

PRINCIPLES FOR ACADEMIC AND PASTORAL SUPPORT WITHIN PARTNER INSTITUTIONS

1. This document sets out a framework of core principles for academic and pastoral support within partner institutions of the University of Suffolk. It is acknowledged that partner institutions will have differing structures and mechanisms for supporting students which may lead to some variations in the detailed operation of academic and pastoral support mechanisms. These principles set out a minimum standard of expectations for all partner students and staff.

2. It is an [OfS condition of registration \(Condition B2\)](#) that providers take all reasonable steps to ensure that students receive support which is sufficient for the purpose of ensuring a high quality academic experience and succeeding in and beyond higher education. All partner institutions of the University of Suffolk are expected to provide regular opportunities for students to access academic and pastoral support to aid their learning and facilitate retention, progression and achievement, including one-to-one support.

3. Academic and pastoral support within partner institutions may take various forms, including personal tutors, student success tutors or personal academic coaches. All students at partner institutions of the University of Suffolk should have access to clear and up-to-date information on local arrangements for academic and pastoral support and associated entitlements (including relevant points of contact, expected frequency of support meetings, the procedure for booking appointments, the respective responsibilities of staff and students, and associated record keeping).

4. The relevance and effectiveness of academic and pastoral support mechanisms within partner institutions should be considered as part of the University's institutional validation and review procedures. This should also be a topic of reflection within annual quality monitoring processes, drawing on feedback from students and staff, in order to monitor and promote student engagement with the support available and to drive ongoing enhancement of service provision.

Key principles underpinning academic and pastoral support

5. In addition to subject-specific academic support for learning and assessment needs at module and course level, all partner students should be provided with regular opportunities to meet with relevant partner staff to discuss their academic progress and any issues relating to, or with the potential to affect, that progress.

6. Academic and pastoral support at partner institutions should:

- be accessible for all students
- recognise the diverse needs of the student body
- be adequately resourced, commensurate with the size and needs of the student population
- show concern for all aspects of students' learning, including academic, career and personal development
- identify students at risk of withdrawal (including due to attendance, engagement and/or performance issues) and offer support to help them continue with their studies (including referral to specialist support where necessary, such as specialist welfare support, support with disabilities and specific learning difficulties, and financial support services)
- empower students to feel sufficiently secure and confident to make increasingly mature and responsible decisions regarding their learning and progression
- provide impartial information and guidance, including signposting to other specialist support services as appropriate (such as study skills support and careers and employability services)
- recognise and refer safeguarding matters appropriately
- maintain confidentiality, only sharing information disclosed by students with the student's written permission or where this information would reasonably lead the staff member concerned to believe that someone was at risk of harm to self or others
- facilitate a sense of belonging and community.

7. Partner staff involved in providing academic and pastoral support to students should be provided with adequate training and support to enable them to effectively perform their duties. This should include clearly setting out their role and responsibilities and providing information on referral processes for students who would benefit from access to more specialist advice and guidance both within and outside the partner institution.

Purpose of academic and pastoral support

8. Academic and pastoral support mechanisms should help partner students to:
- articulate, plan for and evaluate progress towards their personal, academic and career goals
 - recognise their own learning needs, capabilities and style and apply their learning to other contexts
 - recognise, reflect on and value their strengths, achievements and progress
 - address any difficulties they may be experiencing within their programme of study and support them to deal with any problems affecting their progress, including any issues affecting their attendance, engagement and/or academic performance (with reference to

extenuating circumstances and fitness to study procedures and specialist support services where appropriate)

- be better prepared for post-course professional development, employment or further study
- develop a positive attitude to lifelong learning.