

CAPACITY TO STUDY POLICY AND PROCEDURE

Introduction

1. Sheffield Hallam University is committed to providing a supportive environment where every student can thrive academically, even when facing challenges such as disabilities or personal issues.
2. You are expected to conduct yourself in a way that shows that you can live and study successfully and behave respectfully and responsibly on campus and in the wider community.
3. If your behaviour is considered to pose a threat to your safety or the safety of others, appropriate action will be taken.
4. The University's primary focus is on safeguarding the safety, wellbeing, and reputation of all members of the community.

Principles

5. The following core principles will guide the application of this policy:

Respect	We will always act with respect for your privacy and confidentiality. Information will only be disclosed to third parties where necessary and in accordance with our responsibilities under data protection legislation.
Inclusiveness	We will ensure equal access to processes for all individuals, including those with disabilities or belonging to minority groups.
Fairness	We will act fairly in all situations. We will remain impartial ensuring decisions are objective and in accordance with university policy and regulations.
Compassion	We will always be mindful that we are dealing with individuals who all have different needs and challenges. We will consider your overall situation and explore supportive measures wherever possible. We will act to ensure no risk of harm to you, other students, or members of the wider community.
Openness	We will be transparent about our processes and the possible options available to you. You will receive clear and timely communication and information, including clear explanations for the decisions we make. We will ensure that you know who to contact if you have questions.

Policy

6. This policy will be applied if you need additional support from the University because your behaviour, health, or ability to live and study independently has become concerning and/or may affect others in the university community.
7. The University expects all students to:
 - Adhere to the [Student Code of Conduct](#).
 - Demonstrate personal responsibility for your academic studies.
 - Demonstrate the capacity to live and study harmoniously with others, within the University and in the wider community (including online).

- Tell us as soon as possible if there is a problem. The sooner you ask for help, the better we can support you.
 - Engage with any support plans put in place.
 - Keep us updated about any changes in your needs or circumstances, to allow us to ensure that the support in place is appropriate.
8. Where a student is unable to meet these expectations, the University may take the following actions:
- Review concerns and take appropriate action.
 - Establish a Supporting Your Capacity to Study team to manage the situation.
 - Involve relevant members of staff and external parties, if appropriate.
 - Request a meeting with you.
 - Establish whether additional support may reasonably be provided to rectify the concerns.
 - Make a referral to the university's Occupational Health service provider.
 - Establish whether you should be withdrawn from the University, on a temporary or permanent basis.
9. Examples of concerns which may be addressed under this policy include the following:
- Behaviour that worries or scares others, such as disconnecting from reality, displaying psychosis or severe paranoia, or otherwise being unable to live and care for yourself independently.
 - Behaviour which significantly disrupts university activity (such as teaching sessions) or damages university property or student accommodation.
 - Not being able to manage your wellbeing, such as taking prescribed medication.
 - Actions that endanger your safety or the safety of others in the university community.
 - Issues raised by yourself about matters affecting your studies.
 - Issues reported by academic or professional services staff about how you are engaging with your studies.
 - Repeated use of the [Extensions and Exceptional Circumstances Policy and Procedure](#) to request further attempts at assessments.
 - Failure to attempt assessment (i.e. to submit coursework or attend examinations).
 - Referral from the University's occupational health service provider.
 - Referral from external organisations and professionals, including health and care service providers, placement providers, the police, etc.
10. We aim to provide you with the right support, depending on the timing and nature of your circumstances, to help you complete your studies as close to the normal course duration as possible. The ways we do this might include:
- The [Extensions and Exceptional Circumstances Policy and Procedure](#), which provides support options for students who experience sudden, severe and unexpected medical or personal issues.
 - The [Break in Study Policy and Procedure](#), which provides support options for students who need to temporarily pause their studies due to exceptional circumstances (i.e. health issues, personal issues or a change in caring responsibilities which have occurred suddenly and unexpectedly). The maximum length of suspension which we will initially agree to is one calendar year. After this period, you may be able to apply again for a further break, if required.
 - [Assessment Support for Students with Learning Contracts](#).
 - [Assessment Support for Student Carers](#).
 - [Assessment support for elite and talented athletes](#).
 - [Student Wellbeing Services](#) can help you manage personal issues which might impact on your studies.
 - [Disabled Student Support](#) can help you get the appropriate support for your disability, including learning contracts, support workers, equipment and software.
11. We recognise that despite the support services available, you might still face challenges that affect your ability to study. This could be because:

- Support has been applied but has not been effective.
 - The complexity of your situation requires input from various areas of the University.
 - The full impact of your condition is not yet known.
12. Where your capacity to study remains impaired for a sustained period it might result in you failing modules, being unable to complete your studies within the maximum duration of the course or being withdrawn for non-engagement.
13. Where all support options in this policy have been exhausted but concerns persist, a recommendation may be made for Withdrawal Due to Incapacity to Study. Where your Supporting Your Capacity to Study team recommends that you do not have the capacity at present to succeed in your studies, a University Panel may conclude that you should be temporarily or permanently withdrawn from your course.

Withdrawal Due to Incapacity to Study Regulation

14. The Panel will comprise senior members of staff from the university who have not had any previous involvement in your situation to ensure impartiality.
15. You will be given written notice of the date and time of the meeting at least 10 working days in advance. At this point, you will also receive a copy of all the documents that will be presented at the meeting.
16. You have the right to attend the meeting and should inform us of your attendance at least 5 working days before the meeting. Whether you decide to attend or not, you can provide a written submission at least 5 working days before the meeting. If you do not attend after giving notice of attendance, the Chair of the Panel will decide whether the meeting will go ahead as planned in your absence.
17. You can bring someone with you to support you during the meeting. This may be a friend, a family member, a support worker or a member of staff from the Advice Centre at the Students' Union. The person accompanying you cannot be a professional legal representative who has been employed to act on your behalf. You must give the name and position of any accompanying person at least 5 working days before the meeting.
18. The Panel will consider all relevant information about your situation and will decide to either accept or reject the recommendation of the Supporting your Capacity to Study Team.
19. If the Panel accepts the recommendation, then you will be withdrawn from your course. The Panel will decide whether this withdrawal is temporary or permanent.
20. If the withdrawal is temporary, then the Panel will set the date on which you may be able to return to your studies and any conditions attached to your return. These conditions will normally include a review of your situation by the Supporting Your Capacity to Study Team and you might be required to agree to a new action plan and targets. You might also need to provide up to date medical information and to undergo a new Study Needs Assessment where appropriate.
21. If the withdrawal is permanent, then your enrolment as a student will cease. If you have achieved sufficient credit for an intermediate award, then this will be awarded. Any further application for study at the University will be considered in accordance with the University's Admissions Policy.
22. If the Panel rejects the recommendation, then it will refer you back to the Supporting Your Capacity to Study Team with reasons for the rejection. Your studies will continue to be managed through an updated or revised action plan and targets.
23. The Chair of the Panel will write to you with its decision within 5 working days of the date of the meeting. This letter will set out the findings of the Panel, the evidence on which those findings were based, the implications of the Panel's decision and any next steps for you to take.

24. You have the right to appeal a decision of the Panel within the grounds and timescales set out in the University's Appeal Policy and Procedure.

25. We aim to complete the process within 30 working days of you being given notice of the recommendation being made.

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