Student at Risk Procedure

1. Introduction

A student may be referred to a Student at Risk Group (SaRG) if he/she is deemed at risk of not satisfying academic program requirements or responsibilities under the Student Code of Conduct due to mental health, other health concerns or adverse personal circumstances. A SaRG will provide timely, appropriate and coordinated support and intervention to assist the student.

The purpose of referral to a SaRG is primarily to ensure that -

- a student experiencing difficulties receives the most appropriate support available from the University;

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- a student experiencing difficulties receives the most appropriate support available from the University;
• staff members of the University have an appropriate avenue through which to exercise their duty of care in raising safety and wellbeing concerns identified in their work with students; and
• staff and students have the opportunity to work and study in an environment that is safe, supportive and satisfying.

The purpose of referral to a SaRG is primarily supportive, however, this procedure does not exclude the possibility that conduct leading to referral to a SaRG may also be subject to action under other applicable University procedures.

This procedure –
• is in accordance with the Universities Australia Code of Ethical Practice for Overseas Students 2005, the Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) and the National Code of Practice for Providers of Education and Training to Overseas Students 2017;
• does not override or affect the operation of applicable privacy laws and the University’s Privacy Management Plan;
• does not prevent the University from taking any action required by obligations to third parties.

2. Reporting concerns

Any staff member or student, who is concerned about the behaviour or period/s of unexplained absence of a student which may result from mental health or other health issues, or adverse personal circumstances, should refer those concerns to an appropriate senior staff member such as a Dean or Head of School.

The Dean or Head of School will decide whether the matter requires referral to the Director, Student Life (or nominee).

2.1. Information required

The Director, Student Life (or nominee) should be provided with details of the behaviour causing concern, and, if known, the nature of the health condition/s from which the student may be suffering. The student’s identification details including name and/or student number should also be provided.

2.2. Reporting acute/serious student welfare incidents

Any person who becomes aware of a student welfare incident that may require immediate action should contact UNSW Security Services on the emergency line 9385 6666, in accordance with the Student Critical Incident Procedure. Security Services will formally log the incident and notify the Director, Student Life (or nominee), the Student Life unit Manager, and the Manager, Security Services. It is the responsibility of these officers to assess whether the circumstances are such as to warrant any further immediate action.1

Where the incident involves a postgraduate research student the Director Student Life (or nominee) will notify the PVC(RT) and the Director GRS.

3. Initial Investigation

The Director, Student Life, or a person appointed by the Director, Student Life (the nominee), will undertake the initial investigation. This includes reviewing the evidence, identifying any organisational units already providing support to the student, and interviewing the student and/or the student’s representative.

The Director, Student Life (or nominee) will determine either that the situation requires no further investigation or intervention or that the case will be referred to a SaRG.

If the case is referred to a SaRG, further information required includes whether:
• the student is a domestic or international student;
• the student is in receipt of a scholarship;

1 Section 3 Reporting Incident, UNSW Student Critical Incident Procedure
3.1. Satisfactory resolution
If the Director, Student Life (or nominee) determines that the situation requires no further investigation or intervention, he/she will prepare a final report for the DCVA, and will send notification to the student’s email address that the matter is resolved. The Director, Student Life (or nominee) may also inform the person who initially raised the concern.

3.2. Referral to the Student at Risk Group
If the Director, Student Life (or nominee) determines that the case will be referred to a SaRG, he/she will:

• identify staff and/or organisational units to be included in the SaRG;
• prepare a report and recommendations for the SaRG;
• advise the student of the referral via the student’s email address; and
• offer the student Voluntary Program Leave and inform the Program Authority.

The referral of a student’s case to a SaRG is primarily supportive, and therefore there is no provision to appeal the decision of the Director, Student Life (or nominee).

3.3. Suspension or restriction of student – Director recommendation
In urgent circumstances, the Director, Student Life (or nominee) or a SaRG may recommend suspension or restriction of the student in accordance with the provisions of Section 10 of the Student Misconduct Procedure.

If suspension or restriction is approved, the Director, Student Life (or nominee) must convene a meeting of the SaRG within 14 days of the suspension or restriction.

3.4. Restriction of access to staff
In circumstances where a student is posing a threat to staff or is harassing staff, the Director, Student Life (or nominee) may nominate a staff member to be the single point of contact for the student, and will inform the student accordingly.

4. Student at Risk Group
If the Director, Student Life (or nominee) determines that the case is to be referred to a SaRG, he/she will convene a SaRG. Membership of a SaRG is case-specific. The Director, Student Life (or nominee), as convenor, will identify staff and/or organisational unit/s to be included. If the student of concern is an international student, the SaRG will include the Manager, SDI. If the student of concern is a postgraduate research student, the SaRG will include the Director, GRS.

The SaRG will:

• convene on an ‘as needed’ basis;
• review any documents presented to it;
• identify avenues of support available to the student;
• identify any further information required, tasks to be performed, and allocation of responsibility;
• appoint a case manager;
• develop a case management plan; and
• oversee ongoing case management and provide advice to the case manager as required.

The SaRG will continue to meet as needed until it determines either that the situation has reached satisfactory resolution, or that all avenues of support have been exhausted without satisfactory resolution at which time a report will be prepared for the DVCA for consideration of referral to an RMLG.
4.1. Critical Incident SaRG
The Director, Student Life (or nominee) may convene a SaRG for the purpose of responding to a student critical incident (see section 4 Case Management, Student Critical Incident Procedure) and the SaRG will:

- convene on an ‘as needed’ basis;
- manage the incident until its resolution, and provide advice to the critical incident case manager to ensure a consistent and effective response;
- identify any further information required, tasks to be performed, external agencies to be involved, and allocate responsibility for tasks;
- contribute to document the history of the incident;
- debrief as a group post facto to ensure that future responses are informed by current experiences.

4.2. Satisfactory resolution
If the situation has been resolved satisfactorily, the SaRG will prepare a final report for the DVCA. The case manager will send notification of the outcome to the student’s email address.

4.3. Referral to Required Medical Leave Group
When a SARG considers that supportive strategies are not or are no longer appropriate it will, if possible, offer the student Voluntary Program Leave, and inform the Program Authority of this action.

When offering Voluntary Program Leave, the SaRG will indicate to the student the nature of the procedure that will be followed if the offer is declined.

If the student refuses Voluntary Program Leave, the SaRG will provide a report to the PVCE to be referred for consideration by a RMLG, with any supporting documentation the SaRG considers relevant.

The SaRG, in addition, may refer the case to the DVCA for consideration of restriction or suspension under Section 10 of the Student Misconduct Procedure if it considers such action advisable.

5. Recordkeeping
Notes and documentation must be kept at all stages of a SaRG procedure including records of meetings, discussions, and actions proposed or taken, and stored on an appropriate confidential university file. The file must be created and stored in line with university policy.

All actions under this procedure are subject to normal statutory and UNSW policy obligations relating to recordkeeping.

6. Confidentiality
Subject to this paragraph, all parties involved in a case are to maintain confidentiality. Information and records about a SaRG matter are not to be divulged to anybody without direct involvement in the case with the following exceptions:

- Where breach of confidentiality is justified by serious and imminent threat of harm to a person or persons;
- Where there is a legal obligation that overrides this confidentiality provision.
### Accountabilities

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Responsible Officer</th>
<th>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic</th>
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<tr>
<td>Contact Officer</td>
<td>Director, Student Life</td>
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### Supporting Information

| Legislative Compliance | This Procedure supports the University’s compliance with the following legislation:  
Education Services for Overseas Students Act 2000 (Cth) |
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent Document (Policy)</td>
<td>Student Code of Conduct</td>
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<tr>
<td>Supporting Documents</td>
<td>Nil</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

#### Related Documents

- Required Medical Leave Procedure
- Student Critical Incident Procedure
- Student Complaint Procedure
- Student Misconduct Procedure
- Health and Safety Policy

#### Superseded Documents

- Student at Risk Procedure, v1.1

#### File Number

- 2016/08729

### Definitions and Acronyms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acronym</th>
<th>Definition</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DVCA</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic</td>
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<td>GRS</td>
<td>Graduate Research School</td>
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<tr>
<td>PVC(RT)</td>
<td>Pro-Vice-Chancellor (Research Training) and Dean of Graduate Research</td>
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<tr>
<td>RML</td>
<td>A period of enforced program leave applied by the University in accordance with the Required Medical Leave Procedure.</td>
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<tr>
<td>RMLG</td>
<td>Required Medical Leave Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>SaRG</td>
<td>Student at Risk Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>SDI</td>
<td>Student Development International</td>
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<tr>
<td>Voluntary Program Leave</td>
<td>A period of formally approved discontinuation of current enrolment sought by an enrolled student with the intention of resuming studies at a later date.</td>
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### Revision History

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Version</th>
<th>Approved by</th>
<th>Approval date</th>
<th>Effective date</th>
<th>Sections modified</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Vice-President and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)</td>
<td>28 November 2014</td>
<td>28 November 2014</td>
<td>This is a new Procedure</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Administrative update by Head of Governance</td>
<td>18 February 2016</td>
<td>29 February 2016</td>
<td>Administrative Update to senior leadership roles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor Academic</td>
<td>25 July 2017</td>
<td>15 August 2017</td>
<td>Administrative update</td>
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Appendix 1

STUDENT AT RISK PROCEDURE

Referral to Head of School or Dean

Referral to Director, Student Life

No intervention:
Report for DVCA
Student advised

Initial investigation

No intervention: Report for DVCA
Student advised

Action required

Director, Student Life (or nominee) convenes case-specific SaRG
Prepares report & recommendations for SaRG
Advises student of referral and offers Voluntary Program Leave

In urgent circumstances
Director, Student Life or SaRG may recommend restriction or suspension under S10 of Student Misconduct Procedure

If approved, SaRG to meet within 14 days

SaRG – Reviews documents
Identifies support
Appoints Case Manager
Develops case management plan

SaRG determination

Satisfactory resolution – Student advised

No satisfactory resolution

Student again offered Voluntary Program Leave

If Voluntary Program Leave refused, report to DVCA for consideration of referral to a RMLG