



London Professional Academy

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| Title: | Student Support Policy |
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London Professional Academy (LPA) is committed to an ethos of equality and inclusivity, and aims to facilitate and promote positive health and wellbeing through the recognition and understanding of all relevant health conditions and disabilities. This is essential to our wider agenda to empower and transform lives through education. Where necessary, LPA encourages all students to seek help and support from the appropriate service(s) at the earliest possible opportunity.

This policy is designed to guide students to appropriate support, and to determine in a timely fashion what actions are needed where health, wellbeing or Fitness for Study concerns arise:

- Stage one refers to emerging concerns or low risk situations;
- Stage two refers to medium risk situations where concerns are ongoing;
- Stage three refers to high risk situations where a student's Fitness for Study may be in question.

1. DEFINITIONS, SCOPE AND PURPOSE

1.1 The Institution seeks to support all students to fulfil their potential and expects them to participate appropriately in Institution life as a student and a member of the LPA community. Appropriate participation demonstrates a student's Fitness for Study, which is defined as follows: students should be able to take an active part in and meet the requirements of their course, to live and work with others, and to conduct themselves in ways that do not have an adverse impact on other members of LPA and the local community.

1.2 Occasionally a student's circumstances or health may affect their own or others' ability to fulfil their potential. This policy and the accompanying explanatory notes describe the processes that LPA will follow in instances where this ability is in doubt and/or where associated levels of risk are unacceptable. This may be because of a student's extended absence, health condition, wellbeing concern or other circumstances that lead to an inability to progress in their programme, or that adversely affect others.

1.3 In an emergency, where it is believed that a student's health or wellbeing condition presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, the appropriate Emergency Services should be contacted. Members of the Senior Management Team (SMT), should be notified of the emergency as soon as possible. The Study and Wellbeing Review procedures



described below will be invoked subsequently as appropriate. The Appendix below provides further relevant information about dealing with emergencies.

1.4 Where a student's health or wellbeing condition results in inappropriate conduct such as abusive or threatening behaviour, or where others are put at unacceptable risk, this may result in immediate interruption from study on the authority of the appropriate SMT member or Principal. This would include a requirement for the student to leave LPA premises. Such situations would subsequently be dealt with by stage three of this policy (Fitness for Study).

1.5 Safeguarding and Prevent

LPA is committed to supporting and promoting the welfare of its students and is committed to the provision of a safe environment conducive to work, study and the enjoyment of a positive experience for all members of its learning community. LPA will take all safeguarding concerns, including suspicions and allegations of exploitation, radicalization, harm or abuse, seriously and will conduct a risk assessment as soon as possible.

If the concern is found to be valid, LPA will promptly make a referral to the relevant statutory authority. If you are concerned about the welfare of a student in relation to a safeguarding concern or suspicion of allegations of exploitation or harm, please contact the Safeguarding Team (Principal).

2. AIMS OF THE STUDY AND WELLBEING REVIEW POLICY

To ensure that students:

2.1 Can benefit from being members of the LPA community and can participate in all aspects of their study for the required period, with a reasonable chance of successfully obtaining the award for which they are registered.

2.2 Do not in any way prevent, hinder or disrupt the study or assessment activities of other students; staff in the discharge of their duties or academic pursuits; or visitors to LPA from carrying out their lawful business.

2.3 Do not, as a consequence of their required or necessary presence on site, present an unacceptable risk to the health or safety of themselves or others.

2.4 Are in a position to engage satisfactorily in any elements of study or assessment which take the form of placements, particularly those taking place in a professional and/or work-based setting.



3. KEY RESPONSIBILITIES

3.1 LPA has responsibilities in relation to the health, safety and wellbeing of all members of our community, including students, staff and visitors.

3.2 The Principal (or SMT) is responsible for the overall management and implementation of this policy and the accompanying procedures.

3.3 The day-to-day operation and administration of the policy will be undertaken by SMT and the Principal.

3.4 All staff are responsible for acting within the framework of this policy where there are concerns as outlined in section 1. above, or where a student welfare to a member of staff because of a significant concern.

3.5 Students are responsible for informing LPA about any changes to their ability to study or otherwise to engage safely and appropriately with others as a member of the LPA community. We recognize that there may be times when a student is unable to do this. Inability or refusal to do so may result in a student's study being interrupted, in accordance with this policy, until the student is able to demonstrate that they can re-engage appropriately with the Institution as a student. Requests to return to study must be made in writing to the Principal, and will be dealt with as outlined in below.

4. DATA PROTECTION AND CONFIDENTIALITY

4.1 LPA is governed by the Data Protection Act 1998 and will treat all personal information (including sensitive personal information relating to students' mental, physical health or personal circumstances) as confidential within the terms of the legislation. 4.2 Personal information about a student obtained under this policy and procedure will only be shared within LPA amongst those members of staff who need to know that information in order to offer the student appropriate support, to enable the operation of this policy and procedures or, where it is required, with accrediting professional, regulatory or statutory bodies.

4.3 The Institution may ask a student for his or her agreement to share personal information obtained under this policy and procedure with relevant professionals outside of the Institution in order to offer the student appropriate support. LPA will not normally share any personal information about a student without their agreement, but may do so in exceptional cases, where permitted by law.



5. ASSESSMENT OF RISK

5.1 A definition of risk and links to documents providing further guidance can be found in the Appendix below. Levels of risk will be assessed by members of LPA staff using the three-stage framework outlined below. Risk assessment will be undertaken on a case-by-case basis and in conjunction with other appropriate professionals where necessary, to ensure that relevant issues can be dealt with in a supportive, equitable and transparent fashion.

5.2 All staff are responsible to act under the terms of this policy if they become aware of risks arising from a student's health or wellbeing by alerting the Principal in the first instance.

6. STAGE ONE

Where concerns emerge about a student that appear to be low risk, a formal Student Support Meeting need not be called but discussion, information gathering and signposting actions should be taken as follows:

6.1 Concerns arising in academic contexts: the student should be invited by a member of teaching staff to discuss the concerns identified, possible solutions and relevant support available. The Principal must be informed and a contemporaneous record of the meeting must be made. This record must be held by LPA and shared appropriately.

6.2 Concerns arising in social contexts (e.g. on site, in the local area, or outside of course activities): the student should be invited by an appropriate member SMT to discuss the concerns identified, the possible solutions and relevant support available.

The Principal must be informed and a contemporaneous record of the meeting must be made. This record must be held by LPA and shared appropriately

6.3 Where concerns emerge about a student that appears to be low risk, a formal Student Support Meeting need not be called but discussion, information gathering and signposting actions should be taken as must be made. This record must be held by LPA and shared appropriately.

6.4 At such low risk meetings it should be made clear that it is the student's responsibility to inform LPA of any issues related to fitness for study. The explicit causes/instances for concern should be explained to the student, with clear examples provided. The student should be made aware of appropriate sources of academic and personal advice and support.



The student must be informed that a record of the meeting will be kept and that if concerns persist, a more formal meeting will be called.

6.5 If, at an informal meeting with the student, it becomes apparent that more serious concerns exist and that an informal approach will not resolve the situation, the student must be informed that a more formal meeting will be called as quickly as possible, and this must be reported immediately.

7. STAGE TWO

Stage Two involves more formal Student Support Meetings (SSMs) to address risks judged to be of medium level as follows: where an informal meeting with the student as defined in either 6.1 or 6.2 above (Stage One) has already been held but no improvements have occurred in relation to the situation identified. or; where issues arise which are judged to be too serious to be dealt with by a Stage One meeting. In these cases, an SSM should be organised to consider what additional assistance is appropriate. An SSM is a formal meeting organised; it will involve the student and appropriate members of SMT. A student may bring a person of their choosing (friend, member of a family etc.). A student will not be permitted to bring a legal representative to a meeting unless the decision is likely to exclude the student from professional registration permanently, without right to appeal, thereby preventing the student from following his or her intended career.

7.1 As part of Stage Two, the student will be asked to agree an action plan as a result of the SSM. This may include: a) requiring the student to attend weekly appointments with a nominated member of staff for regular monitoring; and b) requiring the student to engage with support services within LPA or from external professionals, such as the student's GP and/or other relevant medical and support services.

7.2 The Principal (or their nominee) will also set a date for review of the student's progress against the agreed action plan (normally after 15 working days) and will inform the student that inability or refusal to meet the conditions agreed will result in the need for a high risk meeting with the possibility of the student being interrupted until such time as they are able or prepared to re-engage appropriately with the Institution.

8. STAGE THREE (FITNESS FOR STUDY)

8.1 A situation will be judged high risk if previous interventions at Stage One or Stage Two have not been successful, or are no longer appropriate, or if Immediate action is required to



mitigate concerns about a student or their impact on others. In serious situations, a Stage Three meeting should be called to consider the student's Fitness for Study (FfS) directly without first enacting Stage One or Stage Two of this policy. All staff are responsible for informing the relevant person responsible, if they become aware of high-risk situations.

8.2 In exceptional circumstances, such as where there is deemed to be an urgent, unacceptable level of risk to the student or members of SMT or the Principal can immediately interrupt a student from their studies and require them to leave LPA premises as soon as possible, pending further investigation, and prior to the holding of a Stage Three meeting.

8.3 It is the responsibility of SMT or the Principal to appoint a suitable member of staff to act as Chair of a Stage Three meeting. Attendees will include academic and professional staff as necessary and appropriate to consider the case. LPA professional staff in attendance will act in an advisory capacity and not as advocates for the student. The student will normally be invited to attend the meeting. A student may bring a person of their choosing (friend etc.) to the meeting for support and are encouraged to seek advice from LPA. A student will not be permitted to bring a legal representative to a meeting unless the decision of the Panel is likely to exclude the student from professional registration permanently, without right to appeal, thereby preventing the student from following his or her intended career.

8.4 Guidance notes will be provided to students in advance of the meeting. These include information about what to expect in terms of the kind of room in which the meeting will be held, the format for the meeting, the likely attendees, and issues of confidentiality. Students will be informed that they can make representations to the Chair if they wish to object to the attendance of any members of staff. To minimize anxiety or distress, the Chair may consider restricting the number of staff in attendance at a meeting at any one time.

8.5 The meeting will be an evidence-based process, drawing upon expert professional judgement where appropriate, for example a registered health practitioner, a social worker, law enforcement or rehabilitation professional. Appropriate medical evidence may include a letter from the student's GP or a report from a clinical psychiatrist, psychologist or occupational health specialist. The Institution reserves the right to make decisions based on the full range of information available in each case and is not obliged to act upon the specific opinions or recommendations of any single professional. The Institution will also consider the matter in the light of its own previous experience in managing such situations.

8.6 The meeting may consider various options in relation to the student, including additional support strategies, a change in the mode of study, interruption from study, or a recommendation to the principal that the student be withdrawn permanently from LPA.



Where it is decided that a student should be interrupted from study, this will normally be for the remainder of the period of the course.

8.7 The decision of the meeting will be communicated to the student in writing, normally within 10 working days of the conference, by the Principal or nominee.

8.8 If it is deemed appropriate that the student should be interrupted from studies they will also be informed in writing of the general procedures for return to study below, and of any particular arrangements specific to their case.

9. IMPACT ON ACADEMIC PROGRESS

9.1 In cases where an action plan has been agreed as part of Stage One, Two or Three, continued failure to make academic progress, or to engage with the requirements of the course, may result in the decision of the award assessment board/LPA to interrupt or withdraw the student from the course directly.

10. APPEALS

Appeals against Stage 1, 2 or 3 decisions should be submitted in writing to the principal within 10 working days of the decision being notified to the student concerned. Appeals should be submitted in line with LPA Appeals Procedure (a) A student may submit an appeal on the following grounds; Material procedural irregularity or other administrative error; (b) Where there is new evidence which for good reason, was not available at the time that the decision was taken under the procedure. Appeals at Stage 1 or 2 will be considered by the Principal (or nominee). Stage 3 appeals will be considered by the director.

11. RETURN TO STUDY

11.1 Following any period of interruption from the Institution under these procedures, it may be appropriate for the student to return to resume their studies.

11.2 Each student's case depends on the specific circumstances but in all cases, return to study will be conditional upon satisfactory evidence of fitness for study. Evidence provided for this purpose could be from a registered health practitioner, a social worker, law enforcement or a rehabilitation professional who has enough knowledge of the student's circumstances to be able to make an informed statement about the student's fitness for study. Students may also be required to produce a reflective statement (of approximately



1000 words), or to complete an equivalent task, to assist LPA in making a decision about fitness to study. LPA reserves the right not to permit a return to study if the evidence provided is deemed insufficient to mitigate any perceived remaining risk.

11.3 The decision to permit a student to return to study will be made by the Principal and an academic tutor, who may impose such conditions as they deem appropriate to the relevant case (such as a return to study plan or a requirement for the student to attend regular review meetings).

11.4 In cases where a student has taken the decision independently to interrupt their studies, LPA reserves the right to utilize the return to study process to determine if appropriate support is in place where needed, and if a return to study can be approved.

APPENDIX

Defining Risk

Risk may be defined as the potential that a chosen action, choice of inaction or lack of consideration of a need for action will lead to an undesirable outcome. The notion implies that a choice that had or could have an influence on the outcome exists, or existed. In the context of this policy, the risk can be to the individual student or member of staff, to others that might be affected by a student's actions or inactions, or to LPA, including its reputation.