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|------|---------------------------------|--------------------|
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Policy Statement

West College Scotland aims to develop and maintain a learning environment of trust where individuals can work together effectively. The principles and values of this policy acknowledge that students have a right to feel their learning environment is safe, promotes equality, dignity and encourages individuals to treat each other with respect and trust.

Equality Statement

The College is committed to providing equal opportunities to ensure its students, staff, customers and visitors are treated equally regardless of gender reassignment, race, religion or belief; disability; age; marriage and civil partnerships; pregnancy and maternity; sexual orientation; sex.

Please note this document is available in other formats, to request another format please email info@wcs.ac.uk

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Student Wellbeing and Guidance Procedure – Guidance for Staff

1. Introduction

The purpose of this guidance is:

- To ensure that there is a coherent approach across the College for students and prospective students who disclose or experience mental ill health
- To promote mental wellbeing for all West College Scotland students.

Students with mental health difficulties are protected by the Equality Act 2010. This came into force in October 2010 and combines several laws including the Disability Discrimination Act, into one single act.

All West College Scotland, WCS College staff and students have a responsibility to create an environment where all students, including those who experience mental health difficulties, are treated with respect and understanding and are supported and valued as members of the College community. We welcome and support all people, including people of all ages, disabilities, ethnic backgrounds, gender identities, religions/beliefs and sexual orientations, people who are pregnant and people from different backgrounds and experiences.

Furthermore, all staff and students of the College have a responsibility to promote equal opportunities for all and to tackle discrimination due to mental health difficulties.

Students who disclose or experience mental health difficulties are offered support. Staff must be aware of the limits of the support which can be offered and of how to refer on appropriately.

West College Scotland works in partnership with other agencies to support students who experience mental health difficulties.

This guidance comprises a range of support and services that are provided for students' emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing. Colleges have specialist services dedicated to the provision of this support, teaching staff also have a critical role to play, being best placed to observe behaviour in the learning environment that might indicate that a student needs support. The relationship between academic achievement and resilience in dealing with personal issues is well documented, and a student who receives relevant and timely support in dealing with the problems of everyday life is more likely to have the energy and motivation to do well in their studies.

Students will benefit from an approach to student guidance that recognises their individual circumstances and can meet their individual needs.

- Factors such as caring responsibilities, disability, gender reassignment and family relationships have the potential to seriously impact upon a student's academic achievement and general wellbeing.
- Many students develop their political, cultural, social, sexual and spiritual identities while in education – and the journey will not always be an easy one.
- Staff reaction to the issues that students present and ability to understand their experiences are crucial in enabling them to work through their problems effectively.
- We all have a legal responsibility to ensure that students are protected from discrimination and harassment and that reasonable adjustments are made to give disabled students equality of access in all aspects of their studies

2. What are mental health difficulties?

Mental health difficulties cover a wide range of issues from mild anxiety to severe problems affecting mood and the ability to think and communicate rationally. In line with other institutions we have seen a year-on-year increase in students declaring a mental health condition. Mental health difficulties are common and that we can all be affected by these kinds of challenges at various times in our lives.

Individual students will be affected differently by mental health difficulties. Signs that a student may be experiencing mental health difficulties include:

- Patterns of absence and engagement with their course
- Changes in the student's performance in their course work
- Student appears tired and listless
- Poor concentration
- Unpredictable behaviour
- Physical complaints such as headaches, stomach upsets etc.

Students may be reluctant to admit that they are experiencing mental health difficulties because of perceived stigma so it is important that all staff are aware of the possible signs of distress and feel confident to respond appropriately.

3. Role of Students

Students can be encouraged to take care of their mental health in a range of ways and West College Scotland is committed to providing an open, supportive and accepting environment, which provides opportunities for students to access information about mental health and wellbeing.

All students can be encouraged to seek support when required and, in some cases, may disclose to fellow students that they have or have had mental health difficulties.

Students can, in these cases, play a key role in encouraging fellow students who disclose to them to seek help and support at the earliest opportunity. These students should be aware of their personal limitations in offering assistance.

4. Disclosure on course application

Applicants are encouraged to disclose throughout the recruitment process if they have support needs because of mental ill health so that support can be put in place from the start of the course according to need. Applicants should be encouraged to seek assistance from the Enabling Services team prior to starting their course of study.

5. Role of staff

The College encourages students who are experiencing difficulties to make these known to staff.

The College is continually developing our services to support students' health and wellbeing; however it is important that staff feel confident in their interactions with students and ensure appropriate initial support and referrals.

Staff should respond to disclosure by students in a non-judgmental and supportive manner and should be clear about the specific responsibilities relating to their role. They should ensure that students are suitably supported and referred on as appropriate. In general, students should be involved in all decisions affecting their welfare though this may not always be possible depending on the nature and degree of their illness. Staff who work with students should make it a priority to attend any relevant training, such as Mental Health First Aid, to assist them in their role.

Staff must treat any disclosure of mental health difficulty by a student with sensitivity and respect for confidentiality. The General Data Protection Regulation classifies data

about mental health as sensitive personal data. Staff should always keep sensitive personal data secure and share it only:

- When they have the student's written consent to do so
- Only with those with an express need to receive the information

Where there are situations where a student's data shall be shared without their consent, they will be informed of this (again, at the time the data are collected)

Occasions when it may be necessary to share information include:

- The student's behaviour poses a threat to themselves or others (if there is a real and present threat to life, data must be shared immediately; consent is not required)
- A crime has been committed or criminal activity is threatened
- A child or vulnerable adult's wellbeing is compromised through abuse or neglect (see the college's guidance on [Safeguarding](#) in this circumstance)
- See section also regarding Helping students in Crisis

On these rare occasions staff must not disclose any more information than is necessary and must ensure that anyone in receipt of this information treats it in strictest confidence. It may be necessary to inform other College staff (for example, the student's lecturers) if the student is to benefit from reasonable adjustments to take account of their mental health difficulty, and that should be made clear to the student. If in any doubt, please contact the Student Counselling and Wellbeing team.

6. Reasonable adjustments

Many students with a mental health condition require no extra support or adjustments. However, the Equality Act places a duty on the college to make reasonable adjustments where someone with a disability would be at substantial disadvantage to someone who does not have a disability. Any reasonable adjustments should be agreed and supported through the Enabling Services team with appropriate support from the Curriculum team ensuring appropriate quality assurance procedures are followed.

These reasonable adjustments are anticipatory so we must prepare and plan to address barriers that students with a disability may face. Anticipatory reasonable adjustments for students with mental health difficulties might include:

- Providing notes prior to a class
- Allowing a student to move classes to avoid morning classes
- Allowing absence for illness-related appointments
- Allowing regular breaks if, for example, a student becomes very anxious
- Giving extensions for pieces of work
- Extra time in assessments and exams
- Recording in class to support note taking
- A separate room for assessments and exams
- Arranging for mentoring /study skill support
- Support to apply for Disabled Student Award funding if studying HE courses

All necessary and reasonable adjustments should be put in place to allow the student to succeed on their chosen programme, and staff have an obligation to ensure that recommended adjustments are consistently adhered to. Advice on reasonable adjustments can be sought from the Enabling Services team.

7. Helping students in crisis

Most of us experience psychological or emotional distress at some point in our lives. We can often be helped by family and friends, but sometimes expert help is required.

All staff have a role in responding to the needs of students with mental health difficulties and for supporting the safety and wellbeing of students. Staff should be ready to offer support to students within the boundaries of what they feel competent to do. (See previous comments about taking advantage of training opportunities) and if you recognise that a student is in difficulty.

All staff should feel confident to:

- Listen without judgment
- Give the student time to talk
- Understand the situation from his or her point of view
- Be sympathetic and not dismissive

- Help the student to feel safe
- Be mindful of confidentiality
- Make appropriate referrals
- Refer to appendix 1 for more detail and specific guidance about actions and referral agencies
- Be aware of appropriate boundaries

8. Safeguarding

Safeguarding ensures that the College provides all young people under the age of 18 and vulnerable adults with a safe and supportive learning environment, and are protected from harm, abuse and exploitation. Where there is a suspicion of or allegations of abuse (see [Safeguarding Policy](#) for definitions) staff should record information by following the instructions within this policy and pass to the Safeguarding team. This will be picked up by the person with responsibility for Safeguarding on that campus and they will keep in touch with the referring staff member regarding any actions taken.

9. Emergencies

Emergency situations are rare. However, if an acute or dangerous situation presents itself and there is an immediate risk to the wellbeing or safety of a student or any other person then this information should be shared immediately and without hesitation. In the first instance this should be reported to the Police using 999 or 101

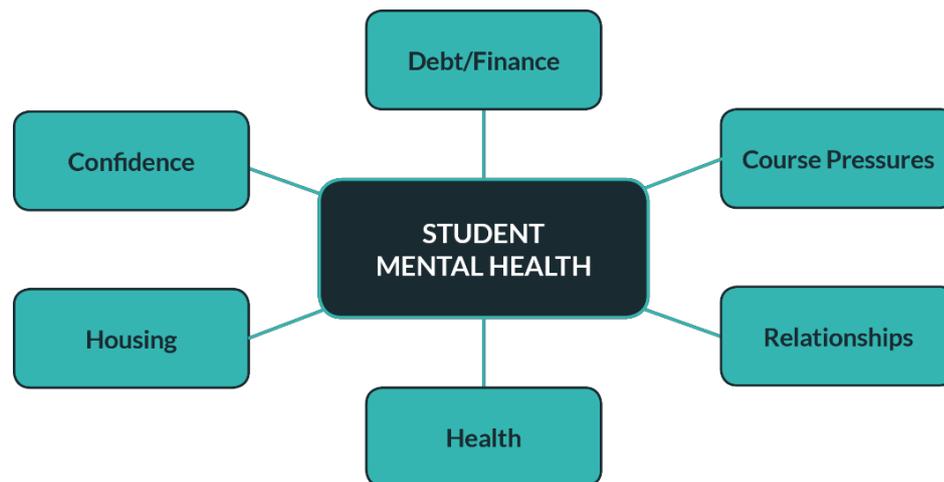
10. Fitness to continue study

In situations where signs of illness, depleted mental health, emotional disorders or substance abuse have had an adverse impact on the ability of individual students to engage with their studies or has an impact on the wellbeing of others around them in college staff should refer to [Appendix 2 Fitness to continue study guidelines](#). These guidelines can be applied as an alternative to disciplinary procedures in situations as described above.

Appendix 1 – Supporting distressed students – a guide for staff

Introduction:

Some students may experience emotional and psychological difficulties during their time at college. This may be as a result of past life experiences and/or current pressures related to academic and/or personal issues. Where this is affecting the student's progress and success or his/her wellbeing it is important to identify what action you may be able to take to help.



Most issues can be resolved with support from friends, family, teaching and wellbeing support staff. However occasionally a student experiences extreme distress and requires extra assistance. In your professional role at the College it is likely that at some time you will be required to support a student who is distressed or vulnerable.

When to help

Students who are struggling usually show some outward signs they are dealing with personal concerns. Symptoms may be expressed via a change in emotion, behaviour or cognition. The following signs and symptoms may help you decide if a student needs help.

Behaviours

- Changes in academic performance
- Deterioration in quality of work
- Repeated absences, procrastination
- Social isolation
- Alcohol/substance abuse or misuse

- Changes in eating or sleeping
- Uncharacteristically becoming disruptive or quiet/withdrawn
- Sleeping in class
- Increase or decrease in energy levels, i.e. becoming agitated or lethargic
- Changes in appearance, personal care neglect
- Incoherent or disorganised speech

Emotions

- Assessment/exam anxiety and perfectionism
- Poor interpersonal relationships or skills
- Demonstrating anxiety or experiencing panic attacks
- Expressing feelings of hopelessness/powerlessness
- Anxieties relating to gender identity or sexual orientation, such as experiencing prejudice or worries about 'coming out'
- Low mood / mood swings

Cognitive

- Writing or creative works expressing extremes of hopelessness, isolation, anger or despair
- Confused or disorganised thinking
- Difficulty in focusing and concentrating

How to help – guidance and support interventions

Responding to a distressed student can be seen as a series of stages:

- Listen
- Assess the situation
- Take action
- Follow up

Listening to the student – this gives the opportunity to talk and gain the information you need. Having a sympathetic listener can be reassuring for the student and sometimes may be all that is required.

Assessing the situation – this involves making judgements with the student about the urgency and severity of the situation and deciding what, if anything, you need to do.

Taking action – action should be based on the information gained during the last two stages.

Following up – making sure there are no loose ends and the student is aware of what has been done and who they can go to if they need further support

Listening to the student

It is important to give the student the opportunity to talk and feel heard. Having a sympathetic listener can be enough to reassure the student that encountering difficulties is a normal part of student life and in most cases, further intervention is not required.

Listen in the right time and space

- If the student appears to be very agitated or upset can a brief conversation be offered immediately?
- If you have an urgent deadline or imminent /unmovable commitment, say so, but offer a specific time later
- Make clear how much time is available. Do your best to ensure that the time offered is free from interruptions and that there is a private space

Listen with purpose: what does this student need?

- What seems to be the main issue?
- Is this the whole story or do you get a sense that there are other /underlying problems?
- How does the student think you can help?

Listen with skill

- Use open questions and open body language e.g. questions that will elicit more information than a simple yes/no response such as 'how long have you feeling this way', as opposed to 'have you been feeling like this for a long time'? Open body language includes things like posture, eye contact, avoiding looking at clocks/watches etc.
- Listen more than talk
- Reflect their words back to them to give a chance to clarify or expand on anything

Remember confidentiality

Treat all personal information as confidential unless:

- You have the student's permission to talk to a colleague
- You have the student's permission to talk to their support network e.g. family, friends, GP, other health professionals
- You believe there is a real threat to the safety of the student or others. In this case confidentiality no longer applies and the appropriate emergency services and college staff should be contacted.

Assessing the risk, action and follow up

It is generally helpful to consider these elements in terms of 3 levels of risk:

- Mild – no immediate risk to student or others and promoting self-help is the main approach
- Moderate to severe – some urgency, internal and external referrals for further support
- Crisis/emergency – student at risk of harming self or others

Level – mild

Examples of Behaviour

- Poor performance
- Avoids meetings
- Some evidence of low mood/anxiety

Assessment of risk

- No serious risk to self or others, but you are concerned about their mental health and wellbeing

Action

- Encourage student to disclose any issues affecting them and if there is any medical or other support in place
- Refer to and liaise with college support/wellbeing (with permission of student) to promote self-management strategies
- Follow up with student

Level – moderate to severe

- Examples of behaviour
- Disruptive behaviour
- Excessive absences
- Evidence of depression / anxiety
- Poor self - care
- Deteriorating class relationships
- Emotional / upset/ tearful

Assessment of risk

- Thoughts of suicide, no immediate intent or plans
- Previous suicide attempt
- Current self - harming behaviour
- Moderate alcohol or drug use
- Evidence of current mental disorder/ ill health

Action

- Listen to the student
- Encourage student to disclose any issues affecting them

- Encourage student to seek further professional help if already under medical supervision, or to make contact with GP if not
- Encourage student to speak with family and friends
- Liaise with other faculty staff where appropriate, as well as internal support / wellbeing services
- Consider referral / report to the [Safeguarding](#) team
- Consider Fitness to Continue Study Procedure

Level – crisis/emergency

- Examples of behaviour
- Highly emotional/distressed
- Aggression / violence
- Disjointed thoughts/speech
- Loss of contact with reality
- Irrational fears
- Suicidal thoughts with intention/plan
- Homicidal thoughts

Assessment of risk

- Risk of immediate harm to self or others
- Risk of serious self - harm
- Risk of suicide
- Extreme disorientation or out of touch with reality / delusional
- Risk of violence to people/property

Action

- In case of immediate risk call 999 for Police or Ambulance, and contact appropriate member of management
- Contact next of kin/ emergency contact
- Follow Action in Crisis or Emergency Procedure

Remember

It can be upsetting and challenging hearing of students' difficulties, particularly if they are as severe as described here, so it is important to only do as much as is reasonable within your role, and to remember to take care of yourself. If you are significantly affected by any situation make sure you talk to someone about it, (while being mindful of confidentiality and protecting the student's identity unless you have their permission) a friend, colleague or line manager.

The college also offers employee support through PAM Assist details of which are on the Intranet and who can be contacted on this number 0800 882 4102.

Mental health and wellbeing support organisations

BREATHING SPACE - 0800 83 85 87

- Breathing Space is a free, confidential phone and web based service for people in Scotland experiencing low mood, depression or anxiety.
- The service is available (Weekdays: Monday-Thursday 6pm to 2am) and (Weekend: Friday 6pm-Monday 6am).

When you phone Breathing Space, the call will be answered by one of their specialist advisors. They come from a range of mental health, counselling and social work backgrounds. They will listen, and can offer advice and, if appropriate, let the caller know about help in their local area for more specific problems.

SAMARITANS -116 123

The Samaritans are a charity that are there round the clock, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Their number is FREE to call and you don't have to be suicidal to call them. They offer a safe place to talk any time you like, in your own way – about whatever's getting to you.

THE MIX

The Mix is a UK based charity that provides free, confidential support for young people under 25 via online, social and mobile. <http://www.themix.org.uk/>

GENDER BASED VIOLENCE -

<http://student.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/index.php/advice/gender-based-violence/>

ANXIETY UK

Charity providing support if you've been diagnosed with an anxiety condition. Phone: 08444 775 774 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5.30pm)

Website: www.anxietyuk.org.uk

BIPOLAR UK

A charity helping people living with manic depression or bipolar disorder.

Website: www.bipolaruk.org.uk

CALM

CALM is the Campaign Against Living Miserably, for men aged 15-35.

Website: www.thecalmzone.net

MEN'S HEALTH FORUM

24/7 stress support for men by text, chat and email.

Website: www.menshealthforum.org.uk

MENTAL HEALTH FOUNDATION

Provides information and support for anyone with mental health problems or learning disabilities. Website: www.mentalhealth.org.uk

MIND

Promotes the views and needs of people with mental health problems. Phone: 0300 123 3393 (Mon-Fri, 9am-6pm) Website: www.mind.org.uk

NO PANIC

Voluntary charity offering support for sufferers of panic attacks and OCD. Offers a course to help overcome your phobia/OCD. Includes a helpline.

Phone: 0844 967 4848 (daily, 10am-10pm) Website: www.nopanic.org.uk

OCD ACTION

Support for people with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD). Includes information on treatment and online resources.

Phone: 0845 390 6232 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-5pm) Website: www.ocdaction.org.uk

OCD UK

A charity run by people with OCD, for people with OCD. Includes facts, news and treatments.

Phone: 0845 120 3778 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) Website: www.ocduk.org

PAPYRUS

Young suicide prevention society.

Phone: HOPElineUK 0800 068 4141 (Mon-Fri, 10am-5pm & 7-10pm. Weekends 2-5pm)

Website: www.papyrus-uk.org

RETHINK MENTAL ILLNESS

Support and advice for people living with mental illness. Phone: 0300 5000 927 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-4pm) Website: www.rethink.org

SANE

Charity offering support and carrying out research into mental illness. Phone: 0845 767 8000 (daily, 6-11pm)

SANEmail email: sanemail@org.uk Website: www.sane.org.uk

SCOTTISH RECOVERY NETWORK

Website: www.scottishrecovery.net

SEE ME SCOTLAND

Website: www.seemescotland.org

YOUNGMINDS

Information on child and adolescent mental health. Services for parents and professionals.

Phone: Parents' helpline 0808 802 5544 (Mon-Fri, 9.30am-4pm)

Website: www.youngminds.org.uk

ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS

Phone: 0845 769 7555 (24-hour helpline) Website: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Telephone Based Support

LIVING LIFE - 0800 328 9655

Living Life is a free telephone service available to anyone over the age of 16 who is experiencing low mood, mild to moderate depression and/or anxiety.

The NHS service is available (Mon-Fri 1pm to 9pm). The caller will be asked to provide some details and then an assessment appointment will be arranged to discuss the service and how help can be provided to you.

Two types of telephone intervention and support are provided: Living Life Guided Self Help (CBT with a self-help coach).

Self-help coaches guide you over the phone through a series of self-help workbooks to help understand some of the reasons why you are feeling low, depressed or anxious. Sessions take place over a period of approximately 4-8 weeks, at a time suitable to you.

LIVING LIFE COGNITIVE BEHAVIOURAL THERAPY (CBT WITH A THERAPIST)

Specialist help and support, allowing you to work with a qualified therapist over the phone through a series of 6-9 telephone sessions. The therapist can provide specialist CBT support to you in the short term, helping you address negative patterns of thinking and teaching new ways of coping.

LGBT HEALTH AND WELLBEING

We are a unique community initiative that promotes the health, wellbeing and equality of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) people in Scotland.

Website: <https://www.lgbthealth.org.uk/>

WEST COLLEGE SCOTLAND SERVICES

TIME4U Counselling Service

- <http://student.westcollegescotland.ac.uk/index.php/advice/student-counselling/>

SilverCloud Online cCBT Resource - <https://wcs.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>

Appendix 2 – Fitness to continue study guidance

In situations where signs of illness, depleted mental health, emotional disorders or substance abuse have had an adverse impact on the ability of individual students to engage with their studies or has had an impact on the wellbeing of others around them in college these guidelines will be followed.

Principles

West College Scotland has a duty of care to respond appropriately to situations which cause significant concern about a student's mental or physical wellbeing, particularly where there is a possibility of adverse impact on other members of the college community, or a risk of harm to the individual concerned.

This guidance assists staff to address these issues with confidence and promotes a positive attitude towards students who require support to help them achieve their educational goals.

These guidance notes should be used when there are serious and pressing concerns that a student's behaviour, caused by disability, mental ill-health or addiction is impacting on his or her capacity to study and engage in college life and presents an actual or perceived risk to themselves or others.

This guidance can also apply as an alternative to disciplinary procedures when behaviour described as above is disruptive to study or presents an actual or perceived risk to themselves or others (addition to be made here regarding students working towards qualifications where Fitness to Practice criteria need to be met). Students working towards qualifications where Fitness to Practice criteria need to be met must declare or accept support with any physical or mental health issues that may pose a risk to patient/ public safety or their ability to carry out work placement activities safely. If students can demonstrate effective management of their health condition, there should be no impact on successful completion of the course.

Objective of guidance

The purpose of these guidelines is:

- To provide a consistent and coordinated approach to the handling of situations where it is probable that a student's behaviour is affected by their mental wellbeing, disability or health issues and should be managed rather than disciplined.
- To identify and implement reasonable adjustments where appropriate.
- To ensure appropriate support for staff and students affected by or involved in interaction with students in these circumstances.

Emergencies

Emergency situations are rare. However, if an acute or dangerous situation presents itself and there is an immediate risk to student, or any other person then appropriate action should be taken (Supporting Distressed Students Appendix 1).

Intervention procedure

Unresolved significant concerns about a student's continued engagement with their study linked to mental wellbeing, disability or health issues will prompt the formation of a Support to Study panel.

- The decision to convene a panel will be at the discretion of the relevant Curriculum Quality Leader (CQL).
- The panel should include the student, appropriate lecturing staff and other staff as appropriate. The student has the right to be accompanied by a friend, or representative of the Students' Association to the meeting.
- The panel may consider various options, including recommending additional support strategies, suspension for a defined or undefined period or withdrawal from the course, all of which will be recorded in the Record of Panel Meeting document, which will be completed by the CQL and subsequently held securely by the Senior Curriculum Administrator.
- The decision of the panel will be communicated to the student within 5 working days.

Appeals procedure

- Students have the right to a final appeal. The request which should outline the grounds for appeal must be submitted in writing (by e mail or letter) within 5 days of the receipt of the panel outcome.
- An appeal panel consisting of the relevant Head of Sector, at least one other Head of Sector/Service and appropriate members of College staff, will review the outcome of the panel and the evidence provided. The appeal panel has the right to invite any relevant person to attend.
- The outcome of the appeals panel will be conveyed in writing to all relevant parties within 5 working days.
- The decision of the Appeal Panel will be final.

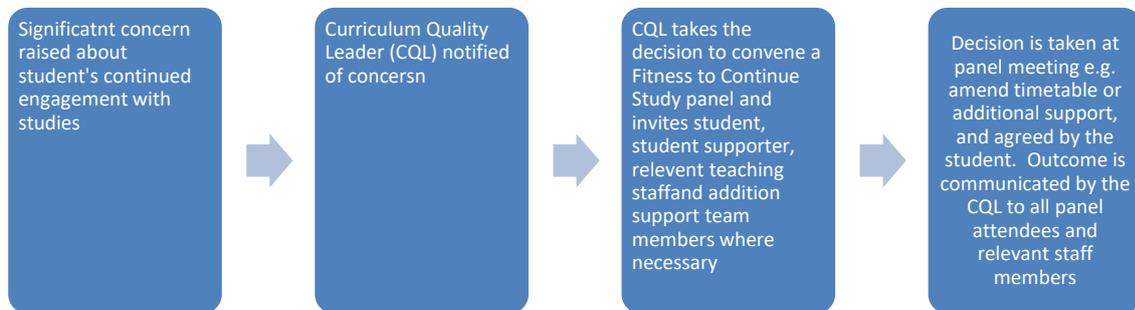
Monitoring

In line with Safeguarding procedures, the Directorate of Student Life and Skills have responsibility for recording the number of concerns regarding fitness to continue study that are formally recorded and how the concerns have been addressed. This information should be sent to the Student Life Manager, records will be held for the period of your course.

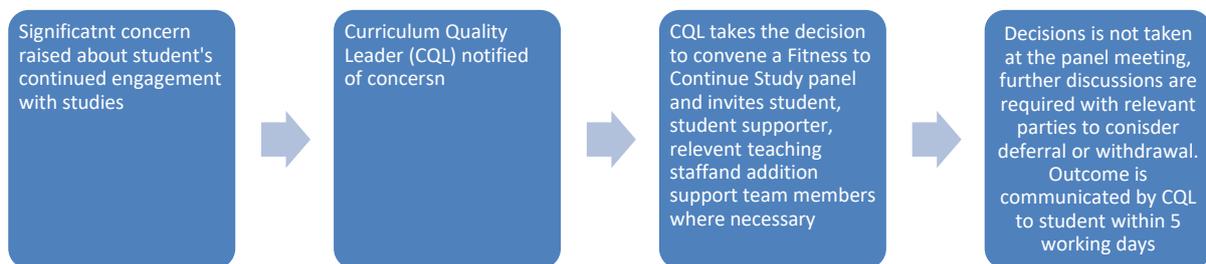
This information will be captured at the end of each academic year and shared with the College's Equality Diversity & Inclusion Manager and the WCS Students' Association President.

Fitness to Continue Flowchart

Outcome 1 – decision taken at panel meeting



Outcome 2 – further discussion required to agree deferral or withdrawal



Outcome 3 – Student right to appeal



Fitness to continue study – Record of panel meeting

| | |
|---|---|
| Date | |
| Student name Student number | |
| Course | |
| Staff members on panel Designated note taker | |
| Learner contract | No /yes Please insert any relevant details |
| Brief outline of the concerns discussed | |
| Support services already accessed (e.g.collegewellbeing /counselling service, GP, other external agency) | |

| | |
|--|--|
| Student comments | |
| Student action points | |
| Staff action points | |
| Any other information/comment | |
| Outcome (e.g., monitor and review within 2-4 weeks, further support measures recommended, reduction in timetable, deferral/withdrawal etc.) | |

Recipient's Name
Recipient's Address
Postcode
Date

Dear **Student Name**

Notice of Fitness to Continue Study Panel Meeting

I am writing in connection with recent concerns that have been raised around difficulties experienced with your progress on **(course name) (details if/as appropriate)**

In these circumstances we like to explore ways in which students may be supported to address the issues which are affecting college experience and agree a way forward.

I would encourage you to bring a friend, family member or representative from West College Scotland Students' Association to be present throughout the meeting. The Students' Association can be contacted by phone (07710 715 538) or e mail sa@wcs.ac.uk

The decision of the panel will be communicated to you by me within 5 college working days. These are some of the possible outcomes which may be considered:

- Alternative study mode
- Adapted/flexible timetable
- Additional study support
- Referral to or re-engagement with college counselling /wellbeing services
- Deferral of study
- Suspension or withdrawal from course

Yours sincerely

Curriculum Quality Leader

Recipient's Name

Recipient's Address

Postcode

Date

Dear **Student Name**

I refer to the Fitness to Continue Study Panel which you attended on (date) where we discussed the recent concerns regarding your difficulties on the (course).

At the panel you were given the opportunity to explore with us some possible outcomes, and you were informed the decision would be communicated to you. The decision of the panel is:

(outline of decision)

You have the right to a final appeal if you are not in agreement with this decision. If you wish to appeal, please submit the grounds for the appeal by mail or letter within 5 college working days of receipt of this letter. The appeal panel will be made up of the Head of Sector, Head of Essential Skills/Head of Student Experience, Students' Association elected officer, and any other relevant person/s

Yours sincerely

Curriculum Quality Leader

Action in crisis or emergency

Emergency situations could include:

- Suicidal intention
- Violence or aggression
- Overdose
- Extremely erratic or disturbed behaviour

If there is an immediate risk call 999 for Police and/or Ambulance and contact a member of the Safeguarding team.

- Never put yourself at risk
- Ensure student is not left alone
- Reassure student throughout and explain actions being taken
- As far as possible include student in any decisions taken
- Ask student if they would like anyone contacted
- Make notes as soon as possible about the event/incident

If no immediate risk to self or others, then these contact options can be considered:

- Liaise with Counselling & Wellbeing team
- GP
- Crisis Centre (phone 08088 010414 or text 07974 42907)
- Breathing Space (08008 38587)
- Social Care Direct

As the responder you must ensure the event/incident is reported through the Safeguarding team. If a young person under 18 or a vulnerable adult has been involved, the [Safeguarding form](#) must be completed. Otherwise, use the Cause for Concern form.

Equality Impact Assessment

Name of policy/procedure/decision: Gender Based Violence Student Policy
Student Mental Health and Wellbeing Procedure – Guidance for Staff

Provide a brief summary of the aims of the policy/procedure/decision and main activities:

The purpose of this guidance is to ensure that there is a coherent approach across the College for students and prospective students who disclose or experience mental ill health and to promote mental wellbeing for all West College Scotland students.

Assessed By: Clare Fraser

Date: 28 August 2020

This stage establishes whether a policy, procedure or decision will have a differential impact from an equality perspective on people who share protected characteristics or whether it is “equality neutral” (i.e. have no effect either positive or negative).

The protected characteristics are: age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex and sexual orientation.

1. Who will benefit from this (students/staff/stakeholders)? Is there likely to be a positive impact on people who share protected characteristics, and if so, how? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality “neutral”? i.e. will not have a differential impact on any equality group/s?

This guidance comprises a range of support and services that are provided for students’ emotional, psychological and spiritual wellbeing. It recognises that marginalised groups may need additional support, and that there is a relationship with wellbeing and attainment. It is anticipated that the promotion of WCS support and signposting to specialists services will positively impact students and staff. This Guidance complements the College’s statutory duty to advance equality and to take steps to meet the needs of protected groups.

2. Is there likely to be an adverse impact on people who share protected characteristics? If so, who may be affected and why? Or is it clear at this stage that it will be equality “neutral”?

These Guidelines recognise that a student’s behaviour is affected by their mental wellbeing, disability or health issues and should be managed rather than disciplined, which indicates that the College is making reasonable adjustments to the Disciplinary Process. This should mitigate the risk that the student disciplinary process adversely affects students with a disability, and it should also assist with their retention.

3. What action will you take to ensure that you are monitoring the impact of this Procedure?

Data recording the number of concerns regarding fitness to continue study and how the concerns have been addressed will be captured and shared with the College's Equality Diversity & Inclusion Committee and the WCS Students' Association.