
Mental Health Framework

Responsible Office	Student Experience/Student Wellbeing Services
Responsible Officer	PVC Student Experience
Approval authority	SLG
Date of approval	
Amended (if applicable)	N/A
Related Procedures	Support to Study Procedure
Related University Policies	Safeguarding Policy
Effective Date	
Supersedes	Mental Health Policy
Next review due	June 2025

1. Purpose

- 1.1. To provide a clear, transparent and practical framework relating to student mental health for students, prospective students (and their supporters), and staff working with students at Bath Spa University.
- 1.2. To embed a consistent approach throughout the University to ensure no student is academically or socially discriminated against because of a mental health condition.
- 1.3. To act as a supplement to other University policies, including the Safeguarding Policy and Procedure and Support to Study Procedure.

2. The Regulatory and Legal Framework

- 2.1. Bath Spa University has a duty of care to meet students' educational needs and to take reasonable steps to protect their health, safety and wellbeing. The nature of the duty of care may be enhanced where the student has an identified vulnerability such as a mental health condition or is an international student. The duty of care extends to all students, so an individual's needs may have to be balanced against the needs of the wider University population.
- 2.2. Office for Students (OfS) 'Securing student success: Regulatory framework for higher education in England'¹.
- 2.3. Statutory legislation includes; Equality Act 2010, Human Rights Act 1998, Data Protection Act 1998, GDPR, Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Coroner's and Justice Act 2009.
- 2.4. Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 & Prevent Duty 2015: Higher Education Providers must have 'due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism' and have robust measures in place to identify and support 'vulnerable individuals'.²

3. Pre-admission and Admission

- 3.1. Bath Spa University is committed to admissions processes that are equitable for all applicants.³ Applications from prospective students, (including International, EU, Erasmus and other exchange programmes) who have declared a mental health condition are therefore considered in the same way as any other application.
- 3.2. Applicants are encouraged to declare a mental health condition on their UCAS/GTTR or BSU application form, to enable the University to assess their academic access needs and requirements.
- 3.3. On receipt of an application and once an offer has been made, the University Admissions Service sends all applicants an invite to complete an Academic Access Plan Questionnaire. This requests further details about a student's disability, including mental health condition/s and may result in further action and advice, such as an informal visit to discuss access and support requirements, discussion about what services are available both within the University and through local health agencies and application for DSA (Disabled Students' Allowance) as appropriate. The University Student Wellbeing Services is identified to applicants as their key point of contact to discuss their transition and transfer of support or treatment.

¹ https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/media/1406/ofs2018_01.pdf

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance>

³

<https://thehub.bathspa.ac.uk/Media/Student%20Services/Admissions%20procedure%20for%20disabled%20applicants.pdf>

- 3.4. All applicants for professional courses, such as PGCE, are required to complete a Fitness to Teach questionnaire via the Admissions Service as part of the application process.

4. Entry and Induction

- 4.1. All new students who declare a mental health condition (or other disability apart from dyslexia) are invited to attend BSU Get Started. This annual early induction event, facilitated by Student Wellbeing Services, aims to help new students with the transition to university, through a combination of structured workshops and orientation activities.
- 4.2. Students are given a further opportunity to make a declaration when completing their online registration with the University via the student Portal and are encouraged throughout their time at Bath Spa.

5. Accommodation

- 5.1. The accommodation application process asks about any specific requirements based on medical or disability requirements. Students are requested to evidence their requirements and the University makes every effort to meet such requests.
- 5.2. All students are bound by licence agreements and the associated behavioural contracts.

6. Academic Access Plans, AAPs

- 6.1. AAPs contain a description of declared disability and/or medical condition and any recommendations, such as adjustments and exam arrangements. These are shared with tutors via E-vision.
- 6.2. Student Wellbeing Services is responsible for informing academic tutors of AAPs for all disabled students, including those who have declared a mental health condition.⁴
- 6.3. Student Wellbeing Services advises and provides guidance for academic staff when adjustments are being planned, during implementation and regularly reviewed with students to ensure measures are effective.
- 6.4. A range of student and staff development and briefings are delivered and available online about a variety of conditions and disabilities, including mental health.⁵

7. Exchange programmes and placements

- 7.1. The University works to encourage its students to engage in placements, EU/international exchange programmes and field trips etc. Bath Spa recognises students with mental health conditions may require assistance with liaison and information sharing (in accordance with Data Protection⁶ and Confidentiality Policy⁷) with 'host' institutions and placement providers in order for them to participate. Student Wellbeing Services works with Academics and other Professional Services staff to facilitate this.

⁴ <http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/Media/student%20support/AAPs.pdf>

⁵ <http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/study-with-us/giving-you-support/emotional-and-mental-health-support>

⁶ <https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies/data-protection-policy/>

⁷ <https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/governance/policies/data-protection-policy/>

8. When a student becomes unwell, or there is concern about someone's wellbeing

- 8.1. There can be a variety of reasons why a student may experience a period of mental ill-health or concern is raised. Guidance is in place for staff when responding to concerns, including crisis interventions, through the Support to Study Procedure⁸.
- 8.2. It is the responsibility of all University staff to pass on any concerns they have about the wellbeing of a student to Student Wellbeing Services. Students who are concerned about another student are encouraged to speak with Student Wellbeing Services, a tutor or the Students' Union Advice Service to seek advice and guidance.
- 8.3. If a student's mental health condition impacts on their academic progress, they can make a formal submission to the University through the mitigating circumstances procedure.⁹ This enables the University to give flexibility (including deadlines and re-submissions etc.) without detriment to grades or progression in accordance with the University's Academic Regulations.¹⁰
- 8.4. The University, through Student Wellbeing Services, will work with students to help them access appropriate support, including treatment and will assist with arranging a break from study, including intercalation if necessary.
- 8.5. The University provides a 24/7 Security and Student Wellbeing Service that is able to respond to concerns about a student's welfare, including undertaking wellbeing checks.
- 8.6. There is a range of free 24/7 digital services available to Bath Spa University students that provide support and assistance to students experiencing mental health problems, including UniWellbeing, TogetherAll, Talk Campus and the Crisis Text Service.
- 8.7. While the University adheres to strict data protection guidance to ensure a student's right to privacy, there may be situations when it is necessary to share information with third parties, including next of kin who have a clear need to know that there are specific concerns; for example where there is risk of an individual harming themselves or others.

9. Support to Study Procedure¹¹

- 9.1. The Support to Study Procedure (StS) is intended to provide an effective framework to support and enable students where circumstances are having an adverse impact on their studies, or are affecting the health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress of others.
- 9.2. These concerns may be about their ability to benefit from and participate in University life, or that their participation gives rise to a concern of risk, including of harm to self or others or of behaviour that is a significant disruption to others.
- 9.3. Support to Study provides a structured framework to assess risk, monitor and review interventions, support offered and to identify and consider options and gives all parties (internal and external) a structured point of reference and clearly maps responsibilities and expectations.

⁸ <https://sulis.bathspa.ac.uk/display/SS/Support+to+Study+Procedure%3A+Toolkit+for+staff>

⁹ <https://thehub.bathspa.ac.uk/services/student-services/student-information-desk>

¹⁰ <https://www.bathspa.ac.uk/regulations/academic-regulations>

¹¹ <http://www.bathspa.ac.uk/about-us/quality-and-standards/a-z> (Policy under review, August 19)