If you are seriously concerned about a student’s well-being and believe they are at risk of serious harm to themselves or others, or seem to be out of touch with reality, discussion with a professional, such as doctor, nurse or counsellor, is important to assess what action is needed.

- The safety of the individual concerned and of those around them is paramount.
- The Emergency Services should be called where there are clear indications that the student is in imminent and serious danger to themselves or others.
- Security should be contacted (Security Emergency Line 3333).
- Where possible, the student should not be left alone.
- Other staff and students should be asked to leave the area.

If time allows, the following may help you decide on the most appropriate course of action:

**Severe situation but compliant subject**

The student is at serious risk of harm to self or others, but will accept help and is not violent or aggressive, e.g. Student asks for help having taken a large overdose

**Urgent psychological emergencies**

For example, a student has disclosed suicidal intent, is out of touch with reality, extreme difficulty in functioning and keeping themselves safe

**Support student into care of health service**

Ask the name of the student’s GP.
Request an emergency (same day) appointment with the GP.
Accompany to surgery if necessary.
If unable to contact the GP call NHS 111.

**Severe situation but non-compliant subject**

The student is in imminent and serious danger to themselves or others and is potentially violent or aggressive, e.g. student has climbed on high building and threatens to jump if approached

**Less urgent psychological emergencies**

The student is experiencing serious psychological difficulties, is vulnerable but not putting self or others at risk

**Refer student to GP**

The GP will be able to refer to psychiatric services, where necessary. For advice call NHS 111.

**IF IN DOUBT ABOUT THE MOST APPROPRIATE RESPONSE, CALL NHS DIRECT ON 111 FOR ADVICE**

**CONTACT NUMBERS (PLYMOUTH)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Service</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>University Medical Centre</td>
<td>01752 222 341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NHS 111</td>
<td>111</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>University security (non-emergency)</td>
<td>01752 588400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Derriford Accident &amp; Emergency</td>
<td>01752 792511</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>01752 439091</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Students can self-present for a mental health assessment

Confidentiality

It is good practice in all situations to avoid offering a level of confidentiality it may be difficult, or detrimental to someone’s well-being, to maintain. However, in situations where there is risk of serious harm to self or others, it is acceptable to breach levels of confidentiality previously offered. Wherever possible, the student should be informed of any decisions to disclose information.
GUIDELINES FOR ACTION: STAFF WITH CONCERNS ABOUT A STUDENT’S WELL-BEING

These guidelines are produced by Learning Support & Wellbeing, Plymouth University: 01752 587676

How do you know the student may be experiencing difficulties?
- the student told you
- recent changes in behaviour
- significant changes in appearance/mood (weight, hygiene, withdrawn, hyperactive)
- you have smelt alcohol or cannabis on the student on a regular basis
- others have voiced concerns
- academic performance has changed dramatically
- poor attendance.

DON’T AVOID THE SITUATION
Approach the student and try to engage in a general conversation

Be proactive and sensitive; engage at a level that is comfortable for you and the student

START BY LISTENING
Be clear with the student about the limits of confidentiality you can offer

A listening ear may be all that is needed – let the student do most of the talking

Usual exemptions include situations where there is risk of serious harm to self or others

Remember time constraints – be honest with the student and yourself about how much time you have

AFTER approaching the student, you think there may be some difficulties

The student may choose not to discuss their issues or seek help

The student recognises that some support may be helpful

Respect the student’s decision and provide information about support options, should they change their mind

Check with the student and/or Faculty Registrar

You are still concerned about the student

Listen and try to help the student identify the issue(s) they need support with, for example:
- Study
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Drug/alcohol use
- Finances
- Relationships
- Pregnancy
- Bereavement

Consult with a senior member of staff or colleague from a specialist support service

Offer an open invitation to come back and talk to you

Your role may involve helping the student identify their options. You do not need to provide answers or take responsibility for resolving the situation. Be clear about the limits of your role – do not give advice on issues outside your area of expertise

Identify those issues you can help with:
- Do you have the time/skill?
- Will it conflict with your role?
- If you offer to help, do you have access to consultation or support?

For other issues, signpost the student to the most appropriate service(s).

Being in a supportive role can be demanding and stressful – if you have been impacted in any way, speak with someone about it

Further information about services at www1.plymouth.ac.uk/counselling

Please turn over