

STRANMILLIS UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
A College of Queen's University Belfast

Helping Distressed Students

A guide for staff

UNDER DEVELOPMENT

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UNDER DEVELOPMENT

Many people experience emotional and psychological difficulties at some point in their lives. Usually these can be resolved by talking them through with family and friends. Sometimes professional help is needed. Most students will cope well with the stresses of academic life given reasonable support from their friends, family and academic departments. Sometimes they need more than this. If you feel you need to, or are requested to give a student extra assistance, it is important to help within the boundaries of what you feel competent to do.

This guidance is for any member of staff who may come into contact with a student in distress. This includes staff whose role involves pastoral support for students, but also those who may simply come into contact with students in the course of their work.

Helping Distressed Students: A guide for staff

This guide has been produced to:

- Help you recognise when a student may be in difficulty
- Provide advice to help you respond/refer appropriately and effectively
- Remind you of the sources of support with the University College
- Raise awareness of issues relating to student mental health

What you can do

- Listen
- 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 contained
- Make appropriate referrals

What you can't do

- Solve all the student's problems
- Take responsibility for his or her emotional state or actions

The health and welfare of all members of the University College is everyone's concern.

This guide gives you advice on dealing with both crises and more everyday situations. It is important to be prepared for emergencies, but you should be aware they occur very rarely and that expert help is available.

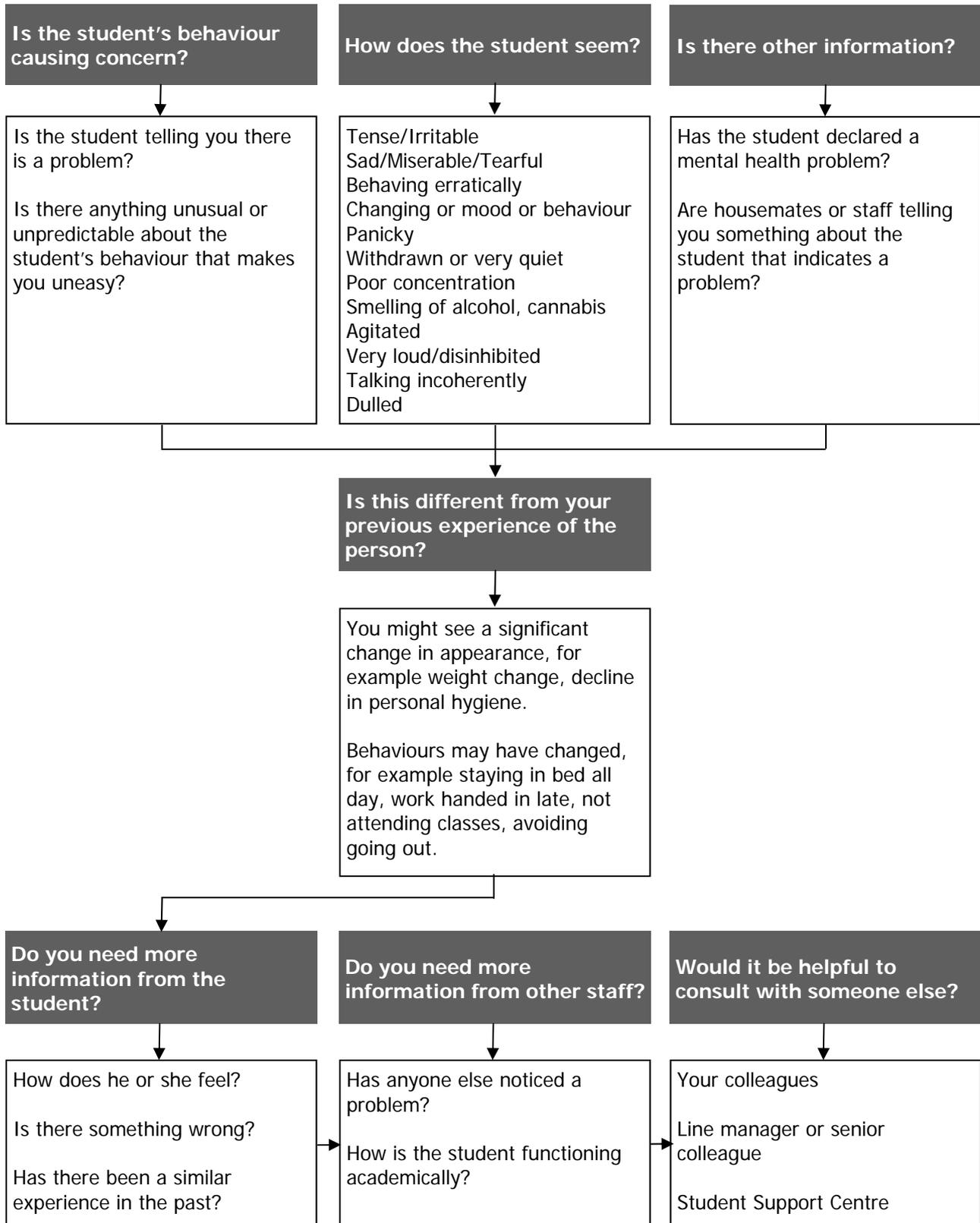
Emergency contacts:

Counselling Service	028 90384513 or 028 90384510
QUB Counselling Service	028 9097 2727
Occupational Health	028 90384446 or 028 90384510 or 07710 174679
Security	028 90384356 or 028 90384340 or 07850 712556
The Samaritans	08457 909090 or 028 90664422 or 07725 909090 (mobile)
GP Out of Hours	028 9079 6220

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How do you know there is a problem?

Trusting your own judgement - check the following



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What you should do if the situation IS URGENT

It is urgent if:

You believe the students may be at risk of harm to him or herself or others.

You are concerned for one or more of the following reasons:

- May be at risk of serious self-harm
- Is violent or threatening violence to people or property
- Has completely stopped functioning
- Seems very disorientated and out of touch with reality
- Is behaving out of character
- Expresses suicidal thoughts

In all situations

- Engage with the student if possible, but put safety first. Prioritise your own safety and that of others at the scene.
- Whenever possible, make sure that you have backup at the scene.
- Try to stay calm.
- Speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and your actions as soon as possible, and inform other relevant staff.
- Make a written note of key points and action taken.
- Decide with colleagues and/or line manager who is going to take responsibility with following up with the student and for monitoring the situation to ensure appropriate further support once the immediate crisis is over.
- You are encouraged to debrief by talking the situation through with a colleague or the Student Counselling Service.
- For advice and what further support might be appropriate once the immediate crisis has been dealt with contact the Student Counselling Service.

Emergency contacts:

Counselling Service	028 90384513 or 028 90384510
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What you should do if the situation IS URGENT and the student requires immediate medical attention including emergency psychiatric services

If the student will accept help



In office hours

Refer the student directly to Occupational Health or his/her GP or the Student Counselling Service or QUB Counselling Service. If possible arrange for the student to be accompanied.

OR

Take the student to the nearest Accident & Emergency Department. The nearest Accident & Emergency Department is at Belfast City Hospital, Lisburn Road (028 9032 9241). College Security can arrange a taxi for you. If you take them to A&E yourself stay with them until they are seen by a Doctor.

OR

Ask College Security to call an Ambulance.

Out of hours

Call the student's GP on the student's behalf. If the GP is not known call Out of Hours GP.

OR

Take the student to the nearest Accident & Emergency Department. The nearest Accident & Emergency Department is at Belfast City Hospital, Lisburn Road (028 9032 9241). College Security can arrange a taxi for you. If you take them to A&E yourself stay with them until they are seen by a Doctor.

OR

Ask College Security to call an Ambulance.

OR

Phone one of the Chaplains for advice.

As soon as office hours recommence decide with your line manager who is going to take responsibility for following up with the student and for monitoring the situation to ensure appropriate further support and advise the Vice Principal (Registrar).

If the student will not accept help



In office hours

If the student is very disturbed and/or dangerous and not co-operating, call College Security and ask them to call the Police. The Police can arrange for an Ambulance if necessary.

OR

Call the Police yourself on 999 or 0845 600 8000.

Out of hours

If the student is very disturbed and/or dangerous and not co-operating, call College Security and ask them to call the Police. The Police can arrange for an Ambulance if necessary.

OR

Call the Police yourself on 999 or 0845 600 8000.

OR

Try to contact a colleague and/or line manager but if you can't because it is out of hours ask College Security to help locate any other preferably senior staff members so that you can share your concerns and actions. Speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and your actions and inform other relevant staff when office hours recommence.

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UNDER DEVELOPMENT

What you should do if you feel the situation IS URGENT but you are not sure that the student requires emergency services

If the student will accept help

If the student will not accept help

In office hours

- Contact the Student Support Centre for guidance.
- Encourage the student to make an emergency appointment with the Counsellor at the Student Support Centre. This might include accompanying them to arrange an appointment. Or you could make the initial telephone call, explain the urgency of the situation and then pass the phone to the student to arrange an appointment.
- Encourage the student to make an emergency appointment with their GP or Occupational Health or QUB Student Counselling Service.
- Speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and actions as soon as possible and inform other relevant staff.
- Decide with colleagues and/or line manager who is going to take responsibility with following up with the student to monitor the situation and ensure that the student is getting appropriate support.

In office hours

- Talk to them and try to encourage them to seek help via an emergency appointment with their GP/Occupational Health/Counsellor/QUB Student Counselling Service
- Offer to help them arrange an emergency appointment with one of the services mentioned above. This might include accompanying them to arrange an appointment. Or you could make the initial telephone call, explain the urgency of the situation and then pass the phone to the student to arrange an appointment.
- Give them the contact details for the Samaritans/GP Out of Hours/ and other relevant contacts from the Resources section.
- Seek guidance from a line manager and/or the Student Support Centre.
- Speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and actions as soon as possible and inform other relevant staff.
- Decide with colleagues and/or line manager who is going to take responsibility with following up with the student to monitor the situation and ensure that the student is getting appropriate support.

Out of hours

- Give the student the contact details for the Samaritans or GP Out of Hours Service and other relevant contacts from the Resources section.
- Encourage the student to make an emergency appointment with the Counsellor at the Student Support Centre once office hours recommence.
- Encourage the student to make an emergency appointment with their GP as soon as they can.
- Contact the Student Support Centre for guidance once office hours recommence.
- Once office hours recommence speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and your actions as soon as possible and inform other relevant staff.
- Once office hours recommence decide with colleagues and/or line manager who is going to take responsibility with following up with the student to monitor the situation and ensure that the student is getting appropriate support.

Out of hours

- Give them the contact details for the Samaritans/GP Out of Hours and other relevant contacts from the Resources section.
- Talk to them and try to encourage them to seek help via an emergency appointment with their GP/Occupational Health/Counsellor once office hours recommence.
- Offer to help them arrange an emergency appointment with one of the services mentioned above once office hours recommence.
- Seek guidance from a manager and the Student Support Centre when office hours recommence.
- Once office hours recommence speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and your actions as soon as possible and inform other relevant staff.
- Once office hours recommence decide with colleagues and/or line manager who is going to take responsibility with following up with the student to monitor the situation and ensure that the student is getting appropriate support.

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What you should do if the situation does NOT require immediate action

It is NOT urgent if:

There is no immediate risk to the student, or others, although the student may be:

- Depressed, anxious, generally stressed
- Homesick, lonely and isolated
- Having problems with relationships
- Suffering from low self-esteem
- Bereaved
- Having unexplained study or money problems

If the student will accept help

Decide who is the best person to help

If you feel you could help the student, you must ensure that

You have the time and/or skills.
It does not conflict with your role.

You are able to:

- Listen to the student's concerns.
- Offer practical advice.
- Provide reassurance.

If you haven't the time to talk to the student at that point, show your concern by arranging to see the student again soon.

If you feel someone else should help the student:

Are you clear what the student needs?

If so, refer directly. Ask them if they are already receiving treatment for example via their GP, local mental health services or the Counselling Service. If so, encourage them to seek help via these established structures.

If they are not already linked into a support service they should be encouraged to contact their GP or Occupational Health or the Counselling Service.

If you are unsure then seek further advice from a colleague or speak to the Student Support Centre.

If the student will not accept help

You can make it clear that you will help if the student changes his/her mind.

Seek advice from the Student Support Centre.

You can monitor the situation.

You should alert the student's Head of Department/Adviser of Studies or other relevant person about continuing concerns.

In all situations

- Speak with a colleague and/or line manager about your concerns and your actions as soon as possible, and inform other relevant staff.
- Make a written note of key points and action taken.
- You are encouraged to debrief by talking the situation through with a colleague or the Student Counselling Service.

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Some sources of help

Information about 24-hour help services

GP Out of Hours Service

If patients require medical treatment or advice outside surgery hours, weekends, bank or public holidays, they should contact 028 9079 6220.

Hospitals

Belfast City Hospital, Lisburn Road, Belfast
Tel: (028) 9032 9241

Royal Hospitals, Grosvenor Road, Belfast
Tel: (028) 9024 0503

The Samaritans

5 Wellesley Avenue, Belfast
Tel: (028) 9066 4422 | Email: jo@samaritans.org
Mobile: Send "TXT" to: 07725 909090 (UK) or 0872 609090 (ROI)
Web: <http://www.samaritans.org/>

Samaritans provides confidential non-judgemental emotional support, 24 hours a day for people who are experiencing feelings of distress or despair, including those which could lead to suicide. The service is available by telephone, email, letter and face to face in most of our branches.

University Contacts List

Access Co-ordinator

Ms Nuala Dalton
Student Support Centre
Tel: (028) 9038 4512
Email: n.dalton@stran.ac.uk

Accommodation

Mrs Christine Nesbitt, Domestic Bursar
Refectory
Tel: (028) 9038 4281
Email: c.nesbitt@stran.ac.uk
Halls Office/Warden
Tel: (028) 9038 4251

Careers Service

Student Support Centre
Ms Joan Francis, Initial Teacher Education Programmes
Tel: (028) 90384515
Email: j.francis@stran.ac.uk
Mrs Diane Masson, BA Early Childhood Studies/BSc Health & Leisure Studies
Tel: (028) 9038 4446
Email: d.masson@stran.ac.uk

Chaplains

The Rev Roy C McMullan, BD Lond, BA DipEd
29 Aberdelghy Park, Lisburn BT27 4QF

Baptist
Tel: 028 9266 4951

Mr James L Crookes BSc
36 Ardmillan Road, Killinchy BT23 6QW

Christian Brethren
Tel: 028 9754 2500

The Rev Ronald Elsdon BA, BD, PhD
St. Bartholomew's Rectory, 16 Mount Pleasant, Stranmillis,
Belfast BT9 5DS

Church of Ireland
Tel: 028 9066 9995

Mr Tom Armstrong
8 Coolpark Avenue, Belfast BT8 6NF

Church of Jesus Christ of the Latter Day Saints
Tel: 028 9070 2786

Rev Tom Boyle
15 Glen Ebor Park, Belfast BT4 2JJ

Congregationalist
Tel: 028 9076 0269

Pastor Dunn
77 Donegal Pass, Belfast BT7 1DR

South Belfast Elim Pentecostal Church
Tel: 028 9032 1583

Rabbi Avraham Citron
5 Fortwilliam Gardens, Belfast BT15 4BS

Jewish
Tel: 028 9077 5013

Mrs Gail Mercer
24 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast BT9 6AY

Methodist
Tel: 028 9038 1443

The Rev Steve Stockman, BD
Derryvolgie Hall, 49a Derryvolgie Avenue, Belfast BT9 6FP

Presbyterian
Tel: 028 9066 9078

Rev Gareth N Burke, BA, Dip.Th
33 Onslow Gardens, Belfast BT6 0AQ

Evangelical Presbyterian
Tel: 028 9045 0900

University Contacts List

The Rev J David Anderson
82 Belfast Road, Glenavy BT29 4HS

Free Presbyterian
Tel: 028 9264 8808

The Rev Dr A D G Steers, MA, BD, Mphil
223 Upper Lisburn Road, Belfast BT10 0LL

Non-Subscribing Presbyterian
Tel: 028 9094 7850

Rev Dr Harold G Cunningham, BA, BTh, MA, PhD
5 Parkside, Dromore BT25 1RZ

Reformed Presbyterian
Tel: 028 9269 9092

The Rev Gary Toman, STL (Maynooth), MA, BSc (Hons)
The Catholic Chaplaincy, 28 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast
BT9 6AY

Roman Catholic
Tel: 028 9066 9737

Counselling Service

Dr Brian Booth, Student Support Officer
Student Support Centre
Tel: (028) 90384513
Email: b.booth@stran.ac.uk or counselling@stran.ac.uk

Disability Service

Dr Brian Booth, Student Support Officer
Student Support Centre
Tel: (028) 90384513
Email: b.booth@stran.ac.uk or disabilityservices@stran.ac.uk

Occupational Health Nurse

Ms Ciara Matthews
Student Support Centre
Tel: (028) 90384446
Email: c.matthews@stran.ac.uk

Mature Students Officer

Ms Nuala Dalton
Student Support Centre
Tel: (028) 9038 4512
Email: n.dalton@stran.ac.uk

Students' Union

Mr Hugh Storey
Tel: (028) 90384500
Email: h.storey@stran.ac.uk

Support Groups and Services

Alcohol and Addictions

Alcoholics Anonymous

7 Donegall Street Place, Belfast, BT7 2EA

Tel: (028) 9043 4848 - office hours only.

Answerphone other times.

Web: www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk

Al-Anon & Alateen

Peace House, 224 Lisburn Road, Belfast, BT9 6GE

Tel: 028 9068 2368 (Helpline 10am – 1pm, Mon – Fri/ 6pm – 11pm, 7 days a week)

Web: www.al-anonuk.org.uk/

Dunlewey Substance Advice Centre

Provides counselling and support groups.

Tel: (028) 9061 1162

Gamblers Anonymous

18 Donegall Street, Belfast, BT1 2GP

Tel: (028) 90249185

Web: www.gamblersanonymous.org

Narcotics Anonymous NI

PO Box 543, Tomb St, Belfast, BT1 1AA

Tel: 07810 172 991, 7pm-10pm

Email: contact@nanorthernireland.com

Web: <http://nanorthernireland.com/>

NICAS

Provides advice and counselling for those with alcohol and drug related problems

Tel: 028 9033 0499

Email: nicas.falls@btconnect.com

NI Council for Alcohol

Confidential 24 hour service

40 Elmwood Avenue, Belfast, BT9 6AZ

Tel: 028 90 664434

Booklets available - Alcohol and the Young, Women and Alcohol, That's the Limit

Bereavement and Suicide

Cruse Bereavement Care

Counselling for people who have been bereaved

Northern Ireland Regional Office

Piney Ridge, Knockbracken Healthcare Park, Saintfield Road, Belfast, BT8 8BH

Tel: 028 90 792419 or 0844 477 9400

Web: www.crusebereavementcare.org.uk/

PIPS Project

187 Duncairn Gardens, Belfast, BT15 2GF

Tel: (028) 90755070

Web: www.pipsproject.com/

Support Groups and Services

Crisis - Pregnancy

Belfast Brook Advisory Clinic

29a North Street, Belfast, BT1 1NA

Tel: 028 9032 8866 or 0800 0185 023 (Monday to Friday, 9am-5pm).

Web: www.brook.org.uk

Family Planning Association

Belfast Centre, 5th Floor, 16 College Street, Belfast, BT1 6BX

Tel: 028 9032 5488 or 028 90821555

Web: www.fpa.org.uk

Appendices

Appendix I Limits of Confidentiality

Confidentiality is an important issue when working with distressed students; it is also a topic about which staff members are often unclear and have many questions. Students may swear others to secrecy prior to disclosing suicidal ideation. A staff member should seek to avoid this situation, and instead, promise to support the student through the crisis.

To maintain an open line of communication and foster confidence, the staff member should explain the limits of confidentiality. In ordinary circumstances, the student's concerns will be held in the utmost confidentiality and no information will be shared with lecturers, parents or friends. However, if the staff member feels there may be an immediate risk of harm to the student or to others, he or she has an obligation to seek help for the student.

If a staff member has concerns about a student, he or she can seek advice and guidance from the student services without breaking confidentiality. Suggestions can be made about negotiating help for the student and confidentiality maintained by omitting identifying details.

However when staff refer students who display a moderate level of distress they will receive a letter thanking them for the referral and indicating whether the student has attended the appointment. This ensures that if a student, staff are concerned about, hasn't attended an appointment, staff can take any other appropriate action to ensure that all has been done that could be done to take care of the student.

Should a suicidal student be at an immediate risk of suicide, staff have an institutional obligation to break confidentiality and intervene. If time and circumstances allow, two actions are advisable. First, consult with a GP, psychiatrist or counsellor to ensure that breaking confidentiality is appropriate.

Second, gently inform the distressed student that there is a need to involve others in maintaining his or her well-being. Give the student the choice about who should be contacted (a mental health professional, family member or significant others). By offering the student a choice, it conveys respect and consideration, and is important in the instance that the family may be a contributing factor to the suicidal risk (eg may be involved in abuse, etc).

Staff members are not mental health professionals and do not carry these responsibilities. The assessment and management of suicidal students is the domain of such professionals. Staff members are also not responsible for students and their decisions, especially in third level institutions where most students are legal adults of 18 years of age or older.

Remember that involvement with a suicidal student may also have an effect on the staff member concerned. Staff can take the opportunity to debrief/seek support from the Counselling Service with this.

Appendix II

Responding to Emergencies

Very occasionally, students exhibit behaviour that gives rise to considerable concern. There may be evidence of:

- Suicide tendencies;
- Risk of self-harm;
- Harm to others;
- Serious physical illness;
- Alcohol or substance abuse or addiction;
- Hearing voices or holding fixed irrational beliefs;
- A complete lack of functioning academically or in other areas of life.

General Advice

In such cases, the need for intervention on behalf of the student should be treated as urgent. If the student is at risk of harm to him or herself, or others, you should refer him or her to Occupational Health, or the emergency out-of-hours services immediately. It may sometimes be appropriate to walk with him or her to the service. In less critical situations it may be appropriate to refer the student to the Counselling Service. If the student is clearly not able to function appropriately and they ask for support, you could offer to phone for an appointment on behalf of the student.

When a student will not accept help

If the student will not accept help then you should contact Occupational Health, the Counselling Service or the Departmental office for advice. In very rare situations when you believe that there is imminent danger of harm to self or to others, call campus security or the police.

Except in circumstances described above, there is little that can or should be done if a student is not prepared to talk to you about his or her problems or to seek help from others. A first offer to support can sometimes be rejected. If you are seriously concerned about a particular student, you have various duties:

- Inform your Head of Department or senior colleague and ensure that a file note of your concern/action/offers is kept;
- Continue to monitor the situation yourself;
- Involve a central service, e.g. Occupational Health, the Counselling Service or the Chaplaincy;
- Where appropriate ask for support and information yourself by calling any of these services mentioned at the end of this document. This will place you in a stronger position to advise the student.

Dos and Don'ts

- **Do** remain calm and try to create a safe environment for your interaction with the student. Without interrogating the student some information is pertinent.
- **Do** express empathy, concern and your willingness to help.
- **Do** take precautions for your personal safety (ensure someone else is within earshot, the door is partially open, there is a clear exit from the room, that excess stimulation is kept to a minimum).
- **Do** try to ascertain basic information if possible (e.g. name, address, ID, academic programme, GP).
- **Do** try to establish whether the person has had a similar difficulty before and if so who, what was helpful (friends, family, medication).
- **Do** call emergency services such as security if you feel there is an imminent threat of violence or harm to self or others.
- **Don't** threaten the student as they may escalate their behaviour.
- **Don't** take unnecessary risks (e.g. stop them if they try to leave).
- **Don't** try to 'counsel' the student yourself without advice.
- **Don't** try to minimise the feelings (e.g. you'll be better tomorrow).

Appendix III

What do I need to know about students who may be talking about or threatening deliberate self harm or suicide

General Information

A student who makes any reference to thoughts or intentions or taking their own life should **always** be taken seriously. A lot will depend on the level of the 'risk' associated with their thoughts/threats. An assessment should normally be carried out by a trained professional. You should always seek professional advice. The student may not be seriously contemplating the act of suicide but may be feeling distressed and need someone to talk to, in which case counselling can be useful. If you suspect there is any immediate or serious threat (physical harm, overdose) you should treat it as a student in crisis and call emergency assistance.

Background Information which you may find helpful

High risk indicators which may precede suicide

- Past attempts at suicide or self-harm
- History or presence of mental illness (depression, schizophrenia, personality disorder, etc)
- Family history of suicide
- Feelings of hopelessness, despair
- A recent death, loss or threat of loss
- Social isolation or withdrawal
- Low social support
- Alcohol, drug abuse or gambling difficulties
- Unemployment, debt
- Physical illness

Assessing risk

A trained professional normally carried this out but it is a good idea for all staff to know what to look out for. If the student tells you about any of the following issues, urgent action is required.

Specificity of the plan (more details are associated with higher risk)

Lethality of anticipated method (guns, hanging, jumping are among the most lethal methods)

Availability of method (how plausible or realistic is the threat)

Proximity of social support (low social support increases risk)

Suggested course of action

If a student comes to you and tells you they are very depressed or having suicidal thoughts and feelings the following is recommended:

1. **Be kind and empathetic, prioritise them and ask who else may know about their feelings:**
 - Most suicidal students want to communicate their feelings safely.
 - Try not to minimise their feelings, e.g. "you'll feel better tomorrow", or "you have everything to live for".
 - Don't try to 'counsel'.
 - Acknowledge that you may not be able to maintain confidentiality.
2. **If you feel the risk is immediate or they are in crisis**
 - Let them know that you are bound to contact an emergency service such as Occupational Health/Counselling/Chaplaincy and share your concerns immediately.

3. If he/she tells you that they are attending a GP or Counsellor:

- Ask if the GP/Counsellor are aware of the extent of the students feelings?
- Can they make an earlier appointment to see them?
- Ask if they would like help to make the appointment (depressed people may find this difficult).
- If they are seeing someone outside of the college they may prefer to see college personnel? Give them the choice.

4. If he/she tells you that they are not seeing a GP or Counsellor and nobody else is aware of their feelings:

- Ask if the student would like to see a member of the college Occupational Health/Counselling Service? They may need help to do this.
- If the student *agrees* you should inform the Occupational Health/Counselling Service of your specific concerns regarding the student.
- If the student does *not wish* to speak to a professional and you remain concerned for their safety, tell the student that you are bound to speak to someone on their behalf (Occupational Health/Counselling Service or family member).

Remember: If you have any concern about your course of action consult with Occupational Health or the Counselling Service. You should never agree to complete confidentiality with students who may be at risk of suicide.

5. Procedure for managing attempted/reported Deliberate Self Harm with or without intentions of suicide.

If a student discloses an incident of deliberate self-harm with or without intentions of suicide and/or reports a friend being in this situation to a member of staff, the member of staff is advised to immediately pass the name of the student or his/her reported friend to **one** of the following professional staff as soon as possible after the incident has been reported:

- Counselling Service
- GP at University Health Centre
- QUB Student Counselling Service
- Occupational Health

The staff member should advise the student that:

- i. The University College takes such disclosure very seriously.
- ii. The University College needs to know about the nature of self-harm.
- iii. The University College has a duty of care to act upon the information given.
- iv. A range of support services from suitably qualified professionals is available within the University College.

The staff member should also:

- i. Facilitate as appropriate, the making of an urgent appointment with the Student Counselling Service, Occupational Health or the Student's GP/GP Out of Hours.
- ii. Inform either the Student Counselling Service, or the student's GP/GP Out of Hours, or Occupational Health, even if the student concerned refuses to contact professional services directly themselves.
- iii. Inform their line manager and the student's Adviser of Studies immediately.
- iv. Ask the student to confirm they have met with the appropriate support service. If the student does not get back to them to confirm they have sought support, the member of staff should again inform the Student Counselling Service.
- v. Document their contact with the student, what was reported to them and note the support service to which the student was referred. This report must be passed onto the Student Counselling Service, who will keep a copy in the student's file in the Student Support Centre.
- vi. Be offered critical incident debriefing session by CareCall.

**Proforma for recording incidents involving
Deliberate Self Harm with or without intentions of Suicide**

Students Name: _____ Student Number: _____

Programme of Study: _____

Current living address: _____

Date, Time & Place of the Incident: _____

Date & Time to referred Student Support Centre or GP at University Health Centre: _____

Name of person making this report: _____

Who else has been informed about the incident:? _____

Brief Details of the incident: [what happened, who was involved, how did you hear about the incident, other relevant information].

For use by SSO:	Signature:
Date/Time report received:	
Seriousness of incident: Category 1-7	

Appendix IV

What about a student who is causing significant disruption on campus and who may have a mental health difficulty

General Advice

Sometimes you may experience a student who while not in imminent crisis can be disruptive, challenging, intimidating, acting in inappropriate ways, displaying bizarre behaviour or loss of contact with reality. Such students show little regard for personal or professional rules, regulations or boundaries. They may have an ongoing mental health difficulty, or personality disorder, which may or may not have been present prior to college. Typically they may have difficulty with their interpretation of everyday events and consequently may behave in inappropriate ways. Often students like this can be intimidating in a non-overt or more subtle way, yet can cause significant disruption within a department, faculty or campus.

Some indicators might be:

- Elevated need for attention from staff and colleagues
- Persistent e-mails, telephone calls, messages
- Unrealistic demands/commands on staff
- Threatening behaviour towards staff and fellow students (verbal/physical)
- Inability to accept feedback
- Low understanding of personal/professional boundaries
- Inability to form healthy interpersonal relationships
- Heightened view of their own importance/delusions of grandeur

If required, disciplinary action must only be instigated on the basis of inappropriate behaviour and not on the basis of a mental illness. It is advisable in these circumstances where a mental health difficulty is suspected, to consult with Occupational Health or the Counselling Service for guidance.

Appendix V Failure in Examinations

For any student, failing an examination is an extremely difficult experience. If you have occasion to meet a student in such circumstances it is important that you remain positive and understanding during your encounter. You will be aiming to help the student improve their academic performance but also if there are underlying personal issues which could be better dealt with by referral to another service. You may find the following notes useful.

Greeting the Student / During the Meeting

- Make eye contact.
- Be positive in your demeanour and language.
- Avoid any remarks that might be interpreted as patronising. Failing an exam is always upsetting for a student and this should be acknowledged.
- Actively listen to the student, as this creates an atmosphere of empathy, understanding and trust.

Question, Guide and Review

These are suggested topics for exploration once you have established a positive contact with the student.

"You haven't done all that well in subject 'X', how did you do in other subjects?"

If the student has failed across the board, ask:

"Why do you think you got these results?"

It might be:

1. That the student has the ability but didn't do any work at all because of lack of motivation or interest.
2. That the student does not have the ability, and found the material very difficult overall.
3. That the student had personal problems which affected performance.

Let the student know that s/he is free to discuss any issue with you (if you are willing) or with a Counsellor/other (see note on referrals).

If the student has failed only in your subject but is doing well elsewhere, ask:

"You did well in other subjects—why not in 'X'?"

The student may admit that s/he doesn't like the subject and/or found it very difficult. In this case, grinds may be appropriate, as well as your own advice.

"Did you expect the result you got? Did this expectation arise before or after sitting the exam?"

If the student is surprised that s/he has failed, it may be a good idea to review the marking scheme in some detail, giving feedback on each question if necessary. This will give the student a good indication of the areas s/he needs to work on.

"Think back to the day of the exam, how did you feel? Did you feel confident? Were you in good form? How did you feel when you read the paper? Were you prepared?"

In some situations, the student will remember that s/he was having a bad day or that in fact, he was not prepared for the exam at all.

"What plans do you have regarding study for the repeats? Do you have a study plan?"

The student must be made aware that some work is necessary between now and the repeats. It may be sufficient to briefly explain what a study plan is.

Appendix VI Common Psychiatric Diagnostic Categories

Anxiety	Agitation, disturbed sleep pattern, significant changes in appetite, headaches, digestive difficulties, panic attacks.
Depression	Low mood, lack of motivation, sense of emptiness, withdrawal, change of appetite, self neglect, self loathing, thoughts of hurting or killing oneself.
Mania	Elated mood, rapid speech, little sleep, relentless high energy, reckless behaviour, delusions of hallucinations. (Mania with depression forms one of the 'bi-polar disorders' such as manic depression).
Schizophrenia	Disordered thoughts, loss of contact with reality, hearing voices, hallucinations, the person believing that others are controlling their thoughts or actions, loss of emotional experience or paranoia.
Psychosis	Schizophrenia is the most common 'psychotic condition' which is a broader term used when the person loses contact with reality, which may result in some of the other symptoms listed for schizophrenia. Other diagnostic conditions, such as anxiety, depression and mania can manifest some psychotic symptoms if sufficiently intense.
Eating Disorders	These include: Anorexia Nervosa: extreme fear of being fat, distorted body image, extremely low dietary intake, excessive exercise. Bulimia: binge eating, induced vomiting, induced diarrhoea.
Obsessive Compulsive Disorder	Repetition of behaviours, rituals, checking, ruminating, repetitive thoughts.
Phobias	Intense fear, usually with one focus (such as heights, rats, social situations, etc).