Cause for Concern

Guidance for staff who have a concern about the wellbeing of a student.

Anglia Ruskin University is committed to the wellbeing and safety of our students. Being alert to when a student is in difficulty and responding appropriately is an important part of ensuring wellbeing.

Our Cause for Concern procedure is part of a continuum of responses to concerns about our students which include:

- **Responding to emergency situations** – these procedures should be followed when you believe a student is at immediate risk of harm to themselves or others
- General responsibilities of staff to notice potentially vulnerable students and advise and guide them to appropriate support
- **Raising a formal Cause for Concern**

Our approach to student wellbeing and vulnerable students

Some students may experience difficulties during their time with us. These may include: academic, financial, physical, emotional and mental health problems. Students may also become vulnerable to harmful situations and behaviours.

Any student who may be at risk of harm to themselves or others is a vulnerable student. This may include: students with severe mental health problems; victims of crime or domestic violence; those at risk of committing crime or drug misuse; students at risk of being drawn into extremism or radicalisation or manipulative and coercive groups.

There are many sources of support for our students and many staff will have a role in providing initial advice and support or guiding and referring to specialist help when needed. Often students actively seek support as problems arise. Others may be
unwilling or unable to seek help when it is needed and may need to be encouraged or referred for support.

**General responsibilities of all staff for the wellbeing of our students**

All staff have a responsibility to the general wellbeing of our students. This involves:

Noticing signs of vulnerability such as changes in behaviour or a student becoming withdrawn.

Checking and discussing emerging concerns with others such as a line manager or a relevant member of staff in a specialist role (see below)

Sharing their concerns where appropriate by using the formal Cause for Concern procedure.

Raising a cause for concern is a supportive process that will help to ensure that a potentially vulnerable student receives the support they need.

Some staff have roles where they work closely with students or are likely to be aware of specific incidences or escalating concerns. Staff in roles such as: Personal Tutor; Course Leader; Residential Assistants; Chaplains, Student Services staff; Security staff, First Supervisor and the Student Union Advice Service have particular responsibilities for student welfare and support. These staff are responsible for:

- Knowing how to recognise signs of vulnerability
- Knowing the range of support services available
- Knowing how and when to guide and encourage students to use specialist support
- Knowing when and how to raise a formal Cause for Concern.

**Sources of information and advice**

Information, advice and training is available so that all staff, within the context of their role, can act appropriately to identify, respond and report concerns about students.

- [Support available through Student Services](#)
- [Understanding mental health and other wellbeing](#)
- [How the Counselling and Wellbeing Service can help](#)
- [How the Chaplaincy can help](#)

**Cause for Concern Guidelines**

Version 2.4
Approved by: Prevent Steering Group, 22nd March 2017
Review date: March 2019
Owner: Student Services.
• Responsibilities of personal tutors
• Signs of vulnerability to radicalisation
• Staff development sessions including Mental Health First Aid/Lite are available through HR.

The Cause for Concern procedure

Lead responsibility for wellbeing related concerns: Director of Student Services.

Tel:  3830 (Chelmsford)  2906 (Cambridge)

Follow-up actions will depend on the exact nature of the concern but are likely to involve contacting the student and arranging for appropriate support to be put in place. Where necessary, further procedures such as Fitness to Study will be used. A case-review meeting with staff from faculties, Residential Service; Chaplaincy or Security may be requested by Student Services to gather more information and assess risks.

In some cases support may involve external services, such as health services.

Where concerns suggest that a student is in danger of radicalisation, the Secretary and Clerk should be contacted and will advise and lead on the necessary actions as required by Prevent.