



HEALTH, WELL-BEING & FITNESS TO STUDY PROTOCOL

Hereford Sixth Form College is committed to supporting students and recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to his or her academic progression. This protocol outlines the process and procedures to be followed when a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour affects their ability to cope at college, to study or progress on their course or when their health, wellbeing or behaviour poses a risk to the health and safety of self and/or others.

This protocol applies to all students enrolled at Hereford Sixth Form College regardless of their background or protected characteristic which are; age, disability, gender re-assignment, marital and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation. This Procedure is intended for consideration during the interview or Admissions process and during a student's time studying at College.

Introduction

Hereford Sixth Form College is an educational institution for full time students. One of our core values is that we have a culture that cares for the individual & promotes inclusivity, equality and mutual respect. The College is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health and behavioural issues is critical to student learning and academic achievement. This philosophy underpins how we constantly strive to make reasonable adjustment for any student. In doing so we fully comply with the Equality Act 2010. Honesty & integrity are central to our work— we are committed to being transparent, open & trusting, therefore, we want to clarify that at times a student's physical or mental health may be so affected that they are no longer able, despite support, to maintain reasonable academic progress.

Academic success depends on positive engagement in classroom learning and on the completion of relevant private study including meeting homework and coursework deadlines. Our attendance target is 95%. For a student with illness or SEND there is a reasonable adjustment to these expectations. However, we are not a distance learning college and whilst it is reasonable for subject teacher & support staff to be flexible on a temporary basis prolonged periods of absence or non-completion of coursework cannot be sustainable.

Additionally, the College has a duty of care to all within its community and a responsibility to take action to support those in distress, or causing significant concern or presenting a risk to self or others. This will include, for instance, situations where students show visible signs of illness, mental health difficulties, or emotional or behavioural disorders that may have a negative impact on the health, safety, learning and wellbeing of the student and others.

Stages in a student's college journey

Joining College

Students and their parents are encouraged to disclose any health or SEND at different points in the application and enrolment process. Where a student has a complex or significant health or SEND need information, advice and guidance will be given to help negotiate a viable study programme and appropriate support plan.

Where appropriate, external agencies will be consulted. Student engagement in any support plan is vital in contributing to academic progress and in contributing to a student's fitness to study. In all cases the support is offered on site and to support classroom learning. Support however is finite and needs to be available to other students as well and therefore consideration would need to be given as to whether the support required is at a level that has extended well beyond that which can reasonably be expected of the College.

On Study Programme

Where a SEND or health need is disclosed during a student's study programme college staff should be informed as soon as possible and as far as possible reasonable adjustments will be made. Clearly it is difficult to set non-negotiable limits for academic success and there needs to be a professional judgment in each case. Disclosure at any point will in no way prejudice any decision but is used to establish how best we can respond to the individual's needs and what reasonable adjustments can be made. Staff who are available to consult regarding support include the College Counsellor, Head of learning support, and Directors of Studies.

Implementation of Fitness to Study Protocol

If the College becomes concerned about a student's Fitness to Study, the following steps will be followed to give clarity to the process.

Stage 1 – Communication with student outlining concerns and setting targets which will be reviewed two weeks later.

Stage 2 – Meeting with Director of Studies and communication with home, re-stating concerns and re-setting targets which will be reviewed approximately two weeks later.

Stage 3 – A case conference or return-to-College meeting will be organised with the student, parents, tutor, support workers, Director of Studies and Deputy Principal as appropriate. This meeting will focus on the feasibility of the student continuing to study at the College. One outcome of this meeting might be that a student will be withdrawn from the College.

Returning to Study

If a student has been absent for two weeks or a similar volume of partial attendance due to illness, a return – to-College meeting may be called to discuss the strategies necessary for a successful return to full time study. Strategies may include a phased return, completion of an action plan to manage any specific risks and setting reasonable targets for attendance and study. Each student's case will vary depending upon the context and specific circumstances out of which the original concern arose. In all cases return to study will be dependent upon evidence of fitness to study such as a GP's letter and of appropriate support systems. Evidence submitted must be from a recognised health worker such as a mental health professional, doctor or psychiatrist who has sufficient knowledge of the student and the demands of education in order to make an informed decision regarding return to study. In particular, specific reference should be made to the student's capacity to return to study.

Information, Advice and Guidance : When a full-time College-based study programme is not appropriate, the Careers Officer can advise on alternative educational provision.