

Framework for Student Behaviour, Health and Practice

Student Casework - Education Services

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Purpose and Strategic Intent

Why the University has this Framework

This Framework establishes the University's overarching principles and governance approach for managing matters relating to student behaviour, health, wellbeing, and professional suitability. It exists to:

- Protect individuals and uphold community safety, recognising the University's institutional responsibilities to students, staff, service users, patients, clients, placement providers, and the wider public;
- Fulfil legal, regulatory and statutory duties, including compliance with Office for Students (OfS) Conditions of Registration, Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Good Practice Framework, Public Sector Equality Duty, freedom of speech and academic freedom legislation, and safeguarding obligations;
- Maintain public protection, professional confidence and regulatory trust where students are enrolled on programmes leading to professional registration or practice;
- Ensure defensibility and institutional accountability through fair, transparent, evidence-based and procedurally sound decision-making capable of withstanding internal and external scrutiny.

Where this Framework refers to the wider University community, this includes service users, patients, clients, placement providers, and members of the public where relevant.

What the University Commits to Achieving

In applying this Framework and the policies that operate within it (Student Conduct, Fitness to Study / Support to Study, and Fitness to Practice / Professional Suitability), the University commits to:

- Supporting students to continue in study wherever reasonably possible, through early intervention, reasonable adjustments and supported activity;
- Acting to protect others and the wider University community where behaviour, health or risk cannot reasonably be managed through support alone, and where necessary to act in the public interest and in accordance with safeguarding, professional and regulatory obligations;
- Making decisions that are lawful, proportionate, evidence-based and procedurally fair, and capable of withstanding internal and external scrutiny;
- Balancing individual circumstances with collective responsibility, recognising that the University's institutional responsibilities extend both to individual students and to the wider community;

- Applying the least restrictive outcome necessary to address risk, protect students and staff, maintain professional standards, and uphold regulatory and procedural fairness;
- Ensuring equity of access and participation by identifying and addressing barriers faced by students with protected characteristics or additional needs, and by providing reasonable adjustments, communication support and other proportionate measures to enable fair engagement with University processes;
- Ensuring bias-aware and equitable processes, including training for decision-makers on recognising and mitigating bias, monitoring of outcomes by protected characteristic, and periodic review to address disproportionate impacts.

Scope and Application

This Framework applies to all registered students of the University of the West of England, Bristol, throughout their period of enrolment, including:

- students on campus, online, or in work-based learning settings (including apprenticeships);
- students on placement, professional practice, or study abroad;
- students on interruption of study or temporary withdrawal; and
- students pending award, where continuation of proceedings is necessary for public protection, regulatory reporting or institutional accountability.

This Framework applies to conduct, health, wellbeing or professional suitability matters that arise:

- on University premises;
- during University-related activities (including placements, field trips and events);
- in online or digital environments; or
- off-campus, where the conduct, behaviour, health or risk reasonably impacts the University community, its operations, safeguarding responsibilities, professional obligations, or reputation.

The Framework provides a coherent institutional foundation for the operation of the Student Conduct, Support to Study and Fitness to Practice policies (including the common components) and explains how those policies operate together as a single, reliable system of student casework.

Institutional Values and Integrity

In applying this Framework, the University will give practical effect to UWE Bristol's values of being ambitious, inclusive, innovative, collaborative and enterprising. Casework relating to student behaviour, health and professional suitability will therefore be conducted with

fairness, dignity and respect; with a commitment to accessible, bias-aware and proportionate decision-making; and with a focus on learning, improvement and shared responsibility.

These values require staff involved in casework to work constructively across services, communicate clearly, consider individual circumstances carefully, and take timely action that protects students, the wider community and public confidence where relevant.

The University's values are operationalised through casework practice as follows:

- **Ambitious:** Strive for high standards in every case; not just meet minimum requirements but go beyond to ensure fairness and defensibility;
- **Inclusive:** Fair, accessible process for every student; remove barriers and ensure everyone is heard and supported;
- **Innovative:** Embrace improvements and new methods to enhance efficiency, accuracy, and student experience in casework;
- **Collaborative:** Work together – engage stakeholders and share knowledge – to ensure consistency and trust in outcomes;
- **Enterprising:** Proactive, learning-oriented approach; a "can-do" mindset that seeks improvement and creative solutions, navigating uncertainty confidently.

Definitions and Interpretive Statements

For the purposes of this Framework:

Supported activity: means non-disciplinary, support-led steps intended to enable safe and effective continuation in study, including early intervention, pastoral support, academic support, wellbeing support, case coordination, reasonable adjustments, and other proportionate support arrangements.

Expected standards: means the standards of behaviour, conduct and/or professional behaviour that apply under the relevant University policy, code, programme requirement, or Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) framework.

Wider University community: includes service users, patients, clients, placement providers, and members of the public where relevant.

Precautionary measures: means temporary, non-disciplinary steps taken to manage risk or protect individuals while a matter is under consideration, and may include reactive precautionary measures following a concern and, where lawful and proportionate, preventive action taken to manage identified risk before harm materialises.

Further definitions can be found in schedule one.

The Casework System

The Framework recognises that concerns about students may arise in different forms but often overlap in practice. Behavioural concerns, health and wellbeing issues, and questions of professional suitability may coexist or evolve over time.

Accordingly, the University operates a single, integrated casework system comprising distinct but coordinated policy routes:

Support to Study

A non-disciplinary, supportive pathway used when serious health, wellbeing, or safety concerns arise about a student's ability to continue their studies safely and effectively. It operates as a continuation of mainstream support and coordinated support pathways as an escalation process.

It focuses on risk management and student welfare. This route is only invoked for serious or persistent wellbeing issues beyond what normal support services can manage, and explicitly is not treated as misconduct.

Student Conduct and Disciplinary Processes

The misconduct and disciplinary framework is used when students breach expected standards of behaviour or University rules. Its purpose is to maintain a safe, respectful community and uphold standards through fair, evidence-based procedures.

Misconduct includes harassment and a wide range of unacceptable behaviours. The conduct process centres on investigation and potential sanctions such as warnings, conditions, suspension or expulsion in severe cases. Conduct processes ensure natural justice, proportionality and trauma-informed practice, especially in sensitive cases such as harassment or sexual misconduct.

If health or disability factors are found to underlie a student's misconduct, the University may adjust its approach. While acknowledging that the misconduct occurred, underlying factors may serve in mitigation of sanction rather than punitive discipline, with a focus on restorative or educational outcomes. Otherwise, conduct issues are handled distinctly from support cases.

Fitness to Practice

Applied to students on regulated professional courses (for example medicine, nursing, teaching or law). Its aim is to safeguard the public and uphold professional standards by assessing whether a student remains fit to join their intended profession. Its primary purpose is therefore protective, not punitive.

This process is triggered by concerns that a student on a professional programme may pose a risk to patients or clients or may have breached professional codes, for example through serious misconduct on placement, health issues affecting safe practice, or criminal behaviour.

The Fitness to Practice route operates separately from general student discipline. It often involves academic experts and may include external input, and outcomes can include conditions on training or removal from the course if required.

It does not duplicate other frameworks. Where a concern is purely general misconduct or solely a health issue, those matters are managed under the Student Conduct or Fitness to Study policies respectively, with the professional route monitoring only as necessary to meet external reporting duties.

This Framework enables cases to be triaged, sequenced or transferred between routes where appropriate, while ensuring clarity of purpose, fairness to students and consistency of decision-making.

How the Policies Relate to Each Other

The Behaviour, Health and Practice framework operates through three distinct but integrated policies. These policy routes are: Student Conduct, Support to Study, and Fitness to Practice. These policy routes are in turn supported by common frameworks covering; precautionary actions, case panels, appeals and return to study. Where concerns arise, the University will identify the most appropriate primary route, having regard to the nature of the concern, the purpose of each policy, and the need to avoid unnecessary duplication whilst maintaining procedural fairness.

A student is managed under one primary policy at any time. The choice of policy is determined by the principal nature of the concern:

- Student Conduct applies where the primary concern is alleged behaviour that may breach University rules or community standards.
- Support to Study applies where the primary concern is the student's health, wellbeing, functioning, or ability to continue in study safely and effectively within the educational environment.
- Fitness to Practice applies to students on professionally regulated, professionally accredited, or practice-based programmes where concerns engage professional standards, public protection, suitability for entry to or continuation within a profession, or safe and effective professional practice this is regardless of whether the underlying issue relates to conduct, wellbeing, or professional suitability.

Common components of the Behaviour Health and Practice Framework are covered separately

- Precategory Actions and Temporary Suspensions can apply to any student on all routes and sets out the types of actions the university may take to manage risk and support safety and wellbeing.
- Case Panels apply to the processes for considering cases that are more serious, or complex or that may cut across concerns. The policy sets out how panels operate.
- Appeals set out a student's rights to appeal decisions relating to decision made under the Behaviour and health framework and covers both precautionary actions and case outcomes.
- Return to Study students suspended or withdrawn from study through casework process who are eligible to return are supported through the return to study policy and process.

Students on professional programmes are managed under the Fitness to Practice Policy for all relevant concerns. The Fitness to Practice Policy draws on the terms, definitions, and principles set out in the Student Conduct and Support to Study policies to characterise behaviour or wellbeing-related matters, avoiding unnecessary duplication of policy content without placing the student under multiple live processes.

Shared language and findings are used across policies to avoid reinvestigation. Where conduct-related concerns arise in a support context, the University may apply, by reference, relevant terms and definitions from the Student Conduct Policy. Where wellbeing-related concerns arise in a conduct context, the University may apply, by reference, relevant terms and definitions from the Fitness to Study Policy. Findings of fact established under one policy may be relied upon for decision-making under another, without re-investigation of the same matters, where it is fair and appropriate to do so.

The University will identify the most appropriate sequencing or combination of procedures having regard to the nature and seriousness of the matter, the level of risk, the student's ability to engage, and the need to avoid unnecessary duplication or unfairness. Where policies operate in sequence or coordination, this will be managed transparently, proportionately, and with appropriate safeguards.

This approach ensures clarity, consistency, fairness, and compliance with regulatory expectations whilst enabling effective and proportionate case management.

Process Integrity and Reliability

The University recognises that fair outcomes depend on reliable processes. Decisions taken under the policies governed by this Framework are justified by the integrity of the process through which they are reached, not by sympathy, informality or ad-hoc judgement.

Accordingly, the Framework embeds the following safeguards:

- clear published procedures, applied consistently across cases;

- separation of roles and responsibilities, including clear distinction between student support and wellbeing functions; case management and investigation; formal decision-making; and appeal or review;
- impartial investigation and decision-making, free from conflicts of interest;
- evidence-based findings, applying the balance of probabilities;
- opportunities for students to be informed, to respond and to be heard; and
- error-correction mechanisms, including reviews, appeals and quality assurance.

This approach ensures that the University's casework system operates as a reliable decision-making process across cases and over time, consistent with regulatory expectations and principles of administrative justice.

The Casework Function

The University's designated casework function has a specific institutional role to:

- manage cases as structured processes, not as extensions of academic delivery, pastoral support or operational management;
- apply policies and procedures consistently and independently, regardless of external pressure, reputational considerations or individual case sympathy;
- ensure procedural fairness, including clarity of allegations or concerns, proper evidence handling and reasoned decisions;
- safeguard the separation between support and decision-making, while enabling lawful and proportionate information-sharing;
- act in the public interest, including taking protective or restrictive action where required to manage risk, even where this is difficult or contested; and
- proceed to decision where necessary, including in the absence of student engagement, where reasonable opportunities to participate have been offered and fairness permits.

Where safeguarding or serious risk is identified, the University will act where necessary to manage risk, meet safeguarding obligations, uphold professional standards or reach a timely institutional decision.

References in this Framework to protective or restrictive action include precautionary measures taken in response to identified concerns and risks. Where lawful and proportionate, they may also include risk-based protective action taken before harm occurs, where credible information indicates a significant safeguarding, public protection, or institutional risk.

This duty exists to protect students, the University and the integrity of the system as a whole, and is essential to regulatory compliance and institutional defensibility.

Facts of Behaviour and the Role of Health and Wellbeing

Across all policies governed by this Framework, the University will:

- establish the facts of behaviour on the balance of probabilities where behaviour is in issue;
- distinguish clearly between what occurred and why it may have occurred;
- recognise that health, disability or wellbeing factors may be **relevant** to support arrangements, reasonable adjustments, risk management, mitigation and outcomes; and
- make clear that being unwell does not, of itself, prevent the University from establishing facts or taking protective action where required.

This ensures clarity, fairness and consistency, while avoiding the inappropriate medicalisation of conduct or the misuse of support processes as substitutes for formal decision-making.

Engagement, Non-Engagement and Institutional Responsibility

The effectiveness of this Framework depends on students engaging constructively with University processes. Students are expected to engage honestly and reasonably, respond to communications, participate in meetings or hearings where able, and comply with proportionate interim measures.

Where a student is unwilling or unable to engage, the University will act where necessary to manage risk, meet safeguarding obligations, uphold professional standards or reach a timely institutional decision. In such circumstances, decisions may be taken on the basis of the information reasonably available, without adverse inference from non-engagement alone.

Student Agency, Engagement and Support

The University recognises students as adults with agency, responsibility and capacity to engage in decisions that affect them. In most cases, the University's first recourse will be to seek engagement and to offer support in partnership with the student and/or, where necessary, through engagement with emergency contacts, with the aim of understanding concerns early, enabling participation, and identifying proportionate steps that help the student to continue safely and successfully in study wherever reasonably possible.

This partnership-based approach is framed and supported by the University's Statement of Expectations, which sets out the standards of respectful, responsible and constructive engagement expected within the University community. The Statement of Expectations is

complementary to, and does not replace, the Code of Conduct; it establishes the shared behavioural and relational context within which support, early intervention and, where necessary, formal casework are understood and applied.

What Students Can Expect from the University

Students can expect the University to act reasonably, transparently and with appropriate care throughout casework, including where a student is unable or unwilling to engage fully. This includes taking steps to make processes accessible, explaining what is expected, considering relevant individual circumstances, and ensuring that action taken is proportionate to the concerns identified.

Students can expect:

- timely and clear communication about concerns, processes, possible outcomes and available sources of support;
- reasonable efforts to enable participation, including through accessible arrangements and appropriate adjustments where relevant;
- decisions to be based on the information reasonably available, taken fairly and without prejudice, and explained with sufficient reasons;
- clear distinction between supportive, disciplinary and professional suitability responses, coordinated appropriately where issues overlap; and
- institutional decisions to be taken where necessary to protect individuals, the wider community or public confidence, even where engagement is limited, provided procedural fairness has been maintained.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The University is committed to the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion and recognises its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the Public Sector Equality Duty and the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students. The operation of this framework and all subordinate policies is designed to ensure lawful, fair, proportionate, and bias-aware decision-making that supports students to remain in study wherever reasonably possible whilst maintaining safety, professional standards, and the integrity of the academic community.

The University recognises that concerns relating to health, wellbeing, functioning, engagement, behaviour, and readiness to continue in study may be experienced and understood differently by students with protected characteristics, by students with intersecting identities, and by students affected by wider structural or systemic inequalities. These may include, but are not limited to, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, gender reassignment, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, age, and socio-economic context.

In applying this framework, the University will take an equity-led approach. Fairness does not always mean identical treatment. It means ensuring that students are able to understand, access, and engage with processes, and that decisions properly take account of different needs, barriers, and contexts. The University will actively consider and implement reasonable adjustments where required so that a student is not placed at a substantial disadvantage in engaging with any policy or process within this framework. This may include adjustments to communication, timing, format of meetings, evidence-sharing, support arrangements, or other aspects of process.

Decision-makers will take account of the possibility that structural inequality, unequal access to support, cultural misunderstanding, disability-related barriers, trauma, or unconscious bias may affect how concerns arise, how they are perceived, and how students are able to participate in decision-making. Such factors will not be ignored in assessing what is fair, proportionate, and appropriate. The University will seek to ensure that no student is disadvantaged in the operation of this framework because of a protected characteristic, intersecting identity, or systemic barrier, including through ensuring accessibility, equitable participation, and bias-aware decision-making.

Equality, diversity, and inclusion considerations do not change whether an incident occurred or whether behaviour meets the policy threshold on the evidence. However, where protected characteristics or differential needs are relevant, the University will consider them when determining process adjustments, context, and proportionate outcomes, including whether less restrictive measures could achieve the policy aims. Decision-makers will explicitly record in outcome rationales any equity considerations that affected process accessibility or outcome proportionality, and why they did or did not change the chosen outcome.

A student's protected characteristics (including disability and health conditions) are relevant to identifying and implementing reasonable adjustments and accessible processes, and to understanding context and potential mitigation. However, protected characteristics do not prevent the University from establishing facts and assessing risk where evidence indicates that behaviour, conduct, competence (where relevant), or health factors may compromise safe practice, public protection, or professional standards.

The duty to make reasonable adjustments applies to provisions, criteria, and practices other than a competence standard. A competence standard is an academic, medical, or other standard applied for the purpose of determining whether a person has a particular level of competence or ability. The University will actively consider reasonable adjustments to process and participation (for example, communication format, meeting arrangements, timelines, and support) and will not treat non-engagement or communication differences as misconduct without first considering whether adjustments are required.

Where the evidence establishes that a concern meets the threshold for action under this framework, the University will determine outcomes by applying the principles of proportionality and necessity. This includes considering whether less restrictive measures (including adjustments, conditions, or support plans) can sufficiently address risk, and

whether any proposed outcome is a proportionate means of achieving legitimate aims (including public protection and maintaining professional standards). This reflects the Equality Act framework that unfavourable treatment linked to disability-related consequences may require objective justification as a proportionate means of achieving a legitimate aim.

Where precautionary measures are used (for example temporary restrictions pending review), they are not imposed because of disability or health conditions, but solely to manage identified safety risks. Decisions will be evidence-based, time-limited, proportionate, subject to regular review, and will include active consideration of reasonable adjustments and less restrictive alternatives.

As a public authority, the University will have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity, and foster good relations in decision-making under this framework. The University will monitor the impact of its policies and decisions, use insight from the operation of this framework to inform learning, review, and continuous improvement, and take steps to reduce unintended differential impact in practice.

Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom

The University is committed to securing lawful freedom of speech and academic freedom, including the expression of lawful views that may be controversial, unpopular or otherwise offensive. The operation of this framework and all subordinate policies is designed to secure lawful speech and academic freedom through fair, proportionate, and bias-aware decision-making that supports students to remain in study wherever reasonably possible whilst maintaining safety, professional standards, and the integrity of the academic community.

Freedom of speech does not extend to unlawful conduct, including harassment, sexual misconduct, discrimination, threats, intimidation, or behaviour that interferes with the rights, safety or dignity of others.

In responding to concerns, the University will distinguish between the content of lawful expression and the manner, context and impact of behaviour, and will not take disciplinary action solely because expression causes offence.

Action may be taken under this Policy where the manner or context of expression, assessed objectively and proportionately, meets the definition of misconduct or the standards of behaviour expected of students.

Any restriction on speech or expression will be lawful, necessary and proportionate, balancing freedom of expression with safeguarding responsibilities, equality duties and the rights of others, including through the use of precautionary measures where appropriate.

Regulatory Alignment

The framework and its policies demonstrates UWE Bristol's commitment to:

- **Consumer protection:** Ensuring terms are clear and students know their rights
- **Equality and inclusion:** Compliance with the Equality Act 2010, provision of reasonable adjustments, and equitable access to appeals processes
- **Data protection:** Compliance with UK GDPR and Data Protection Act 2018
- **Sector standards:** Alignment with the OIA Good Practice Framework and OfS regulatory conditions
- **Natural justice:** Adherence to principles of fairness, impartiality, independence, and evidence-based decision-making
- **Transparency and accountability:** Clear communication, reasoned decisions, internal review rights, and external oversight
- **Institutional learning:** Using appeals data to identify and address procedural issues, inconsistencies, or systemic concerns

By establishing a unified, principled framework for appeals within the Behaviour, Health and Practice context, the University ensures that all students subject to these processes have access to fair, independent, and effective internal review, and that the University's appeals processes withstand internal and external scrutiny.

Lawfulness and Regulatory Compliance

The University commits to ensuring that this framework and its policies comply with:

- Relevant Office for Students (OfS) regulatory requirements,
- The Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA) Good Practice Framework,
- Equality Act 2010
- Human Rights Act 1998,
- Data Protection Act 2018 and UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR),
- Safeguarding duties
- Professional, Statutory, and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements where applicable to specific programmes.

Ownership and oversight

Document name:	Framework for Behaviour, Health and Practice
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Senior Policy Owner:	Assistant Director (Learning Teaching and Student Experience)
Policy Author:	Head of Student Casework and Insight
Overseeing committee:	Learning Teaching and Student Experience Committee
Compliance measures:	Annual Casework Report External scrutiny via the OIA
Related policies, procedures and codes of practice:	• Student Conduct and Disciplinary Policy • Support to Study Policy • Fitness to Practice / Professional Suitability Policy • Behaviour, Health and Practice Panels Policy (Casework Panels) • Behaviour, Health and Practice Appeals Policy (including any Part B Reporting-Student Request for Review as approved) • Reporting, Risk Assessment and Precautionary Actions Policy • Case Outcomes and Sanctions Policy • Return to Study Policy • Master Definitions Document (BHP definitions) • Policy Governance Framework (the umbrella governance instrument for UWE policies) • Complaints Policy and Procedure for Students; Complaints Policy for Non-Students; and, once approved, the Policy on Reportable Complaint Outcomes to the Office for Students • Academic Appeals Policy, as the distinct route for challenges to academic judgment • Freedom of Speech Policy and Code of Practice (currently v1.4, November 2025) • Dignity at Work and Study Policy and the University's Anti-Racism Strategy commitments • Statement of Expectations and Duty of Care Framework • Safeguarding arrangements and the University's Prevent duty response • Data Protection Policy, Records Retention Schedule, and the Advocate CMS Data Protection Impact Assessment

	• Academic Regulations and Student Terms and Conditions (as the contractual context within which this Framework operates)
Related legislative and/or regulatory requirements	• Office for Students regulatory framework and ongoing conditions of registration • Statutory external student complaints scheme • Equality Act 2010, • Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, • Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023, • UK GDPR, Data Protection Act 2018 and Data (Use and Access) Act 2025 • Consumer Rights Act 2015 • Digital Markets, Competition and Consumers Act 2024 • Higher Education and Research Act 2017 • Prevent duty • Children Acts 1989 and 2004, • Care Act 2014 • Protection from Harassment Act 1997 • UKVI Student Sponsor Guidance • PSRB standards and reporting duties

Version history

Version	Date	Summary of changes	Author
26_09_01		N/A - new	Head of Student Casework and Insight

Further advice and guidance

Further advice and guidance on the operation of this Framework is available from the Student Casework Team (studentcasework@uwe.ac.uk).

Schedules

Schedule 1: Definitions

This Policy uses terms that have specific meanings within the Behaviour, Health and Practice framework. Authoritative definitions are provided in the **Definitions** document, which applies consistently across all related policies.

Status of these definitions: The definitions set out below apply across the entire Framework for Student Behaviour, Health and Practice and all subordinate policies and procedures (including Student Conduct, Support to Study, Fitness to Study, Fitness to Practise, Professional Suitability, and related appeals, review, and precautionary measures procedures).

These definitions are incorporated by reference into all policies within this suite. Where a term is defined here, that definition applies consistently across all policies unless a specific policy explicitly states otherwise for a particular context. This ensures consistency, fairness, and clarity for students and staff.

Where a term is not defined below, it shall take its ordinary meaning in UK English or, where applicable, its recognised legal or regulatory meaning in higher education.

DEFINITIONS

Academic Misconduct

Behaviour that undermines the integrity of academic work, assessment, or scholarship. Academic misconduct is addressed through the University's Academic Misconduct Policy and procedures, not through this Framework. Examples include plagiarism, cheating in examinations, and falsification of data.

Allegation

A statement or claim that a student has breached University rules, policies, or expected standards. An allegation may be made by a member of staff, another student, or a third party. The University will assess allegations to determine whether they should be investigated under this Framework.

Alternative Regulatory Body (ARB)

A non-statutory professional body that sets and maintains professional standards, codes of conduct, and accreditation or recognition frameworks for a profession, even where legal registration is not required by statute. Examples include the Solicitors Regulation Authority and the Bar Standards Board. For the purposes of this Framework, references to Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies (PSRBs) include ARBs unless otherwise stated.

Appeal

A formal request for a decision to be reviewed on specified grounds. Appeals under this Framework are normally limited to procedural irregularity, new material evidence not previously available, or evidence of bias or prejudice. An appeal is not an opportunity to re-argue the case or challenge the academic or professional judgement of the original decision-maker.

Balance of Probabilities

The standard of proof used in all procedures under this Framework. A matter is proved on the balance of probabilities if it is more likely than not (i.e. more than 50% likelihood) that the event occurred, or the allegation is true. This is the standard civil standard of proof used in UK law.

Bias-Aware Decision-Making

An approach to decision-making that recognises the potential for unconscious bias to affect judgements. Bias-aware decision-making requires decision-makers to reflect on their own assumptions, consider whether protected characteristics or stereotypes may be influencing their assessment, and ensure decisions are based solely on relevant evidence and consistent application of policy.

Case Coordination

The collaborative management of a student's circumstances across academic and professional services to support engagement, wellbeing, and continuation in study. Case coordination is support-led and does not of itself constitute Fitness to Study decision-making. It is an early intervention and pastoral activity that sits outside formal procedures under this Framework.

Case Officer / Investigating Officer

A member of University staff responsible for gathering evidence, conducting investigations, and preparing case reports under this Framework. The case officer must be impartial and have had no prior involvement in the matter. They are not the decision-maker.

Case to Answer

A determination, following initial consideration or investigation, that there is sufficient credible evidence to establish, on the balance of probabilities, that: (a) the alleged conduct, behaviour, or concern occurred; and (b) it is serious enough to warrant formal consideration under the relevant policy, including (where applicable) determination of whether fitness to practise is impaired. A finding that there is a case to answer does not constitute a final determination of impairment, misconduct, or outcome.

Complaint

An expression of dissatisfaction about the University's services, actions, or lack of action. Complaints about how a case under this Framework has been handled may be made under the University's Student Complaints Policy. Complaints about the substance of a decision (as opposed to how it was reached) are normally addressed through the appeal process.

Concern

Information or observation that suggests a student may be experiencing difficulty, may be at risk, or may be behaving in a way that raises questions about their wellbeing, engagement, or conduct. A concern is not an allegation and does not imply wrongdoing. Concerns are raised to enable early, supportive intervention.

Condition (Outcome)

A requirement placed on a student as part of an outcome under this Framework. Conditions are designed to support the student's continued engagement, protect others, or address the circumstances that gave rise to the case. Conditions may include requirements to engage with support services, complete training, observe boundaries, or meet specific academic or professional standards. Breach of a condition may lead to further action.

Decision-Maker

The person or panel responsible for making a formal decision in a case under this Framework. The decision-maker must be independent (i.e. not previously involved in the case), appropriately trained, and sufficiently senior. The decision-maker is responsible for reviewing the evidence, applying policy, and determining outcomes.

Disability

A physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on a person's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities, as defined in the Equality Act 2010. This includes conditions such as mobility impairments, sensory impairments, long-term health conditions, mental health conditions, learning disabilities, and neurodiverse conditions such as autism, ADHD, and dyslexia.

Engagement

Active participation in academic study, attendance at scheduled teaching and assessment activities, and communication with the University in accordance with programme and University requirements. Engagement also includes responding to correspondence from the University, attending meetings when reasonably requested, and taking reasonable steps to address concerns raised.

Evidence

Any information reasonably relied upon to inform decision-making under this Framework, including (but not limited to) medical or wellbeing information, academic or professional services reports, engagement records, behaviour-related information, third-party reports, witness statements, and the student's own representations. Evidence must be relevant, proportionate, and considered in accordance with the principles of procedural fairness.

Expected Standards

The standards of behaviour, conduct, professionalism, and engagement that the University expects of all students. Expected standards are set out in the Framework, in individual policies, and in programme-specific codes of conduct (particularly for professional programmes). They include respect for others, academic integrity, adherence to University rules, and (where applicable) meeting professional body requirements.

Fact of Behaviour

A finding about whether particular conduct or behaviour occurred, determined on the balance of probabilities and distinct from any judgement about whether that behaviour constitutes misconduct, impairment, or warrants a particular outcome. Establishing the fact of behaviour is a necessary first step in decision-making but does not, of itself, determine the consequence.

Fitness to Practise (FtP)

The requirement for students on professional programmes leading to registration with a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) to demonstrate that they are fit to practise in their chosen profession. Fitness to practise encompasses health, conduct, character, and competence. Fitness to practise concerns are addressed through the University's Fitness to Practise Policy and are subject to PSRB requirements and public protection considerations.

Fitness to Study

A student's capability to engage safely and effectively with their academic programme, taking into account their health and wellbeing. A student may be considered unfit to study if their health (including mental health) or wellbeing significantly impairs their ability to engage, places them or others at risk, or cannot be reasonably accommodated through adjustments and support. Fitness to Study matters are addressed through the Support to Study Policy, not through disciplinary procedures.

Fitness to Study Decision-Making

The University's formal institutional process for determining whether a student is fit to continue in study where serious concerns relating to health, wellbeing, or safety require

a decision affecting the student's registration, continuation, interruption, restriction, or withdrawal. This does not include early intervention, pastoral support, reasonable adjustments, or routine wellbeing activity, which sit outside formal procedures under this Framework.

Fitness to Study Panel

A formal institutional body convened under delegated authority to make Fitness to Study decisions in accordance with the relevant policy. The Panel must have regard to evidence, risk, proportionality, and procedural fairness. Panel members must be appropriately trained, independent, and sufficiently senior. The Panel's role is to review evidence, apply policy, and determine outcomes in accordance with the Framework's principles.

Framework (or "this Framework")

The Framework for Student Behaviour, Health and Practice, which is the overarching governance document setting out the University's approach to student conduct, health, and professional suitability. All subordinate policies and procedures sit beneath this Framework and must align with its principles.

Health

A student's physical and mental state, including diagnosed medical conditions, mental health conditions, disabilities, and temporary illnesses or injuries. Health is relevant to this Framework where it may affect a student's ability to engage safely with their studies, where reasonable adjustments may be required, or where health-related circumstances provide relevant context for decision-making.

Impairment of Fitness to Practise

A determination that a student's fitness to practise is called into question such that: (a) there is a real risk of harm to patients, clients, service users, pupils, or the public; (b) professional standards or public confidence in the profession may be undermined; and/or (c) the student cannot meet the requirements for safe practice, professional registration, or PSRB standards, even with reasonable adjustments or support. Impairment is determined on the basis of established facts and a current assessment of risk and suitability, not on past behaviour alone.

Independence (of Decision-Maker)

The requirement that a decision-maker has had no prior involvement in the case and has no conflict of interest. Independence ensures fairness and public confidence in the process. A decision-maker is not independent if they have previously investigated the case, witnessed the relevant events, provided support or advice to any party, or have a

personal or professional relationship with any party that could reasonably be perceived as affecting impartiality.

Interim Measures

See **Precautionary Measures**.

Misconduct

Behaviour by a student that breaches University rules, policies, or expected standards. Misconduct may include (but is not limited to) violence, harassment, discrimination, damage to property, disruption of University activities, breach of IT or library regulations, misuse of University resources, or off-campus conduct that affects the University community. Misconduct is addressed through the Student Conduct Policy.

Natural Justice

The common law principle that procedures must be fair. Natural justice requires that: (a) a person has the right to know the case against them; (b) a person has the right to be heard and to respond to allegations; and (c) the decision-maker must be impartial and free from bias. This Framework embeds natural justice throughout all procedures.

Non-Disciplinary

Describes procedures or interventions that are supportive rather than punitive. Non-disciplinary processes (such as Support to Study) are not concerned with blame, fault, or sanction. Their purpose is to provide support, ensure safety, and enable continued engagement. Non-disciplinary does not mean there are no consequences or requirements; it means the process is not designed to punish.

Non-Engagement

Failure by a student to respond to University correspondence, attend scheduled meetings, or participate in a process under this Framework. Non-engagement may result in a decision being made in the student's absence, based on the available evidence. The University will make reasonable efforts to contact the student and will consider whether there are reasonable adjustments or mitigating circumstances that explain the non-engagement.

Off-Campus Conduct

Behaviour by a student that occurs outside University premises or University-organised activities. Off-campus conduct may fall within the scope of this Framework if it: (a) involves other members of the University community; (b) affects the University's reputation or interests; (c) involves criminal conduct relevant to the student's suitability to study or practise; or (d) is connected to University-related activity (e.g. placement, field trip, online study group). The University does not regulate students' private lives,

but retains the right to act where off-campus conduct has relevant University implications.

Outcome

The result or decision reached at the conclusion of a process under this Framework. Outcomes may include: no further action; a written warning; conditions on continued study; referral to support services; restrictions or requirements; suspension; or (in the most serious cases) termination of studies. Outcomes must be evidence-based, proportionate, and consistent with the Framework's principles.

Placement Provider

Any external organisation, setting, or institution that hosts a student for placement, work-based learning, or professional practice as part of their programme of study. Placement providers include (but are not limited to) NHS Trusts, health and care settings, schools, colleges, educational establishments, social care and statutory agencies, legal practices and chambers, and any other organisation providing supervised professional training or practice opportunities. Placement providers are part of the wider University community for the purposes of this Framework.

Policy

A formal University document approved by a governance body that sets out rules, procedures, roles, and principles. Policies within this Framework suite sit beneath the overarching Framework and provide detailed procedures for specific contexts (e.g. Student Conduct Policy, Support to Study Policy, Fitness to Practise Policy).

Precautionary Measures (or Interim Measures)

Temporary restrictions or requirements put in place before a final decision is reached, where necessary to: (a) protect the safety or wellbeing of the student or others; (b) preserve evidence; (c) prevent interference with an investigation; or (d) maintain the integrity of University activities. Precautionary measures are not a finding of fact, not a punishment, and not an outcome. They are reviewed regularly and lifted as soon as circumstances allow. Examples include temporary suspension from specific activities, no-contact requirements, or relocation.

Procedural Fairness

The principle that processes must be transparent, consistent, impartial, and accessible. Procedural fairness requires that students understand the process, are given adequate time and information to respond, are treated with respect, have access to support, and have decisions made by an appropriately qualified and independent decision-maker based solely on relevant evidence.

Procedure

A set of defined steps, roles, and timescales that govern how a policy is implemented in practice. Procedures within this Framework set out how cases are reported, investigated, decided, and reviewed.

Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)

An external organisation that regulates entry to, and practice within, a profession (e.g. Nursing and Midwifery Council, Health and Care Professions Council, Teaching Regulation Agency, Solicitors Regulation Authority). Students on programmes leading to PSRB registration must meet PSRB standards of conduct, competence, and character. The University's Fitness to Practise procedures ensure compliance with PSRB requirements.

Professional Suitability

The requirement for students on professional programmes to demonstrate the conduct, character, health, and competence necessary to practise safely and effectively in their chosen profession. Professional suitability encompasses fitness to practise and is assessed in accordance with PSRB requirements and public protection considerations.

Proportionality

The principle that outcomes and interventions must be appropriate to the seriousness of the matter, the circumstances, and the student's individual context. Proportionality requires consideration of: the nature and impact of the behaviour or concern; any mitigating circumstances; the student's previous record; the need to protect others; and the least restrictive means of achieving a fair outcome. Disproportionate outcomes are unfair and may be overturned on appeal.

Protective not Punitive

An approach that prioritises safeguarding students, staff, and the wider community over punishment. Protective measures are designed to manage risk, support wellbeing, and enable safe continuation of study wherever possible. This principle underpins Support to Study and Fitness to Study procedures in particular, but applies across the Framework.

Public Protection

The requirement to safeguard the public (including patients, clients, pupils, and service users) from harm. Public protection is a primary consideration in Fitness to Practise procedures for students on professional programmes. Where a student's conduct, health, character, or competence raises concerns about their ability to practise safely, the University has a duty to act in the public interest, in accordance with PSRB requirements.

Reasonable Adjustments

Changes to policies, procedures, or environments to remove barriers faced by disabled students, as required by the Equality Act 2010. Reasonable adjustments under this Framework may include adjustments to timescales, communication methods, meeting formats, or support arrangements. The University has a legal duty to make reasonable adjustments and will do so proactively wherever possible.

Reasonable Opportunity to Respond

The principle that a student must be provided with sufficient time and an accessible method to understand and respond to the substance of allegations, concerns, or evidence relied upon, in a way that is fair and proportionate to the circumstances. Reasonableness is context-specific: the University will vary timescales and formats where necessary to achieve a fair process, manage risk, and ensure meaningful participation, and will record the reasons for any variation. This principle is a core element of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Regulatory Determination

A decision made by a Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB) or Alternative Regulatory Body (ARB) regarding a person's eligibility for professional registration, licensing, or authorisation to practise. Regulatory determinations are independent of the University's processes and may occur before, during, or after a student's enrolment. The University's decisions inform, but do not determine, PSRB or ARB regulatory decisions, and vice versa.

Reporting Party

The individual, organisation, or body that raises a concern about a student's professional suitability, fitness to practise, conduct, or wellbeing. Reporting parties may include University staff (academic or professional services), placement providers (including clinical, educational, or practice-based supervisors), Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies, other students, service users, patients, clients, pupils, members of the public, external agencies (such as police, safeguarding authorities, or employers), or the student themselves (self-disclosure). The University will assess all reports in accordance with the principles of this Framework.

Representation

The right of a student to be accompanied and supported at meetings and hearings under this Framework. A student may normally be represented by: a Students' Union adviser or advocate; a friend or family member; or (in the most serious cases, such as Fitness to Practise hearings) a legal representative. The role of the representative is to support the student, not to answer on their behalf (unless the student requests this or there are reasonable adjustments in place).

Responding Student

The student about whom a concern, allegation, or matter has been raised and who is subject to consideration, investigation, or proceedings under this Framework. The responding student has the right to be informed of the case, to respond, to be heard, and to be treated in accordance with the principles of natural justice and procedural fairness.

Review (of Decision)

A formal reconsideration of a decision, normally through the appeal process. Review is not a re-hearing; it is an assessment of whether the original process was fair, whether the decision was reasonable based on the evidence, and whether there are grounds to overturn or amend the outcome.

Risk

The likelihood and potential impact of harm to the student and/or others, including risks to physical safety, mental wellbeing, professional suitability, or the effective functioning of the University community. Risk is assessed in context and may change over time. Risk considerations inform decision-making under this Framework, particularly in relation to precautionary measures, fitness to study, and fitness to practise.

Risk Assessment

The structured consideration of identified risks, including their seriousness, immediacy, sustainability, and the effectiveness of existing or proposed control measures. Risk assessment is undertaken to inform proportionate decision-making under this Framework. It is not a clinical or diagnostic process, but an evidence-based evaluation of the likelihood and impact of harm in the University context.

Sanction

A penalty or consequence imposed as an outcome of a Student Conduct or Fitness to Practise procedure. Sanctions are distinguished from **conditions** and **supported activity** in that they are explicitly punitive or restrictive. Sanctions may include formal warnings, fines, suspension, or termination of studies. Sanctions are not used in Support to Study procedures, which are non-disciplinary.

Serious Concern

A concern relating to a student's health, wellbeing, behaviour, or safety that is persistent, escalating, or presents a significant or imminent risk such that supportive measures alone may be insufficient. Serious concerns may trigger formal consideration under this Framework, including (where applicable) Fitness to Study decision-making,

Support to Study procedures, or precautionary measures. Not all concerns are serious concerns; seriousness is assessed in context.

Sexual Misconduct

Behaviour of a sexual nature that breaches University rules, policies, or expected standards and causes harm or distress to others. Sexual misconduct includes (but is not limited to) sexual harassment, sexual assault, sexual exploitation, stalking, voyeurism, exposure, sharing of intimate images without consent, and other unwanted conduct of a sexual nature. Sexual misconduct is addressed through the Student Conduct Policy and may also be relevant to Fitness to Practise considerations for students on professional programmes. The University takes a trauma-informed and survivor-centred approach to sexual misconduct cases.

Student

Any person registered on a programme of study at the University, including undergraduate, postgraduate taught, postgraduate research, apprenticeship, exchange, and visiting students. The Framework also applies (where relevant) to applicants who have accepted an offer and students whose registration has been suspended.

Student-Facing

A plain-language, accessible version of a policy designed for publication on the University website and written specifically for students. Surface layers translate complex policy and procedure into step-by-step guidance, answer practical questions (e.g. "What happens next?", "Who can I contact?"), and signpost to support services. Surface layers are formally governed and approved alongside their corresponding policy.

Supported Activity

An action or requirement intended to help a student succeed, rather than to punish. Supported activity may be an outcome or condition under this Framework and may include: engaging with wellbeing or academic support services; attending skills workshops or training; meeting regularly with a personal tutor; or making agreed changes to study patterns. Supported activity is designed to address underlying issues and enable the student to meet expected standards.

Support-Led Activity

Early intervention, wellbeing support, pastoral care, reasonable adjustments, and routine case coordination delivered by University services to enable students to continue in study wherever reasonably possible. Support-led activity is non-disciplinary, non-punitive, and sits outside formal procedures under this Framework. It

is designed to address difficulties at the earliest opportunity and prevent escalation. Engagement with support-led activity is normally voluntary, though it may be recommended or, in some cases, required as a condition of continued study.

Support Person

A person who accompanies and supports a student in meetings or hearings under this Framework. The support person may be a friend, family member, Students' Union representative, or (where agreed) a professional advocate. The support person's role is to provide emotional and practical support, help the student understand proceedings, and (if the student wishes) contribute to the discussion. A support person is not the same as legal representation, unless explicitly agreed.

Support to Study

A non-disciplinary, supportive framework for addressing situations where a student's health, wellbeing, or personal circumstances are significantly affecting their ability to engage with their studies or are raising concerns about their safety or the safety of others. Support to Study aims to provide appropriate support, agree reasonable adjustments where needed, and enable the student to continue their studies wherever possible. It is not a conduct process and does not result in sanctions.

Suspension (Precautionary)

A temporary, precautionary measure that restricts a student's access to University premises, activities, or facilities pending the outcome of an investigation or case. Precautionary suspension is not a finding of misconduct or unfitness; it is a protective measure. The University will review precautionary suspension regularly and lift it as soon as circumstances allow. During precautionary suspension, the student normally retains access to online learning resources and support services unless this would be inconsistent with the protection being sought.

Suspension (Outcome)

A formal outcome following a Student Conduct or Fitness to Practise procedure in which the student is required to withdraw from study for a specified period. Suspension as an outcome is a sanction (in conduct cases) or a protective measure (in fitness to practise cases). The terms and conditions of suspension will be clearly set out, and the student will normally be required to meet specified conditions before returning to study.

Termination of Studies

The most serious outcome under this Framework, in which the student's registration is ended and they are required to leave the University permanently. Termination may result from the most serious misconduct, from fitness to practise concerns that cannot

be mitigated and pose unacceptable risk, or from persistent breach of conditions or non-engagement. The student has the right to appeal a decision to terminate their studies.

University

UWE Bristol, including its academic faculties, professional services, delivery partners (where applicable), and any person acting under delegated authority on its behalf. For the purposes of this Framework, references to "the University" include all staff, services, governance bodies, and decision-makers acting in their official capacity.

University-Related Activity

Any activity connected to a student's studies or relationship with the University. This includes: teaching, learning, and assessment; University-organised events and activities; placements and fieldwork; use of university facilities and services; online participation in University platforms or study groups; and interactions with staff, students, or visitors in a University context. Conduct during University-related activity falls within the scope of this Framework, even if it occurs off-campus.

UWE Professional Suitability Assessment

The University's institutional decision-making under this Framework regarding: (a) a student's continuation on a programme; (b) participation in placements or professional practice; (c) eligibility for an award conferring entry to a profession; and (d) reporting obligations to PSRBs or other regulatory bodies. UWE professional suitability assessment is distinct from, but may inform, regulatory determinations made by Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Bodies. The University's decisions are made in accordance with PSRB requirements, public protection considerations, and the principles of this Framework.

Wellbeing

A student's overall state of physical, mental, emotional, and social health. Wellbeing encompasses mental health, emotional resilience, social connectedness, and the ability to cope with the demands of academic study and daily life. The University's approach to student wellbeing is holistic and supportive, recognising that wellbeing challenges are common and that early, compassionate intervention can prevent escalation.

Wider University Community

All persons connected to the University, including students, staff (academic, professional services, and support staff), visiting lecturers, contractors, visitors to campus, placement providers and supervisors, patients or clients in practice settings, and members of partner institutions. This Framework applies where conduct affects or

involves members of the wider University community, regardless of where the conduct occurs.

Working Days

Monday to Friday, excluding University closure days (including public holidays and periods when the University is officially closed, such as the winter closure period). All timescales set out in policies within this Framework are expressed in working days unless otherwise stated. Where a deadline falls on a day when the University is closed, the deadline is extended to the next working day.

NOTES ON USAGE

Hierarchy of Terms:

Where the Framework uses "must", this indicates a mandatory requirement. "Should" indicates normal expectation, with flexibility in exceptional circumstances. "May" indicates discretion or option.

Cross-References to External Definitions:

Where this Framework refers to legal or regulatory concepts (e.g. disability under the Equality Act 2010, data protection under UK GDPR), those terms take their legal definition as interpreted by relevant statute, case law, and regulatory guidance.

Amendment of Definitions:

These definitions may only be amended with the approval of the same governance body that approved the Framework. Minor typographical or clarificatory amendments may be made under delegated authority, with a report to the next meeting.