



Student Support Quick Guide:

A student is at risk of harm, abuse or neglect

What should you look out for?

Students, like everyone, may be potentially vulnerable to the risk of abuse or neglect. We have a range of support mechanisms which can help in such cases as well as possibly being able to report third party or historic abuse.

There are many forms of abuse and neglect, which may occur at the same time; look out for the following as possible indications that a student may need additional support:

- Possible signs of physical abuse such as unexplained or unusual injuries with improbable explanations given for them; on rare occasions changes in behaviour such as aggression directed towards others may also be a sign of stress arising from abuse.
- Possible signs of sexual abuse such as sudden changes in behaviour or educational performance, unusual displays of affection for example in an overly sexualised way, unexplained gifts or money, or signs of mental distress.
- Possible signs of sexual exploitation may include having much older boyfriends or girlfriends, unexplained gifts or new possessions, changes in emotional wellbeing, misuse of substances and regular absences, disclosures of being closely monitored or their behaviours controlled.
- Possible signs of emotional abuse such as unusual levels of anxiety about doing something wrong or over-reaction to mistakes, continual self-disapproval or evidence of bullying (including cyber-bullying).
- Possible signs of neglect which include constant hunger or tiredness, poor personal hygiene, inadequate clothing, frequent lateness or absences, low self-esteem and no social relationships.

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- Possible signs of financial abuse such as students who talk about pressure in connection with their finances, wills, property or inheritance or hint that they may be experiencing theft or exploitation.

What should you do?

There are three levels of response and you need to choose one of the options below as appropriate:

Level 1: Supported signposting:

If you are concerned about a student, but they have denied or made no disclosure of harm or abuse, provide clear, concise information to the student about how to register for specialist support through the university [Wellbeing Support and Inclusion teams](#). and, where appropriate, also provide them with a link to a webpage containing information about how to access [Emergency Crisis and Out of Hours Support](#). You may want to offer to sit with them while they go through the registration process (emailing counselling@napier.ac.uk)

Level 2: Seek advice:

If a student has disclosed that they have experienced, or are at risk of, harm abuse or neglect, please seek advice from the safeguarding team (safeguarding@napier.ac.uk). The team may advise you on next steps, or make a safeguarding intervention themselves. **Importantly, 'level 2' is not for emergency situations.** The safeguarding service operates Monday – Friday between 9am – 5pm.

Level 3: Emergency / Risk to life:

If you are concerned that a student is at imminent risk of harming themselves, for example, stating that they have an imminent plan to take their own life – or posing a serious risk to another person, such situations should be reported to emergency services (999) and/or to the university's security team's 24/7 emergency number 4444 or 0131 455 6119. You can also make use of the [SafeZone app](#) emergency button which immediately alerts the University security team. The security team will then let the safeguarding team know about the situation, so that appropriate follow-up support can be put in place.


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What happens next?

Experienced colleagues will talk through your concerns. In most cases, the Safeguarding team will contact a student and work with them to assess risk and to identify appropriate interventions to mitigate that risk. A range of options are open to the University depending on the information we have and the possible risks we identify. The Safeguarding and Security teams are able to liaise with external support services (e.g. Social Services and the Police), should this be necessary, we might call a case conference to bring together all of these colleagues to identify the best course of action. You may be asked for further information about your concerns but it is unlikely that any further action would be expected of you. Further information is available in our [Safeguarding Policy & Support Guidance at the bottom of the Wellbeing Support & Inclusion section of myNapier](#).

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For further information or to provide feedback about this Quick Guide, please [contact dlte@napier.ac.uk](mailto:dlte@napier.ac.uk)

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