



**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

When to Refer

Your Guide to helping students access the right support at the right time.

- What should you look out for?
- What should you do?
- What happens next?

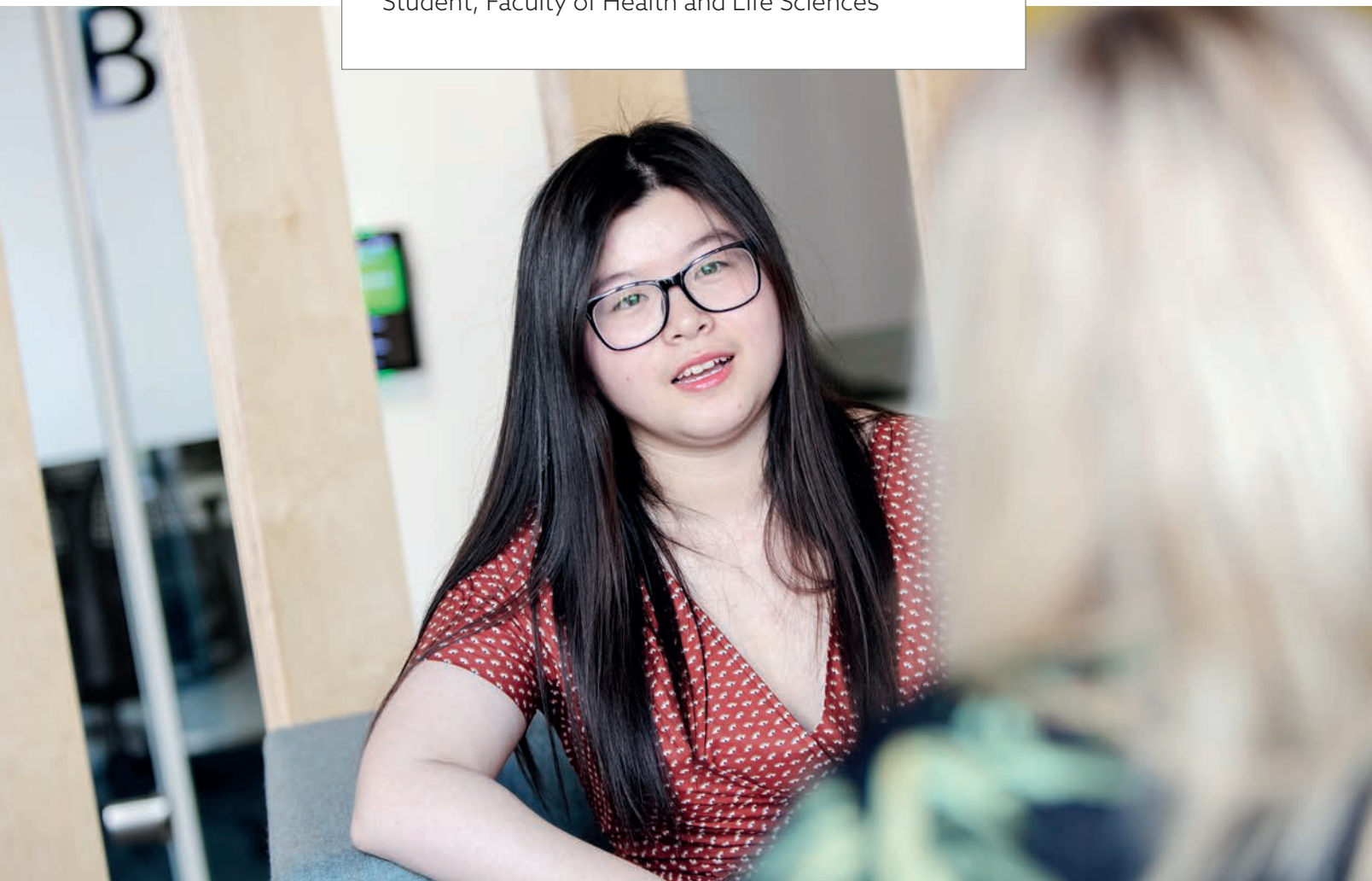


Student Life and Wellbeing



"I feel that if there wasn't a Student Life and Wellbeing service I probably wouldn't be at university still, as they have given me guidance on where to go to receive the help I needed."

Student, Faculty of Health and Life Sciences





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Introduction

Whilst students choose to study at Northumbria primarily to take advantage of the outstanding academic experience on offer, specialist advice and support is also fundamental to a truly excellent student experience.

Student, Library and Academic Services consists of a number of professional services including: Graduate Futures, University Library, Academic Support, Student Progress including Change of Circumstances and Student Life and Wellbeing (SLW).

SLW is a collection of professional and accredited practitioner teams offering support and advice on: finance, wellbeing and health, international student queries, disability and dyslexia, counselling and mental health, student resilience and chaplaincy and faith. The specialist services that we provide underpin the academic experience by enabling students to access, focus on, and remain on their programmes.

We work closely with other departments across Student, Library and Academic Services and it may be useful to note that they too can provide specialist support in their areas of expertise, for example University Library staff will support scholarly endeavour and Graduate Futures supports all aspects of employability. For more information in these areas please do not hesitate to refer to:

Library: <https://library.northumbria.ac.uk/infoforpersonalguidancetutors> or www.northumbria.ac.uk/library

Graduate Futures: <https://one.northumbria.ac.uk/service/sls/ce/Pages/Home.aspx> or www.northumbria.ac.uk/careers

Our teams in SLW see a variety of students across the University and, on average, over half the student population, each year, receives one-to-one support of one kind or another from one of our practitioner teams. 93% said the service they received from our advisers, counsellors and practitioners was "good" or "very good", while 75% said that support from SLW had a positive impact on their academic performance.

Whatever your role at Northumbria – whether you are an academic or guidance tutor, or working in a support team in a Faculty, a student-facing service or the Students' Union – this Guide is for you. It is designed to ensure that you can, quickly and confidently, direct students to the advice and support they need, when they need it.

How to use this Guide

It is worth taking some time to familiarise yourself with **When to Refer**. It covers a range of support services offered, focusing particularly on those services we are most commonly asked about by colleagues. It outlines some of the key signs, cues and behaviours to look out for to help you spot a student who may need additional support. It then provides practical guidance on action you need to take, as well as some future information about what is likely to happen after you take this action. When the guidance refers to a 'student' this refers equally to undergraduate, postgraduate taught and postgraduate research students.

How SLW services fit with the support offered by other parts of the University

Some of the kinds of specialist support described in this Guide are fairly self-contained in nature. For example, advice on visas and immigration issues, mental health assessments or counselling should only be offered to students by our teams in SLW. This Guide may, therefore, help you to clarify the boundaries of your own role in supporting students, and help you to avoid inadvertently straying into offering types of advice which should be coming from the University's specialist, accredited practitioners.

In other cases, alongside the specialist support they are accessing from us, students may require academic support, learning and teaching adjustments, and general pastoral support from you and your teams. For example, most disabled students, in addition to the advice, funding and support we provide in SLW, will also require Faculty learning and teaching adjustments and modified arrangements from other Services. In cases like this, remember that we are also here to provide you with advice on what you can or should do.

We welcome your feedback about **When to Refer** and will be reviewing and growing this Guide so it becomes your essential reference point for all the information you need about SLW services.



When a student needs help with a finance enquiry

What should you look out for?

Students experiencing money worries could have difficulties in concentrating on their day-to-day activities and making the most of their time at University. Students or applicants may come to you because they do not know who to speak to about a difficulty they are having in relation to their student loans, fees, bursaries and scholarships, or they may have a query about their entitlement to such support. Look out for signs of worry, a drop in performance, missed academic commitments, or even talk of leaving University as possible clues that one of your students is struggling financially.

What should you do?

1. If a student or applicant is seeking general information about a finance issue.

If the student is a current on-programme student refer them to the Student Portal:

- **myportal.northumbria.ac.uk**

For prospective students, direct them to the main national website for information on fees, loans and support for living costs:

gov.uk/studentfinance

Be wary about offering students the benefit of your own experience as the rules and regulations relating to loans, fees and other forms of funding change regularly. Offering out-of-date advice to a student could create difficulties for the student and the University. If in doubt, refer the student on for specialist advice.

2. If a student or applicant wants to speak to a student finance specialist for advice about their individual circumstances.

If the student is a current on-programme student refer them to the Student Portal:

- **myportal.northumbria.ac.uk**

For prospective students, direct the student to the University's student finance specialists. They can do this by:

Emailing:
sv.welfareandinternational@northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
City Campus Library,
Student Central,
City Campus East
- **At Coach Lane Campus**
Student Central,
Coach Lane Library
- **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
- **At Amsterdam Campus**
Fraijlemaborg Building

What happens next?

The University's student finance specialists can advise on a wide range of issues and, in many cases, will liaise directly with external organisations such as Student Finance England on behalf of the student. In some circumstances, subject to students meeting the eligibility criteria, Northumbria University is able to provide financial support to students in hardship, such as non-repayable hardship grants.



When a student is considering a course transfer, interruption or withdrawal

What should you look out for?

Students may approach you to discuss the possibility of transferring to another programme (changing course), interrupting their study (taking time out), or withdrawing (leaving university before completion). Any of these three actions is classified as a 'change of circumstances'.

Students who are considering making such a change are required to initiate their request via the on-line portal. This guarantees a standardised, consistent approach for all students and provides referral into academic advice and professional support services as appropriate. The same process applies to students who are still considering their next steps.

Whilst you can support students as they come to a decision about their future, once they have decided to take that step, they must make a formal request via the Change of Circumstances portal.

What should you do?

1. Advise students to log on to the Change of Circumstances on-line portal by:

- Logging on to the Student Portal: **myportal.northumbria.ac.uk**
- Clicking on **'My Info'**
- From the Menu, clicking on the **'Change of Circumstances'** link
- Selecting **'Start Process'** to initiate their request.

2. Advise students:

- To give as much information as they can (enabling the team to respond efficiently)
- To continue to engage with the portal until completion of case
- That the portal offers a remote 24/7 access.

3. If you are unsure and would like some advice:

- Staff can email the Student Transition Team at: **as.choc@northumbria.ac.uk** or, for urgent queries, telephone the team on: **0191 243 7500**.

What happens next?

The Student Transition Team contacts students and offers them all the support and guidance they need before they commit to a decision. Dedicated case management and continued contact (via the portal, telephone and face-to-face meetings) reduces the 'bounce' from one area to another. This assists in maximising retention, helping students feel more valued. Faculties have a clearly defined role in the process and the Student Transition Team continues to liaise with, and refer to, the Faculty and Services, as appropriate, from beginning to end.



When a student has a mental health or emotional difficulty

What should you look out for?

According to the National Union of Students, 20% of students consider themselves to have a mental health problem, with as many as 92% reporting feelings of mental distress. The University has a duty of care to provide support for students experiencing mental health difficulties. Many symptoms are those which affect us all from time-to-time such as anxiety, low-mood or feelings of not fitting in, but when these become overwhelming or start to have a serious negative impact on a student's studies and day-to-day life, then they are likely to benefit from contacting our Counselling and Mental Health Support Team. **There are three levels of response and you need to choose one of the options below, as appropriate:**

What should you do?

1. When a student requires support, but is not at immediate risk.

In the vast majority of cases, direct the student to the online registration form for the University's Counselling and Mental Health Support (in Student Life and Wellbeing). Students will need to log on to their student portal and search for '**Counselling and Mental Health Registration Form**'.

If possible, support the student by giving them access to a computer there and then to enable them to register. Please assure the student that the team will contact them within two working days with an offer of support. This may be by phone or it could be via their student portal, so it is important that students check their portal for messages.

Do not assume, just because a student is quite distressed, that they will not be able to engage with

the form; often they can and will find it quite helpful. To make sure the student knows how to access emergency support, should they need it in the future (e.g., if you do not consider that they are at imminent risk but want to be sure they know what to do if their state of mind was to worsen over the next day or so) make them aware of the 'Need Help Now?' webpage: **northumbria.ac.uk/needhelpnow**

2. During University opening hours, if a student is not able to engage with the registration form, and you need advice on how to proceed.

From 9am to 5pm on weekdays, the Counselling and Mental Health Support Team can be contacted by staff on **0191 227 4576** for advice. Sometimes, the Team will decide that a student may be seen on the same day, or they might suggest an

alternative course of action. Outside opening hours, this option is not available and you should choose between options 1 and 3.

3. If, at any time, 24/7, you become aware of a student who is at imminent risk of harming themselves or others, (e.g., threatening to take their own life or the life of another person).

Do not contact the Counselling and Mental Health Support Team. Instead, telephone the University Security Team's 24/7 emergency number **0191 227 3200**.

Colleagues in London should call the emergency services first and then University Security to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

Colleagues in Amsterdam should call the emergency services first and then advise the University on **020 703 8280** to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

What happens next?

All three routes are designed to ensure that the student receives the support they need. Once a student completes the online form for the Counselling and Mental Health Support Team, they will be contacted with a tailored offer of support. The team offers a range of ways to help, from online guided self-help and workshops through to 1:1 sessions with a counsellor or a mental health practitioner. If Security is involved in an individual case or incident, then once the initial incident is managed, Security will pass the details onto the Counselling and Mental Health Support Team to ensure that the team can follow up and offer the student longer-term support if needed.



When a student has a disability, dyslexia, a medical or mental health condition

What should you look out for?

At Northumbria, we have a large number of disabled students (around 1 in 17 of all students) with physical or sensory impairments, specific learning difficulties (such as dyslexia or dyspraxia), autistic spectrum conditions and a range of medical and mental health conditions which require particular support. Some students may not yet have a diagnosis; for example, it is estimated that 43% of students with dyslexia do not know they have the condition. Students may also become disabled during their time at University. Many disabled students find that previous strategies and coping mechanisms which served them well during their time at school are no longer working for them in the higher education context. Look out for students who regularly submit work late, seem to struggle with written elements of their course, display perfectionist tendencies or frustration at the marks they are receiving as they could potentially benefit from some additional support.

What should you do?

Ask the student to contact the Disability and Dyslexia Support Team.

They can do this by:

Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:
myportal.northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
City Campus Library,
Student Central,
City Campus East
- **At Coach Lane Campus**
Student Central,
Coach Lane Library
- **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
- **At Amsterdam Campus**
Fraijlemaborg Building

We would recommend students contact the Team as soon as possible, rather than waiting until they encounter difficulties. We respect a student's wish not to come forward for support if they prefer not to; however, it is important that they understand the implications of this choice. In circumstances like this, you, as a staff member, are very welcome to contact the Team for advice.

What happens next?

After contacting the Team, the student will be given an appointment to speak with a Disabilities Adviser who will work with them to develop and implement a package of support unique to their individual circumstances. The Adviser will:

- Recommend and, in many cases, source additional support for students, including adaptations to their accommodation, specialist equipment, human support – such as a note-taker or personal assistant – or adjustments to learning, teaching and assessment methods.
- Develop a Disabled Student's Support Recommendations (DSSR) report which will outline for Faculty staff what adjustments they should put in place for the student.
- Liaise with external partners, such as Student Finance England or specialist providers, to ensure that students receive any external funding they are eligible for to pay for the disability support and specialist equipment.



When a student has a query related to faith, belief or religion

What should you look out for?

Coming to University is an exciting time for students and brings with it greater freedom to question the world around them and their place in it. For many this may mean exploring issues of faith, perhaps questioning their own beliefs, or exploring new ideas and possibilities. As a University, we also need to be aware of our responsibilities for responding to practical issues of faith observance on campus and requests from students for adjustments. Students may come to you with a variety of questions about faith.

What should you do?

1. If the student is requesting an adjustment of some kind on religious or faith grounds.

The University has guidelines around responding to requests from students for adjustments on grounds of religion or belief. This covers, for example, changes to assessment arrangements, timetabling, coursework, etc.

Guidelines can be found under the '**Duty of Care**' policies which are available in the Student Life and Wellbeing section of the staff intranet.

2. If the student might like to talk to someone or find out more about local events and facilities.

The University has a Chaplaincy and Faith Advice Team with a number of chaplains and advisers from a variety of different faith traditions. They are trained and experienced in supporting students of all faiths and none, and will be the key referral route.

To contact the Team, a student can:

Email:
sv.chaplaincy@northumbria.ac.uk

Telephone: **0191 227 3284**, or

Visit in person:

- The City Campus multi-faith chaplaincy (located on the 4th floor of Wynne Jones Building)
- The Ask4Help point at Coach Lane Campus, London Campus or Amsterdam Campus.

Visit online:

- The Chaplaincy and Faith Advice webpage: **northumbria.ac.uk/chaplaincy** for information about the team and on-campus prayer facilities.

What happens next?

The Chaplaincy and Faith Advice Team offers a range of faith services to support students including: one-to-one and group support, organised events and activities such as lunches, discussion groups and information on local places of worship including churches, gurdwardas, mosques and synagogues. The University also provides a number of quiet spaces and prayer places including the Peace Room at Wynne Jones, Quiet Room at Coach Lane, a prayer room at our London campus, and the designated Muslim Prayer Facility at City Campus. It is also worth bearing in mind that the Chaplaincy and Faith Advice Team is in place to work with staff members as well as students.



When a student has an enquiry about their visa

What should you look out for?

International students will often have queries relating to their visas particularly when they are approaching the end of their course or wish to seek a renewal or extension. Be prepared to offer support to international students and be aware that they may begin to get anxious or need support particularly towards the end of their programmes. As visa rules and immigration laws are complicated and, as visa and immigration advice can only be provided to students by qualified and regulated specialists, you must always refer any student who is seeking advice.

What should you do?

Refer the student direct to the Welfare, Immigration and Funding Team (in Student Life and Wellbeing).

They can do this by:

Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:

myportal.northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
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- **At Coach Lane Campus**
Student Central,
Coach Lane Library
- **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
- **At Amsterdam Campus**
Fraijlemaborg Building

What happens next?

A specialist will be able to support the student with all aspects of their query. If a student needs to apply for a new visa, they will be asked to attend a visa workshop, which will be followed by one-to-one support to check their application before it is submitted.



When a student would like some support with homesickness

What should you look out for?

Northumbria is a truly international university. International students are attracted to study in the UK for a variety of reasons and academic colleagues are encouraged to help them mix with home students in class. Settling in a new country and making new friends can be a challenge for some. Look out for students who seem to be struggling to integrate, have few friends, are withdrawn, struggling with work or experiencing culture-shock. The University and Students' Union have a range of programmes in place to help students make friends and feel at home.

What should you do?

Refer the student to any of the following activities:

- University students have access to a programme of trips and social events held throughout the year. Activities have included trips to Manchester and York, Durham Cathedral and a ghost walk around Newcastle. Refer the student to the Students' Union for more information.
 - Northumbria Students' Union hosts a range of events throughout the year, has a large number of societies (some of which focus specifically on international themes), and has student representatives available to offer information and signposting:
mysu.northumbria.ac.uk
 - The Chaplaincy and Faith Advice Team help, and have contact with, groups who organise visits, events and discussion groups throughout the year. They are happy to talk one-to-one with students regardless of life stance. They can be contacted via:
northumbria.ac.uk/chaplaincy
- You may also wish to suggest that a student meets with a Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser in Student Life and Wellbeing. This can be useful for signposting to other sources of support or letting a student know about other activities which are happening on campus.
- A student can contact an Adviser by:
Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:
myportal.northumbria.ac.uk
- Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or
- Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:
- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
City Campus Library,
Student Central,
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 - **At Coach Lane Campus**
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 - **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
 - **At Amsterdam Campus**
Frajlemaborg Building

What happens next?

Ultimately it is the decision of every individual student whether they take up any of the opportunities available at Northumbria. All you can do is encourage them to take part and enjoy the fullest possible experience of university life in the UK.



When a student has a communicable or notifiable disease

What should you look out for?

The University has around 30,000 students living and studying in close proximity across the city of Newcastle and in London. Given these numbers, the opportunity for close physical contact and the numbers of staff and students regularly returning to the UK from overseas, there is always the risk that a serious disease or bout of illness may break out on campus. Whilst major outbreaks and serious diseases are thankfully comparatively rare, the University has both legal and moral responsibilities to respond in an appropriate and efficient way whilst being highly sensitive to any students affected. Under the Health Protection (Notification) regulations 2010, there are a number of diseases which, if diagnosed, should also be reported to the proper authorities such as: cholera, malaria, measles, meningitis, mumps, SARS, TB and whooping cough.

It is possible that a student you know may come to you complaining that they are feeling ill with the symptoms of a communicable or notifiable disease. Alternatively you may receive a report, directly or indirectly, that a student has already been diagnosed, or is being tested for, such a disease.

What should you do?

1. Firstly, ensure that the student is receiving appropriate medical attention.

For some conditions, this will mean advising that they go straight to their GP or go to Accident & Emergency. In other cases, you may need to phone an ambulance; if you are on

University premises in Newcastle, an ambulance should be called by contacting the Security emergency number on **0191 227 3200**.

2. Secondly, report the case internally within the University.

You can do this by: Telephoning Student Life and Wellbeing on **0191 227 4127** (or, out-of-hours, telephone Security on **0191 227 3999**) and explaining that you need to report a case (or potential case) of a communicable disease. Try to have key information to hand when you make this call, such as:

- The student's name, student ID, and contact details (phone numbers are particularly helpful)
- Information about the student's current whereabouts
- Information about whether the student has already received a diagnosis and which parts of the NHS they have already engaged with.

What happens next?

Student Life and Wellbeing or Security (as appropriate) may provide you with some initial actions to take. However, it is more likely that they will look into the matter and come back to you. If required, Student Life and Wellbeing will make a notification of the case to the relevant NHS authorities. In some cases, a University case conference will also be convened by Student Life and Wellbeing to ensure effective cooperation with any NHS efforts to trace people who have been in contact with the students, coordinate internal and external communications, and ensure that the University's response is effective and well-managed.



When a student reports discrimination, victimisation or harassment

What should you look out for?

Whilst universities are, by their very nature, liberal and inclusive environments, there is always a risk that a student may feel they have been harassed or discriminated against. Such behaviour can have a serious negative impact on the individual and the University, as well as being morally and legally wrong.

The University is committed to equality, inclusion and promoting a positive campus culture. We have a zero tolerance approach and the University takes allegations of discrimination, victimisation or harassment very seriously. Remember, discriminatory behaviour can be based on a number of characteristics and the University treats all cases of potential discrimination, victimisation or harassment equally seriously. Our commitments are clearly outlined across our policy framework including the Handbook of Student Regulations and our duty of care protocols.

People being discriminated against or the victims of harassment, particularly sexual harassment, often feel worried about coming forward. Look out for signs of withdrawal, fall-off in academic performance or lecture attendance, lack of interaction with a group as a whole or particular individuals and avoidance of certain situations. These, in particular, may be signs that a student may need some additional support.

What should you do?

Refer the student to a Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser.

If the student would like to talk to someone about their experience and discuss their options, refer the student to Student Life and Wellbeing. They can do this by:

Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:
myportal.northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
City Campus Library,
Student Central,
City Campus East
- **At Coach Lane Campus**
Student Central,
Coach Lane Library
- **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
- **At Amsterdam Campus**
Fraijlemaborg Building

What happens next?

As well as ensuring that the student is offered any support they might require, the Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser will be able to signpost the student to any relevant complaints' procedure or to the Students' Union Advice Service, as appropriate.

The University is committed to tackling incidents of harassment on our campuses so will record anonymised information about the incident(s) to help us develop our understanding of any trends relating to harassment or discrimination.

If you, as a member of staff, would like advice on any aspect of good practice in relation to equality and diversity issues as they relate to students, the Head of Accessibility and Inclusion in Student Life and Wellbeing can assist (telephone **0191 227 3385**).



When a student is a victim of crime

What should you look out for?

It is possible that at some point a student will approach you looking for support as a victim of crime. A student might, for example, share with you the fact that they were a victim recently and have not yet reported this to anyone, or they might tell you that they are finding it difficult to cope with the after-effects of a crime that happened some time ago. Even crimes experienced some time in the past can have a significant effect on a student's day-to-day life and studies.

What should you do?

1. First identify whether the student has reported the crime and if not, help them to decide whether to do so.

In most cases, when a person is a victim of crime, it is their decision as to whether or not to report that crime. This can be a difficult decision. If a student tells you about a crime they have experienced which they have not reported, seek to ensure that the student has the support they need to think through their next steps.

We suggest that you:

- Make sure that the student has the telephone numbers for University Security (**x3200**), and
- Suggest to the student that they talk to a Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser in Student Life and Wellbeing.

2. Help the student access the support available.

After experiencing a crime, people can be affected in different ways:

- If you feel that a student's experience of crime is having a significant effect on their mental wellbeing, refer the student to the University's Counselling and Mental Health Support Team (**see separate section entitled 'When a student has a mental health or emotional difficulty.'**)

- If the student would like to talk to someone about their experience, or you feel it would be beneficial, refer the student to a Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser in Student Life and Wellbeing.

They can do this by:

Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:

myportal.northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
City Campus Library,
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- **At Coach Lane Campus**
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- **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
- **At Amsterdam Campus**
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What happens next?

What happens next will depend on the circumstances of the case in question. The University's Security Team are experienced in responding to serious crimes and liaising with the emergency services. Referring students to Student Life and Wellbeing for ongoing support will ensure that the student receives the help they need. To coordinate our response to a serious allegation (e.g. a safeguarding concern) or crime, the University will often hold a case conference (generally chaired by Student Life and Wellbeing, involving key Service and Faculty representatives) to agree a way forward.



When a student is trans or transgender and is seeking advice and support

What should you look out for?

It is estimated that there are between 300,000 and 500,000 trans people in the UK and, whilst not all will transition to their preferred gender, a large proportion will look for advice and assistance at some point. Given the number of trans people in the UK, it is likely we will have trans students here at Northumbria and we have both legal and moral responsibilities to ensure they are effectively supported. It is important to note that everyone is different; some people will transition from one gender to another with ease and others will not, some will access surgery whereas others will live in their preferred gender full-time without taking this step. Many younger trans people in particular will choose not to transition fully for a variety of reasons such as finance or lack of autonomy from their parents. It is possible that a student may come to you seeking advice either because they are questioning their gender identity or because they have made the decision to transition to their preferred gender.

You must respect the confidentiality of the individual student and always seek agreement from the student before sharing any information with anyone else.

What should you do?

Refer the student direct to the Welfare, Immigration and Funding Team (in Student Life and Wellbeing).

The student can do this by:

Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:

myportal.northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127**, or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
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- **At Coach Lane Campus**
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- **At London Campus**
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- **At Amsterdam Campus**
Fraijlemaborg Building

What happens next?

A confidential appointment will be held with a practitioner from Student Life and Wellbeing who will support the student and discuss their circumstances with them. If they are experiencing gender confusion, they will be signposted to specialist local support services who can provide further advice and guidance. If they have made the decision to transition, then the practitioner will discuss this with them and develop, as part of their support package, a plan which will agree how their transition will be managed from a University perspective. This will include amongst other things; any necessary changes needed to their University records and identification, any amendments to their accommodation and any adjustments required to ensure continued engagement with their programme. The Team will liaise with departments across the University to coordinate the actions required to support the student and this may require further input from yourself or your colleagues.



When a student is unexpectedly missing

What should you look out for?

Students may miss classes or be away from their accommodation for legitimate reasons. After all the vast majority of students are adults free to do what they choose and the University does not act *in loco parentis*. However, should you have reason to think a student is missing because of a genuine welfare concern, not just skipping classes, then we can intervene.

If a student is missing it could be a sign that they need some additional support, that they are not enjoying their time at University or, in some rare cases, that they are spending time with people who may harm them or they are getting into trouble. If you are genuinely worried, do not feel you have to wait to report a missing person, we can help. If you feel a student is missing from their classes or accommodation and may need help, do the following:

What should you do?

1. If you have concerns about a student contact a senior manager in SLW.

Telephone (direct dial):
0191 227 4207 or **4156**

Telephone (main number):
0191 227 4127

2. If, at any time, 24/7, you become aware of a student who is at imminent risk of harming themselves or others.

Do not contact Student Life and Wellbeing. Instead, telephone the University Security Team's 24/7 emergency number:
0191 227 3200

Colleagues in London should call the emergency services first and then University Security to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

Colleagues in Amsterdam should call the emergency services first and then advise the University on **020 703 8280** to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

What happens next?

Experienced staff from Student Life and Wellbeing or University Security will make contact with the student and in the vast majority of cases they will find that they are fine. In those instances when they need some extra support, this will be arranged by SLW. If the student cannot be contacted or we have reason to believe the situation may be more serious, SLW will coordinate activities across the University and liaise with the Police as appropriate. In this situation we may need further information from you such as details of the student's social circle or their usual behaviours but it is unlikely you will be required to undertake any further action.



When you think a student is at risk of abuse or neglect

What should you look out for?

Students, like everyone, may in some cases be potentially vulnerable to the risk of abuse or neglect. We have a range of support mechanisms which can help in such cases as well as possibly being able to report third party or historic abuse. There are many forms of abuse and neglect, which may occur at the same time; look out for the following as possible indications that a student may need additional support:

- **Possible signs of physical abuse** such as unexplained or unusual injuries with improbable explanations given for them, or aggression towards others
- **Possible signs of sexual abuse** such as sudden changes in behaviour or educational performance, displays of affection in a sexual way, unexplained gifts or money, or signs of mental distress
- **Possible signs of sexual exploitation, particularly in vulnerable adults** such as much older boyfriends and girlfriends, unexplained gifts or new possessions, changes in emotional wellbeing, misuse of substances and regular absences
- **Possible signs of emotional abuse** such as an over-anxiety about doing something wrong or over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-disapproval or evidence of bullying (including cyber-bullying)
- **Possible signs of neglect** which include constant hunger or tiredness, poor personal hygiene, inadequate clothing, frequent lateness or absences, low self-esteem and no social relationships
- **Possible signs of financial abuse** such as students who talk about pressure in connection with wills, property or inheritance or hint that they may be experiencing theft or exploitation

There are three levels of response and you need to choose one of the options below as appropriate:

What should you do?

1. If you have concerns about a student contact a senior manager in SLW.

Telephone (direct dial): **0191 227 4207** or **4156**

Telephone (main number): **0191 227 4127**

2. If you feel you know someone else connected with the University who may be at risk of abuse or neglect.

Please contact the Designated Safeguarding Officers for advice.

Refer to: northumbria.ac.uk/safeguarding for contact details.

3. If at any time, 24/7, you become aware of a student who is at imminent risk.

Do not contact Student Life and Wellbeing. Instead, telephone the University Security Team's 24/7 emergency number: **0191 227 3200**.

Colleagues in London should call the emergency services first and then University Security to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

Colleagues in Amsterdam should call the emergency services first and then advise the University on **020 703 8280** to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

What happens next?

Experienced colleagues will talk through your concerns, help you complete the relevant paperwork and help plan the next steps. A range of options are open to the University depending on the information we have and the possible risks we identify. Student Life and Wellbeing and Security are able to liaise with external support services (e.g. Social Services and the Police), should this be necessary and we might call a case conference to bring together all of these colleagues to identify the best course of action. You may be asked for further information about your concerns but it is unlikely that any further action would be expected of you. Further information is available in our Safeguarding Policy which can be found on the intranet.



When a student reports a sexual assault

What should you look out for?

It is possible that at some point a student may approach you looking for support as a victim of a sexual assault. A student might, for example share with you the fact that they were a victim recently and have not yet reported this to anyone, or they might tell you that they are continuing to experience the after-effects of an assault that happened some time ago which in turn is still having an impact on their day-to-day life and studies. The University has a very detailed set of protocols which will be enacted when we receive notification of an alleged sexual assault, but paramount in the first instance is to get the student the immediate guidance and support they need. It may also be worthwhile consulting the **When to Refer** arrangements for when a student is experiencing harassment and when a student has been a victim of crime.

What should you do?

1. First identify whether the student has reported the assault and if not, help them to decide whether to do so.

It is the student's decision whether or not to report the assault. This can be a very difficult decision and we must be sensitive to their wishes. If they have not made a report, seek to ensure that the student has the support they need to think through their next steps.

We suggest that you:

- Make sure that the student has the telephone number for University Security (**x3999**) and
- If the student would like to talk to someone, suggest that they speak with a Welfare, Immigration and Funding Adviser in SLW. They can do this by:

Sending an enquiry via the Student Portal:

myportal.northumbria.ac.uk

Telephoning: **0191 227 4127** or

Contacting the team via one of the Ask4Help points:

- **At City Campus**
Student Central,
City Campus Library,
Student Central,
City Campus East
- **At Coach Lane Campus**
Student Central,
Coach Lane Library
- **At London Campus**
Ground Floor
- **At Amsterdam Campus**
Fraijlemaborg Building

2. If, at any time, 24/7, you feel the student may be at imminent risk of harming themselves or anyone else.

Do not contact Student Life and Wellbeing. Instead, telephone the University Security Team's 24/7 emergency number: **0191 227 3200**.

Colleagues in London should call the emergency services first and then University Security to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

Colleagues in Amsterdam should call the emergency services first and then advise the University on **020 703 8280** to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

What happens next?

What happens next will depend on the individual circumstances of the case in question and the wishes of the victim, and the University will follow the approach confirmed in our Sexual Offences Protocol. The need to support the student is of paramount importance and will shape our response. University Security are experienced in responding to sexual offences and liaising with partners in the Police. Referring students to SLW for ongoing support will ensure they receive the help they need. To coordinate our response, the University will often hold a case conference (generally chaired by SLW, involving colleagues from across the University and key partners) to agree a way forward.



When you have a significant concern about a student from a wellbeing perspective

What should you look out for?

There may be instances where you have a significant concern about a student's physical or mental health and wellbeing. This could include (though not limited to); students being admitted to hospital, being reported missing, concern reported by friends.

You can find information about what you should do when a student has concerns such as a disability or homesickness, elsewhere in this Guide. You may become aware of other welfare cases which require an escalated response, such as where a student:

- has been arrested or disclosed a previous conviction
- has made an allegation of sexual misconduct or harassment, or is the subject of such an allegation
- has disclosed that they have been the victim of a sexual assault (see also 'When a student reports a sexual assault')
- is in hospital
- is struggling with their mental health (see also 'When a student has a mental health or emotional difficulty')
- has behaved in a way which could damage the University's reputation
- may be behaving unlawfully
- has been the victim of a crime (see also 'When a student is a victim of crime')
- has been reported missing (see also 'When a student is unexpectedly missing')

Please note that this page doesn't cover 'on course' concerns such as non-attendance and these should be directed to the Student Progress Team.

What should you do?

1. During University opening hours.

Contact the Serious Welfare Incident (SWI) Team:
Email: swi@northumbria.ac.uk

If you are unable to contact the Team, you can call Ask4Help on **0191 227 4127**.

Telephone: **0191 227 4200** or **0191 227 4156 / 07468 700 890**

2. Outside of University opening hours.

If you need to speak to someone straight away, call Security on **0191 227 3200** (for emergencies) or **0191 227 3999** (for non-emergencies).

Email the Serious Welfare Incident (SWI) team on: swi@northumbria.ac.uk

What happens next?

The SWI Team or Security will contact the student to outline your concern and offer appropriate support. This may include organising a welfare check. If after 24 hours, they still have concerns based on the outcomes of that welfare check they will share information with the student's nominated contact.

They will refer to appropriate services within the University, such as Welfare, Immigration and Funding or Counselling and Mental Health, or external services, if appropriate. In some cases, a University case conference may be convened and action coordinated between the SWI Team and University services, as needed, to support the student.



When you think a student is susceptible to radicalisation

What should you look out for?

Universities, like all public sector bodies, have had a duty placed on them by the Counter Terrorism and Security Act 2015, to have due regard to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism. This is commonly referred to as 'The Prevent Duty'. The University has introduced policies and processes to respond to the duty which includes upholding the legislative requirements placed on us with the commitment to protecting academic freedom, freedom of speech and equality as foundations of University life. The University is committed to the safety and wellbeing of our staff and students and all who interact with the University, including not being victims of, or involved in, any activities linked with radicalisation. Whilst we will all have differing levels of involvement with this area of work, all staff at the University have a responsibility to help keep our students safe.

Experimenting with political ideas will be part of the University experience for many students and is not necessarily negative; after all many great innovations were the result of 'radical' thought. However, when these thoughts are so far from the norm that an individual begins to see violence as legitimate, then we need to intervene. Radicalisation can take place face-to-face, via the internet or there have been cases when an individual has radicalised themselves. People may become unhealthily involved in a range of radicalising causes including religious radicalisation, far right activity or animal rights extremism. Also, there is a risk from 'lone wolves' those who plan and commit terrorist acts without any particular radicalising cause. The University considers that everyone can be radicalised and whilst there is no fixed pattern to how radicalisation may occur, look out for the following:

- **Cultural or religious isolation**, especially someone actively avoiding a diverse group of people
- **Changes in peer group**, such as spending long times away with unusual people
- **Isolation from family** and significant difficulties in adapting to university life
- **Political activism or the possession of literature advocating extremist views or actions** - notice any sudden and significant increases in political activity, especially on those issues championed by extremist groups
- **Sudden changes in religious practice** either becoming more active, or adopting a new religion in a way which gives rise to concern
- **Accessing violent and hate rhetoric** either in print, on-line or expressing these verbally
- **Suspicious items** for example very large amounts of money, multiple passports / personal documents, large amounts of peroxide, fertiliser, unusual looking cooking and kitchen appliances or other everyday items which could be used to make explosives.

We need to bear in mind that, rather than being signs of potential radicalisation, a lot of these might suggest other support needs. This is why our approach is to consider each case individually and decide on the best way forward.



When you think a student is susceptible to radicalisation

What should you do?

1. If you have concerns about a student and are not sure whether radicalisation might be a factor, telephone a senior manager in Student Life and Wellbeing.

Telephone (direct dial):
0191 227 4207 or **4156**

Telephone (main number):
0191 227 4127

2. If, at any time, 24/7, you become aware of a student who is at imminent risk of harming themselves or others.

Do not contact Student Life and Wellbeing. Instead, telephone the University Security Team's 24/7 emergency number:
0191 227 3200.

Colleagues in London should call the emergency services first and then University Security to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

Colleagues in Amsterdam should call the emergency services first and then advise the University on **020 703 8280** to ensure follow-up action is coordinated.

What happens next?

Experienced Student Life and Wellbeing staff will talk through your concerns and if needed, a case conference will be held between Student Life and Wellbeing, Security, and other relevant Faculty and Service representatives to assess the evidence, consider the risks posed and agree the next steps. A range of options are available to the University depending on the evidence we have and the possible risks posed. Student Life and Wellbeing and Security are able to liaise with external support services (e.g. Adult Services, Police), should this be necessary, in a small number of cases. You may be asked for further information about your concerns but it is unlikely that any further action will be expected of you. All concerns raised in good faith will be considered by the University.

A parallel process exists for concerns which relate to staff, with a Senior Manager in Human Resources being the key contact point. As with students, if you have a concern that a member of staff may be an imminent risk to themselves or others, contact University Security immediately on **0191 227 3200**.



When a student has died

What happens if you are made aware of a student death?

The death of a student, though rare, represents a sad loss to the whole University community; fellow students, colleagues, staff as well as their family and friends. In a student population the size of Northumbria, the University may be informed of the death of a student a few times each year, and, when this happens, the University has a range of responsibilities to discharge whilst being highly sensitive to the needs and wishes of those involved. In the rare circumstance that you discover, or are the first notified, that a student has died, there are some actions you need to take.

What should you do?

1. In the unlikely event that you are the person who discovers a student who has died on University premises.

Telephone University Security immediately on their emergency number, which is **x3200** (or **0191 227 3200**).

Colleagues at London Campus and Amsterdam Campus should also inform the most senior staff member on site.

You should also:

- Ensure that the scene is not disturbed, and
- Arrange for any witnesses or friends of the deceased to be accompanied to a quiet area where you and they should wait for Security to arrive.

Security will take charge of the situation and notify and liaise with the emergency services in relation to the immediate incident/scene.

2. In the event that you are notified that a student has died off-campus – for example, if the parent or a friend of a student contacts you to let you know of the death of a student.

Contact University Security by: Telephoning their general enquiries number, which is **x3999** (or **0191 227 3999**), or

Emailing
CRSecurityTeams@northumbria.ac.uk

It is helpful if you can provide as much information as possible (e.g. the student's ID number, course, level of study, etc.).

What happens next?

Following (if necessary) any emergency services involvement, Security (or senior colleagues in London or Amsterdam) will initiate the University's formal response by notifying Student Life and Wellbeing, so that a case conference, (normally chaired by a senior manager in Student Life and Wellbeing), can be called.

The case conference, which will involve representation from Faculties and other relevant University Services, will coordinate the University's response. This includes, for example, ensuring that appropriate support is offered to the next-of-kin, our communications with students, staff and others are coordinated, and that support is offered to friends and fellow students, as well as coordinating the range of practical actions required in the case of a student death.





**Northumbria
University**
NEWCASTLE

"As a result of the support I have received from Student Life and Wellbeing I have recently been diagnosed with dyslexia and have been thoroughly informed about the support I can receive, which is currently being put in place with help from the Service."

Student, Faculty of Arts, Design and Social Sciences

"Without Student Life and Wellbeing, I would have left university. Instead, I am in my second year and managed to get a first on my assessment."

Student, Faculty of Engineering and Environment

"It greatly helped as the stress from my financial situation would have caused me potentially to drop out of university or to achieve poor grades. The staff were very understanding of my situation which helped a lot as I felt more supported."

Student, Faculty of Business and Law

For more information, visit:
northumbria.ac.uk/slw

