

Student Wellbeing Handbook for Colleagues

Information, tools & resources
from the Student Health &
Wellbeing Service

Urgent Support

Wellbeing Consultancy Team

The Wellbeing Consultancy Team provide support and guidance to anyone with high concern about the physical or mental wellbeing, or safety, of a Newcastle University student.

Colleagues are provided with advice and guidance on how best to help our students, and to mitigate any risks. When necessary, the Wellbeing Consultancy Team will take any appropriate proactive safeguarding action.

You can access the Wellbeing Consultancy Team on weekdays, between 9am and 5pm, by:

- **Calling: +44 (0)191 208 3333.**
- **Emailing: wellbeingconsultancy@ncl.ac.uk**
- **In person: Kings Gate**

Emergencies and Out-Of-Hours Support

If you are worried about a student's safety or feel they are at risk of harming themselves, they need to access help immediately. If you feel there is imminent danger, please follow the guidance below:

1 - Contact the emergency services by dialling 999.

Give them as much detail as you can, such as the person's location, especially if they are not with you. Follow all guidance from the emergency services.

2 - Then contact the University Security Team 0191 208 6666 (emergency number)

Let them know what is happening – this is especially important if the emergency services require access to campus.

3- Then contact the Wellbeing Consultancy Team on 0191 208 3333.

They will support you and take appropriate risk mitigation action.

4 - If out-of-hours, the Security Team will alert an on call SHWS colleague.

They will support you and take appropriate risk mitigation action.

You may also find it useful to download the SafeZone App at safezoneapp.com

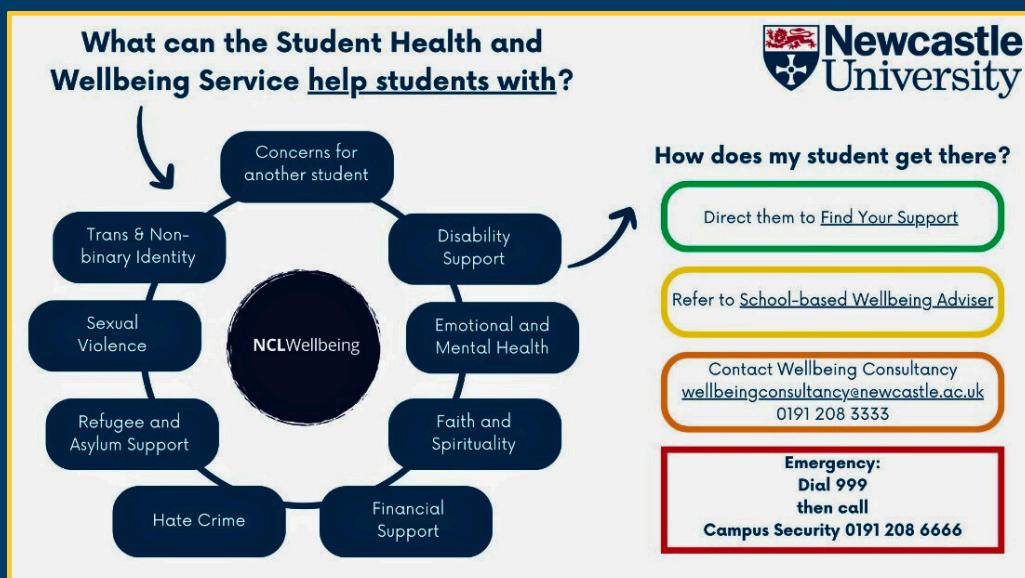
When you raise an alarm, the app will alert our on-campus security team of your situation and location. The team can co-ordinate the help you need quickly to ensure your safety.

SafeZone only shares your location when you ask for help or check in on campus. Its privacy feature means it doesn't track you at other times.

Introduction to Student Wellbeing

We understand that throughout their studies, students may require extra support, or may need to engage in treatment for mental and physical health conditions. Whilst we encourage students to make the best use of their existing support networks (such as family and friends), we know that independent support may also be necessary.

This document has been developed to provide guidance for Newcastle University colleagues who may be supporting students who are in distress, and to show clear signposting to the most appropriate support service for the student's needs.



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Student Health and Wellbeing Services

The Student Health and Wellbeing Services (SHWS) aim to help students maximise their potential whilst at university by providing support, information, and guidance on a wide range of student support issues. Through our partnerships with healthcare providers, we can support students in accessing treatment for mental and physical health conditions. All our services are available, without charge, to all current students.

How to find us

Our services are located in Kings Gate, an accessible site at the heart of campus, as well as in schools across the campus.

We are open throughout the year (Monday – Friday, 9am to 5pm), except on bank holidays and during the University winter closure period.

Useful Contacts

Student Health and Wellbeing Services	Tel: +44 (0)191 208 3333
Newcastle University Security	Tel: +44 (0)191 208 6817
Emergency Services	Tel: 999
NUSU Emergency Taxi Services	Tel: +44 (0)191 298 5050 Quote reference NEW02
Northumbria Police (24-hr non-emergency calls)	Tel: 101
Spectrum Life	UK: +448000318227 Int: 0035315180277 Whatsapp: 07418 360 780

Helplines

Samaritans

Available around the clock, 24/7. If you need a response immediately, it's best to call on the phone. You do not have to be suicidal to contact Samaritans.

jo@samaritans.org.uk 116 123 (free to call) www.samaritans.org

PAPYRUS (Prevention of Young Suicide)

A phone, text, and email service for vulnerable young people or for anyone concerned about a young person who may be at risk of suicide.

pat@papyrus-uk.org 0800 068 4141 www.papyrus-uk.org

Crisis Text Line / SHOUT

A service in the UK that provides free, confidential support 24/7 via text. It is available in England, Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland.

Text **SHOUT** to **85258** to text with a trained Crisis Volunteer.

www.crisistextline.uk

CALM (Campaign Against Living Miserably)

CALM exists to prevent male suicide by offering support to men in the UK, of any age, who are down or in a crisis via a helpline and website.

17:00 – 00:00, 365 days a year **0800 58 58 58 www.thecalmzone.net**

Nightline

A student-run listening service providing a space to talk about how you're feeling and request contact info on other services. Access via the NUSU portal website.

Available every night of term **0800 58 58 58 www.nusu.co.uk/nightline**

Our Services

Alcohol and Drugs - Harm Reduction

At Newcastle University we understand that students may be tempted to consume alcohol or take drugs. In response to this, we have created two videos along with training modules that all students should familiarise themselves with – these resources are available [here](#).

Chaplaincy & Pastoral Care

Our Chaplains provide support and encouragement to students and colleagues, of all faiths and none, through initiatives like Listening Ear, as well as various faith-based and inclusive events throughout the year.

Listening Ear offers students a one-off, or regular, conversation with a member of our Pastoral Care team to check in about any concerns and to receive support. Students can book for a Listening Ear appointment [here](#).

Counselling Support

We provide counselling for students who may be struggling with the common life concerns that many students face. Students can book for an initial call with our Counselling Team, which allows them the opportunity to discuss the most appropriate support for their needs, which may be in-house time-focused counselling, support provided by an external service, wellbeing groups, or self-led online resources.

Students can book for an initial call with our Counselling Team by visiting our Student Health and Wellbeing website and filling out our [online form](#) to request an assessment call.

Our Services continued

Disability Support

Our Disability Team provide support to students with a range of disabilities, including long-term mental health conditions, unseen long-term health conditions, neurodiverse conditions, sensory impairment, physical disabilities, and students who care for someone with long-term health issues or disability. Examples of support include:

- Advice, information, and guidance about support and reasonable adjustments throughout all stages of their degree.
- An individual Student Support Plan (SSP) that identifies reasonable adjustments.
- Carer's Passport that identifies support and adjustments.
- Advice for students seeking an assessment for a neurodiverse condition.
- Exam concessions, such as extra time.
- Transitional and social support.
- Advice and information for colleagues supporting students with a disability.

Students can get in contact with our Disability Team for an SSP, or by being referred by their school-based Student Wellbeing Adviser.

Financial Support

Student Finance Advisors can provide information, advice, and guidance for students throughout all stages of their studies. The range of support available includes help with budgeting and managing their money, assistance with student finance issues (such as problems with student loan entitlement), and information about the range of university funding available.

Please visit our website for more information how students can get in contact with our Student Financial Support Team.

Postgraduate Support

We want to ensure all our postgraduate students know where to receive support and advice. In addition to the services available through our Student Health and Wellbeing Teams, all registered postgraduate students can access the additional services available [here](#).

Sanctuary Support (Refugee and Asylum Support)

As a University of Sanctuary, we offer support for students with pending asylum claims. Whether those students may benefit from practical and/or emotional support, we are here to help them make the most out of their experience at university. You can find out more [here](#).

School-Based Student Wellbeing Advisers

Student Wellbeing Advisers (SWAs) are school-based points of contact for when you need advice and guidance when working with students who report any health and/or wellbeing concerns.

Students can access support from their SWA directly by emailing the appropriate wellbeing email address, or you can refer a student to your SWA via email as long as the student gives explicit consent for you to do so. You can find out more [here](#).

Trans Support

We welcome and support transgender and non-binary students and work to ensure they are not disadvantaged.

An Initial Point of Contact (IPC) is available for confidential advice and support, including guidance on changing your name and gender on university records without a deed poll. The IPC can also liaise with or signposts students to relevant university teams or external services.

Our Services continued

Hate Incident Support

Our Student Health & Wellbeing Service (SHWS) is here for students who have experienced any form of hate crime or hate incident. We understand that seeking support and guidance after experiencing a distressing or traumatic incident is not always an easy decision to make. Through the Student Health & Wellbeing Service, we'll help students explore their options. Our SHWS is an inclusive, safe space providing support for students of any gender identity, race or ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability, age or any other identifying characteristic. Find out more [here](#).

Sexual Violence Support

As above, our Student Health & Wellbeing Service is here for students who have experienced any form of sexual violence since coming to the university. Find out more [here](#).

Online Support

We also have a range of online, therapeutic, self-help resources available for all students:

Spectrum Life

Students can get 24/7 mental health and wellbeing help with the Spectrum Life App. From mental health, to self-care resources, support is always just a tap away.

They can go to newcastleuniversitystudents.spectrum.life/login and register with the code **NUNI**

Spectrum also offer access to their mental health team via telephone, live chat, SMS & WhatsApp channels. Available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, 365 days a year, students can call them on:

UK: +448000318227

International: 0035315180277

Whatsapp/SMS: 07418 360 780

Responding to Students in Distress

Within your professional role at the University, it is possible that you will be faced with a student who is distressed and/or vulnerable. Understandably, this can be very daunting and stressful. There are many causes of distress for students and many ways in which they express it, the same as for anyone else.

Responding to a distressed student can be seen as a series of stages:

1. Listening to the student

Giving the student the opportunity to talk and gaining the information you need. Having a sympathetic listener can reassure the student that encountering difficulties is a normal part of student life and may be all that is required.

If the student is creating a disturbance or if you are concerned about your personal safety, contact Security on 0191 208 6817. In an emergency, contact 999.

2. Assessing the situation

Make judgements with the student about the severity and immediacy of the situation and decide what, if anything, you need to do. A prompt response is required if a student may be at risk of hurting themselves or someone else, or if their behaviour appears to be significantly out of character.

Discuss your concerns by calling the Wellbeing Consultancy Team on 0191 208 3333 (9am-5pm - Mon-Fri)

3. Taking action

Based on the last two stages, there may be practical things that you can do within your role which may help the student. Offer information by signposting the student to resources and services which you think might help them and encourage them to access these.

4. Following up

Making sure that there are no loose ends, and that the student is aware of what has been done and who they can go to if they need further support. This also gives you an opportunity to check they are still on track, accessing support, and taking any action that you agreed would help.

Further information on all these stages can be found on the following pages.

Stage 1: Listening

If the student is agitated, angry, or upset:

- Try to appear calm and in control of the situation, even if you don't feel that way.
- Allow the student space to talk about what is distressing them. If there is only limited time available, offer more time later.
- Discuss with the student where they can access support in the future.
- If the student is creating a disturbance or if you are concerned about your personal safety, contact Security on +44 (0)191 208 6817 or use the Safezone App.
- In an emergency, contact 999 or use the Safezone App.

Listening in the right time and space:

- If the student appears to be agitated or upset, could a brief meeting be offered immediately?
- If you have an urgent deadline or imminent appointment, say so and offer a specific time later. Alternatively, could the student be directed to someone who can offer time immediately?
- Make clear how much time is available.
- Try to ensure the time offered is free from interruptions and is in a private space.
- Maintain a professional relationship, eg. do not give a student your private mobile phone number, avoid sharing personal details about yourself, maintain appropriate boundaries.

Listening with purpose:

- What seems to be the main issue?
- Is this the whole story, or are there other problems?
- Is the issue having a major impact on the student's wellbeing?
- How does the student think / hope you can help them?
- How do you think you can help the student as they might not know for themselves?

Listening with skill:

- Use open questions.
- Occasionally allow silences to last slightly longer than is comfortable – people need time and courage to find the right words.
- Check with the student that you have understood them correctly.
- Reflect their words back to them to give them a chance to clarify or expand.
- Consider their body language and any recent behaviour changes you might have noticed.
- Do not be drawn into physical contact with the student.

Making a record:

If you are going to make notes, explain to the student why you are doing this, even if it's just to serve your own memory. Any notes you make should be kept securely; these may be requested under Freedom of Information, so be objective. You should make notes:

- 1) If you think you will see the student again, so that you can remember what they have told you and / or track their progress.
- 2) If you think the student is at risk and you will need to:
 - a. Consult someone else about how to support them, and;
 - b. Have evidence of what they told you, and how you responded.

Stage 2: Assessing the Situation

During your initial conversation with the student, it is important to form an impression of how serious the situation is, as this will determine the action that you take. Having someone listen and take them seriously may be sufficient to defuse the situation and/or for the student to work out a course of action.

On most occasions, although the situation may be very distressing for the student at the time, it will not be an urgent matter. The following questions will help you to assess whether the situation is more serious.

Questions to ask yourself:

- Is the student (or anyone else) at high risk of harm (eg. self-harm or suicide)?
- Is anyone else at risk through coercive behaviours (eg. relationship abuse or initiations)?
- Are the risks immediate?
- Is specialist help required?
- Is there a need to act quickly?
- Is there a need to inform or consult with someone else?

A prompt response is required if:

- A student may be at risk of hurting themselves or someone else.
- Their behaviour appears significantly out of character.

What to do next if a prompt response is required:

Discuss your concerns with your manager or with a member of our Wellbeing Consultancy Team by calling +44 (0)191 208 3333. Please see page 2 for further details.

If you think there is an immediate risk, call the emergency services directly on 999, and then inform Security of the situation by ringing their emergency number (+44 (0)191 208 6666).

Out-of-hours: If the concern cannot wait until the next working day, call security on +44 (0)191 208 6817, and they will take appropriate action.

Stage 3: Taking Action

What can you do?

There may be practical things that you can do within your role which may help the student. For example:

- Helping with academic adjustments.
- Arranging follow-up contact with the student.
- Helping to resolve conflict with other students.

Offer information:

Signposting – sharing information with the student about resources and services which you think might help them and encouraging them to access these. [Our Student Health and Wellbeing Services website](#) has links to a wide variety of resources and other online information and support, as well as emergency and out-of-hours contacts.

A student should be directed elsewhere for support when:

- The problem needs specialist help.
- The problem is complex or serious.
- The situation needs more time than you can offer.
- The student appears to be at risk to themselves or others.
- The student is requesting support from a particular service.

Making an appointment with the Student Health and Wellbeing Services:

Students can book an appointment by accessing our [online form](#).

It is important to remember that most Schools have a Student Wellbeing Advisor who can often be approached in the first instance. A list of their emails can be [here](#).

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality needs to be respected at all times, and sensitive information shared only with the explicit informed consent of the student. Confidentiality can be broken:

- When a student is alerting you to a clear and present danger to self or a third party i.e., suicide, radicalisation, domestic abuse, child abuse.
- If there is an issue around child protection.
- Disclosure of information relating to an act of terrorism or terrorist related activity.

If you are unsure about the best course of action, seek advice from your manager in the first instance, or you can contact the Wellbeing Consultancy Team, see **page 1** of this guide.

A case can be discussed hypothetically without revealing names. If you are seriously and urgently concerned about a student's welfare, you or they should contact the appropriate emergency services.

Stage 4: Following Up

What can you do?

This stage gives the student an opportunity to let you know of their progress and any additional support they might need. It also gives you an opportunity to check they are still on track, accessing support and taking any action that you agreed would be helpful.

Following up:

- Should ideally be agreed in advance with the student so they know when and how you will follow up with them.
- Enables you to go home with a clear mind and you are both aware of your role in this situation.
- Relieves the pressure to have covered everything in the initial meeting. The time in between the initial interaction and the follow up gives you an opportunity to think a bit more about what might be useful and prepare for the student meeting.
- Can be done by phone, email or face-to-face. Use your judgment to decide what you think will be most appropriate.

Some examples of things you can say can be found on the next page:

Shall we agree to speak on a Teams Call after you have talked to the manager in your halls? Let's speak at lunchtime on Monday to see how it's going.

It sounds like you're OK for now, let's check in after your appointment with Student Health and Wellbeing and see how things are going.

I'll email you in a week to see if things have improved.

Thanks for letting me know. I'll have a think and let's meet again tomorrow at 3, when I'm not so rushed.

Please come back to me if anything changes and you need to talk about it some more. My office hours are...

Final Key Points

- Sometimes, listening will be enough.
- Be clear about what is realistic for you to deal with yourself. Decisions about what support to offer will depend on your role, whether you have relevant expertise and the time available to you.
- Be clear about the limits of confidentiality and information sharing e.g., do not disclose personal information about the student to parents or third parties.
- Situations requiring immediate action are rare. If you are in doubt about how to respond to a student, it is nearly always possible to give yourself time by saying that you need to think over what the best way is to help and arranging to see them again.
- Consult with others or contact the Student Health and Wellbeing Services if you think the student's problems may be serious or if you are uncertain what action to take.
- Ensure that you have information about other services on campus that you can pass on to students.
- Agree with the student what, if anything, needs to happen next.
- Keep a record of your meeting/interaction and notify your line manager or the Student Health and Wellbeing Services if necessary.

Colleague Health and Wellbeing

Our Colleague Health and Wellbeing Team have put together a wellbeing hub on SharePoint, which is full of information and resources designed specifically for staff here at Newcastle University.

The Employee Assistance Programme ([People Services - Employee Assistance Programme](#)) offers free, 24/7, confidential wellbeing support for colleagues. You can contact them on 0800 066 8688

You can contact our Colleague Health & Wellbeing Team by emailing colleague.wellbeing@newcastle.ac.uk.

Please note: These services are not emergency services. If you need support outside of the University's normal working hours, please call the Samaritans on 116 123, or contact 999 if you require immediate support.

NCLWellbeing

Student Health and Wellbeing
Newcastle University
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ncl.ac.uk/wellbeing