



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY
Document Administration

Document Title:	Fitness to Study Procedure
Document Category:	Policy
Version Number:	1.2
Status:	Approved
Reason for development:	To provide a procedure for cases where student conduct creates serious concern about a student's welfare and the welfare of other students, such that reasonable adjustments are not sufficient
Scope:	This procedure applies to staff and students
Author / developer:	Clerk, Governance and Compliance Manager / Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
Owner	Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary
Assessment: (where relevant)	Tick relevant assessments Tick if not applicable <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Equality Assessment <input type="checkbox"/> Legal <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Information Governance <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> Academic Governance <input type="checkbox"/>
Consultation: (where relevant)	<input type="checkbox"/> Staff Trade Unions via HR <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Students via Bishop Grosseteste University Students' Union <input type="checkbox"/> Any relevant external statutory bodies
Authorised by (Board):	Senate
Date Authorised:	Revised December 2015 (October 2014)
Effective from:	January 2016
Review due:	October 2018*
Document location:	University Website
Document dissemination / communications plan	Emailed link to website to key staff, the Students' Union and Student Advice
Document control:	All printed versions of this document are classified as uncontrolled. A controlled version is available from the University website.

*Please note this document remains valid until formally revoked or replaced by the University



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Fitness to Study Procedure

1. Scope and purpose

- 1.1. Bishop Grosseteste University has established a Fitness to Study Procedure which is intended to apply in rare cases where student conduct creates serious concern about a student's welfare and the welfare of other students, such that reasonable adjustments are not sufficient.
- 1.2. Occasionally, a student's circumstances or health may impact upon their own, or others' learning opportunities; in such situations, the University has a duty of care to respond appropriately. This procedure is intended to outline the actions which the University will take in such circumstances to ensure that the issues are dealt with in a concise, consistent and transparent manner for all concerned.

2. Definition of fitness to study

- 2.1. The term, 'fitness to study' refers to a student's fitness to commence, continue with, or return to, a course of academic study; and the student's responsibility to meet the reasonable academic requirements of the course or programme. It also refers to the reasonable social and behavioural requirements of a student member of the University, to ensure that their physical, mental, emotional or psychological health do not have an unacceptably damaging impact upon the health, safety and/or welfare of the student, their peers, staff or the University.

3. Relationship to other procedures and codes of practice

- 3.1. There may be an overlap between a number of procedures when considering an issue relating to fitness to study, such as:
 - Code of Practice on Academic Appeals
 - Code of Practice for Academic Misconduct
 - Code of Practice for Extenuating Circumstances
 - Procedures Relating to Student Disciplinary Offences
- 3.2. Where a situation requires consideration under more than one procedure or Code of Practice, it is generally accepted that the fitness to study issues will be considered first, though the decision of which procedure to follow will be at the discretion of the Head of School.
- 3.3. The Fitness to Study Procedure is not an alternative to disciplinary action. If concerns about a student's fitness to study have led to a referral to the University's student disciplinary procedures, those proceedings will normally be suspended while the fitness to study issues are investigated.

4. Principles and protocols

- 4.1. In dealing with concerns over a student's fitness to study, the following principles and protocols will be followed:
- i. The University will seek to ensure that the investigation of the student's fitness to study under the terms of these procedures is conducted transparently and promptly and in a way which is fair to all parties concerned.
 - ii. Privacy and confidentiality will be maintained insofar as that is compatible with an effective Fitness to Study Investigation. As far as possible, the student will normally be informed in advance if any disclosure to a third party not mentioned in this procedure is required in order to progress the investigation (that is, for instance the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager will be informed of all cases as a standard measure).
 - iii. All investigations will be considered on their merits and in accordance with the University's values, ethos and relevant policies, e.g. the Diversity and Equality Policy. Evidence of previous concerns may be submitted by the University for consideration should this be deemed appropriate, though the staff member/panel considering the issues may decide to disregard past behaviour which is unconnected to the current circumstances.

5. Examples of behaviour which may cause concern

- 5.1. Concerns about a student's fitness to study may present themselves in a number of different ways. The following lists a number of common indicators that may warrant concern:
- i. Mood swings or unusual behaviour (e.g. aggressive, withdrawn, distressed, irritable), inappropriate behaviour (e.g. uncharacteristically bad language, invading personal space, excessive/unexpected or prolonged laughter, inappropriate touching)
 - ii. Withdrawn from social, cultural or sporting activities
 - iii. Signs of self-harming
 - iv. Signs of apathy
 - v. Suicidal thoughts or attempts
 - vi. Signs of substance or alcohol abuse
 - vii. Signs of lack of sleep
 - viii. Relationship and behavioural problems in University accommodation
 - ix. Behaviour leading to a Police report to the University
 - x. Expressing a threat/desire to harm others
 - xi. A pattern of communications which appear irrational or extremely inconsistent

- xii. A pattern of unreasonable demands, which appear irrational, inappropriate or inconsistent
 - xiii. Frequent failure to submit work or to comply with other requirements of the programme of study
 - xiv. Submitting an unusually high number of extenuating circumstances applications
 - xv. Significant non-attendance or engagement
 - xvi. Sudden deterioration of academic performance or engagement
 - xvii. Changes in behaviour or health that make the student's use of equipment, etc. dangerous to themselves and/or to others
- 5.2. This list is not intended to be exhaustive and if a concern is raised which a member of academic staff feels compelled to consider, the procedures may be invoked.
- 5.3. Such incidents outlined in paragraph 5.1 may be considered whether they occur inside or outside the University. It is important to note that isolated incidents will not normally give cause to invoke the procedures; concerns are usually the result of a number of indicators, a sustained pattern or a significant incident.
- 5.4. Significant concerns should be acted upon quickly and should be supported by evidence of such a decline over a period of time or a legitimate belief that the student presents a risk of harm to self or others. In an acute emergency the first action should always be to alert the emergency services by calling (9)999 and by phoning University Security – daytime: 0 for Reception or night time: (9)07850 015713.

6. Fitness to Study Procedure for students

- 6.1. There are three stages to the procedure: Initial Concerns, Formal Intervention and Serious or Persistent Concerns. The stages are based on the perceived level of risk to the mental wellbeing, health and safety of the student and other members of the University community.
- 6.2. Though it is usual to progress sequentially through the stages, the procedure may be invoked at any of the stages depending on the cause for concern, or remain at the same stage if this is appropriate.
- 6.3. In most situations, it will be appropriate to start with Stage 1 of the procedure. There may be some circumstances however where the level of risk/disruption presented requires immediate consideration at Stage 2 or 3. The level of risk must be judged based on the risk to others as well as the student concerned, particularly where the student is living in shared accommodation.
- 6.4. In circumstances where a student is unwilling or unable to work within the Fitness to Study Procedures, the process should continue with concerns raised and action taken as appropriate.
- 6.5. Should a student choose to interrupt their studies, the Fitness to Study investigation will continue if and when the student decides to return to study.

7. Reporting a concern

- 7.1. The procedure may be initiated by anyone who has a sufficient level of concern about a student's health, safety and mental wellbeing; this includes academic tutors and professional support staff. Students may raise concerns about another student's health or wellbeing, though they should not be expected to deal with such matters.
- 7.2. If a student wishes to raise a concern about another student, then they should raise this with a member of staff within the University who they feel comfortable with. The student is not expected to deal with the matter themselves. The member of staff to whom the concern is raised will make the appropriate referral to the Academic Co-ordinator of the student about whom concerns have been raised. If the student contacts a member of the Students' Union then they will make the appropriate referral to the Academic Co-ordinator of the student about whom concerns have been raised.

8. Concerns involving a criminal prosecution

- 8.1. The Head of School may defer action through the University's internal procedures until the Police and Courts have dealt with the matter. In such cases, the student will be notified of this deferral in writing.
- 8.2. The University will normally report any suspected criminal offences to the Police unless the victim of an alleged offence committed by the student requests otherwise, in such cases this would normally be for the discretion of the Head of School. However the University reserves the right to report any offences to the Police, even if the victim of the alleged crime requests the University not to do so.
- 8.3. Consideration of misconduct following a sentence from a criminal court will be undertaken under the University's disciplinary procedures, normally once any fitness to study issues have been considered and at the discretion of the Head of School.

9. Representation and attendance at meetings and hearings

- 9.1. The University's Students' Union may, upon the request of the student, provide advocacy for the student. In such circumstances, the student should inform the University in advance if they will be accompanied to a meeting as per the provisions in Stage 2 or 3 as per paragraph 13 & 15. Student Advice is also able to offer advice to students and members of staff within the University on general fitness to study queries and issues. Care should be taken to ensure that there is no conflict of interest for the student and the University. Separate advisers from within Student Advice should liaise with each individual party.

10. Disclosure

- 10.1. A member of staff may seek advice from the Head of School, Student Advice or Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager about whether or not to invoke the Fitness to Study Procedure. To ensure appropriate levels of confidentiality, this advice should initially be sought without disclosing the details of the student concerned. Before any actions are taken under the Fitness to Study Procedure, the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager should be consulted.

- 10.2. If a student chooses to disclose to a member of staff a mental health illness or disability but does not wish to disclose this information to Student Advice, who may be able to suggest additional support, then the staff member and student should fill out a Non-Disclosure Form, which records that the student has opted out of receiving the relevant support. This form should be retained by the school and should not be sent to Student Advice. The form is included as Appendix 1 of the procedures but may also be downloaded from the website.
- 10.3. However, students in certain disciplines such as teacher training are subject to stricter requirements to ensure the suitability of a recommendation for Qualified Teacher Status (QTS). The University should also consider its duty of care in relation to students presenting a cause for concern whose courses require them to undertake placements within the local community.

11. Stage 1 - Initial concerns

- 11.1. Once the student's Academic Co-ordinator (or Course Leader/equivalent or similar academic management role holder) has been informed of a possible concern, or if they have a concern of their own, they should then inform the Head of School that they are minded to have a discussion with the student under the procedures. The Academic Co-ordinator and the Head of School will consider the concerns and decide whether or not there is sufficient cause to proceed under the Fitness to Study Procedure. Where appropriate, the Academic Co-ordinator and Head of School may discuss the possible invocation of other student procedures. The Head of School consults the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager for advice.
- 11.2. A member of academic staff will then contact the student to propose a meeting, at least 1 day in advance, briefly outlining that concerns have been raised under the Fitness to Study Procedure which the staff member would like to discuss. At this point, the student is welcome to contact the Students' Union or Student Advice if they have any concerns or questions regarding the procedure.
- 11.3. At the initial meeting with the student, the staff member will talk with the student in an empathetic and understanding manner, indicating that there are concerns about the student's fitness to study, registered by use of this procedure. The nature of the concerns should be clearly outlined and the student should be encouraged to discuss the issues, including potential impact on themselves and others.
- 11.4. It should be explained to the student that, whilst the University has a duty of care to support students with ill health, it is the student's responsibility to be fit to study.
- 11.5. The initial meeting will provide an opportunity to discuss possible outcomes and determine whether any further support is required. The staff member may make recommendations to the student, which may include regular attendance at study sessions, avoiding particular areas of the University or people for a period of time, submission of extenuating circumstances forms, counselling services available through Student Advice, intercalation of study etc.
- 11.6. The 'Record of Concern for a Student's Health or Wellbeing' form (Appendix 2) should be used to record the key points and agreements from the initial discussion with the student and a copy should be sent to the student within five working days. A further copy should also be kept on the student's file for a period of time agreed with the student. The student should be reassured that the purpose of keeping the form on file is to ensure the

University is providing all necessary support and to ensure that the student remains fit to study. The Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager should also be informed that an initial meeting has taken place though it is not necessary to provide any further detail regarding the specific concerns.

- 11.7. The student should be informed that if the concerns continue, any additional cause for concern arises, or they refuse to engage with the process, then this could result in their fitness to study being considered under Stage 2 of the procedure. It is advisable that the student's Academic Co-ordinator makes three attempts to engage the student with this process as they are in the best position to have the initial meeting, having normally had the opportunity to directly observe the fitness to study issues.
- 11.8. The student and the Academic Co-ordinator should agree a date to meet, normally within one month of the initial meeting, to review the situation (Stage 1 Review Meeting) and to discuss the effectiveness of the support that the student has been accessing. The member of staff conducting the review meeting should fill out the Review Form (Appendix 3) with the student, which will be recorded in the same manner as paragraph 11.6 of these procedures. If concerns have been significantly reduced by the time of the review meeting, then no further action is required. If the Informal Intervention is unsuccessful, or the case is too serious, then the student will be progressed to Stage 2 of the procedure. If concerns arise at a later date then Stage 2 of the procedure may also be invoked.
- 11.9. If the academic staff member who met with the student feels that they are unable to address the concerns at Stage 1 then they should contact the Academic Coordinator and Head of School to discuss moving on to Stage 2 of the procedure. If the student progresses to Stage 2 of the procedure then they will be informed of this by the Academic Co-ordinator. The Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager should be notified that the issue is being progressed to the next stage.
- 11.10. If the concerns escalate and lead the Academic Co-ordinator to believe that the student may be putting themselves or other members of the University community at significant risk then they should raise this with the Head of School who may consider moving directly to Stage 3 of the Fitness to Study Procedure under paragraph 13.1. The Governance Compliance and Operations Manager should be notified that the issue is being progressed to Stage 3.

12. Stage 2 - Formal Intervention

- 12.1. Stage 2 of the procedure should be used when intervention at Stage 1 has been unsuccessful as such that the concerns are continuing or the concerns over the student's conduct or circumstances are sufficiently serious to indicate that further intervention is required. This stage is normally undertaken by the Academic Co-ordinator or nominee at the request of the Head of School¹. The Head of School should contact the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager for advice on procedural matters and may also contact Student Advice for any other queries or support.
- 12.2. The student will be given written notice of a formal meeting by the Academic Co-ordinator or nominee which should ideally be within 5 working days of the concern being raised within Stage 2. Reasonable notice of around 48 hours will normally be given in the

¹If the Academic Co-ordinator is unable to attend the meeting then Stage 2 will be conducted by the Head of School

written missive, which informs the student of the purpose of the meeting and requests any necessary documentation. If appropriate, the student will be encouraged to provide detailed information, including medical evidence. The requirement for notice before formal meeting does not preclude any communication with the student at the time of a specific incident.

- 12.3. The meeting will normally include the Academic Co-ordinator or nominee as Chair and the student's personal tutor or another suitable member of academic staff². A member of Student Advice may also be invited by either the Academic Co-ordinator or the student, if appropriate. The role of the member of Student Advice will be to provide impartial advice regarding specific help which may be offered to the student, along with suggestions regarding any reasonable adjustments which could be made.
- 12.4. The student may be accompanied at the meeting by one person of their choosing; this could include a friend, member of the Students' Union or parent.
- 12.5. The meeting will normally proceed regardless of whether the student wishes to engage with the process.
- 12.6. During the meeting, the student (if present) will be informed of the concerns about their fitness to study, including detailed examples if appropriate. The student will be given the opportunity to respond and ask questions. The meeting will help to establish the student's own perception of their behaviour and the way in which this impacts on others within the University community.
- 12.7. The meeting will seek to establish the next course of action, which could be one or more of the following:
 - That no further action is required
 - That it is necessary to make a referral to other University Procedures such as the Student Disciplinary Procedure or Code of Practice for Extenuating Circumstances
 - A request for medical evidence which confirms that the student is fit to study (subject to paragraph 15.9.1), such as a doctor's letter, occupational health referral etc.
 - Intercalation of Studies – where intercalation of studies is recommended, this should be discussed and approved by the Head of School as soon as possible after the meeting. Other actions should be considered as alternatives to put forward to the Head of School should they consider that suspension is not the most appropriate action
 - Extension of deadlines
 - Any reasonable adjustments not already in place intended to support the student throughout their studies
 - A mutually agreed action plan (Appendix 4), including specific actions (desired behavior/expectations), support mechanisms and dates for review- if the Academic Co-ordinator or Head of School feels that an action plan is necessary but cannot be agreed then Stage 3 of the procedures should be implemented. The action plan should be agreed at the meeting and written up following the meeting by the Academic Co-ordinator. This will then be sent to the student, normally within 5 working days. Both the student and Academic Co-ordinator should sign the action plan to confirm that they agree to the actions and timescales outlined.

² If the Academic Coordinator is unavailable then they may nominate a representative to attend on their behalf such as the student's personal tutor/supervisor/other relevant nominee.

- Any other actions intended to support the student for the duration of their period of study and ensure the safety and wellbeing of other students and members of staff within the University
- 12.8. A report of the meeting and its outcome should be recorded by the Academic Co-ordinator or nominee. A copy will be provided to the Head of School within 48 hours of the meeting who will then approve the report and forward the record along with any action plan devised to the student, within 5 working days of the meeting.
- 12.9. If the student cannot agree to any actions proposed by the Academic Co-ordinator or nominee then they will be advised that action will be taken under Stage 3 of the procedure.
- 12.10. The student's case should continue to be monitored until it is agreed by all involved that there is no longer cause for concern. This decision should be communicated to the Head of School and Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager.

13. Stage 3 - Serious or Persistent Concerns

- 13.1. A student should be progressed to Stage 3 of the procedure where there are serious or persistent concerns about their behaviour which are putting the health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress of theirs or other members of the University community at significant risk.
- 13.2. The Head of School or nominee³ will instruct the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager to call a Fitness to Study Panel to discuss the situation. The Panel will normally consist of 3-5 people including:
- The Head of School or nominee (as Chair of the Panel)
 - Senior members of academic staff from the School
 - An independent member of staff who has not been involved in the previous stages

The Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager⁴ will also be in attendance to instruct on procedure and take notes.

Such other members may be asked to provide evidence either in attendance or as a written submission:

- A representative from Student Advice.
 - The Student's GP or other relevant representative (provided the student gives consent).
 - A member a University Support Service such as Estates, Accommodation Services, or Registry if appropriate.
- 13.3. The student will be informed of the meeting in reasonable time before the meeting is planned to take place and will also be informed at least 5 working days in advance of the

³ If the Head of School is not available for any reason, for instance because of significant previous involvement with the case at a preceding stage, the meeting will be chaired by a senior member of academic staff from the School.

⁴ If the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager is unavailable then they may instruct a nominated representative to act on their behalf.

meeting of who will be present and the type of information which will be considered at the meeting.

- 13.4. The requirement of notice prior to the Formal meeting does not preclude communication with the student at the time of a specific incident.
- 13.5. The student will be informed of the Panel meeting by the Head of School (or, if applicable, a nominee) in writing. The student will be encouraged, where appropriate, to provide detailed information for the Panel, including medical evidence (subject to paragraph 15.9.1). The student will be informed that they are able to submit a written representation to the Panel and at the discretion of the Chair of the Panel may be allowed to attend in person to submit their representation. Should the student be permitted to attend, then they are permitted to be accompanied by one person of their choosing (this may include a friend, family member or representative from the Students' Union).
- 13.6. The Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager will then contact the student to enquire whether they wish to provide details of witnesses who will either attend in person or provide written submissions, subject to the Chair's discretion.
- 13.7. Attendance by the student at the meeting in general is also subject to the Chair's discretion; should this be agreed, the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager will contact the student to enquire whether they will be in attendance and if they will be accompanied. If the student intends to be accompanied to the meeting, the student should inform the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager of their intention to speak for themselves or whether they intend to provide a written statement authorising the third party to speak on their behalf. In most cases, it is expected that the person accompanying the student will be present to provide advice and support to the student and that the student will speak for themselves. The student will also be asked to provide details of the nature of the intended evidence they wish to provide. The student is required to provide all requested information to the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager at least 4 working days ahead of the Panel meeting.
- 13.8. Each member of the Panel will receive a pack of documentation at least 3 working days prior to the meeting, which will include information such as:
 - A copy of the Fitness to Study Procedure.
 - Any medical or other information provided by the student in advance of the meeting.
 - Details of the case including previously agreed actions and evidence of all other incidents.
- 13.9. The Panel will normally still be held if the student is invited to attend but refuses to do so or if the student refuses to engage with the process. The meeting may also proceed if an invited member is unable to attend, subject to the discretion of the Chair.
- 13.10. The purpose of the Panel is to share information about the student and agree appropriate actions.

After reviving the case, the panel may decide:

- That no further action is required

- To implement, or amend a previously agreed Action Plan
 - To implement reasonable adjustments, which could include amending the hours of study, providing additional tuition additional time in exams and extended library loans etc.
 - That it is necessary to make a referral to other University procedures, such as the Student Disciplinary Procedure, Code of Practice for Extenuating Circumstances etc.
 - That, with the student's consent, it is necessary to agree an interruption of studies
 - That, without the student's consent, it is necessary to suspend the student from studies
 - That, with or without the student's consent, it is necessary to terminate the student's studies at the University
 - Any other actions which are intended to support the student in the successful completion of their studies
- 13.11. A record of the Panel meeting signed by the Chair will normally be sent to the student within 5 working days of the panel meeting and if an Action Plan was agreed as the outcome then this will accompany the record. A copy of this documentation will also be held on the student's personal file.
- 13.12. If an Action Plan is agreed, it will normally include specific actions (desirable behaviour and expectations), support mechanisms and dates for review (See Appendix 4). The Action Plan may include a request for the student to provide evidence that they are fit to study (subject to paragraph 15.9.1) and detail of consequences should the student not choose to engage with the plan. If an Action Plan is the agreed outcome of the Panel meeting then it would normally be necessary to convene one or more review meetings which will normally include at least two members of the original (Level 3) Fitness to Study Panel.
- 13.13. At the Review meetings, the Panel will consider progress and will normally revisit the options previously considered at the Panel meeting and decide whether an alternative outcome is appropriate; this may include a decision that no further action is required, or that it is necessary to revisit alternatives to address any continuing or additional concerns. The student will normally be in attendance at the Review meetings and will have the opportunity to be accompanied by one person of their choosing. If the Action Plan has proved unsuccessful and the Review Panel decides that it is necessary to revisit an alternative decision, then Stage 3 of the procedure may be invoked again.
- 13.14. Where it has been decided to interrupt, suspend or terminate a student's studies at the University, then the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager will ensure that this is recorded appropriately within the School, Quality Assurance and Student Data and on the student's file.

14. Request for Review

- 14.1. Should the student wish to invoke their right to appeal a decision at Stage 3 of the Fitness to Study Procedure, then a request for review should be made in writing to the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary within 21 days of the decision being communicated to the student. If a request is submitted after this date then the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary may decide whether or not the appeal should be allowed.

- 14.2. The student should use the form provided in Appendix 5 to this procedure to submit their request. The appeal for a Review of the Fitness to Study outcome should include brief details of the case and the grounds for the appeal and should be accompanied by any other supporting documentation.
- 14.3. A Case for Review may only be considered on the following grounds:
- There was a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the disciplinary procedures
 - New evidence is now available which was not available upon reasonable enquiry or application at the time of the original meeting
 - That the decision reached was of such nature that it was one which no reasonable person could have reached on the available evidence.
- 14.4. The Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary will decide whether there is a *prima facie* case for review and if there is, then they may ask an Executive Dean⁵, where appropriate, to convene a new Stage 3 Fitness to Study Panel. Where possible, the new Panel will not normally include any members of a panel previously involved in the case.
- 14.5. Following completion of this panel, the student will have exhausted the University's procedures and there will be no further grounds for appeal. The student will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter by the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager which will provide details of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), whose role it is to independently review the application by the University of its own procedures. (www.oiahe.org.uk)

Second Floor
Abbey Gate
57-75 Kings Road
Reading
RG1 3AB

15. Supplementary Provisions

15.1. Audio Recording

- 15.1.1. The audio recording of meetings or hearings under this procedure is normally prohibited, although this clause may be revisited in an individual case subject to such a reasonable adjustment as may be agreed by the University under the Equality Act 2010.

15.2. Medical or other evidence

- 15.2.1. If, under the procedures, a student is encouraged to provide medical or other evidence of their fitness to study, a student may decline this request.
- 15.2.2. The University respects medical or other evidence provided regarding a student's fitness to study but will not necessarily be bound by it. It is for the University to decide whether or not it accepts a statement provided by a medical certificate of the student's fitness to study, taking into account the context, conduct and

⁵ If the appropriate Executive Dean has already been involved with the case e.g. because of staffing issues at Stage 3 then another member of the Senior Leadership Team of the University will undertake the Review.

communications of the student.

- 15.2.3. It is normally expected that no costs will be incurred in providing additional evidence. However, if costs are incurred, they will generally be borne by the student. The University may however fund the cost of obtaining additional evidence if the University requests that the student complete an independent assessment to supplement evidence already provided by the student. If an independent assessment is required at the request of the University, then the University will make the arrangements and may also request that specific questions are addressed.

15.3. Conflict of interest

- 15.3.1. Student Advice may offer a student therapeutic or other support during the administration of this procedure. An alternative member of Student Advice may be asked to advise University staff during the application of this procedure. Care will be taken to minimise the potential conflict of interest which may occur.
- 15.3.2. Other members of academic or support staff may also have had previous involvement with the student prior to the fitness to study procedure being invoked. This will not preclude their involvement within the fitness to study case though care will be taken to minimise any conflict of interest which may arise.

15.4. Suspension from studies and intercalation

- 15.4.1. A student may be suspended from studies at any stage of this procedure by the Head of School or nominee upon report of serious concerns and pending further investigation.
- 15.4.2. In such cases, the decision to suspend will be reviewed by the Head of School or nominee every two weeks until the conclusion of the case or it is deemed appropriate for the student to return to studies during the course of the procedures. During the period of suspension, every effort should be made to hold the relevant Stage 2 or 3 meeting as soon as practicable, within 6 weeks.
- 15.4.3. Any student whose studies are suspended or terminated by the University under the Fitness to Study Procedure shall not be entitled to a refund of fees and where necessary, it is the student's responsibility to inform the Student Loans Company (www.slco.co.uk) of their suspension/termination. The same also applies to an intercalation. The student may seek advice from Student Advice regarding this.
- 15.4.4. Whilst a student is suspended or intercalated, they will not be permitted to engage with the University. They may continue to receive ongoing therapeutic support through Student Advice as an exception.
- 15.4.5. Intercalation or suspension should not normally be for a period longer than one year in total. If intercalation/suspension period exceeds one year then the student's studies should normally be terminated and the student would be required to reapply should they wish to return at a later date.

15.5. Return to studies

- 15.5.1. Following a formal decision to intercalate/suspend a student from studies at Stage 2 or 3 of the procedure, a Return to Study Review will be conducted within a 4 week period of the expected return to study.
- 15.5.2. Students will usually only be permitted to return to studies following suitable medical or other evidence stating that the student is fit to return to study. A Return to Study Plan will normally be agreed 4 weeks prior to the student's expected return where possible and will be agreed by the student, the student's Academic Co-ordinator and the Head of School. The plan will include specific support measures following consultation regarding reasonable adjustments with Student Advice, and will also include any other support deemed reasonable and necessary to allow the student to return to study. The student will be required to comply with all the agreed actions in order to remain at the University.
- 15.5.3. Following the student's return to study, they will be required to attend regular Review meetings with the authorised member of staff in their academic unit (i.e. an academic staff from the School, agreed by the Academic Co-ordinator). If appropriate, the meetings may also be attended by members of staff from Professional Services.
- 15.5.4. The Review meetings may normally cease after an agreed period but if it is deemed appropriate, these meetings may continue for the full duration of the student's study at the University.

15.6. Monitoring of procedures

- 15.6.1. The effectiveness of these procedures will be kept under regular review by the Senate.
- 15.6.2. The Governance & Compliance Office will prepare reports to the Senate and Audit Committee on the number of cases which have been considered.



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Student Disability Disclosure Guidelines and Non-Disclosure Form

Guidance Notes for Staff:

All staff and students have a personal obligation to adhere to the responsibilities outlined within the Equality Act 2010.

Disabled students are strongly encouraged to disclose any information about any disability they may have so that the University is able to implement reasonable adjustments to support the student throughout their studies.

It is the student's responsibility to disclose their disability and to discuss and agree to support offered by Student Advice to support them.

It is the staff member's responsibility to ensure that, once the disability has been disclosed to them, Student Advice and any other relevant authority within the University are made aware so that the appropriate reasonable adjustments can be made in accordance with the Equality Act.

Students also have the right to confidentiality, however; the student should be asked whether or not they wish for the member of staff to whom they have disclosed a disability to disseminate this information elsewhere within the University. The staff member should ensure that the student is made aware that the information provided is confidential and would only be passed on with the student's consent. The student should also be informed of the way the information will be used and the benefits of sharing the information with those who would have a legitimate requirement to be made aware of the disclosure, such as Academic Co-ordinators, Heads of School, the Quality Assurance and Student Data Department, School Administrators and any staff associated with the teaching and presentation of course material.

If a student discloses a disability to a member of staff, then that staff member should attempt to direct the student towards Student Advice, which is based on the ground floor of the University Library (studentadvice@bishopp.ac.uk / (01522) 583600). The member of staff should outline the type of help available from Student Advice and the role of Student Advice in offering confidential advice and support. If the student does not wish the information regarding their disability to be disclosed, then the student and the member of staff should sign the Student Non-Disclosure Form attached to the next page. This form should then be sealed in an envelope marked "Confidential" and handed to the Head of School to be stored in a secure area. It should be emphasised to the student that should they change their mind then they are welcome to contact Student Advice.

The University still has a limited responsibility to provide reasonable adjustments even if the student signs a Non-Disclosure Form and the staff member may be able to make limited adjustments themselves in agreement with the student such as adapting hand-outs etc. Staff may seek additional advice and guidance from Student Advice regarding student disability disclosures.



BISHOP
GROSSETESTE
UNIVERSITY

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Student Non-Disclosure Form

Student's name: _____

Student number: _____

Date of Birth: _____

Programme of Study: _____

I do not give my consent for the information I have provided regarding my condition to be shared with any other department within the University, including Student Advice.

I do not wish to access any support from Student Advice and I understand that my decision not to disclose information about my condition to Student Advice may mean that the University may be unable fully to meet my needs as a disabled student and make reasonable adjustments to support my study as outlined in the requirements of the Equality Act 2010.

Student signature: _____

Staff signature: _____

Date: _____

This form should now be sealed in an envelope marked "*Confidential – Student Non-Disclosure Form - [Student's University ID number]*" and should be given to the Head of School to be stored within a secure setting.



**BISHOP
GROSSETESTE
UNIVERSITY**

BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Record of Concern for a Student's Health and Wellbeing

Student's name: _____

Student Number: _____

Term time address: _____

Home address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Gender: Male Female

Concerns raised by: _____

Brief outline of concerns:

Student feedback:

Actions, recommendations and further support:

Date for review: _____

Declaration:

I understand the nature of the concerns outlined to me by the University during the meeting today and recorded within this document. I am also aware of the possible consequences and impact of my fitness to study for both myself and others within the University community.

I have agreed to work towards the actions and recommendations outlined within this form, as discussed with my academic coordinator, which has been agreed in order to support me throughout my studies.

I am aware that, should I be unable or unwilling to engage with the actions and recommendations outlined within this document, further action will be undertaken by the University as appropriate.

I am also aware that non-attendance on my part will also constitute a cause for concern and will be reported and acted upon accordingly.

I consent to information surrounding my fitness to study being shared with other relevant services within the University where necessary such as the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager and Student Advice.

I understand that I am ultimately responsible for my own health and wellbeing and that it is my responsibility to be fit to study. I also understand the University's duty of care to support me and also to the wider University community.

Signed: Student: _____ Staff: _____

Date: _____

The original form should be recorded in the students file for an agreed period of time or at least until no further action is required under the Fitness to Study procedures. A copy of this form should be given to the student.



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Fitness to Study Review Form

Student's name: _____

Student number: _____

Programme of study: _____

**Date of implementation of
Fitness to Study procedure:** _____

Stage of procedure: 1 2 3

Number of previous meetings: _____

Name of staff member: _____

Brief outline of initial concerns:

Staff member's comments on progress against agreed actions, recommendations and further support:

Student's comments on progress against agreed actions, recommendations and further support:

Next Steps:

- The concerns have subsided, no further action is required

Agree the amount of time that the documentation regarding the student's fitness to study should be held on their file. This should take account of the likelihood of further incidences occurring in the future.

- The level of intervention has been unsuccessful, progress to the next stage of the procedure

Follow the next steps as set out the Fitness to Study Procedure.

- Some concerns remain though not significant enough to progress to the next stage of the procedure, another review meeting is required

Agree further actions recommendations and support:

(For Stage 2 and 3 of the Fitness to Study Procedure, use the Action Table in Appendix 4 to accompany this form, where appropriate)

Date of next Review meeting: _____

Signed: Student: _____ Staff: _____

Date: _____

The original form should be recorded in the students file for an agreed period of time or at least until no further action is required under the Fitness to Study procedures. A copy of this form should be given to the student.

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY****Fitness to Study - Agreed Action Plan**

Date: _____

Name of Student: _____

**Name of Staff member responsible
for reviewing progress against actions:** _____

**Names of staff members who
contributed to the action plan:** _____

Date agreed (indicate if student was not present): _____

Stage of Fitness to Study Procedure: _____

This action plan may be used in accordance with Stage 2 or 3 of the Fitness to Study Procedure. Though the student concerned does not need to be present at the time of drafting the proposed actions, they will need to sign the plan to confirm an intention of completing the actions identified. A failure on the student's part to agree to the proposed actions could lead either to progression to stage 3 of the procedure, or the Fitness to Study Panel reconsidering another outcome as per the procedure.

Action	Desired behaviour/ expectations	Support mechanism (staff or service)	Achieved by / on-going	Date for Review

Signed: Student: _____

Staff: _____

Date: _____

**BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY****Fitness to Study – Request for Review (Student Appeal)**

If you are a student at Bishop Grosseteste University and you wish to appeal against a decision taken by the University under Stage 3 of the Fitness to Study Procedure then you should do so within 21 days of being made aware of the decision. Any appeal which is received by the University after this point will be for the discretion of the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary whether or not to consider the appeal.

You should address your appeal to the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary either by post (Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary, Bishop Grosseteste University, Longdales Road, Lincoln, LN1 3DY), or by email (regulatorycompliance@bishopg.ac.uk).

You should use the appeal template on the following page to help structure your appeal.

You may only appeal against a decision by the University in relation to the Fitness to Study procedures on the following grounds:

- You believe that there has been a procedural irregularity in the conduct of the Fitness to Study procedures
- You believe the member(s) of staff responsible for implementing the procedures acted with bias or prejudice
- New evidence is available which was not available upon reasonable enquiry at the time of implementation of the procedures and would have a significant impact upon the overall decision of the panel
- You believe that the decision reached was of such nature that it was one which no reasonable person could have reached on the available evidence

It will be for the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary to decide whether or not, on the face of it, there is a case for review. If the Chief Operating Officer and University Secretary feels that there is a need to review the decision then they will instruct the Head of School, where appropriate, to convene a new Fitness to Study Panel under Stage 3 of the procedure. Where possible, the new Panel will not normally include those panel members in attendance at the last meeting; it is more likely that those previously involved with the case would be called as witnesses during the new panel hearing.

Once this panel has met and you have been informed of the final outcome at the Appeal Stage you will have exhausted all of the University's procedures for handling fitness to study cases. At this stage, you will be issued with a Completion of Procedures Letter by the Governance, Compliance and Operations Manager, directing you towards the OIA (The University's external ombudsmen) should you remain dissatisfied.



BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Request for Review of a Decision under the University Fitness to Study Procedure

Student's name: _____

Student Number: _____

Term time address: _____

Home address: _____

Telephone number: _____

Email address: _____

Preferred method of contact: email post

Grounds for appeal:

- Procedural Irregularity
- Bias or Prejudice
- New Evidence
- Unreasonable Decision

Member of staff primarily conducting Fitness to Study procedure:

Stage 1: _____

Stage 2: _____

Stage 3: _____

Brief details of University's actions concerns regarding Fitness to study:

Previous actions undertaken by the University / Reasonable Adjustments made:

Previous actions agreed and undertaken by the student:

Reason to believe there are grounds for appeal:

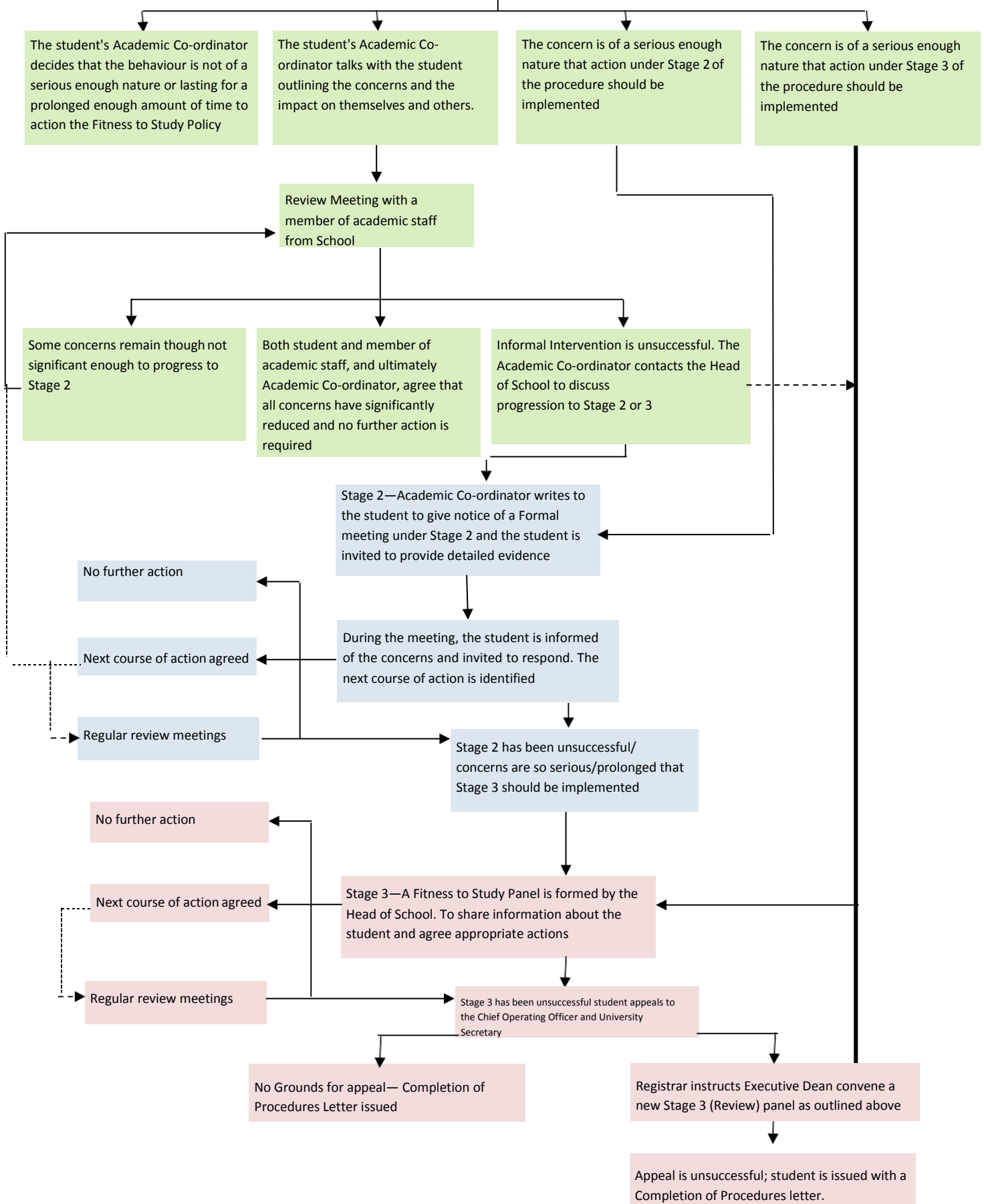
Desired outcome of appeal panel:

Additional Information:

Signed: _____

Date: _____

Stage 1—The student's Academic Co-ordinator is informed of a concern raised by a third party or notices behaviour which causes concern

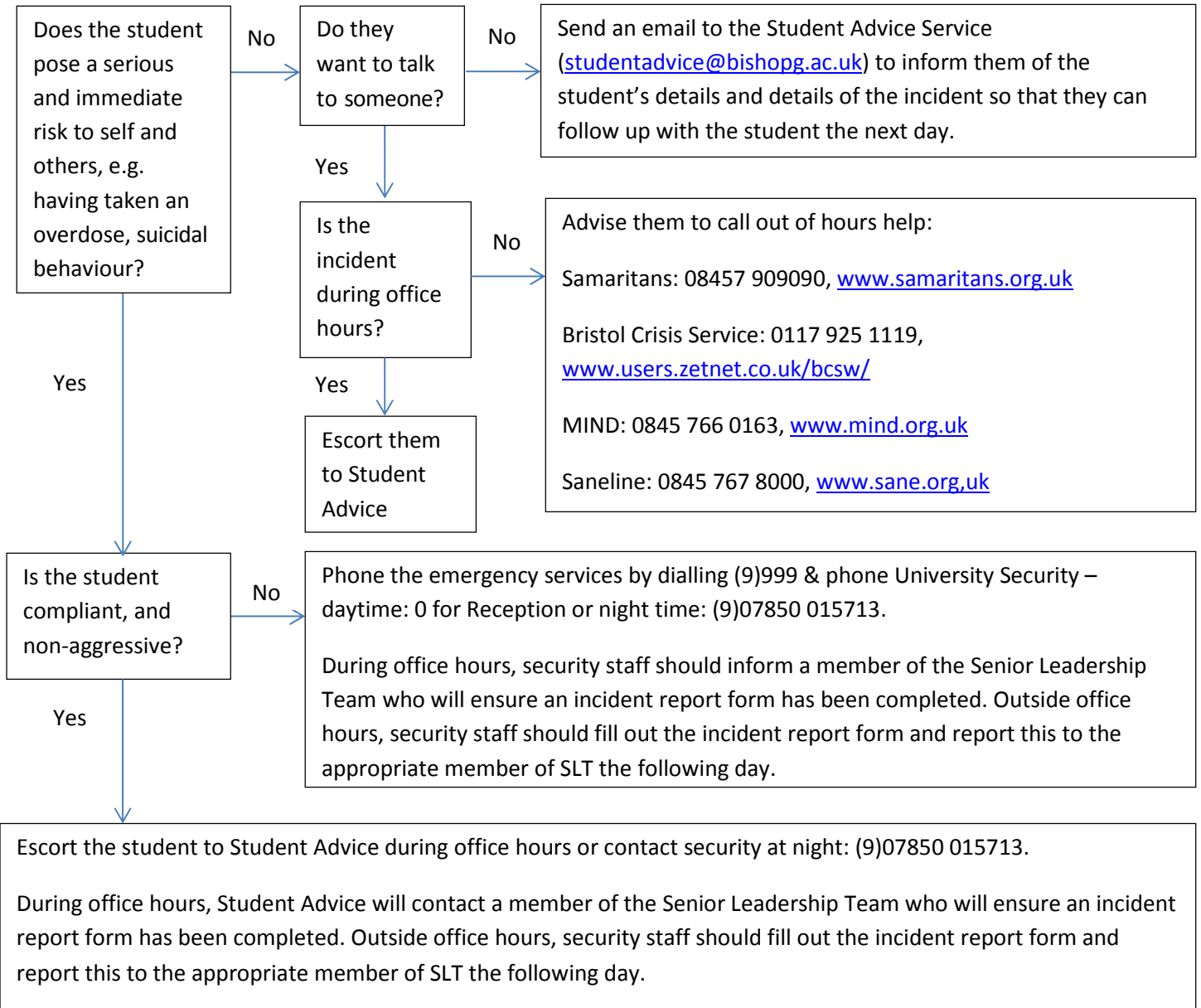




BISHOP GROSSETESTE UNIVERSITY

Guidelines for Action – Student presenting Risk of Serious Harm to Self or Others

If you are a student of the University then there is no expectation for you to act under these guidelines, the guidance is aimed at assisting the University community effectively to help a student in crisis. As a student, you should always contact a member of University staff or security immediately when facing a difficult situation with another student.



The first member of staff to deal with the incident, or the staff member most involved, should fill out an incident report form. Incident report forms are available in the documents area of the Staff Portal, under the Policies and Procedures section. *If it is not clear from the chart which action you should take, then contact either the Student Advice Team (01522) 583600 or Security (0 for Reception or 07850 015713 outside work hours).*