

SUPPORTING YOUR CAPACITY TO STUDY

Introduction

- 1 In this document 'we', 'our' and 'us' refer to Sheffield Hallam University. 'You' and 'your' refer to all students of Sheffield Hallam University who are studying for a Sheffield Hallam academic award either at the University or a partner organisation.
- 2 We want to create an environment in which all students are challenged, supported and encouraged to succeed. We are committed to ensuring you receive a high quality experience which culminates in you achieving the award on which you are enrolled; however, we recognise that your capacity to study may be affected by disability, ill health or other difficult personal circumstances.

Working collaboratively to assist engagement

- 3 Our aim is to provide you with the right support, depending on the timing and nature of your circumstances, to help you to complete your studies as close to the normal course duration as possible. The ways we do this include:
 - [The Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure](#) which provides support options for students who experience sudden, severe and unexpected medical or personal issues.
 - [Assessment Support for Students with Learning Contracts](#)
 - Student Wellbeing Services which can help you manage personal issues which might impact on your studies.
 - Disabled Student Support which can help you get the appropriate support for your disability, including learning contracts, support workers, equipment and software.
- 4 What you can expect from us is:
 - Regulations, policies and guidance that clearly explain what you need to do, how you need to do it and when you need to do it by.
 - Support that is appropriate to your needs and within our ability to provide
 - Support that meets our responsibilities under equality legislation, so that we are able to support individual students whilst protecting the interests of other students, members of staff and the University as a whole
- 5 What we expect from you is:
 - To tell us as soon as possible if there is a problem. The sooner you ask for help, the better we can support you.
 - To engage with the appropriate teams and processes and be prepared where necessary to provide evidence of the circumstances you are experiencing
 - To keep in touch if your circumstances or needs change as you might need to access different support.

Barriers to study

- 6 We recognise that barriers to study may remain despite the support services described above and this may affect your capacity to study. The reasons for this may include:
- support has been applied but does not appear to have been effective;
 - you have been unable to fully engage with the support provided;
 - the complexity of your situation warrants a more holistic approach with input from various areas of the University,
 - the full impact of your condition is not yet known.
- 7 Where capacity to study is affected for a sustained period of time it may result in you failing modules, being unable to complete your studies within the maximum duration of the course or being withdrawn for non-engagement with studies. It is important therefore that we work with you to try and remove barriers to study wherever possible. How we do this is explained below in the Supporting Capacity to Study Process.

Supporting Capacity to Study Process

- 8 The Supporting your Capacity to Study Process (the Support Process) may be applied where we have concerns that your capacity to study is being impaired for one or more of the reasons listed in point 6. Decisions on whether and at which point to apply the support process, and how it is applied will be at the discretion of the Senior Student Support Advisor, or nominee.
- 9 Concerns that your capacity to study is being impaired could emerge from a variety of sources, including:
- Issues raised by yourself about matters affecting your studies;
 - Issues reported by academic or professional services staff about how you are engaging with your studies;
 - Repeated use of the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure to request repeats of assessment attempts or planned breaks in study;
 - Repeated requests for extensions to coursework submission deadlines as set out in the Assessment Support for Students with Learning Contracts;
 - Failure to attempt assessment (e.g. to submit coursework or attend examinations).
- 10 The Support Process will be overseen by a Supporting your Capacity to Study Team (the Support Team). The composition of the Support Team will depend on your particular circumstances and may include academic and professional services staff from your faculty and representatives from central student and academic support services.
- 11 The Support Team will look at how you are engaging with your studies and with any specialist support services available to you. It will take advice as necessary from specialist support teams in the University and members of academic staff on your course about the effectiveness of the support currently available and the types of additional support that may be required.
- 12 The Chair of the Support Team (or nominee) may request a meeting with you to discuss how you feel your studies are progressing, what you feel are the barriers to study, and how these might be removed. This meeting will offer the opportunity for an open appraisal of your current position and what you want to achieve from your studies.
- 13 The Support Team will act as a single point of contact for any requests you wish to make under existing support mechanisms such as the Extenuating Circumstances Policy and Procedure and Assessment Support for Students with Learning Contracts and will assume the

responsibilities set out within those procedures for agreeing extended submission deadlines, repeat assessment attempts and breaks in study.

14 If the Support Team decides there are actions that we and/or you can take, an action plan will be produced setting out:

- The support we will provide and how you can access this.
- Timeframes and targets for engaging with support and study
- Who is responsible for taking the actions
- The date that the action plan will be reviewed

15 The Support Process will generally be tailored to supporting your capacity to study on a particular course. If you decide to transfer to a different course within the University, a new Support Team will be formed where necessary.

16 We are committed to working with you to ensure we have explored all avenues that will assist your capacity to study in order that you can complete your course. In exceptional circumstances the Support Team may conclude that you do not have the capacity at the present time to succeed in your studies within the specified timeframe. In these circumstances it may be necessary to recommend that your case is considered within the [Withdrawal due to Incapacity to Study Regulation](#).

General Principles

17 We will act in your best interests throughout the Supporting your Capacity to Study Process.

18 We will act fairly. You will receive clear and timely communication and information. You may be accompanied at any meeting held during the support process by a family member, friend or member of staff from the Advice Team at the Students' Union. We will provide any specialist support services necessary to facilitate these meetings.

19 We will act promptly to avoid undue delay in any aspect of the Support Process, whilst recognising that complex issues can take some time to work through.

20 We will act with respect for privacy and confidentiality at all times. Information will only be disclosed to third parties where necessary and in accordance with our responsibilities under data protection legislation.

21 We will act to ensure there is no risk of harm to you, to other students, to members of the University community or to University property.

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