UKMC Student Support and Wellbeing Policy

Date	Author	Summary of Changes	Version	Authorised
25/06/2025	Dr Razia	New institutional policy for student support and wellbeing (taught undergraduate programmes)	1 (25-26)	SELTEC
03/11/2026	Head of Wellbeing	Concern Evaluation Unit removed; functions moved to the Wellbeing Department Fit to Study stages merged into one procedure SSTs replaced by PATs Suspension clarified as supportive, not disciplinary Legislation updated New: trusted contact, serious incidents, crisis contacts	2.0	Pending Academic Board Approval

Policy/Procedure Management and Responsibilities	
Policy/Procedure Owner	The policy is owned by the Student Experience Committee. Day-to-day implementation is delegated to the Wellbeing Department, and communication to the Registrar.
Equality Analysis	Equality Analysis to be refreshed for Version 2.0. Also to be reviewed by the EDI Committee. (TBC).
Effective From	November 2026
Next Review	December 2028
Internal/External	Both – student-facing, with procedures for staff
Document Location	UKMC | Policies and Legislation
Linked Documents	• Mental Health and Wellbeing Referral Policy • Vulnerable Student Support Policy • Support to Study Policy and Procedure • Disability Disclosure and Learning Support Policy • Student Course Changes and Continuity of Study Policy • Safeguarding and Prevent Policy Code of Conduct • Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy • Student Discipline Procedure • Student Complaints Policy and Procedure • IT Data Protection and Data Security Policy • UKMC Inclusive Curriculum Framework • Equality Act 2010 • Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR • Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended) • Universities UK and PAPYRUS, suicide-safer universities guidance
Dissemination Plan	• Published on the UKMC Policies and Legislation page. • Announced through communication bulletins, academic briefings, Course Directors, course coordination committees and faculty meetings.
Accessibility	**Alternative formats available on request** quality@ukmc.ac.uk

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1. Purpose

1.1 This policy sets out UKMC's commitment to the wellbeing and mental health of its students.

1.2 It aims to build understanding of mental health, encourage students to seek help early, reduce stigma, make sure support is timely and confidential, and keep the learning environment safe and fair for everyone.

2. Scope

2.1 This policy applies to all students enrolled at UKMC. It does not apply to staff or external service providers.

2.2 It operates alongside the UKMC Inclusive Curriculum Framework and supports Principle E (Wellbeing and Flourishing), which treats wellbeing as central to engagement, progression and success.

3. Policy Statement

3.1 UKMC will respond appropriately when concerns are raised about a student's health or wellbeing, especially where the student's safety, academic progress or the wider community may be affected.

3.2 Action under this policy is supportive, not disciplinary. Where a temporary suspension of study is needed as a last resort under Section 5, it is to protect the student's wellbeing and safety. It is not a sanction and does not appear on the student's disciplinary record.

3.3 Staff will act with fairness, clarity, timeliness and confidentiality, and keep the student's welfare at the centre of every decision.

4. Key Principles

4.1 **Understanding mental health.** Mental health covers emotional, psychological and social wellbeing. Difficulties may be short-term (for example after a bereavement) or long-term (for example anxiety, depression, eating disorders, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or OCD), and may be temporary or ongoing.

4.2 **Language.** UKMC uses respectful, inclusive language about mental health to reduce stigma.

4.3 **Duty of care.** UKMC will provide a supportive environment, high-quality education, a safe campus and safe university activities, and appropriate support.

4.4 **Inclusive ethos.** UKMC promotes diversity, equity, inclusion and belonging, including in relation to disability, mental health, race, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion or belief, age, neurodiversity and socioeconomic background.

4.5 **Leadership.** UKMC's senior leadership will visibly and consistently support student wellbeing.

4.6 **Training.** All staff receive ongoing training in mental health awareness and first aid, inclusive and trauma-informed teaching, handling disclosures safely, and referral routes. Training is delivered through mandatory sessions, on-demand resources and role-specific learning.

4.7 **Student partnership.** Students are partners in wellbeing. They take part through representation on advisory groups, consultation with the UKMC Student Association, focus groups, surveys and co-design workshops. UKMC reports back on how student input has been used.

4.8 **External partnerships.** UKMC works with NHS services, GPs, crisis teams and charities such as Mind, Samaritans and YoungMinds on referrals, joint planning and continuity of care.

4.9 **Curriculum and assessment.** Wellbeing is built into teaching. Course design considers resilience and stress management; assessment planning manages workload and avoids clustered deadlines; teaching uses reflective learning, peer collaboration and wellbeing check-ins.

5. Fit to Study Procedure

5.1 **Definition.** A student is fit to study if they can take part in academic and placement activities (with support where needed) and manage student life without serious disruption to others and without risk to themselves, others or the environment. Concerns may come from health, behaviour or personal difficulties.

5.2 **When the procedure is used.** The Wellbeing Department, working with the Academic Office, may start this procedure when:

- conduct linked to a student's health might otherwise lead to disciplinary action;
- a student's wellbeing poses a risk to themselves or others; or
- a student's health is significantly affecting their engagement with their studies.

5.3 **Stage 1: Early support.** For concerns that are not severe or urgent.

(a) The Wellbeing Department, with the student's PAT, reviews the concern and contacts the student.

(b) An informal meeting agrees a support plan and an Action Plan with realistic, time-bound steps. This may include referral to services and academic adjustments under Section 8.

(c) Progress is monitored over 2–4 weeks and the plan adjusted as needed.

5.4 **Stage 2: Formal review.** Used when concerns continue or are more serious or complex.

(a) A Formal Review Panel, led by a Wellbeing Officer with relevant academic and support staff, meets with the student to review the concerns and the support already given.

(b) The panel may ask for updated medical or specialist evidence.

(c) The panel agrees a Formal Action Plan. Outcomes may include further support, conditions on study, or a recommendation to interrupt studies.

(d) The student may respond to the findings and may appeal on procedural or evidential grounds.

5.5 **Stage 3: Fit to Study Panel.** Used where there is significant, immediate risk or where earlier stages have not worked. A case may go straight to Stage 3 if it is urgent.

(a) A Fit to Study Panel of trained, impartial members, chaired at senior level, reviews all the evidence, including whether the student has engaged with earlier Action Plans.

(b) Outcomes may include temporary suspension of study, withdrawal, or referral to external agencies.

(c) The student may be accompanied and may present evidence and mitigating circumstances.

5.6 **Last resort.** Suspension or withdrawal is considered only after all reasonable support and adjustments have been tried.

5.7 **Return to study.** A student returning after suspension needs evidence that their wellbeing has improved, evidence that they have engaged with support, and an agreed reintegration plan.

5.8 **Communication and safeguards.**

- The student receives written communication at each stage, setting out the reasons, the support available, and their rights to representation and appeal.
- Decisions are proportionate, based on evidence, and made with professional input.
- Records are kept in line with data protection law (Section 10).
- Suspension under this procedure is supportive and not a sanction (3.2).

6. Relevant Legislation

6.1 **Equality Act 2010.** Protects people with long-term physical or mental health conditions from discrimination. UKMC must make reasonable adjustments.

6.2 **Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR.** Govern the lawful, fair and transparent handling of personal data, including health data, which is special category data. Information is shared only where necessary, proportionate and lawful, usually with consent unless there is a risk of harm.

6.3 **Mental Health Act 1983 (as amended).** Sets out the rights of people with serious mental health conditions, including where assessment or treatment may happen without consent because of significant risk.

7. Roles and Responsibilities

7.1 **Academic staff** notice and respond to signs of distress or disengagement and encourage students to contact the Wellbeing Department or external services. They do not assess or diagnose.

7.2 **Personal Academic Tutors (PATs)** hold regular contact with their students, raise concerns with the Wellbeing Department, and take part in Stage 1 of the Fit to Study Procedure.

7.3 **The Admissions Team** invites applicants to disclose disabilities or mental health conditions early and liaises with the Wellbeing Department, so support is ready before the course starts. Adjustments for applicants at Prepare for Foundation (PFF) and Prepare for Degree (PFD) days, and at induction, follow the Disability Disclosure and Learning Support Policy, 6.4–6.5.

7.4 **The Wellbeing Department** provides confidential support, works with staff and external providers on support plans, leads the Fit to Study Procedure, and carries out the case monitoring in Section 9.

8. Student Wellbeing and Academic Support

8.1 **Services.** The Wellbeing Department offers confidential support for mental health, disability and personal difficulties. This includes referrals to external services, workshops, check-ins and coordination with academic departments.

8.2 **Access.** Students are encouraged to get in touch early by emailing Student.wellbeing@ukmc.ac.uk or visiting the Wellbeing Office at any campus.

8.3 **Support routes.**

Route	For	Policy
Temporary Learning Agreement (TLA)	Medium- or long-term difficulties not related to disability	Support to Study Policy and Procedure
Learning Support Plan (LSP)	Disabilities and long-term conditions	Support to Study Policy and Procedure; Disability Disclosure and Learning Support Policy

9. Case Monitoring

9.1 The Wellbeing Department monitors academic, behavioural and wellbeing concerns about students.

9.2 For each case, the Wellbeing Department assigns a lead Wellbeing Officer, starts early support, and escalates to the formal stages of Section 5 where needed.

9.3 The Wellbeing Department keeps a confidential central register of cases and reports on it to the Student Experience Committee.

9.4 Each case has a follow-up timeline, typically 2–4 weeks, and outcomes are recorded.

9.5 The Wellbeing Department makes sure student concerns are dealt with in a timely, fair and supportive way.

10. Data Protection, Confidentiality and Information Sharing

10.1 Health information is handled under the Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR. Staff must understand the rules for special category data.

10.2 Confidentiality is balanced against the need to share information where there is a risk of harm, a legal obligation or a safeguarding concern.

10.3 In practice:

- **Keep confidential** information about a student's health, mental health, disability and wellbeing.
- **Share** only where there is serious risk, criminal activity or a safeguarding concern; share the minimum needed and record it.
- **How to share:** seek consent where possible, keep it proportionate, record what was shared and why, and justify any decision to share without consent.
- **Be open:** tell students about the limits of confidentiality at the start.

10.4 **Trusted contact.** At enrolment, students are invited to name a trusted contact and to consent to UKMC contacting that person if there is a serious concern for the student's safety or wellbeing. Students can update or withdraw this consent at any time through the student portal. Where there is an immediate risk to life, UKMC may contact the trusted contact or the emergency services without consent.

11. Partner University Policies

For matters specific to their awarding university, students should also read that partner's policies.

Partner	Policies
Canterbury Christ Church University (CCCU)	Policies and procedures
University of Wolverhampton (UoW)	Academic policies
Arts University Bournemouth (AUB)	Regulations
Health Sciences University (HSU)	Academic regulations, policies and procedures

12. UKMC Points of Contact and Support

Wellbeing Department: Student.wellbeing@ukmc.ac.uk, or visit the Wellbeing Office at any campus during opening hours.

Out of hours or in a crisis:

- Emergency: call 999
- Urgent mental health support: call NHS 111 and choose option 2
- Samaritans: call 116 123 (free, 24 hours)
- Shout: text SHOUT to 85258

Students are encouraged to stay in regular contact with their Wellbeing Officer and PAT.

13. Related UKMC Policies

All are on the UKMC Policies and Legislation page.

- Mental Health and Wellbeing Referral Policy
- Vulnerable Student Support Policy
- Support to Study Policy and Procedure
- Disability Disclosure and Learning Support Policy
- Student Course Changes and Continuity of Study Policy
- Safeguarding and Prevent Policy Code of Conduct
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14. External Reference Points

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