

ENOHE Conference 2015

Fit to Study?

Policy interventions to handle problem cases

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Cooking up the perfect policy



Cherry cake or chocolate?

The basic ingredients

- Policy?
- Procedure?
- Guidance?
- Regulations?

The flavour

Supportive?

- Part of the 'support' facilities made available to students
- Encouragement to work together towards a return
- Ongoing support/awareness after return

Punitive?

- Penalties for non-cooperation
- Lead into disciplinary processes

One, two, three...?



- Most policies have three stages...

The basic shape

- **Procedure driven?**
 - *1) informal chat*
 - *2) more formal meeting*
 - *3) referral to a panel*
- **Structure driven?**
 - *1) informal Departmental level*
 - *2) School/Faculty level*
 - *3) University level*

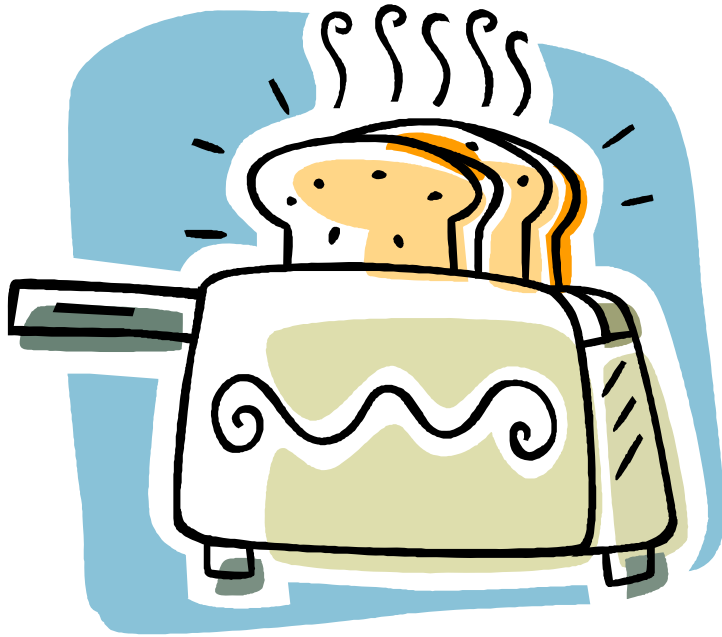


...or behaviour-driven?

- 1) *emerging concern*
- 2) *continuing concern*
- 3) *acute or serious concern*



Emergency action



- A separate policy, or
- The ability to move straight to 'stage 3'?

Interface with other policies



- Disciplinary/conduct?
- Emergency/crisis action?
- Counselling?
- Fitness to practise?
- Fitness for practice?
- Mitigating circumstances?
- Fit to sit?
- Disability support?

...and interface with external agencies?

- Admissions – see HEOPS
<http://www.heops.org.uk/>
- Professional bodies – e.g. GMC, Law Society, GTC*
- ...and of course, your students' union
- **i.e. think about fitness to practise, fitness for practice*

Other ingredients



- Student's cooperation needed?
- Third party (typically parental) input?
- Involvement of students' union in casework
- Return to study – how it is assessed and how it is managed

...and further stages?

Appeal?

- If so, how and to whom?

And external review?

- OIA (England and Wales)?
- SPSO (Scotland)?
- Your regulatory body/Ombuds service in-country?

Catering for different tastes – other issues to think about

- When does one person's 'reasonable adjustment' conflict with the reasonable needs/expectations of others?
- How do we support staff caught up in these cases?

Hot off the press!

The Universities UK Good Practice Guide, published 13 Feb 2015



- <http://www.universitiesuk.ac.uk/highereducation/Pages/StudentMentalWellbeingGuide.aspx#.VQWvNZ1FCM8>

The end product

- Clearly thought through
- Practical application
- Good interface with other policies
- Well understood and easy to implement
- A useful addition to the student support mechanisms



Questions? Comments?

- Aftersales discussion available at Jean.Grier@ed.ac.uk