health, wellbeing or other concerns.

Remember you are not on your own in these situations.



Scan the QR code to find out more information on what support services

If you or someone you know is in immediate danger or experiencing a mental health crisis, call 999 or go to the local A&E department For 24/7 support:

Inspire Student Helpline - 0808 800 0016 Lifeline Crisis Response Helpline - 0808 800 8000



## STUDENT WELLBEING

