

Guide to Support Through Studies

What is the Support Through Studies Policy?

The Support Through Studies policy is intended to provide supportive procedures which can be used by staff of a Conservatoire School in the following circumstances:

- when a student's health, well-being and/or behaviour is, or appears to be at risk of, having a detrimental impact upon their studies and/or ability to cope with student life, and/or
- when a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour poses a wider risk to others, and/or has a detrimental impact on others.

In cases where a School has concerns that a student's health and well-being means they may not be able to meet the expectations and requirements of the training, the student may be referred into one of the routes guided by the Support through Studies policy. The overall purpose of the policy is to help students successfully complete their studies, by creating a joined-up conversation between the School and a student where the School can discuss with the student where they may need some support/additional support, and agree any necessary actions that both the student and the School will complete. In this way, both the student and the School should have a joint understanding of what is needed to help the student succeed in their studies.

What are the procedures?

The Support Through Studies Policy has the following procedures under which support may be managed:

PROCEDURE and RELEVANT SECTION OF POLICY	EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURE
<i>Informal procedures</i> Section 2.6	Initially, your School will consider whether the issue can be resolved informally (this will normally mean an informal agreement to make positive progress towards a resolving the difficulty). 'Informal frontline resolution' means that staff will try to address and resolve any issues of concern informally. However, this will not necessarily be appropriate in all cases, if the level of concern means that a more structured/formal approach to support is necessary. In these cases, one of the formal stages of the Support Through Studies procedures will normally be started progressed (please see below).

<p>Formal procedures</p> <p>GENERAL OVERVIEW</p> <p>Section 2.7</p>	<p>Where your School deems that informal procedures are not appropriate, they may instigate formal procedures. There are three parts to the formal procedures:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stage One: Emerging or Initial Concerns • Stage Two: Continuing and/or Significant Concerns • Stage Three: Highly Significant, Serious or Persistent Concerns (Case Conference)
<p>Formal procedures:</p> <p>STAGE ONE, Emerging or Initial Concerns</p> <p>Section 2.7 (and 3.2-3.4 of the procedures)</p>	<p>The School will designate a ‘Lead Contact’ for the case. This will normally be your course leader, or a member of School staff with an equivalent level of seniority.</p> <p>The ‘Lead Contact’ will have a conversation with you about the concerns your School has, and will discuss ways of resolving the situation including any action needed by you. Should you wish, you can be accompanied for this conversation by a member of staff for support.</p> <p>A written record of the Stage One conversation and outcome will be made. Your School may give you a copy of this, or you can request one.</p> <p>There are three potential outcomes to Stage One:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The matter is considered resolved and no further action is needed No further action will be taken • an action plan is agreed by the student and Lead Contact This may include referral to additional support services and will articulate expected actions, outcomes and timelines (for both parties) • The matter is referred directly to the next stage, or, in serious cases, to Stage Three This matter will be referred to Stage Two or Stage Three of the Support Through Studies policy.
<p>Formal Procedures: STAGE TWO, Continuing and/or significant concerns</p> <p>Section 2.7 (and 3.5-3.8 of the procedures)</p>	<p>Your School will designate the ‘Lead Contact’ for the case if this has not already been arranged under Stage One or Stage Three of the Support Through Studies procedures.</p> <p>At Stage Two, the Lead Contact and another member of the senior staff of the School will have a meeting with you which outlines the issues (which may be continuing problems). The focus of the meeting will be on finding an agreed strategy for managing the situation and a reasonable timeframe for seeing improvement.</p> <p>There are four potential outcomes to Stage Two:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new action plan, or further action plan, is agreed upon This may include referral to internal/external support services. A specific date will be set for a review of the action plan.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The student decides that they wish to interrupt studies and intermits for a period If you interrupt/intermit your studies, the School will review your case in order to ensure when an appropriate time to return might be. They may need you to provide information and/or undertake a review with them before they can be satisfied that it is appropriate for you to return to your studies. Your School will also look to identify any transition arrangements and support for you that might be necessary. • The student is made aware of consequences if there is no improvement If there is no improvement, the matter will normally be escalated to the next stage (ultimately, if there is no improvement within a reasonable timeframe the School may need to withdraw you from your studies) • The case is referred directly on to Stage Three of the procedure The Lead Contact and senior member of staff who have conducted the Stage Two meeting determine whether there is a need to escalate the case to Stage Three. This decision might not take place immediately, for example, where an Action Plan has been agreed with you, the decision might be made once a review of progress with the Action Plan has taken place. <p>More than one of the above outcomes may occur at the same time as a result of a Stage 2 Support Through Studies meeting.</p>
<p>Formal Procedures: STAGE THREE, Case Conference: Highly Significant, Serious or Persistent Concerns</p> <p>Section 2.7 (and 3.8-3.21 of the procedures)</p>	<p>If not already designated via Stage One or Stage Two of this procedure, the School will designate a 'Lead Contact' for the case.</p> <p>If the case is considered to be of serious or critical concern (e.g. where the student is deemed to pose a risk either to themselves and/or to others), or if there has been no satisfactory resolution of the problem(s) or necessary change in behaviour, the Lead Contact, will request that a Case Conference Panel be convened.</p> <p>The membership of the Case Conference panel will include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • At least one member of the School's Senior Management Team, who will act as the Chair of the Panel • The Lead Contact • A member of Conservatoire staff responsible for student welfare and support, either from your School or from another Conservatoire School <p>In addition, as required and appropriate, the Panel may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an individual (external to the School) with specialist expertise relevant to the case (e.g. a psychologist/GP/appropriate health worker)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the student’s tutor • another member of staff, either from the School or from Shared Services, with specialist expertise relevant to the case. <p>There are several potential outcomes to Stage Three:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Referral back to Stage One or Stage Two The respective procedures at either stage will then be invoked. b) Emergency Action Plan A specified review date will be set. c) Enhanced Action Plan A specified review date will be set. d) Required interruption of studies This will be for a specified period with a specified review date, where appropriate including an Action Plan specifying expected remedial actions. e) Required suspension from the programme This will be for a specified period with a specified review date, with conditions set which, if not met, will normally result in a withdrawal of student status. f) Required exclusion from certain aspects of the programme This could also be exclusion from certain areas of the School. g) Withdrawal of student status This would be on the basis of a finding on the balance of probabilities that the student will not succeed with their studies for one or more reasons that fall within the scope of this policy.
<p>REQUEST FOR AN APPEAL</p> <p>Section 4 of the procedures</p>	<p>If you have been referred to a Case Conference Panel and the decision of the Panel under Stage Three of these procedures is to either suspend you from your studies, or discontinue you from your programme of study, you have the right of appeal against that decision.</p> <p>Appeals must be made under one of the stated grounds (see Section 4.5 of the Procedures), and must be submitted within the deadline (i.e. it must be submitted within 21 days of formal written notification of the Stage Three Case Conference Panel decision). This means you have 21 days from the date of the letter you receive from the Case Conference Panel that informs you of the Panel’s decision. Appeals received after this deadline will not normally be accepted.</p> <p>If your appeal request meets at least one of the grounds, a Support Through Studies Appeal will be organised. The Panel will review whether the original decision by the Case Conference Panel should stand, or be replaced with a new decision.</p>

	<p><i>I have not been suspended or withdrawn but I disagree with the Case Conference Panel's decision. Can I appeal?</i></p> <p>Where the decision of the Case Conference Panel is neither to suspend you nor withdraw you, you do not have the right to appeal that decision. This is because the Panel have been able to reach a decision that should allow you to complete your studies. However, if you do not accept the decision of the Panel, you can formally notify the Case Conference Panel that this is your decision.</p> <p>To formally notify the Panel that you do not accept their decision, you should:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) write to the Secretary of the Panel within 7 days of the date of formal written notification of the Panel's decision, to formally notify the Panel that you do not accept the Panel's decision; b) In this written notification, you should also provide the reason(s) why you do not accept the Panel's decision; c) You should also outline any terms or action to which they would agree. <p>On receipt of formal written notification as above that you do not agree with the Panel's decision, your case will be resubmitted to the Panel for further consideration. You may be requested to attend another meeting of the Panel, or the Panel may determine that it has all the relevant information from you that it needs and therefore it can meet without needing you to attend. The Panel will review your case, together with any reasons you have provided explaining why you do not accept its original decision.</p>
<p><i>SUPPORT THROUGH STUDIES APPEAL PANEL</i></p> <p>Section 9 (and 4 of the procedures)</p>	<p>If the decision of the Support Through Studies Case Conference Panel is that you are suspended or withdrawn from your studies and you choose to appeal against this decision, an appeal will initially be reviewed by the Support Through Studies Appeal Adjudicator (this will be a senior member of staff from the Conservatoire Central Office or from another Conservatoire School).</p> <p>The appeal will either be found to be upheld or not upheld.</p> <p>If your appeal is upheld:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> d) the original decision may be modified or replaced with a new decision e) the original decision may stand as it is the most appropriate outcome, or f) the original decision may be quashed) and the case be referred back to the original Case Conference Panel (a new/further panel will be held). <p>If your appeal is not upheld, the original Case Conference Panel decision will remain and you will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter (see below).</p>

Completion of Procedures

Once all internal procedures have been concluded, you will be issued with a Completion of Procedures letter (see Section 5 of the procedures). The letter will advise of the option for making an application to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), which operates an independent scheme for the review of student complaints. Students can request a Completion of Procedures letter at an earlier point in the process, however, should they wish. To request a Completion of Procedures, students should contact the Quality Team in the Conservatoire on qualityoffice@cdd.ac.uk.

Staff who have any procedural enquiries, or are seeking advice and/or guidance on the Support Through Studies policy and procedure, should contact the Quality Team in the Conservatoire.

FAQs

Below are a set of frequently asked questions to help you better understand the Support Through Studies policy and procedures. If you have any other questions please contact the Quality Team in the Conservatoire at qualityoffice@cdd.ac.uk.

When might the Support Through Studies Policy be used?

Each application of the Policy will be based on individual circumstances. The following list provides examples of situations when the Policy may be applied, but should not be considered exhaustive:

- The student discloses difficulties relating to substance misuse, alcohol or drug problems or other personal circumstances and may need additional support;
- A student has disclosed a disability, and reasonable adjustments and appropriate support are accordingly in place but the student experiences difficulties in meeting the requirements of the programme;
- A third party such as another student, staff member, or healthcare professional reports concerns about a student's health or personal circumstances which are having a negative impact on their ability to engage with their studies;
- Multiple complaints are received about a student from other students and/or staff for which the underlying reasons indicate concerns which might most appropriately be addressed under this Policy;
- The student is in serious and continued breach of the attendance policy as a result of health/other circumstances preventing them from engaging properly with their studies;
- A student behaves in a way that would usually be considered a disciplinary matter but there is reason to believe this may be due to underlying cause(s) which should be considered under this Policy;
- A student continuously makes applications for mitigating circumstances or other adjustments stating health issues, or what is thought could be the result of an underlying physical or mental health problem, which give cause for concern and/or indicate they may need support under this Policy.

I'm a student and I'm worried about a fellow student, what should I do?

If you are a student and you have concerns about a fellow student, you should contact a staff member. It is probably best to contact your tutor/student support staff member, to discuss your concerns confidentially (though you may contact other staff members should you prefer). You will not be expected to manage the situation yourself or make a referral, and you should seek advice and support as soon as you can to ensure that the School can offer the best possible support.

I've told a member of staff that I'm worried about another student – what happens now?

Where a student raises concerns about a fellow student with a member of staff, the member of staff should also check with the concerned student that they are okay and direct the concerned student to the various avenues of support in the School.

I am a student worried about my own ability to engage with my training, what should I do?

If you are a student and you have concerns about your own wellness or fitness to be in study or training, you may request additional structured support under these procedures. Please get in touch with a member of staff in your School.

What would a Stage Three Case Conference involve?

You will be informed in writing of the Case Conference and its purpose. You will be given as much notice of the case conference as is both possible and reasonable, with at least 7 days normally being given. You may be invited to attend the Case Conference, in which case you can bring a friend, family member or other person for support. You are entitled to be accompanied by a representative, or be represented in absentia (where there is a good reason, and this is agreed by the Chair of the Panel). You will be able to submit a written statement and/or supporting documents in advance of the meeting. There may be a reason why you are not invited to the Case Conference and this will be explained to you in writing, along with the reason(s).

Can I appeal against a decision of a Support Through Studies Stage Three Case Conference?

The Support Through Studies Policy allows you to appeal a decision to suspend you or remove your student status provided it meets one of the grounds in Section 4.5 of the procedures. Your appeal submission will be initially reviewed to see whether there are sufficient grounds for your case to proceed to a hearing. If there are, an Appeal Panel will be arranged and you will normally be invited to attend. If you are not invited to attend, the reason(s) will be explained to you in writing. and/or provide evidence (see Section 8 of the Policy). If you do not feel you meet the grounds for an appeal but still wish to take the matter further, you have the right to request a Completion of Procedures letter (see Section 9 of the Policy).

How do I make an appeal?

You should complete and submit an appeal by using a 'Support Through Studies Appeal Form' (Appendix 2 of the Support Through Studies policy and can be found at <http://www.cdd.ac.uk/policies/student-related-policies/>), to the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Conservatoire.

What is the deadline for submitting an appeal?

You must submit your appeal within 21 days of formal written notification of the decision of the Stage 3 Case Conference Panel. If you do not submit it by this deadline, your appeal may be rejected for being out of time, without being considered. If you fail to state the ground(s) upon which you are appealing, your appeal may also be summarily rejected.

Can I complain about the Support Through Studies process?

If you wish to make a complaint about the Support Through Studies process, you should follow the Student Complaints Procedure (which can be found at <http://www.cdd.ac.uk/policies/student-related-policies/>). The Student Complaints Procedure cannot, however, be used to contest or appeal a decision made under Stage Three (Case Conference) of these procedures; if you wish to contest a decision taken by the Case Conference Panel at Stage 3, the appeal procedures should be used (see the table above on page 4 of this guide).

What can I do if my appeal is unsuccessful?

If your appeal is rejected by the Support Through Studies Appeal process, you have the right to take your case to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA), which is the ombudsman for student complaints in Higher Education (see Section 9 of the policy). Following the outcome of your appeal (whether successful or not), the Conservatoire will issue you with a Completion of Procedures (CoP) letter, and you will have 12 months from the date of your CoP letter in which to lodge a case with the OIA. Visit <http://www.oiahe.org.uk/> for more information.

FAQs for staff

I'm a staff member who has had a student report concerns about another student to me – what should I do?

In the first instance, you should To report such concerns on behalf of a student, you should refer the matter on to a member of your School's Senior Management Team. Where a student has reported concerns to you as a member of staff and you are of the view that there is no such concern which may impact on the student's fitness to study or may present a risk of harm to themselves and/or others, a referral should still be made; however the staff member may report this view to a Senior Manager at the time of making the referral so it may be taken into account.

I'm a member of staff and I'm worried about a student, what should I do?

If you are a member of staff and you need to report concerns regarding a student's ability to undertake or engage with their studies, then you should notify your School's Support Through Studies coordinator. If you are unsure who your Support Through Studies coordinator is, check with either a member of your School's Senior Management Team, or a member of your School's Student Support staff. The 'Lead Contact' for the case will then be designated and it will be determined whether the case should be referred into Stage 1, Stage 2 or Stage 3 of the Support Through Studies procedures. The 'Lead Contact' will normally be the student's course leader or equivalent, or a member of School staff with an equivalent level of seniority.

How do I find out who the Support Through Studies Coordinator is in my School?

You should contact your School Student Support Team or a member of Senior Management. It is important that staff report any potential Support Through Studies concerns to the School's Support Through Studies coordinator in the first instance, to ensure a joined-up approach and that there is no inadvertent duplication of process.