

Online Reporting Tool

Use our online system to report any incidents or acts of harassment, bullying, violence, targeted hate, or sexual misconduct.



Student of Concern Form

Worried about a student?

You can report any concerns about a student's wellbeing or safety through the Student of Concern Form.



Dignity at Work and Study Toolkit

Support to identify potential adverse or negative behaviours and guidance on how those behaviours can be managed and mitigated.



Prevent Suicide Scotland App

Access immediate support, advice and local external service contacts to support suicide prevention.



Students' Union

Students can access academic advice, support, and representation from elected officers. Connect with others through sports, clubs, and societies.



Supporting you to support students.

A pocket guide for staff.



Supporting you to support students online guidance.



Employee Wellbeing Support

Access a wide range of support services and resources, including Employee Assistance Programme.



Being Prepared – Equip yourself to help

Feeling confident when responding to a student in distress doesn't happen by chance, it comes from preparation.

Engaging in wellbeing training builds the skills and awareness to respond calmly, so you can support students using approaches you already know.

Access development and upskilling resources, including videos, guidance, e-learning and links on the staff wellbeing web pages.

Why not start with these short bitesize videos:

- ➔ Signs and symptoms
- ➔ Active listening and supportive conversations
- ➔ Boundaries and signposting
- ➔ Privacy/Confidentiality when providing support
- ➔ Supporting you to support students

Preparation doesn't mean having all the answers. It means feeling equipped to listen, respond with care, and guide students towards the right support.



SafeZone and The Security Team

Download the SafeZone app for immediate access to support and advice from the Security Team.



Student Helpline

Free 24/7 – All year round

For in the moment support, counselling, and advice. Available to all students, all day, every day.



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Student Advice and Support

Available Mon – Fri via email: student.support@abdn.ac.uk

Staff can contact the team for advice and guidance about concerns for a student. Details of drop-in times can be found on the website.

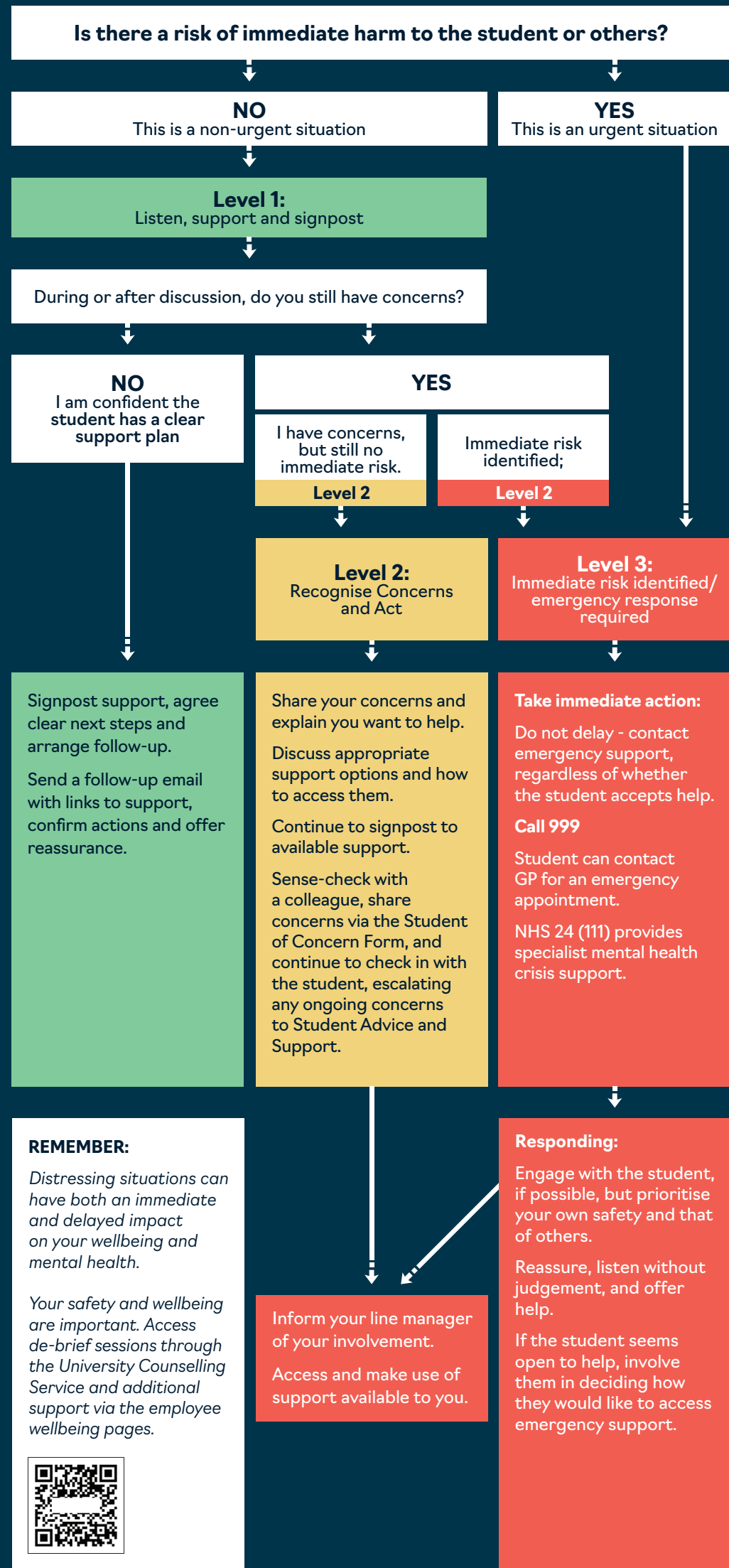
The team are not mental health specialists and in crisis situations, will defer to external professionals and emergency support services.

What Student Advice and Support can help with:

- General support advice
- Study-related support for students, including disabled students and those with mental health conditions
- Advice on academic concerns, money and finance matters, student parents, student conduct concerns and any personal issues



Access information about all student support services



Level 1 – Listen, Support and Signpost

Use when: No immediate risk to the student or others. The student may be experiencing emotional distress (e.g. stress, anxiety, low mood, isolation, relationship or study concerns).

Listen

Offer a supportive, non-judgemental conversation. Stay calm, listen actively, and explore what is happening for the student. Reassure them, validate their feelings, and work together to identify practical next steps.

Support and Signpost

Help the student identify appropriate support and agree next steps. Ensure they understand what support is available and how to access it. (Tip: Use the Student Support Z-card.)

Connecting Students with Support

If a referral is appropriate, such as when a student discloses a disability or health condition, gain the student's consent, involve them in the referral, and confirm they are happy to be contacted by a support advisor.

Sample Phrases

"That sounds really difficult."

"I'm really sorry you're feeling this way. You're not alone."

"Would you feel comfortable if I helped you contact someone who can support you?"

"It's okay to ask for help - there are people who want to support you."

Level 2 – Recognise Concerns and Act

Use when: There are clear or increasing concerns about a student's wellbeing, but no immediate risk to the student or others.

Notice the signs:

Changes in behaviour mood, appearance, engagement. Be alert to:

- Persistent emotional distress
- Sudden changes in behaviour or appearance
- Unusual or concerning ideas
- Declining engagement with studies and/or student life

Trust your judgement and take concerns seriously.

Talk and explore:

- Have a supportive conversation, listen actively and clarify the student's situation
- Share your concerns and explain you want to help
- Discuss appropriate support options and how to access them

Remember you're not expected to fix everything.

Seek advice, refer, escalate:

To refer or escalate your concerns to student support, or to seek further advice, you can complete a Student of Concern Form or email: student.support@abdn.ac.uk

- Encourage the student to access appropriate support
- Check in with the student, and refer ongoing or escalating concerns to Student Advice and Support

You do not have to deal with concerns alone.

Level 3 – Immediate risk and emergency response

Safety is the priority in all situations

Use when: There is immediate risk to the student or others (e.g. serious self-harm, violence, loss of functioning, disorientation or suicidal intent or plan)

Take immediate action:

- Treat as an emergency, act immediately, with or without student consent
- Use your judgement, **If risk is immediate call 999**
- Students can also contact **GP for an emergency appointment**
- **NHS 24 (111) provides specialist mental health crisis support**

In all situations:

- Try to stay calm and present
- Don't try to manage the situation alone
- Engage with the student, if possible, but prioritise your own safety and that of others
- Inform the Security Team via SafeZone if emergency services have been called to campus
- Inform Student Advice and Support by email to ensure appropriate follow up for the student
- Inform your manager and seek support for yourself

This guide helps staff recognise and respond to distressed students, support and signpost with confidence and compassion.

It does not replace professional support.

Expectations, boundaries and confidentiality

Staff are not expected to be counsellors. Maintain professional boundaries and understand when and how to refer students to appropriate services.

Confidentiality should be respected but not promised - especially when there is a risk of harm.

External services

Emergency Services (999) - Call in a life-threatening or immediate risk situation where urgent intervention is needed.

NHS 24 (111) - Call 111 for urgent medical help that is not life threatening.

Samaritans (116 123) - 24/7 free support. Confidential listening service for anyone in distress.

Breathing Space (0800 83 85 87)
Weekdays: 6pm - 2am
Weekend: Friday 6pm - Monday 6am

Located in Aberdeen City Centre:

SAMH The Nook - Drop-in support centre, 10am - 4pm daily, ground floor, Marischal Square, Aberdeen City Centre. The Nook is proudly a safe space for mental health support.

Penumbra 365 suicide prevention walk-in service, 9am - 9pm daily, 168 Skene Street, Aberdeen.