

Safeguarding Guide

Crisis situations (on the campus)

A crisis situation:

- The student is talking about wanting to end their life
(and have a plan and intention to do so)
- The student appears to be disturbed or mentally ill
- The student says they have taken an overdose

Good Practice

- Keep calm and if possible, move the student to a quiet and safe place.
- Enlist the help of another member of staff, so the student is not left alone and you are not left alone with the student. Ensure that the door is open. Contact a senior manager who will coordinate the crisis response.
- Contacting a senior manager can be done by calling the Facilities number which is available on the lectern in each classroom or sending someone to the iCentre.
- If in the absence of a senior member of staff, you should:
- Arrange for the student to go to the nearest A&E Department. Telephone 999 and explain the situation (the student's consent is not necessary in these situations).
- If the student is very distressed, appears aggressive or uncooperative, ask someone to call security as well as the emergency services.
- Stay with the student until the ambulance arrives and you are able to hand them over to paramedics.
- Complete an incident report. Debrief the senior manager immediately.

Crisis situations: when the student is not talking to you face-to-face

Process

- Remain as calm as possible.
- If email communication has been received, please forward this to the senior manager and provide the student's contact details.
- If you have been speaking with the student and you are able to call the head, please do. Outline the situation and provide the student's contact details.
- A senior manager or a Wellbeing Advisor will call the student to assess and will further manage the situation.

If you are on a call with a student and do not feel that you can hang up:

- Email a senior manager and a Zoom session will be set up for you to join. A senior manager will guide you over Zoom chat (questions to ask, information to elicit), whilst arranging emergency services (where appropriate).
- Try to keep the student engaged with you until emergency services arrive. However, as above, if a student absconds (on campus), do not follow. Call the police and provide a description.

Things to consider when managing a crisis response:

Advisors will need to consider eliciting/giving the following information:

- How does the student feel? Do they feel they need urgent attention? Have they harmed themselves in some way?
- Do they have any weapons and/or taken an overdose? Do they plan on harming themselves? How?
- Are they alone? If alone, are they able to unlock the door so that help can get in?
- Have they been in touch with their GP recently or told anyone how they have been feeling.

Safeguarding: Children, Young Persons, and Adults at Risk

The term ‘**safeguarding**’ refers to several areas relating to children, young persons and adults at risk, including:

- Child protection issues; (neglect, sexual and physical abuse) as defined in the Children Act 1989 and later revisions and amendments
- Discrimination
- Domestic violence in its various forms, modern slavery and (sexual) exploitation
- Organisational abuse (e.g. bullying, harassment, exploitation etc.)
- Self-neglect, self-destruction and suicidality
- Radicalisation
- Harm to others or self as defined in the Mental Health Act 1983

If any of the above arises, please immediately discuss them with the Wellbeing Advisor (in their absence: first point of call: the Academic Registrar).

Students need to be aware of our Duty of Care, e.g. that the Wellbeing Team cannot guarantee confidentiality in high-risk scenarios (situations that put the mental and physical safety of individuals at risk). The Wellbeing Team reserves the right to contact emergency services, GPs and Children’s Services to limit or prevent harm (please refer to the information sharing form mentioned under appointments and record keeping).

Domestic Abuse

What to do:

- If you become aware of domestic abuse, inform the head (or in their absence, another senior manager) immediately.

- Establish if the student or the family members are at continuing risk. Do this through direct questions such as “do you and X (the perpetrator) still live together?”, “has the police been called?”. Ask factual questions.
- If there is continuing risk, find out whether the student can relocate to a place of safety (a friend for example). The same applies to the victim’s dependents such as children.
- If this is not possible and the student plans to return to the perpetrator, at the risk of being physically harmed or killed, you need to call the Police (and inform the student about this). The same applies to the victim’s dependents such as children.
- If you have to call a victim of domestic abuse, say “Hi, my name is from UoB Manchester, do you have a minute?”. Do not mention your job title or your department. Only discuss any issues concerning domestic abuse if you are certain that the perpetrator does not overhear the conversation.
- Invite the victim of domestic abuse to an appointment at your office.
- Consider a referral to a domestic abuse agency such as Hestia Women’s Aid and inform the victim about their possibility of reporting the abuse to the police.

What not to do:

- Do not assume that domestic abuse is only perpetrated by heterosexual perpetrators, those of certain ethnicities, a certain educational- or class background etc. Domestic abuse occurs in all sections of society.
- Do not send victims of domestic abuse written communication. If you have to write to the victim, do not include your job title in your signature and do not mention any details that may alert the perpetrator to the fact that their behaviour has been flagged up.
- Do not ask detail questions about sensory experiences during violent assaults (like “What was the perpetrator wearing?”, “what did they say exactly?”, “did it hurt?” ...). Not only may you risk sabotaging criminal investigations by asking such questions, you could also cause a re-traumatisation over whose impact you will have no control after the conversation with the victim of domestic abuse has ended.

Police welfare check

When used: when an individual has intimated that they are at risk, e.g. actively suicidal, and are not responding to multiple attempts to contact them.

What to do:

- Inform a senior manager of the situation. They will decide whether to sanction the police welfare check.
- The Wellbeing Advisor calls 101 and requests a police welfare check (state the reasons why, the background and get a CAD number).
- The police will need the Name, DOB, address, telephone number and details of what was said/written that pointed to an immediate risk and how many attempts have been made to contact the student.
- Write up an incident report.

Please be aware that some call handlers may ask if we have called next of kin. We have a UK contact person on file – this is not necessarily a next of kin. We do not send staff to home addresses.

Maintaining Professional Boundaries

Good Practice

- Do not share your personal contact details with any student.
- Ensure that students are aware that you will respond to contact during working hours. The student should be provided with emergency support details, outside of these hours.
- Adhere to the stipulated principles of safeguarding/confidentiality – ensure that the information sharing form is completed and signed.
- Work within and do not cross the boundaries of your remit (i.e. wellbeing, disability or counselling).
- Reassure students that help is on the way, you will continue talking to them until help arrives.
- Guide breathing- and grounding techniques where possible, e.g. deep and slow breathing and asking the student to tell you what their different senses perceive.
- In terms of delusions and/or paranoia: ask what or who is the student afraid of. Do not debate this (as this can increase delusion and paranoia by making the person defensive).