

# **SENATE REGULATION 11: Extraordinary Support for Study**

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## **Contents**

A. INTRODUCTION .....	2
B. SCOPE .....	2
C. SUPPORT FOR STUDY .....	2
D. REVIEWING SUPPORT .....	3
E. OUTCOMES .....	3
F. SUPPORT DURING THE PROCESS .....	4
G. APPEALS .....	4

## **A. INTRODUCTION**

1. Good mental and physical health and wellbeing are essential to students' academic success, their engagement with a positive student experience and for the career of their choice upon graduation.
2. Brunel University London is committed to supporting students to engage with their studies to the best of their ability and to help them complete their programme of study. To help with this Brunel provides a wide array of support for all students; including providing reasonable adjustments for students with a disability (including mental health and neuro-diverse conditions). Reasonable adjustments are intended to remove any disadvantage that a disabled student may have because of their disability.
3. There are times when a student's health may be impacted by their studies, or their studies are being impacted by their health and additional support is required. This regulation gives a process to follow in these occasions. This will give both the student and the University an opportunity to review the information available about an individual's circumstances to ensure that their current and future studies are not unduly impacted. The procedure also takes into consideration any action that may be required in cases where a student's behaviour may be impacting on the study or wellbeing of others.

## **B. SCOPE**

4. The Extraordinary Support for Study regulation applies to all enrolled students, including those on partnership programmes, foundation courses, doctoral researchers, those studying under work contracts and those students on professional courses. The regulation is owned and overseen by the Student Services department.

## **C. SUPPORT FOR STUDY**

5. Being able to study effectively means that a student is:
  - Able to attend to the University when needed;
  - Able to retain information provided, either in class, or through research;
  - Able to attend and complete assessments, as required;
  - Able to progress through their course effectively and within prescribed timescales;
  - Able to participate in activities without having a materially adverse impact on others;
  - Meeting all professional elements of their course where required.
6. This regulation can be instigated by any of, but not limited to, the following:
  - When there are concerns about a student's progression or attainment, which might be contributable to their health;
  - Where there are concerns that a student is not able to attend university due to their health;
  - Where there are concerns that a student's behaviour is having a negative impact on the university, or is affecting other students or colleagues;

- Where there are concerns that a student may cause harm to themselves, or others;
  - Where a student is required to spend a period of time as an inpatient in hospital.
7. This regulation will enable conversations to review the reasonable adjustments that are currently in place or further adjustments that could be made, or to investigate other actions that should be considered.

#### **D. REVIEWING SUPPORT**

8. The University Student Support and Welfare Team will liaise with the student to review the support in they have in place (examples of which have been referred to in this regulation), additional information and any current concerns raised. This could include but is not limited to the following:
- Review of the Student Support Profile, if one is in place;
  - Self-reflection or statement from the student (or their advocate) about their progress in their studies and the support being offered;
  - Request for additional medical information through the occupational health physician, the students treating physician and/or mental health practitioner;
  - Review of academic progress and attendance records, if available;
  - Gathering of any other information which may be available, i.e. from the residences and security teams and third parties.
9. Following a thorough investigation of the situation, including conversations with the individual student where possible, an action plan will be compiled which will provide actions for all involved to work towards getting the student back on track with their health and their studies. For the best outcomes with this process, students are encouraged to fully and openly engage so that decisions made are with all the required information and in the best interests of the student.
10. Where a student does not engage with this process, or is too unwell to do so, decisions may be made based on the balance of risk from all other information available, and in considering the future academic progress of the student.
11. The University is not obliged to follow medical opinions although they can be used for guidance.

#### **E. OUTCOMES**

12. The outcomes possible following a review of the support for study can vary depending on the nature of the concern. An action plan will be written clearly listing actions that will be taken, by whom and by when. A review date will be agreed to ensure that the support in place is suitable and effective and is still appropriate. The review date will normally be no longer than one term, unless a period of abeyance has been taken, in which case the review date will be before the start of the following academic year.
13. Action plans will consist of a wide variety of actions depending on the circumstances. These can be actions including, but not limited to:

- Student voluntarily agrees to take some time in abeyance to undergo treatment;
  - Change of mode of study from full time to part time (if available);
  - Consideration to split the assessment load across May and August exam period;
  - Regular appointments with a member of the University i.e. tutor or Student Services;
  - Adjustments being made to a placement;
  - Contact the Emergency Contact, if provided by the student;
  - Review of reasonable adjustments.
14. In serious cases, when all other options have been exhausted, it may be a requirement to temporarily suspend a student from their studies or impose restrictions on their access to study for a specified period as is reasonable in the circumstances. In such cases, a decision to suspend a student from study may be made as precautionary measure to allow some time to improve their health, and not a sanction. This decision will be made in accordance with Council Ordinance 7E following a thorough assessment of risk and/or exploration of alternative actions.
15. Consideration will be given where a student's continuation of study at Brunel is affected by their exceeding the maximum period of registration, or in the case where there is a planned change to the programme (in line with the Periodic Programme Review) that would make continuing on their current course unfeasible. This may include a request to extend the maximum period of registration or change of programme where appropriate. Where all other options have been exhausted, expulsion might be considered in order to mitigate any undue impact on the health and wellbeing of the student. Any requests for temporary suspension or expulsion will be made to the Vice Chancellor and President, or their nominee.

#### **F. SUPPORT DURING THE PROCESS**

16. Whilst it is acknowledged that students engaging with University processes may experience additional stress and or anxiety, the regulation provides a transparent and comprehensive outline of the procedure and includes measures to ensure that the student is offered appropriate support by University or external services as required. Students engaging with the process will also be signposted to the Student Union Advisory Services and student advocacy support for additional assistant.
17. A return to study from any period of temporary suspension will be dependent on the student satisfying any conditions attached to their return. The Head of Student Services may reasonably require the student to produce satisfactory medical and/or other evidence of their ability to study effectively. The Student Support and Welfare team will contact any student returning from a suspension as an outcome of this process to ensure appropriate support is in place.

#### **G. APPEALS**

18. A student will have the right to appeal the decision made under this process. The grounds for appeal, the procedure to be followed and the role of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator are set out in the *Support for Study Procedure*.

*(Updated December 2021)*