

King's College London

Student of Concern Procedure

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1. Purpose and Scope

- 1.1 King's College London has identified the need for a clear referral pathway for situations where serious concerns about the health, welfare or wellbeing of a student have arisen. This is where there is a risk to the safety of an individual, from themselves or another person. For more detail, see Section 2, below.
- 1.2 The SoC pathway is primarily for concerns relating to significant mental health and welfare needs and/or situations where a student may need multi-team support to address complex issues relating to their mental or physical health and welfare.
- 1.3 SoC's purpose is to facilitate & coordinate internal and/or external support to appropriate services for students at the time of the referral. SoC is not a counselling, therapy or other clinical intervention service although may liaise with services which provide this support to students. SoC is not an emergency service and, in cases where there are urgent concerns for the safety and/or welfare of individuals, the College emergency procedures (set out in 6.2, below) should be followed.
- 1.4 SoC is not a register and Student Services do not keep a 'Student of Concern' or 'risk register' for students referred to services via SoC.
- 1.5 Although SoC is a Third Party referral service, student engagement with support increases significantly where individuals are aware that a SoC referral is being made on their behalf. Where it does not compromise the student's safety or that of others, it is strongly recommended that the student is informed of the decision to make a referral as this impacts directly on the likelihood of positive engagement and outcomes resulting from any interventions made. For resources to support staff in having conversations with students and signposting, see the [FWA resource on Wellbeing & Welfare Support for Students](#).
- 1.6 Information on what happens when a Student of Concern referral is made as well as other information on consent, particularly considerations for students under 18, and advice on staff support can be found on the main [Student of Concern page](#).

2. Definition of ‘Student of Concern’

- 2.1 The SoC process is a specialist mental health and welfare triage & advice service for situations where serious concerns about the health, welfare or wellbeing of a student have arisen, as well as a liaison point into other King’s Services. These include those within Faculty Welfare & Wellbeing Services, Disability Support & Inclusion (‘DS&I’), Residences, Visa & International Services, Money, Housing & Advice and Student Conduct & Appeals (SC&A). (See Section 8, below for links to these services).
- 2.2 The SoC process also facilitates, where needed, liaison with external services including GPs, Home Treatment Teams, Community Mental Health Teams and/or Social Services. Liaison with external services is mainly for students with complex mental health needs/conditions who are open to, or may need specialist or long-term mental health support in, the NHS or in the community or when there are safeguarding concerns. It is not possible for King’s directly to support all levels of student need, so external referrals are often appropriate and necessary.
- 2.3 If a student has an open registration with the Counselling Service, CMHS (not the SoC team) will lead on the appropriate clinical decision regarding the student’s mental health support and risk management, as CMHS would have the most complete information regarding the student. However, if there are welfare or safeguarding concerns, these would be discussed with the SoC Welfare team who would advise on any issues which need support or further investigation.
- 2.4 The SoC pathway is not a crisis or emergency referral service and for students at imminent risk of serious harm (from self or other) and in these circumstances, staff and students should follow university guidance on [accessing crisis support](#)
- 2.5 The SoC pathway is for where there are significant, but non-emergency, concerns about an individual’s immediate health or welfare. (See 2.7, below).
- 2.6 If there are not immediate concerns to a student’s health or welfare, a referral to the [Faculty Wellbeing Advisors \(‘FWA’\)](#) may be appropriate in the first instance. If needed, they will then raise a SoC referral or help the student access the appropriate service.
- 2.7 Although the SoC pathway can support with liaison into other student services, it is not intended for non-urgent single service referrals relating to, for example, Visa expiry or non-compliance issues, Mental Health DS&I, Counselling & Mental Health or SC&A concerns. Where appropriate, students should be encouraged to self-refer directly to these services for appropriate support.
- 2.8 Examples of a ‘Student of Concern’ may include:
- A student who expresses suicidal thoughts or plans which they have not yet, or do not imminently intend to act upon.
 - A student who reports a recent suicide attempt.

- A student who informs a member of staff (or a member of staff becomes aware) that they are in hospital following a physical or mental health emergency or episode.
- A student who has sent/is sending staff or fellow students communication with disturbing, threatening or otherwise concerning content.
- A student appears to be experiencing a mental health deterioration, expresses feelings of hopelessness or describes/appears to be struggling to keep up with their course.
- A student reports an urge to self-harm, a recent incident of self-harm or a situation where they have been exposed to significant risk of harm due to mental health or other vulnerabilities.
- A student is known or believed to be at imminent risk of homelessness.
- A student who is believed to be vulnerable to being drawn into violence or terrorist activity.
- A student who is believed to be vulnerable to Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage.
- A student who is understood to be at risk due to domestic or intimate partner violence or sexual assault.
- A student who presents as paranoid or excessively concerned about harm from identified or non-identified others (in person or online).
- A student at significant risk of harm due to financial deprivation.

In all the examples above, if the situation is an emergency or crisis where risk of harm is immediate, referral to appropriate external agencies or statutory services should be made first, and a referral to SoC completed once the student is safely under the care of an appropriate crisis team. This may include encouraging the student to present at A&E, calling 111 or, where necessary, 999.

For non-emergency support or referral pathways, please see Section 8, below. This may be appropriate where, for example, a student is at risk of homelessness or financial hardship or needs support or advice in relation to their visa, but the situation is not imminent and does not need to be co-ordinated by the Student of Concern Team.

3. Student of Concern Referral & Pathway Management

3.1 The SoC process facilitates liaison with external services where appropriate including GPs, Home Treatment Teams or Community Mental Health Teams. Liaison with external services is mainly for students with complex mental health needs/conditions who are open to or may need specialist or long-term mental health support in the NHS or in the community. External referrals are often appropriate and necessary to ensure the student receives the appropriate level of care.

3.2 The SoC pathway is multi-disciplinary and overseen by the Student of Concern Management Group ('SoC MG') which meets weekly (except on College closure days) to discuss referrals and consider any appropriate further actions required. (See Section 4, below re. timeframes for action once a SoC referral is raised). This group includes:

Associate Director, Advice, Wellbeing & Welfare (AWW)

Associate Director, SC&A

Associate Director, Counselling & Mental Health Support (CMHS) *

Associate Director, DS&I

Heads of CMHS - Head of SoC/Mental Health Advice ('SoC/MHA'), Head of Counselling and Head of Mental Health & Counselling Outreach & Training)

Head, SC&A

Senior Coordinators, SC&A

Head of Mental Health DS&I

Head of Welfare

Head of Money, Housing & Advice

Head of Student Wellbeing & Welfare

Residences Wellbeing Manager

Head of Visa & International Student Advice

(**Chair*)

4. Practical Application of Procedure

- 4.1 [Guidance](#) on making a SoC referral for Personal Tutors can be found on King's internal webpages, as can the [Student of Concern referral form](#).
- 4.2 If a referrer wishes to be updated on the case, they should indicate this in the 'What support is Requested' section of the referral form. The type of update may depend on the level of risk or complexity of the student's situation. It may, therefore, be a brief general update or confirmation that the appropriate team is working with the student to resolve the issues raised, or it may be that the case requires a full report on the assessed levels of risk posed to the student, to others, or to the organisation, along with a summary of action taken to date and recommendations for next steps. (See Templates 7.1 and 7.2, below).
- 4.3 Once the referral has been made, SoC Welfare or Mental Health Advisors will reach out to the student within one working day. The team leading on primary contact will depend on the nature of the concern raised.
- 4.4 If the student does not respond, a further attempt to contact them will be made by the relevant team.
 - 4.4.1 The length of time given before any repeated attempts to contact the student will be in reference to the potential risks identified. This could, therefore, be within one working day of the first attempt or at any point during the following week.
 - 4.4.2 If there are serious concerns about welfare or safety and the student is not responding to attempts to reach out to them, the SoC Welfare or Mental Health Advisors may ask Residential colleagues (for students in college accommodation) or the Police (for students not in college accommodation, not in residence or where students are not responding to Residential colleagues) to carry out a Welfare check.
 - 4.4.3 If it is considered that this may be an emergency situation, it may at this stage be appropriate to call the student's Emergency Contact in relation to either a student's Vital Interests, or a Serious Concern.
<https://www.kcl.ac.uk/assets/policyzone/governancelegal/safeguarding-procedure-7.pdf>
 - 4.4.4 If there are not serious concerns relating to safety or welfare, the SoC team will initiate the follow up after an appropriate amount of time but not make multiple attempts to contact the student. Without these serious concerns, and where no response is received the teams will attempt to contact the student twice before closing the referral.
- 4.5 In cases where the student does not engage with the Welfare Lead or Mental Health Advisors, the referrer will be updated by the SoC Administrator if this was requested on the original referral. The Faculty DSO/SEM or other nominated person will also be notified that the student has not engaged with SoC so that they can consider any actions from a Faculty perspective (including, where appropriate, a Support for Study Stage 1 or 2 meeting).

- 4.5.1 A decision will be made whether to escalate concerns to the SoC Management Group for multi-disciplinary discussion and planning, or to close the referral at this stage.
 - 4.5.2 Cases appropriate for SoC MG may be where there are identified or potential issues which may require a co-ordinated multi-disciplinary approach to help resolve.
 - 4.5.3 SoC MG discussion may also be appropriate where the student concerns are such that referral to Support for Study Stage 3 or discussion relating to consideration of emergency interruption, withdrawal or suspension are indicated.
 - 4.5.4 A further category of cases may be escalated to SoC MG to ensure appropriate oversight of case management, for example, where there are concerns relating to organisational or reputational risk.
- 4.6 In cases where the student has chosen not to engage and there are not believed to be serious concerns relating to imminent harm to self or others, a SoC referral will not be followed up again at this stage, but the student referred can contact the SOC team at any point in the future. The DSO/SEM or other nominated person from Faculty will be notified that a SoC was raised for this student but that they have not engaged at this time.
- 4.7 Should further concerns arise in future, another SoC referral may be appropriate.

5. Student of Concern Actions & Outcomes:

5.1 Where further action may be required or recommended, reports on assessed risks (where known) to self or others, actions taken and recommendations for next steps are sent to referrers or other staff members (e.g. the Student Experience Managers 'SEM's) by the SoC MG. The content of these will be subject to considerations about confidentiality and sharing only information necessary to inform decisions on how to support students and/or reduce risks posed to self or other. (Please see templates 7.1 and 7.2 below). The FWA team will be copied into these responses in order that they can assist Faculty and the student with any concerns arising. These recommendations may include, but are not limited to, advice:

- That a Support for Study Stage 2 or Stage 2(S) meeting (See section 6.6, below) is convened with Faculty, the SEM and any other team who may be relevant to supporting the student's current situation (e.g. MH DS&I or Residences);
- That Faculty proceed with normal academic processes as all support available is being provided to the student for mental health, welfare or other concerns and the issue is primarily one relating to questions of academic progression;
- That the student be considered for Support for Study Stage 3 on the basis of significant or complex concerns relating to their current situation, particularly where appropriate outcomes may include putting in place conditions for the student to continue, or to consider potential interruption or withdrawal from study; and/or
- That the student be referred to Occupational Health for an assessment as to their fitness to practice, or in relation to support for study, and any recommendations as to adjustments for the university to consider.
- That the University consider reputational risks posed by the student or the impact of the student's mental health, welfare or behaviours on staff wellbeing.

In exceptional situations, the SoC MG may also make recommendation that the university consider additional measures to increase the student's safety and welfare, such as:

- Supporting a non-standard hardship application due to circumstances relating to the risks of ongoing harm to the student;
- Supporting emergency accommodation requests on a temporary basis to enable the student to access statutory services for mental health or social care assessments; and
- Recommending that Student Emergency Contact Procedure be actioned.

6. Related Processes:

6.1 Report & Support

Report & Support is an online platform where staff and students can report concerning behaviour and access appropriate support. This service is for all members of the King's community and is available to report concerns regarding behaviour on campus or in King's residences, but also experiences outside of King's. Members of the public can also report behaviours but our ability to support them is more limited.

[Report + Support - King's College London \(kcl.ac.uk\)](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/report-support)

A staff member making a report via this online service may also choose to make a referral to Student of Concern if it is felt that there are significant (non-emergency) issues relating to a student's immediate welfare or wellbeing. Alternatively, if appropriate, one of the Report & Support team may make a referral to SoC if concerns arise which it is felt are best managed by a multi-team approach, if there are serious and immediate mental health, welfare and/or housing and money issues, or if the concerns are appropriate for oversight by the SoC MG.

6.2 Emergency situations

If there is an immediate risk of harm to self, staff should refer to university information on crisis support.

[Crisis support: need help now | Counselling & Mental Health Support | King's College London \(kcl.ac.uk\)](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/crisis-support)

Once the student is under the care of emergency services, a SoC referral should be completed with information relating to the incident and actions taken. The appropriate SoC team will then attempt to contact the student to follow up.

6.3 Referral to Counselling & Mental Health Support

Where a student is presenting with mental health concerns that are non-urgent, it may be appropriate to signpost them to [Counselling and Mental Health Support](https://www.kcl.ac.uk/counselling-and-mental-health-support) (CMHS) or to consider other services available to support them, within King's Pyramid of Support such as the Faculty Wellbeing Advisors (FWAs).

Usually, if a student has registered with CMHS and seeing a counsellor, the SoC MHA team will notify the counsellor that a SoC has been raised but unless there are new concerns which may alter the treatment plan, the MHAs will not make contact.

6.4 Emergency Contact Procedure

Where there are concerns about a student's immediate safety, or other serious concerns about their wellbeing, it may be appropriate to consider contacting their [Emergency Contact](#).

6.5 Single pathway, non-urgent referrals

6.5.1 Students may be best supported in non-urgent situations by self-referring to individual student services. For example; [money, housing & advice, immigration and visa advice, faculty wellbeing, or disability.](#)

6.5.2 Where a student is worried about an issue but the concern is non-urgent (in line with the types of concerns set out in 2.7 above), self-referral to one of the above student services is likely to be the most appropriate approach.

6.6 Support for Study (SfS)

Support for Study is separate from SoC but there is often overlap and the two teams work closely together. [King's College London - Support for Study Policy \(kcl.ac.uk\)](#)

6.6.1 SfS Stage 2

If a SoC referral is made, once the issues have been assessed by the teams involved and appropriate support is in place, a recommendation may be made by the SoC MG for a SfS Stage 2 meeting. This is for the student and Faculty to discuss any adjustments, concerns or other issues arising in relation to academic study which may be impacting on the student, or be impacted by current difficulties being experienced.

For a Stage 2 SfS meeting, if this is the recommendation of the SoC MG, a report will be sent to the Faculty Student Experience Manager (SEM) setting out the reasons a SfS Stage 2 meeting is being recommended. If appropriate, one of the student services teams can attend to support. This may be suggested in the SoC MG's report to the SEM, or the SEM can contact one of the teams directly to request attendance from, for example, Residences, CMHS, Disability etc.

6.6.2 SfS Stage 3

In some instances, the SoC MG may recommend that a SfS Stage 3 is organised in order to look at what actions are needed. This is usually where it is felt that there is a need for a discussion with the student together with both Faculty and Student Services or other university staff, to look at the concerns, the existing support in place and consider whether there are further actions or resources required and available to enable the student to safely continue with their studies.

In this instance, the SoC MG will send a report to Faculty and to the SfS team, setting out the reasons for the recommendation that a SfS Stage 3 meeting takes place, including: an assessment of risk to the student, to others and/or to the university; detail on the concerns raised; information on actions taken to date in support of the student from the respective teams.

The SfS team will co-ordinate the meeting and any appropriate student services team members will attend to support Faculty and the student in the discussions and planning.

6.7 Misconduct

Issues regarding student [misconduct](#) (academic or non-academic) are overseen by the Student Conduct & Appeals team (SC&A).

For some students, situations can arise where there are concerns about mental health risks, alongside issues arising in regard to their conduct; for example, where a student is behaving in ways which may be in contravention of the University's [Bullying and Harassment Policy](#)

This can be difficult as there is the need to balance ensuring as much as is possible can be done to ensure the student's safety, whilst also preserving the safety and wellbeing of others within the community.

However, it is important to ensure that concerns about a student's conduct are dealt with expediently, as not acting on these due to mental health concerns can cause situations to escalate, potentially increasing the risk of harm to both the student and others. Often, there are delays due to fear that addressing conduct issues whilst the student is unwell will escalate the situation.

As such, it is important that the approach in such cases will be risk-based and focused on enabling a resolution of issues arising.

The following guidance is to help where this situation arises:

1. If you have not already done so, raise as a [Student of Concern](#) (SoC) providing information on the dual behaviour or conduct issues and mental health concerns.
2. The Student of Concern MHA (SoC/MHA) Team will action this referral with a focus on understanding and, where applicable, minimising the risk posed by the student to self or others. The initial actions of the SoC/MHA intervention will be to:
 - a. Make contact with the student to understand the current level of risk, and ensuring risk of immediate harm to self or others is minimised;
 - b. Engage with the student to consider what support needs can be met by the University; and/or
 - c. Assess whether there are potentially support needs which require referral to statutory services (or signposting the student to local services if overseas).
3. SoC/MHA will always refer students to Statutory Mental Health services if it is felt that their current presentation exceeds the level of support that can be safely offered by King's.
4. A referral to external services and/or communication with the student's emergency contact may also be made if the student does not respond to the SoC/MHA team and concerns are sufficient to indicate a need for crisis involvement.

5. Through the SoC Management Group, the SoC/MHA team will liaise with any other teams whose input is important to reduce the risk to self or others; for example, those supporting students' safeguarding, welfare and wellbeing, including within King's residences.
6. Once satisfied that any immediate risk to the student's safety has been appropriately understood and stabilised, the Student Conduct & Appeals Team (SC&A) will consider the potential conduct concerns and advise Faculty or any other teams impacted of actions to be taken.
7. SC&A will action the concerns based on levels of risk to others and to the organisation. This may include:
 - a. Recommending that emails from the student are forwarded to a single point of contact;
 - b. Recommending that disciplinary action be taken against the student; or
 - c. Any other action deemed proportional and appropriate.
8. The SC&A and the SoC/MHA team, along with any other services within the SoC Management Group will continue to work together to ensure that any action regarding conduct is pursued within the context of risks posed to the student or others.
9. Where there is potentially a reputational risk, the SoC Management Group will notify the Communications Team and/or Senior Leadership.
10. The SoC Management Group will provide a response the original referrer which will include actions taken and any recommendations for supporting the student going forward.

7. Templates

7.1 Student of Concern Management Group Update Report

Student of Concern Management Group Update Report	
Student ID and initials:	
Date of referral to SoC:	
Date of SoC Management Discussion:	
Undergraduate/Postgraduate:	
Faculty:	
Referrer:	
Primary Concern:	
Secondary/other concerns:	
Update to:	

Summary:

- Risk:**
 - Self:
 - Other:
 - Organisational:
- Specific concerns raised in SoC:**
(Delete as applicable)
Accommodation in Residences:
Mental Health:
Financial Hardship:
Academic Studies:
Other
- Recommendations:**
 - XX
 - XX

4. Summary of Issues Raised and Actions:			
Issue	Information	Action	Team/ Individual
Accommodation			
Mental Health			
Possible complaints by student			
Welfare (General)			
Academic Studies			
Applicable Processes (S&P etc)			

7.2 Notification of Student of Concern (to Faculty)

**Student of Concern Management Group
Notification of Student of Concern**

Student ID and initials:	
Date of referral to SoC:	
Date of SoC Management Discussion:	
Undergraduate/Postgraduate:	
Faculty:	

This is to inform you that the above student has been referred to Student of Concern and their case discussed at the SoC Management Group.

They are receiving support from [insert team(s)] to help address the concerns raised.

We are not able to share all the details of the discussion but wanted to let you know that a referral has been made, in case you had concerns about this [student](#) and you wanted to speak with your Faculty Welfare and Wellbeing Advisor.

If so, please contact [FWWA] [email etc?]

Kind regards,

Student of Concern Management Group

7.3 Sharing of Information with Security (Out of Hours)

Out of Hours - Student of Concern Information for King's Security Teams

There will be occasions when dealing with your case work, you may need to call upon the support of the security team for help. This may involve but not limited to:

- Checking to see if a student has been on or is on campus
- Providing support to the police or other emergency services if you have asked for welfare checks to be conducted of an individual
- Waiting with a student until the arrival of an ambulance

To ensure the task you are asking is something that security can assist with, often the security team will require additional information either of the circumstances, any risks to the student or their own staff and how best to approach or deal with the student based on your knowledge of the case.

To assist this process there are two steps that must be followed:

- 1) Please call in the first instance Cliff Law Head of Security (07584 145667) or in his absence Fiona Elliot Associate Director CSS (07748 622406) for an initial discussion
- 2) Having made the phone call please complete the following information sheet and then send to Cliff Law (clifford.law@kcl.ac.uk) or Fiona Elliot (fiona.elliott@kcl.ac.uk) who will share to the relevant security team or on-call security manager and brief them of what is required

Subject	Information
Student Name and ID	
Faculty and Yr of Study	
Campus/Building(s)	
Reason for Concern(s)	
Risk to Self	Y/N
Risk to Others	Y/N
Arrangements already in place	
Requested Action(s)	(e.g. Could you check ID card access information; has student been on site; could you call/email [MHA/Welfare etc] team back with information; please could you call police if sighted?)
Recommendations	
How to update	(e.g. email to SoC MHA team; call to Head of Security; call to named person)
Emergency Contact	Rhiannon Thomas (rhiannon.2.thomas@kcl.ac.uk or 07777 668438)

8. Related Documents, Resources & Guidance

Referral Guidance for Staff	Referral Guidance for Staff
University Safeguarding Policy	King's College London - Safeguarding Policy (kcl.ac.uk)
Crisis Support	Guidance on Crisis Support
Emergency/Trusted Contact Procedure	Student Emergency Contact Procedure
Counselling & Mental Health Support	Counselling & Mental Health Support at King's Registration: https://corenet2.coreims.co.uk/KCL/selfreferral/selfreferralstart.aspx
Support for Study	King's College London - Support for Study Policy (kcl.ac.uk)
Student Conduct & Appeals	Misconduct
Bullying & Harassment Policy	King's College London - Bullying and Harassment Policy (kcl.ac.uk)
Report & Support	Report + Support
Money Housing & Advice	Housing & Accommodation Support Fees, Funding & Money Advice
Disability Support Services	Disability Support at King's
Immigration & Visa Advice	Support with International and Visa Issues
Safeguarding (General Information)	Safeguarding Information

9. Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations:

CMHS: Counselling & Mental Health Support

DS&I: Disability, Support & Inclusion

DSO: Designated Safeguarding Officer

FWA: Faculty Wellbeing and Welfare Advisors

Home Treatment Team (HTT): Community based NHS Mental Health Service for Crisis Support

MH&A: Money, Housing and Advice Team

Pre-SoC: Meetings held between relevant teams (e.g. Mental Health and Welfare) prior to the main SoC MG meeting

SC&A: Student Conduct and Appeals

SEM: Student Experience Manager

SfS: Support for Study

Single Pathway Referrals: Referral of a student (or student self-referral) to a single team, e.g. Money, Housing & Advice rather than to SoC

SoC MG: Student of Concern Management Group

SoC/MHA: Student of Concern Mental Health Advisors