

STUDENT SUPPORT FRAMEWORK

Scope

1. This framework provides an overview of the support available as a minimum to students studying at the Ipswich campus; support available to students on University of Suffolk courses at partner institutions are determined and reviewed under each partnership agreement.

Principles and purpose

2. This framework outlines the nature of support provided by the University of Suffolk to enable students to succeed academically and to develop personally and professionally in preparation for life beyond graduation. It also provides an overview of the support available to support students' wellbeing.

3. The Support of students is shared across University staff. While many members of staff have specific roles in providing support to students, all staff share the duty of care to all students as explored below.

4. In the following sections we outline the support provided for students to enable their academic success, progression (to employment or further study) and wellbeing. The University recognises that these three main areas of support are interconnected, that supporting a student's wellbeing will also support their ability to achieve and progress, that supporting academic development is likely to have a positive impact on a student's wellbeing and their ability to progress, and supporting a student's exploration of progression may provide motivation and encouragement for their engagement in academic studies, and in improving their overall wellbeing. Staff who have a role principally in one of these areas are aware of the role that they play in the holistic support of students, of the requirements for them to record interactions and the circumstances under which they should disclose concerns.

Statement of Duty of Care

5. Staff at the University of Suffolk have a general duty of care to all students. A general duty of care is normally considered as a level of care that a layperson could give to another individual. A general duty of care does not assume specialist knowledge, but expects a reasonable level of contextual knowledge, such as the policies, procedures and services of the University.

6. University of Suffolk staff have an enhanced duty of care towards students who may associate with one or more of the following:

- a. Need to be safeguarded, this may be because they:
 - are a child (Children Act 1989)
 - are an adult at risk (Care Act 2014)
 - may be vulnerable to radicalisation (Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and Prevent Duty Guidance)
- b. Present as a risk of harm to themselves or to others
- c. Identify as having a protected characteristic (Equality Act 2010 and Public Sector Duty) or from an under-represented group (Office for Students Access and Participation Regulatory Advice)

7. Staff are supported in meeting these duties by the provision of materials and training relating to Prevent, Safeguarding and Mental Health First Aid. Prevent and Safeguarding training are regarded as 'mandatory' for all staff with a student-facing role.

Supporting Academic Success

8. Students are supported to continue in their studies and to achieve academically. The staff roles principally involved in supporting students achieve academic success are:
- Module Leaders and tutors play an important part in supporting the academic attainment of students by providing module-specific academic support within contact sessions and through academic tutorials. Such support is provided for all modules and may include group tutorial sessions, individual tutorial provision, on-line support, and formative assessment and feedback opportunities.
 - Personal Tutors provide students with opportunities to explore their progression and success across their programme of study. Employing a coaching model of support, personal tutors will encourage students to reflect on and evaluate their progress, signpost opportunities to supplement course provision with further study and learning activities. Personal tutors will also support students in identifying and exploring strategies and learning approaches that might address their personal situations and needs.
 - The Course Administrator associated with a particular course is often the first point of call for a student seeking advice and guidance on a number of matters associated with their course and their own study journey. Working closely with the Course Team and alongside other professional services teams, the Course Administrator will provide advice and guidance to students, signposting and facilitating conversations between students and other members of staff as required.

- The Library and Learning Services team provide comprehensive support targeted at enabling students develop their academic and personal skills in order to achieve at their full potential on their courses. Support available through the team includes:
 - i. a range of workshops for all levels that focus of areas such as critical writing and reading, finding and referencing information, maths and statistics and creating posters and presentations
 - ii. one to one support with both academic skills advisers and liaison librarians offering support with all aspects of academic work. One to one appointments can be booked online.
 - iii. Access to online content exploring academic skills and providing guidance for academic work and library information including reading and resource lists, courses, and best practice methodologies for out of hours or off campus assistance.
- The Office for Student Appeals, Complaints and Conduct (OSACC) provides procedural advice and guidance to students on the University's policies and procedures on matters concerning student appeals, complaints and conduct.

9. The University actively encourages the development of learning communities of staff and students, particularly recognising the potential of peer support and mentoring in enabling the development of student competencies and confidence. Course teams are supported and encouraged to implement peer mentoring schemes within their provision and to promote these as an essential aspect of the students' experience.

Supporting Progression

10. Students are supported to identify their goals and aspirations for life beyond graduation and to attain the graduate attributes needed to progress to and succeed in their chosen field. The staff roles principally involved in supporting students' progression are:

- Personal Tutors are able to get to know their students throughout their time on their course, developing an understanding of their development, circumstances, and aspirations. Employing a coaching model, they encourage students to articulate, plan for and evaluate progress towards their personal, educational and career goals, guided by the Suffolk Graduate Attributes (or equivalent career development frameworks for Post Graduate students).
- Course teams, supported by the Business Engagement and Entrepreneurship Directorate, support student's progression by integrating opportunities for students to work with and learn from employers and practitioners during course provision. Course

teams are also encouraged to implement mentoring schemes within their provision to enable students to draw from experienced professionals and recent graduates to help them prepare for and access employment and progression opportunities successfully. Course teams also provide students opportunities to discuss and explore opportunities for further and higher-level study with providers and, where possible, alumni.

- The Careers and Employability Team play an important role in supporting students' progression to life beyond graduation, whether that be in employment, further study, independent practice, social or commercial enterprise. The team provides a range of services, events and workshops to assist students in exploring and developing their aspirations for the future, understanding their options for progression beyond graduation. The team supports students to identify opportunities for employment, voluntary work, internships and supports the development of applications. Further examples of the work of the Careers and Employability Team's support include:
 - i. Opportunities to meet employers throughout the year at careers fairs and events
 - ii. Career development programmes and workshops.
 - iii. One-to-one careers guidance and drop-ins.
 - iv. Mock interviews and interview guidance
 - v. Events exploring postgraduate study opportunities.
 - vi. Volunteering and Internship fairs.

Supporting Wellbeing

11. Students' wellbeing is supported by the provision of a range of professional services and further contributed to by interactions with other staff, some of whom know the student well and are attune to their needs, and some who may not have frequent student contact but might encounter a situation that causes them to become concerned for a student's welfare. The professional services available to support student wellbeing are:

- The Disability and Wellbeing team includes Disability and Mental Health Advisers, Disability and Wellbeing Advisers, a counselling service, Learning Differences and Accessibility Assessors and a team of specialist support staff. They offer a confidential and non-judgmental service provided through a range of bookable one-to-one appointments, drop-ins, workshops and initiatives. In addition, the team offer:
 - i. Identification and arrangement of reasonable adjustments
 - ii. Advice on Disabled Students' Allowances (DSAs) funding and eligibility, and Diagnostic assessment for Specific Learning Difficulties (SpLD)
 - iii. Information about University processes such as, extenuating circumstances, appeal and Fitness to Study

- iv. Risk assessment and brief intervention support for students presenting with mental health conditions
 - v. Campaigns, such as; Bystander programme, mental health awareness and suicide prevention
- Student Finance Advisers provide information and advice on a range of financial matters for current and prospective students, such as;
 - i. Advice on statutory funding
 - ii. Liaison with funding bodies regarding problems with funding
 - iii. Discretionary financial help through the Financial Support Fund
 - iv. Liaising with authorities and organisations to assist students with financial difficulties
 - v. Advice on funding for EEA migrant workers and other EU students who may qualify for UK funding
 - vi. Signposting regarding benefit entitlement
- The Infozone provides a first point of contact for students looking for an answer to any questions. The team of advisers provide a welcoming, friendly and efficient service and respond 'on-the-spot' to the majority of enquiries.
- The IT Service Desk seeks to answer students' IT queries through its direct and on-line services.
- The Multi-Faith Chaplaincy's team of male and female chaplains represent a variety of faiths and religious perspectives. Chaplains provide students, regardless of their personal faith convictions, opportunity to be listened to, supported, encouraged, and, where appropriate, to provide advice or signpost to further avenues of support.

Students' Union

- The Students' Union provide and promote initiatives to support the student experience such as social sports, mindfulness and other wellbeing activity.
- Through the SU's confidential and impartial advice service, the team signposts and supports students to access a range of support services and networks at the University and externally.

University Policies and Support

12. Many of the roles of staff in support of students are defined within University policies including:

- Management of Academic Provision Framework

- Tutorial Policy

13. The University will ensure that all staff allocated to any of the roles explored within this framework will be given appropriate training to prepare them for the role, and to enable them to further develop their skills and expertise in support of their role.