Questions regarding difficult student matters

For important telephone numbers, please see page 4.

The Student Health Centre has put together some tips and advice that can serve as a guide in situations involving students who need help of various kinds.

As a study advisor, lecturer, other member of university staff or student representative, you may find yourself identifying problems when you come into contact with students who are experiencing difficulties of various kinds. For many students, their concerns soon pass, but there may nonetheless be a need for help and support. It is important, both for the individual and those around him or her, that you draw attention to the problems and try to guide the student at an early stage before the problems get out of hand. Be prepared to ask for help from colleagues!

Can I contact the Student Health Centre for advice if I am concerned about a student?

Yes, you can always consult us via www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health. Initially, when the conversation is only for general advice, it is best not to identify the individual concerned. It is only later, when it may be necessary to help the student make contact with medical services that we need to know their details.

How do I refer a student to the Student Health Centre?

In most cases it is best if the student gets in touch to make an appointment. There are various ways to contact the Student Health Centre. We do not offer emergency appointments.

Visit our website, www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health, where you will find information about telephone hours and a self-referral form that the student can print out, complete and submit.

You should begin by talking to the student if you are concerned. It is a good idea to remember:

- that the purpose of the conversation is to show the student where he or she can get help to overcome his or her problems
- that you can be frank – say that you are worried
- to ask if he or she has sought help, and if so, where. If the answer is no, feel free to tell the student about the Student Health Service and pass on our contact details
- that you can offer to make initial contact with the medical/support services.
- that even if the student reacts negatively, it may turn out later that your concern was welcomed and that the information you provided was of use.
What are the signs that a person is in need of urgent professional help?

One sign can be a significant deterioration in performance and/or frequent absences from teaching or exams.

There are a number of warning signs that should be taken extremely seriously. These are primarily:

- Aggressive behaviour, threatening behaviour towards others
- Talking about suicide
- Visible outward signs, such as cuts, low body weight, being drunk or under the influence of drugs
- Obvious and worrying changes in the individual’s personality
- Expressing thoughts that are absurd and cannot be corrected

What should I do if a student is very introverted and withdrawn, perhaps seems depressed but is unwilling to talk to anyone?

- Let the student know that you have noticed that he or she is withdrawn, and that you are willing to offer help
- Try to refrain from offering a quick solution to what might appear to be the student’s problem, without knowing all the facts
- Repeated support, even if only for a few minutes at a time, can help to break the student’s isolation. Encourage the student to keep in touch with his or her family and friends
- If the student talks about suicide, listen to him or her – this is a cry for help. Then seek assistance immediately!

Who should I contact?

When a student shows serious signs of mental illness, it is important that you contact the medical services. Sometimes emergency help will be needed.

- **Emergency psychiatric unit Lund** 046-17 41 00
- **Emergency psychiatric unit Malmö** 040-33 80 00
- **Emergency psychiatric unit Helsingborg** 042-406 27 30

In the event of serious physical illness, ring the emergency services on **112 (NB within LU: 0112)**

or the health advice line (sjukvårdsupplysningen) on **1177**
What should I do when a student comes to me and wants to talk about how he or she feels?

- Accept what the student says
- Try to focus on a more tangible part of the problems and help the student to understand what needs changing
- Maintain your own integrity and keep to your role in relation to the student; for example, **do not promise confidentiality**
- Remember that you can prevent the student’s problems worsening if you intervene at an early stage
- It is not always easy to decide yourself what help you can provide and what you simply cannot. Seek advice from your colleagues to support you in identifying the right level, or contact the Student Health Centre, [www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health](http://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health).

What should I do if the student is being disruptive or threatening?

Ring the University’s emergency telephone number internally on **20 700** or externally on **046 222 07 00** and ask for help from security.

In the event of threats or violence, remember:

- that if someone makes threats or is violent, the matter should be reported to the police. Always speak to your line manager about the incident and make a plan of what you will do if the person returns
- that no-one should meet a threatening person alone, even if the threats are only implied and not explicit
- that work environment legislation also applies in universities – the risk of threats and violence must be minimised. These issues should be brought up in discussions about the work environment. The measures drawn up must be documented
- that you can always ask for help from the University’s central security service, tel. **20 700**

The University is not a public place – disruptive behaviour is not acceptable. Anyone who disrupts teaching could be subject to disciplinary measures.

What should I do if I don’t want to talk to a student alone?

- If the situation might be uncomfortable, you should never be alone; make sure you have a colleague with you
- You can always request assistance from the University’s security service, tel. **20 700**
**Important telephone numbers**

**IN AN EMERGENCY**  \[112 NB within LU 0112\]

- Health advice line (sjukvårdsrådgivningen) (open 24 hrs/day)  \[1177\]
- Police  \[114 14\]
- University security  \[20 700\] or 046 222 07 00
- Emergency psychiatric unit Lund  \[046 17 41 00\]
- Emergency psychiatric unit Malmö  \[040 33 80 00\]
- Emergency psychiatric unit Helsingborg  \[042 406 27 30\]

For more information, see the Student Health Service website [www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health](http://www.lunduniversity.lu.se/student-health) - Medical help

or [www.lu.se/studenthalsan](http://www.lu.se/studenthalsan) (in Swedish) - go to “Vård och stöd”

On [www.lu.se/emergency](http://www.lu.se/emergency) you will find some other useful telephone numbers and an incident report form if an incident has already occurred or if you want to contact the University’s central security service.