

LEARNING AND TEACHING CONFERENCE

**Centre for Academic Innovation
and Teaching Excellence**

Supporting student wellbeing while protecting your own

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Housekeeping

- Content Warning
- Please look after yourself
- Confidentiality and anonymity of any cases discussed
- No 'silly' questions
- You can also access support at: <https://www.pamwellbeing.co.uk/>

Today's session

- How to listen and respond proportionately your students concerns
- The benefit of applying 'Safeguarding Principles' for support
- How to protect yourself by being mindful of professional boundaries
- Knowing where to find support and guidance for yourself and your student

What are professional boundaries?

- Time,
- Responsibility for action,
- Expertise
- Duty of care – safety and support



**Be a
supporter,
not a fixer**

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Empowering University

Healthy DMU Student Hub:

<https://www.dmu.ac.uk/healthy/index.aspx>

- Current, up to date information about activities and appointments to support students to reach their full potential
- Empowers students to make their own decisions about what to access
- Health and wellbeing 'hints and tips'

Healthy DMU Staff Toolkit:

https://demontfortuniversity.sharepoint.com/sites/DMUHome/support/healthyDMU/Pages/Toolkit_Home2.aspx

- Allows you to set boundaries
- Consistent, supportive and professional
- Removes any expectation that you should be 'experts'

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Safeguarding Principles



1. **Empowerment**
I support and encourage individuals to make their own decisions.
2. **Prevention**
I create a safe, professional environment where people can flourish and achieve their potential. I know how to signpost individuals to support services.
3. **Proportionality**
I will only get professionally involved as much as the individual or situation dictates.
4. **Protection**
I understand how I can professionally protect those at risk and know how report a concern.
5. **Partnership**
I can work in partnership with individuals to find solutions to problems. I can do this while maintaining professional boundaries with both the individual and the services I am engaging with.
6. **Accountability**
I understand my role with regards to safeguarding. I understand that individuals can expect a reasonable standard of service and a complaint needs to be taken seriously and escalated via the correct process.

[DMU Safeguarding Webpages](#)

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Case study I

Student drops into staff office without an appointment outside of available times.

Student is visibly in distress and so the member of staff invites them in to talk.

The student is having personal issues that are affecting their coursework that is meant to be submitted the same day.

The student says that they are just not sure they can carry on.

Staff member stays with the student until they calm down because they are worried to leave them, which is nearly 2 hours later.

Consider:

- How effective the member of staff's actions were in empowering the student to make their own decision
- How effective the member of staff's actions were in maintaining professional boundaries and protecting their own wellbeing

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Case study 2

Staff member sees student they teach outside their office in tears.

The member of staff approaches the student to ask if they are okay.

Students says that “everything is just getting too much and this is making my depression so much worse”.

Member of staff asks if student is being supported by the university mental health team and students says they are “not able to get an appointment for 2 weeks which is far too long to wait”.

Member of staff escorts the student to the reception of Gateway House to demand that the student is seen much sooner because of how upset they are.

Consider:

- How effective the member of staff’s actions were in empowering the student to make their own decision
- How effective the member of staff’s actions were in maintaining professional boundaries and protecting their own wellbeing

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Case study I - response

Student drops into staff office without an appointment outside of available times.

- **Time**
- **Empower** student with information of availability and [Healthy DMU Hub](#)

Student is visibly in distress and so the member of staff invites them in to talk.

- **Manage expectations:** time, expertise, responsibility & duty of care
- Distress is fluid and will pass

The student is having personal issues that are affecting their coursework that is meant to be submitted the same day.

- **Expertise** - Direct questions to what you can support with

The student says that they are just not sure they can carry on.

- **Responsibility (prevention, protection and accountability)**
- **Expertise - Proportionate** response guided by [Healthy DMU Staff Toolkit](#)

Staff member stays with the student until they calm down because they are worried to leave them, which is nearly 2 hours later.

- **Time and Proportionality**
- **Empower** student with information of availability and [Healthy DMU Hub](#)

Case study 2 - response

Staff member sees student they teach outside their office in tears.

- **Manage expectations:** time, expertise, responsibility & duty of care
- Distress is fluid and will pass

The member of staff approaches the student to ask if they are okay.

- **Time**
- Empower student with information of availability and [Healthy DMU Hub](#)

Students says that “everything is just getting too much and this is making my depression so much worse”.

- **Expertise** - Direct questions to what you can support with
- **Responsibility (prevention, protection and accountability)**

Member of staff asks if student is being supported by the university mental health team and students says they are “not able to get an appointment for 2 weeks which is far too long to wait”.

- **Empower** student with information of availability and [Healthy DMU Hub](#)

Member of staff escorts the student to the reception of Gateway House to demand that the student is seen much sooner because of how upset they are.

- **Expertise - Proportionate** response guided by [Healthy DMU Staff Toolkit](#)

Quick signposting links:

Students can tell us about a disability, medical condition, learning difference e.g. dyslexia or mental health condition:

[Online Consent Form](#)

- Disability Advice and Support disability@dmu.ac.uk
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Wellbeing@dmu.ac.uk
- Mandala themandalaproject@dmu.ac.uk
- No Space for Hate nsfh@dmu.ac.uk
- DMU Security 0116 2577642

Staff can contact a Wellbeing Duty Officer for advice on:
Tel: 0116 366 4442 during business hours

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Useful guidance videos:

[One-minute mental health videos for university staff
\(charliewaller.org\)](https://charliewaller.org)

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