**Support to Reside Procedure**

**Contents:**

1. Introduction
2. Purpose and Scope
3. Definition of “Fitness to Reside”.
4. Stages of Concern
5. Support Pathway
6. Support Available for Students
7. Support Procedure
8. Recording of Information
9. Sharing of Information
10. Related Policies

**1. Introduction**

The University is committed to supporting student wellbeing and recognises that a positive and recovery-focused approach to the management of physical and mental health is crucial. It has a responsibility to respond appropriately to situations where a student’s illness, disability or psychological, personality or emotional state may have a profoundly disturbing impact on the functioning of the individual student and/or the wellbeing of the wider University community. The entirety of the University community has responsibility to support each other in creating and maintaining a safe environment that is conducive to positive life, study and work experiences.

The Support to Reside Procedure applies to all students studying at the University (full time, part time, undergraduate, postgraduate, research programmes) who are residing in halls of residence or properties that are owned or managed by the University of Northampton.

The University expects students in Halls of residence to live safely, independently, and in harmony with others, not conducting themselves in ways that adversely impact those around them. While some students may require additional support to achieve this, all students are responsible for managing their own health, wellbeing, and behaviour.

This procedure was designed to help provide a consistent, proportionate, and coordinated response by the University when it is believed or demonstrated that a student requires support, and no other internal policies/ procedures are deemed relevant or appropriate.

Students who present with difficulties should, wherever possible, be considered from a supportive perspective. The University is committed to promoting positive attitudes towards all students, including those with physical or mental ill health.

**2. Purpose and Scope of the Procedure**

The University and the support to reside procedure aims to foster independence, self-awareness, resilience, and encourage personal responsibility among students by outlining available support and steps to be followed when safe and appropriate participation in hall life cannot be sustained by standard support pathways. The support to reside procedure works with the accommodation terms and conditions that are read and signed by every student resident when they commence their contract with the University. In cases where student behaviour may lend best to an alternative policy, then that will be applied either solely or will work in conjunction with this fitness to reside procedure if the behaviours demonstrated are believed to affect multiple university programmes. Policies that are closely linked with residential services such as the misconduct policy, the health, wellbeing, and fitness to practise policy and the student conduct policy are all linked below (Section 11).

**Scope:**

2.1To provide a suitable and coordinated response by the University when a student may require help/intervention, and when it is not appropriate to apply other internal procedures.

2.2 To encourage early intervention and active collaboration between hall staff, other University staff, and external professional services in managing situations where there are concerns regarding a student’s fitness to reside in university managed/ owned properties.

2.4 To encourage and support engagement by students whose behaviour/actions/demeanour are causing concern, with other internal and, if required, external support services.

2.5 To document that there may be times when it may not be in the best interests of the student, the university, or any sub sector of the university community to allow an individual to remain residing in halls. This could be because they are not fit to live independently (which may include specialist care requirements compliant with equality legislation). If any individual is found to expose themselves or others to risk, then the University may find it appropriate to consider cancelling the accommodation contract.

The accommodation provided for students is reflective of the academic community that the University fosters. If a student should require specialist care (medical or otherwise) the University will work with our internal ASSIST (Additional Student Support and Inclusion Services) team and the NHS/ any other external agency/ statutory service that can provide support, advice and guidance to protect both the student and the university.

1. **Definition of “Fitness to Reside”.**

3.1 Students are considered fit to reside if they can live independently (which may include specific care arrangements compliant with equality legislation) and can live with others in a communal environment. They must also be able to comprehend, observe and follow the rules and conditions that are stipulated and laid out by the university and are accessible through the Accommodation contract.

3.2. Students are considered fit to reside if they demonstrate that they can reside in communal accommodation in a way that does not present a risk to themselves or any other members of the University community.

3.3 Occasionally a person’s fitness to reside can change mid contract. This could be in the manner of medical conditions or disabilities and could be temporary (broken bone etc) or a longer term or permanent issue. In these cases, once informed, the residential life team will carry out a risk assessment including where the student is currently living, access to the university and ability to source medical help to name but a few. If required, the University will support reasonable adjustments such as a temporary move in liaison with the accommodation team. A student who suffers a longer-term medical issue will obviously be supported in the manner which benefits them most. This could be a referral to internal support (ASSIST), a study break for them to take time to recuperate prior to returning to studies or it could result in a withdrawal from the University. Regardless of the situation, the welfare of the student will be the focus of the outcome and the University will do the utmost to support them in achieving their best possible outcomes.

3.4 Fitness to reside considerations once raised, will trigger support coordinated by the university as per this Support to reside procedure. These relate to a wide range of concerns, including but not limited to:

i) Behaviour that can present as misconduct, but the behaviours are a symptom or result of an underlying physical or mental health illness.

ii) Severe health concerns (physical or mental) including a lack of management, lack of acknowledgement or lack of understanding of the concerns.

iii) Violent, indecent, disorderly, threatening or aggressive behaviours.

iv) Criminal behaviour and/ or conviction of a serious criminal offence which could compromise the safety of any University Community group (students, staff, halls etc).

v) Continuous drug, alcohol, substance misuse/ abuse that causes disruption to the communal living environment.

vi) Displays of behaviour/ conduct where the health, safety and wellbeing of students, staff, visitors or the wider University could be at risk.

vii) Displays of behaviour/ conduct which significantly impact other residents, staff or negatively impacts the day-to-day operational running of the Halls of the Residence.

1. **Stages of concern**
   1. **Emerging/ Initial Concerns**

* Concerns can be raised by anyone. Professional service staff, academic, administrative, contractors as well as students, visitors, or others, which are less severe than acute issues, should be channelled through the concerns team and the mental health team. Typically, this involves a personal informal meeting between the student and the Residence Life Manager to check if the student is engaged with Wellbeing Services.
* All university staff have a responsibility to raise and share concerns about a student if they are informed of a disclosure, if they identify a concern or if they are informed as a third party about the behaviour or wellbeing of a student at the university.
* Any concerns identified can be easily and anonymously reported on the University Intranet by staff or students. These will be triaged and investigated by the concerns team or referred to a more relevant service.
* Any person with concerns should report these at the earliest opportunity to the Residential Life team, concerns team or equivalent within partner/third party accommodation providers, who must seek urgent advice from Wellbeing Services.
* There is an expectation of the University community to support students in a person-centred, respectful manner, minimising the stress and anxiety that can be suffered from a variety of reasons when attending University and to provide a consistent and sensitive approach to managing situations.

**4.2 Continuing/ persistent/ Serious Concerns**

* Serious concerns should be raised with Wellbeing Services staff, and the student’s Personal Tutor should be consulted to determine if academic pressures contribute to behaviour issues or vice versa. Findings should be discussed with Wellbeing Services for possible referral to the Fitness to Study Policy.
* If the concern is of an urgent nature and persons are deemed to be at immediate risk, either from themselves or others then (as above) this is to be treated as an emergency and the relevant pathway followed (emergency services first, followed by informing security and residential life).

**4.3** **Acute/ Emergency Mental Health Concerns**

* Acute mental illness relates to a state of crisis (brief or temporary phase) where a person displays specific psychiatric symptoms in such a way that severely prohibits them from effectively functioning/ diminishes their ability to cope with daily life.
* If any person witnesses anyone suffering from acute mental health and believes that they are an immediate danger to themselves this constitutes an emergency and there is a responsibility to inform relevant emergency service(s) initially and campus security/ Residential Life team to be informed immediately after.

**5. Support Pathway**

* Residential Life Team members will discuss concerns (emerging and existing) in a weekly briefing with Residential Life Team Leader/ Residential Services Manager.
* The level of commitment required for each case will be discussed and individual support plans formulated, which could include signposting or escalation to other agencies/ departments both within and external from the University of Northampton.
* Concerns will be triaged on the information submitted and reviewed methodically, whether submitted by a staff member, student or external third party.
* Once we are satisfied that all relevant safeguarding measures have been completed, Residential life team and accommodation team will discuss the matter of accommodation. If a panel finds the student not fit to reside and all reasonable support will be offered to ensure a smooth transition onwards (to private rent, back to home residence, hospital etc).

**6. Support Available for Students**

* Within the halls, students have access to wellbeing support provided by the Residential Life team. This service offers safety netting and signposting but is not intended to replace counselling and therapeutic services provided by member institutions or the NHS. The support from Residential Advisors is designed for occasional use only and is not suitable for dependent support sessions, crises or long-term support.
* We encourage all students/ staff to download our SafeZone app which communicates with our security team. Here reports can be submitted that are then followed up and are supported by geographics which verify a location.
* Where other factors can impact a student’s residential status, there are other departments in the university that can assist. These include the Financial Guidance Team, International Student Support and Accommodation teams which students can self-present to for advice and guidance or students can be referred/ signposted by alternative departments.
* The University do keep emergency accommodation available so if for any reason it is deemed unsafe for a student to stay in their contracted residence, they can be moved temporarily and a longer-term plan where deemed appropriate can be initiated once the initial concern/ emergency has concluded.

**6.1 Residential Life Advisors/ Officers (RLA/ RLO)**

Residential Life Advisors and Officers are staff that are employed by the University to help encourage and maintain a harmonious living environment for students who are living in university owned/ managed buildings.

**6.2 What RLA/ RLO’s can offer**

* Non-judgmental, empathetic listening for any worries or concerns.
* Sharing personal university life experiences and offering tips for common challenges.
* Helping students resolve low-level disagreements with other residents.
* Acting as a point of contact for emergencies or crises, assisting with contacting emergency services or professional help if necessary.
* Offering check-ins with students who have been unwell or distressed, for a short period after an incident.
* Advice on managing common student problems.
* Help with resolving conflicts in Halls.
* Guidance on navigating professional support options both within the university and externally.
* Assistance with creating personal emergency plans for temporary impairment.
* Facilitating workshops such as harm reduction.
* 1-1 engagement/coaching sessions.
* Guidance during moving-in and moving-out of halls.

**6.3 Residential Life Team Boundaries:**

* The team are not trained counsellors, therapists, or mental health advisors.
* They are not qualified to manage clinical risk, so complex or serious difficulties, including thoughts of self-harm or suicide, require professional healthcare or support services.
* They cannot offer intensive, frequent, or regular support for individuals needing extensive help.
* Specialised accommodation guidance for room transfers, contracts, and bespoke accommodation requests.
* Support for non-resident students.

**7. Support Procedure**

* When a student has reported the behaviour of another student, the University has the same duties and obligations to each of the students involved. We take all reasonable steps to make sure all parties are treated fairly through the process.
* Reporting parties will remain involved during the subsequent investigation. However, the extent of their involvement will depend on the unique circumstances of the case. Should it call for attendance at a hearing of any kind, or there is a lengthy multi agency investigation, the University will ensure support is in place for those involved and kept up to date as best they can.

**8. Recording of Information**

* Auditable records of all concerns discussed are kept and managed by professionals at the University. These include names, student numbers and a brief outline of the concerns raised.
* Records will be kept of the nature and outcome of cases, as well as the protected characteristics of students, so that recurring issues or issues related to equality and diversity are identified and addressed. All records will be managed in line with current data protection legislation.
* Monitoring will ensure that appropriate support mechanisms are in place for students, that staff are adequately trained and supported, that staff and students understand the procedure and that the procedure meets its aims.
* Authorised personnel are required to retain records of the cases overseen to provide summary information on this for inclusion in the Student Conduct, Complaints and Appeals annual report as required.

**9. Sharing of Information**

* Data protection legislation does not completely prevent University of Northampton from sharing information if it is deemed necessary to do so.
* This will be done on a case by case basis; carefully considering GDPR, our own Data Protection Policy and an individual’s right to privacy.
* On any occasion, the rationale and justification for sharing personal details with another agency will be mandatory and will be recorded. If this is done and found to be an inappropriate breach, then sanctions will be issued.
* Sharing of data in this respect should only be done if a person is believed to be at risk of harm and the details should only be shared with relevant agencies such as police/ social care who are likely to be involved in the incident or in the immediate aftercare provision.

**10)Related Policies**

These are some, but not all the University policies that are most likely to be used in conjunction with this Support to reside procedure. However all university policies and procedures can be located here**:-** [University Policies, Procedures and Regulations | UON (northampton.ac.uk)](https://www.northampton.ac.uk/about-us/governance-and-management/management/university-policies-procedures-and-regulations/)

**Student Code of Conduct:-** [Student Code of Conduct and General Student Regulations 2024-2025.pdf](file:///C:/Users/hlroche/Downloads/Student%20Code%20of%20Conduct%20and%20General%20Student%20Regulations%202024-2025.pdf)

**Student Disciplinary Policy:**- [Student Disciplinary Policy (1).pdf](file:///C:/Users/hlroche/Downloads/Student%20Disciplinary%20Policy%20(1).pdf)

**Health, Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy:** [Health Wellbeing and Fitness to Study Policy.pdf](file:///C:/Users/hlroche/Downloads/Health%20Wellbeing%20and%20Fitness%20to%20Study%20Policy.pdf)

**Student Mental Health Policy:**- [Mental Health Policy.pdf](file:///C:/Users/hlroche/Downloads/Mental%20Health%20Policy.pdf)

**Accommodation Term and Conditions of Residency:-** [Terms and Conditions of Residency 2024-25 final 19.2.24.pdf](file:///C:/Users/hlroche/Downloads/Terms%20and%20Conditions%20of%20Residency%202024-25%20final%2019.2.24.pdf)