

Student Support and Welfare Policy

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Linked policies:	<p>Safeguarding Policy Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy Admissions Policy Student Handbook Student Council ToRs and Guidance Student Code of Conduct Student Engagement Policy</p>
External reference:	<p>Prevent Guidance [https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance] QAA Quality Code Core practices: 1. The provider has sufficient and appropriate facilities, learning resources and student support services to deliver a high-quality academic experience. 2. The provider supports all students to achieve successful academic and professional outcomes.</p> <p>OfS Conditions of Registration- [https://www.officeforstudents.org.uk/advice-and-guidance/regulation/registration-with-the-ofs-a-guide/conditions-of-registration/]</p>
Audience:	Students and Staff

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1. Introduction

Student support is essential to Oxford Business College's ethos, as stated in its vision statement: *providing each student with the most supportive learning experience*. The College is committed to providing students with inclusive support and creating a supportive environment. This policy establishes an overview of the support available at the College, outlining its purpose, scope, aims and objectives, and implementation guidelines. The College also takes a proactive approach to student support and welfare with the establishment of key staff and roles, as outlined in this document, dedicated to seeking out student needs and providing support and welfare whenever needed.

2. Purpose

The Student Support and Welfare Policy informs students and relevant stakeholders, regarding the objectives and responsibilities for supporting students. It ensures a supportive and responsive experience for students at the College, from the admission process through to the completion of a course, and progression within or outside the College. This policy outlines the student support framework available and accountability guidelines to ensure implementation.

3. Scope

The Student Support and Welfare Policy applies to all students currently enrolled at Oxford Business College, as well as prospective students considering enrolment. Central to the College's operations, student support and welfare are overseen centrally from Head Office and implemented across all campuses. This policy ensures the provision of additional academic, mental health, welfare, and disability support across all programmes of study and campus locations at Oxford Business College.

4. Aims and Objectives

Through a range of support and welfare services the College aims to reduce barriers to learning and ensure that students achieve their full potential irrespective of their background and personal circumstance. To this end the College will:

- Provide a high-quality and impartial Information, Advice, and Guidance (IAG) service to assist students in enrolling in suitable learning programs and achieving positive outcomes upon completion of their courses.
- Consider everyone, irrespective of their background, with fairness and respect and provide a positive learning and social environment.
- Guide and support all staff involved in student recruitment and selection.

- Provide free access resources enabling students to achieve their full potential.
- Provide capable staff who prioritise support for students to achieve academic excellence and successful graduate outcomes.
- Provide pastoral support to all students.
- Take steps to ensure additional support and reasonable adjustments are made to accommodate students with disabilities and additional support needs.
- Provide a supportive environment for students, offering counselling service and referral services.
- Provide additional academic support for students to ensure they are able to make the best of their studies.
- Foster an open-door policy where all students may drop in and request support for staff when possible.

5. Overview of the Student Support Service

The Student Support Service at OBC recognises and prioritises its duty of care towards all students and apprentices. It aims to foster positive physical and mental well-being by providing a range of supportive measures tailored to individual needs, guided by professional judgement. These include:

- Personal Academic Tutoring (PAT): All student are allocated a PAT to support their journey, both academically and pastorally at the College.
- Academic Support Officers: Student can access timetabled academic support on a range of topics, as well as drop in assessment support at all campuses.
- Student Support Officer: Available on all campuses, the Student Support Officer serves as the initial point of contact for students facing any challenges. Their primary role is to assist in resolving student issues and support their academic progress.
- Support for Students with Disability or Additional Support needs: The college provides tailored support and accommodations to students with disabilities or additional support needs. This includes support with Disabled Students Allowance (DSA) application, support with academic adjustments, and assistance with navigating campus facilities to ensure an inclusive learning environment.
- Regular Wellbeing Drop-in Sessions: Students are offered confidential and safe environments to discuss any concerns they may have.

- One-to-one Appointments: Longer sessions with the OBC College Counsellor are available for students who require more detailed discussions about their circumstances.
- Internal short-term Counselling: As deemed appropriate by professional assessment, OBC offers short-term counselling sessions to support students.
- Signposting To External Support: OBC establishes institutional links with local service providers to facilitate access to external organisations and support services, such as GP surgeries, local authority teams, and third-party organisations.
- Regular Workshops: Workshops focused on specific topics are conducted to encourage positive physical and mental wellbeing among students.
- Events and Campaigns: OBC facilitates events and campaigns related to student well-being to promote awareness and engagement.
- Provide guidance and support on health-related issues that may impact a student's ability to continue on the programme, i.e. pregnancy, serious injury, adoption etc.
- Referral For Mental Health Assessment: Students are referred for mental health assessment and support via GP or other local services as appropriate, with assistance provided in accessing these services.
- Money and Housing Advice: Support and appropriate signposting to local services are offered for students experiencing financial hardship.
- Contemplation Room: A dedicated space on campus allows students to engage in quiet reflection, prayer, meditation, and other contemplative activities.

6. Support at point of admission

OBC is committed to providing comprehensive support throughout the admissions process, ensuring that every prospective student receives the personalised assistance required to navigate their enrolment seamlessly. Student can access the following support:

- A confidential pre-enrolment advice and guidance service.
- Support with the enrolment process.
- Assessment by a member of the academic team
- Signposting to external welfare organisations.
- Support with DSA application and academic adjustment processes of Higher Education partners.

- Referral to services including additional workshops and the College Counsellor.

7. Accessing Student Support and Welfare Services:

OBC has a team of Student Support and Welfare Officers who are based in all the College's locations, managed centrally from Head Office. Student Support and Welfare Officers receive training provided by the Head of Student Services regarding how to provide support to students on a range of issues.

You will find student support and welfare officer stationed at the reaction of all of Campuses.

- Student Support Drop-in: Students can attend drop-in sessions to discuss their concerns with trained professionals, in a confidential setting.
- Email: Queries or concerns regarding well-being, counselling, disability, mental health, financial hardship and general enquires can be directed to your campus based support teams.
 - support.oxford@oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk
 - support.nottingham@oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk
 - support.london@oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk
 - support.slough@oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk
 - Brentford@oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk
- Workshops or Events: Students can participate in workshops or events organised by the Student Support Service to gain valuable insights and support.

8. Academic Support

OBC are committed to ensuring that all students have access to comprehensive academic support services to enhance their learning experience and academic success. Our Academic Support Officers are available to assist students with a wide range of academic needs through personalised one-to-one support sessions and various resources. These services include:

- One-to-One Tutorials: Personalised sessions where students can receive individualised academic guidance and support tailored to their specific learning goals and challenges.
- Assessment Support: Assistance with understanding assessment criteria, preparing for exams, and improving assessment techniques to achieve academic excellence.

- **Study Skills Online Workshops:** Interactive workshops designed to enhance students' study skills, including time management, note-taking strategies, effective revision techniques, and exam preparation tips.
- **Academic Writing Support:** Guidance on improving academic writing skills, including structuring essays, developing arguments, referencing correctly, and enhancing overall clarity and coherence in written assignments.
- **Digital Literacy Tutorials:** Instruction and support in developing digital literacy skills, including proficiency with academic research tools, online databases, and digital communication platforms essential for academic success in a digital age.

9. Personal Academic Tutor

OBC is committed to providing a supportive and enriching academic experience for all students. As part of this commitment, each student is assigned a PAT to offer individualised guidance and support throughout their academic journey.

The PAT offers the following support services:

- **Personalised Guidance:** Each student will be assigned a PAT upon admission. The PAT serves as the primary point of contact for academic advice and personal development. Regular meetings with the PAT help students set academic goals, monitor progress, and address any issues that arise during their studies.
- **Academic Support:** The PAT assists students in understanding course requirements, and planning their study schedules. Students can seek advice from their PAT on academic performance, strategies for improvement, and preparation for assessments.
- **Pastoral Care:** The PAT provides pastoral care and support for personal issues that may affect academic performance. In cases where students seek further assistance, the PAT can signpost them to appropriate support services within the College who can help refer to external organisations as required.
- **Facilitating Support Services:** The PAT plays a crucial role in facilitating access to additional support services. This includes identifying the need for academic adjustments and liaising with the Head of Exams and Student Support and Welfare Officers. For students with disabilities, the PAT will sign post student to correct process for making an application for adjustment to the Higher education Partner that the student studies with.
- **Career and Personal Development:** The PAT provides guidance on career planning and development, helping students to align their academic pursuits

with their career goals. Students can receive advice on internships, job applications, and educational progression opportunities.

- **Monitoring Progress:** The PAT regularly monitors each student's academic progress, providing feedback and identifying areas where additional support may be needed. Early identification of issues allows for timely intervention and support to help students stay on track.

Students are encouraged to make full use of their PAT for support and guidance. To ensure effective communication, students should:

- Schedule regular meetings with their PAT to discuss academic and personal progress.
- Inform their PAT promptly about any issues or concerns that may impact their studies.
- Utilise the PAT as a resource for navigating College services and accessing additional support.

If students require assistance beyond what the PAT can provide, they should:

- Contact the Student Support and Welfare Officer for additional support services.
- Use the College's Concerns and Complaints Procedure for raising issues or complaints.
- Refer to the Appeals Procedure for assessment or examination decisions where necessary.

Oxford Business College aims to create an academic environment that promotes growth. The PAT system ensures that every student has access to personalised support.

10. Support for Students with Disability or Additional Support Needs

OBC is committed to ensuring that all students, regardless of disability, or support need are supported throughout their academic journey. The College provides a range of support services tailored to meet the needs of students with disabilities and/or additional support needs.

During the admission process, all students are invited to disclose any disabilities or additional support needs to facilitate the provision of appropriate support. A section

on the application form is dedicated to indicating disabilities or special needs, such as additional support needs. Students are encouraged to inform the College of any support requirements during their entry interview and enrolment. The following support services will aid the students with their academic journey:

- Disabled Student Allowance Application: To support students applying for the Disabled Students' Allowance (DSA), the college directs students to our Higher Education partner's process for consideration. Decisions regarding DSA applications and academic adjustments are made on an individual basis through this process. Students may receive accommodations such as individual support arrangements, technological aids, and recommendations for reasonable adjustments based on their specific needs. To initiate the DSA application and adjustment process, students are encouraged to communicate their requirements either during the admission phase, after enrolment to a Student Support Officer, or directly to their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT).
 - Further information can be found here: <https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowance-dsa>
- Academic Adjustments: In accordance with equitable access principles, the college supports students through the adjustment process with their Higher Education Partners. Decisions regarding academic adjustments are made and confirmed on an individual basis following each partner's process. Students will receive adjustments based on their specific needs, which may include additional time during examinations, modified texts, the use of assistive technology, and specialized room arrangements. To initiate this process, students are encouraged to communicate their requirements either during the admission phase, after enrolment to a Student Support Officer, or directly to their Personal Academic Tutor (PAT).
- Counselling and Mental Health Support: The College offers free, confidential short-term counselling and referral services. Students can access these services through the campus based support team, as signposted above and available on the College website.
 - Support and Wellbeing: <https://oxfordbusinesscollege.ac.uk/wellbeing/>
- Physical Access and Facilities: The College strives to ensure that all premises are accessible. This includes ramped entrances, lifts with tactile controls, accessible toilet facilities, widened fire exit doors accessible parking bays, and classrooms designed to accommodate wheelchair access. All the College's campuses offer convenient access to major transportation links, such as bus and train routes.

- **Technology and Equipment:** The College provides necessary equipment to support students with disabilities, including computers for accessing support information, word processing, desktop publishing, and other assistive technologies.

11. Emergency and/or Urgent Situations

While it's uncommon, there may be times when a student finds themselves in an emergency or urgent support situation. In these situations, it's crucial to know what steps to take to ensure everyone's safety. Here is what you should do if find yourself in an emergency or urgent situation at Oxford Business College (OBC):

If you encounter an emergency situation where there's an immediate danger to yourself or others, or if someone is at risk of harm, call 999 and seek help from the appropriate emergency service.

If you encounter an urgent situation, with no threat or danger to life, during OBC opening hours follow these steps:

Contact the Campus Designated Safeguarding Officer (DSO) or their deputy right away. They will know what to do and can coordinate with emergency services if needed.

If you can't reach the DSO, don't hesitate to call emergency services directly, this should only be done in case of emergencies.

Examples of emergencies include:

- If someone's behaviour is putting themselves or others in immediate danger.
- If someone is showing signs that they might harm themselves.
- If someone is acting strangely or seems confused and disoriented.

It's also important to inform Student Support Service about the situation, so they can follow up and offer the appropriate support .

If there are concerns about a student's well-being, but it is not felt the situation constitutes an emergency; advise the student to contact their GP or NHS 111 who will be able to determine the best course of action.

Advise the student to contact the Student Support Service directly and/or request permission to share information with the service yourself (you are only able to breach confidentiality if there is a significant risk to the student or others).

Contact the DSO for advice and guidance.

12 Constraints

There are a number of constraints that may affect the ability of the College to provide students with support and welfare including:

- Confidentiality and care to be taken with personal data in accordance with GDPR requirements.
- Students unwilling to disclose a need.
- The assessment of the ability of the student to achieve on a course.
- The level of adjustments required to meet students' needs are unreasonable.
- Non-compliance of the student with the College's Student Code of Conduct.