

Your guide to
**understanding
academic
procedures**

All you need to know about University
procedures and where to get advice

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Introduction

Everyone arrives at university expecting and wanting to succeed, but sometimes things don't go to plan. The Students' Union Advice Centre team has put this guide together to help everyone understand what to do and where appropriate help and support can be found on campus.

If you do find that you have questions and don't know who to ask, the SU Advice Centre has a wealth of knowledge and experience and will either be able to answer your question or direct you to someone else who can help.

If things are not going well or you have a specific problem, the SU Advice Centre team would always recommend that you get help and advice from appropriate people as early as possible.

Our Advice Centre service is free, confidential and independent from the University. We can be contacted by email, telephone or by visiting us in person. To guarantee an appointment, please contact us first to arrange one – however, if you come to the Advice Centre without an appointment, we will do our best to see you as soon as we can.

advice@warwicksu.com

02476 572824

warwicksu.com/advice

This guide aims to provide some initial guidance and signposting on the University and its processes, and is not intended to replace the full details of the University Regulations or procedures.

The University has an extensive website which contains detailed information about every aspect of its various Departments and procedures. For full information, please refer to the University of Warwick's web pages: warwick.ac.uk

Where to get support

For information about support available on campus, please see: warwick.ac.uk/supportservices

Who gives what help?

Academic support

There are a number of different people who can offer you academic support on campus, including you:

- Personal Tutor
- Supervisor
- Course Tutors
- Director of UG Studies or Director of PG Studies
- Departmental Senior Tutor
- Dean of Students
- Faculty Senior Tutors
- Students' Union Advice Centre
- Your SSLC (Student-Staff Liaison Committee)

Warwick SU support

Your Students' Union can offer you help on a range of different matters via:

- The SU Advice Centre team
- Your Sabbatical Officers (warwicksu.com/officers)

Non-academic support

Who you choose to speak to on campus will depend on what type of problem you have.

- The SU Advice Centre team can give advice and support on a wide range of issues – please see our web pages: warwicksu.com/advice

Within the University there are a lot of places to get support including:

- Wellbeing Support Services: Student Support | Disability Services | Mental Health and Wellbeing Team | Counselling | Residential Life team for campus residents
- The Chaplaincy
- Careers and Skills
- Immigration Service in the International Student Office (for International students)
- Security
- Student Funding Team
- Health Centre

Study and exams

Academic success is what everyone aims to achieve, and there is plenty of support available for students to ensure that they have the necessary skills for academic advancement.

If you have any questions or concerns about your academic progress, talk to your Personal Tutor, Supervisor or the Departmental Senior Tutor, who should be able to help you and direct you to specific support where appropriate.

Also, see our Top Tips for Success online at warwicksu.com/academicoptips

Disabilities, learning difficulties or medical conditions

If you have a disability, learning difficulty or medical condition, you should speak to Disability Services and your Department to see if any reasonable adjustments can be made to support your learning experience (for example, if you need special arrangements for any exams).

External factors

If there are things going on in your life that are impacting on your ability to study or meet a deadline, it is essential that your Department knows so they can help minimize the impact and provide you with relevant information. You should consider whether you should submit **Mitigating Circumstances** (see page 6). If events are seriously affecting your ability to study, you may also want to consider **Temporary Withdrawal** (see page 9).

Exams

Exam time can be highly stressful. The University and Students' Union usually organise events and support to help promote wellbeing during peak exam periods, so do watch out for them.

Don't be afraid to ask for help. The whole University and SU team wants you to succeed and achieve your full potential.

If you are unwell or there are other factors affecting your performance in an exam, make sure you get advice as soon as possible by talking to: your Personal Tutor | Department | Dean of Students | Departmental Senior Tutor | Faculty Senior Tutor | the SU Advice Centre team.

Useful information

warwicksu.com/examinations

For support if you experience problems during an exam, visit: warwicksu.com/examcontacts

The University Regulations and Procedures Governing Study can be found in Section 2.3 of the Warwick University Calendar: warwick.ac.uk/calendar

Postgraduate supervision

Warwick has comprehensive guidance regarding Supervision (warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/staffandexternal/hp-contents/guidelines_on_supervision_and_monitoring_-_updated_july_2016.pdf) which sets out the responsibilities of the University, the Department, the Supervisor and the student. If you find that you do have any problems relating to your supervision, it is important to try and resolve these issues before they impact on your research and progress.

Places to get advice:

Supervisor | Departmental Senior Tutor
| Dean of Students | Faculty Senior Tutor |
SU Advice Centre.

HEAR: Higher Education Achievement Report

This is a report which lists information about your time as an Undergraduate and will include:

- Academic achievements, including module marks and degree classification.
- Information about the programme of study.
- Additional information such as activities undertaken and prizes won.

For further information, please see: warwick.ac.uk/hear/hearcontent

Mitigating circumstances

If there is something happening in your life that is affecting your academic work, it is important to tell your Personal Tutor, Supervisor or Department about it as soon as possible so that the circumstances can be taken into account.

Mitigating Circumstances are any personal issues, e.g. illness, bereavement, family or housing problems. For full guidance, see the link below – usually the person you should talk to is your Personal Tutor, Supervisor or Departmental Senior Tutor.

University guidance on Mitigating Circumstances and guidance on what can or cannot be used as mitigation can be found at: warwick.ac.uk/services/academic/quality/categories/examinations/policies/u_mitigatingcircumstances/mc_guidance_for_students_final_revised_2_100119.pdf

When you are explaining your circumstances, it is important to include:

- That you would like your circumstances to be taken into account by your department and Board of Examiners.
- Explain the circumstances that are affecting your academic work.
- Explain how the circumstances have affected your academic work.
- Explain what academic work has been affected, i.e. which essays, modules etc.
- Provide any evidence you have to support your case.

Rules on absence for medical reasons are found in Regulation 12: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

If you are ill and cannot take an exam, ensure the University receives a medical certificate after no more than three days.

For information about the submission of assessed work, please see: warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/calendar/section2/regulations/absence/

You will need a medical certificate if an illness prevents you attending an exam or submitting an assignment which constitutes at least 10% of the module mark.

However, under certain circumstances it is possible to self-certify for periods of illness lasting no more than 7 days and where an assessment contributes 10% or less of the module credit. This should be submitted within 3 days of returning to University after the illness. If you are uncertain whether it is appropriate to self-certify, check with your Department.

Places to get advice:

Personal Tutor | Departmental Senior Tutor | Supervisor | Dean of Students | Faculty Senior Tutor | SU Advice Centre.

Appeals

Find advice: Personal Tutor | Supervisor | Departmental Senior Tutor/appropriate person in your Department | Faculty Senior Tutor | Dean of Students | SU Advice Centre.

The University now operates a unified appeals regulation under Regulation 42. warwick.ac.uk/services/gov/calendar/section2/regulations/reg42academicappeals

The relevant regulations are in the University Calendar: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

- Regulation 8: Regulations for first degrees.
- Regulation 37: Regulations Governing Taught Postgraduate Courses.
- Regulation 38: Regulations Governing Research Degrees.

UG first and intermediate year students:

An appeal can only be made if you are asked to leave your course permanently.

UG final year students:

An appeal can be made against the final degree classification, as well as against the decision not to award a degree at all.

Postgraduates (Taught and Research):

Appeals can be made if a lower award or no degree has been awarded (with the exception of a Masters classification).

Once you have completed the appeals procedures and received your completion of procedures letter, you can take your complaint to the OIA (oiahe.org.uk). For further information or advice on what to do, contact the SU Advice Centre.

Appeals must be lodged within 10 University Working Days."

Grounds for appeal

You can't challenge matters of academic judgment – but you can appeal under the following grounds:

- You are in possession of evidence relevant to your examination performance which was not available to the Board of Examiners when its decision was reached and can provide good reasons for not having made them aware of this evidence.
- There appears to have been procedural irregularities in the conduct of the examination process.
- There appears to be evidence of prejudice or bias on the part of one or more of the examiners.

First year and **intermediate UG students** can only appeal on the first ground.

Postgraduates have an additional ground:

- There is evidence of inadequacy of supervisory or other arrangements during the student's enrolment at the University. In this instance, you are required to explain why a complaint was not made at an earlier stage.

Permanent and temporary withdrawal

Permanent withdrawal

This is where you permanently end your registration with the University of Warwick and leave.

People leave for a variety of reasons – we would recommend talking to people able to understand your issues before making the final decision, as there may be other options which you have not considered (e.g. changing course or temporary withdrawal). In some exceptional cases, it may be possible to restart or repeat a year.

It is usually helpful to talk to your Department before making a decision – we would recommend that you speak to your Personal Tutor, Supervisor or the Departmental Senior Tutor, as they will understand your academic situation within the Department and should be able to offer you guidance on the options available to you.

In addition to this, you should also make sure you fully understand the impact that taking Permanent Withdrawal will have on things such as future study, funding and housing.

Places to get advice:

Personal Tutor | Supervisor | Departmental University Senior Tutor | Dean of Students | Faculty Senior Tutor | SU Advice Centre | Student Funding Team | Immigration Service in the International Student Office (if you're an international student subject to visa restrictions) | Careers and Skills.

The SU Advice Centre team is able to go through all the issues with you. Other people to speak to include:

- The Student Funding Team, who would be able to discuss any impact on your student funding.
- The Careers and Skills Team, as they may be able to offer guidance on your future plans.
- The Immigration Service in the International Student Office (if you're an international student subject to visa restrictions). They can discuss any impact this may have on your ability to study in the UK in the future.

For information and links, see: warwicksu.com/permanentwithdrawal

Once you have made your decision to permanently withdraw, all you need to do is complete the form and submit it to your Department, who will send it to Student Records for processing.

Temporary withdrawal

Temporary Withdrawal is an approved absence from the University, governed by Regulation 36: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

A student may ask to withdraw from the University temporarily, normally on health or personal grounds. This will usually need to be supported by strong evidence. (A student enrolled on a Degree Apprenticeship may only be withdrawn temporarily from the University or a course of study when this request is received from the employer of the apprentice.)

If you think temporary withdrawal might be something that you want to consider, you should talk to your Personal Tutor, Supervisor or Departmental Senior Tutor as your Department will need to support your request.

There are rules which apply to temporary withdrawal, and the application must be made on the correct form. For information and links, see: warwicksu.com/temporarywithdrawal

Once you have decided to make an application for temporary withdrawal and your Department is in agreement, you will need to do the following:

- Complete the online application form. In it, you have an opportunity to explain why you need the temporary withdrawal – make sure you explain fully how your circumstances are affecting your ability to study at this time.
- Attach all the supporting evidence to your application (e.g. medical certificates).
- Submit your application electronically to the Academic Office, who will liaise with your Department to obtain the formal agreement for the application.
- Once it is approved by your Department and the Academic Office, you will be notified of the decision with confirmation of your last date of attendance and your expected date of return and new expected completion date.

Things to consider

Financial impact:

- Contact the Student Loan Company, as withdrawal will affect your funding.
- You may not be able to get out of your housing contract, leaving you liable for rent.
- You will not normally be eligible for any state benefits, though you will continue to be exempt from paying Council Tax.

Other issues:

- You will normally be able to use the library, University IT and other facilities.
- You remain a member of Warwick SU.
- If you withdraw for health-related reasons, you will need to supply a medical certificate confirming you are fit to resume study.
- You are not normally allowed to withdraw for more than two consecutive years, or for more than a total of two years over the course's duration (see Regulation 36).
- International students may be unable to take temporary withdrawal and remain in the UK. Consult the International Student Office.

University committees

This guide aims to outline basic information and resources to do with each of the University's main procedures.

For more detailed guidance, it is important to make use of the advice that is available on campus.

The SU Advice Centre offers free, confidential, independent and impartial advice on all aspects of University procedures. We can offer you guidance and support if you are being taken to a University Committee, and will work with you to help you understand the process and the implications of your particular case.

Once you have completed the complaints or appeals procedures and received your completion of procedures letter, you can take your complaint to the OIA (oiahe.org.uk). For further information or advice on what to do, please contact the SU Advice Centre via warwicksu.com/advice.

Student fitness to attend protocol

The University has introduced this protocol to help facilitate early intervention and active collaboration to manage situations where there is a cause for concern over a student's behaviour, health or medical conditions and they pose a risk to themselves or the wider University community. The protocol is a staged response encouraging identified students to obtain relevant support but, depending on the student's responses and the seriousness of the concern, the protocol can be moved to another stage at any time.

For the full protocol, please see: warwick.ac.uk/services/supportservices/fitnesstoattend

The process:

The protocol will be activated where a third party raises a concern about a student's behaviour, health or medical condition with Student Support – this could be from their Department, friends, housemates or colleagues.

Stage 1:

This is the informal stage, and a student subject to the protocol will be invited to an informal meeting with Student Support or their Department. The issues that need to be addressed will be discussed, and hopefully a care plan can be agreed to address the areas of concern. If the student engages with the plan and there are no further issues, there may be no need for further escalation. However, if a plan cannot be agreed or if there is a failure to engage with the process, the protocol will move to Stage 2.

Places to get advice:

SU Advice Centre | Dean of Students
| Faculty or Departmental Senior
Tutor | Personal Tutor | Supervisor |
Wellbeing Support Services.

Stage 2:

This stage requires a formal Student Care Planning meeting, which is attended by representatives who form the Student Review Panel (including the student). The Student Care Planning meeting will:

- Consider the previously-identified concerns and any new areas of concern;
- Assess the student's fitness to attend.

A full discussion of the issues will take place, but the meeting will follow more formal procedures than the informal meeting in Stage 1.

If the student fails to engage with the process or agree to proposals for a care plan, then the process may be escalated to Stage 3.

Stage 3:

Referral to Academic Registrar for Continuation of Registration proceedings under Regulation 36.

Continuation of Registration is the process by which the University considers whether your registration as a student at Warwick should be ended.

The protocol is governed by Regulation 36, and is specifically set out at 36.4.4, but for detailed information on the protocol and its implementation see: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

Disciplinary processes

The main Disciplinary Regulations are 23 & 27: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

If you are involved in any incident that is investigated under the Disciplinary Regulations, we would recommend getting advice as early on in the process as possible. The SU Advice Centre is able to offer confidential, impartial and independent guidance to help you to understand the process and the implications of what has happened.

When the University decides an incident or conduct may need to be investigated within their disciplinary regulations, the usual procedures are:

- You should be notified in writing of the allegation they are investigating and whether it is being treated as a major or minor offence, or whether they are undecided about which level it is and want to investigate further.
- You will be invited to attend a meeting, and told the purpose of that meeting. Often, the initial meeting is to investigate the incident and establish the facts. Before attending this meeting, you should be told where you can get support and help, and we would recommend that you do get advice on what is going to happen. If you have been told you are being considered under the major disciplinary procedure, we would strongly recommend taking someone with you to any meetings.
- How the matter proceeds after the initial meeting will depend on the seriousness of the allegation. In the case of a minor breach, the process might end with an informal meeting or, in the case of a serious allegation, it could progress to a major disciplinary hearing. Understanding the situation as early as possible will help you navigate the procedures to get the best possible outcome.

If you do end up with a major disciplinary hearing, make sure you obtain proper advice about how to represent yourself. The SU Advice Centre team is experienced in this area, and is here to help you navigate the process.

Fitness to practise

These hearings are governed by Regulation 34: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

Fitness to Practise processes may be triggered for students on professional courses (e.g. Medicine, Dentistry, Education (PGCE) or Social Work) when there are doubts about a student's ability to fulfil the course's professional requirements.

If you fail to convince a Fitness to Practise Committee that you are able to meet the required standards, this may end any chance of working in your chosen profession.

If you are told your fitness to practise is under investigation, get advice as soon as possible to help you understand the process and navigate its procedures to get the best outcome possible.

Find advice:

SU Advice Centre |
Dean of Students |
Faculty or Dept. Senior
Tutor | Personal Tutor
| Supervisor.

If you belong to a trade union or professional body, they may be able to offer additional advice/support.

Plagiarism or cheating

The University's rules are set out in Regulation 11: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

Academic integrity is a very important aspect of study, and the University has strong rules and procedures that it implements where there is a suspicion that plagiarism or cheating has taken place. Most assessed written work is required to be put through the Turnitin website which provides a report on the originality of the work submitted.

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. To avoid accusations of plagiarism, it is important that sources are referenced fully and in the prescribed manner. If you are unsure how to reference properly, make sure you get advice on this from your Department and consult your course handbook.

If a piece of work is suspected of containing plagiarised content, you will usually be invited to meet with your Department so they can investigate the allegation. You should usually be given notice of the allegation before the meeting and good practice means you should see the 'Turnitin' report in advance so that you can get advice on what it means, before you are asked to discuss it.

Cheating can be anything from direct copying from another student to taking unauthorised materials into the exam room.

Being found guilty of cheating or plagiarism can result in severe penalties, so if you are accused of either we would recommend getting advice as soon as possible. This will help you to understand the process and the implications, and hopefully help navigate the procedures to get the best outcome possible in your particular circumstances.

Places to get advice:

SU Advice Centre | Dean of Students
| Faculty or Departmental Senior
Tutor | Personal Tutor | Supervisor.

Continuation of registration

If the University believes that there is good cause to end your registration as a student then you will be taken to a Continuation of Registration Committee, which is governed by Regulation 36: warwick.ac.uk/calendar/section2/regulations

If you are told that you will be taken through a Continuation of Registration Committee, it is extremely important that you get proper advice as quickly as possible to ensure you understand what the issues are and how to proceed.

Places to get advice: SU Advice Centre | Dean of Students | Faculty or
Departmental Senior Tutor | Personal Tutor | Supervisor.

Changing Course

Many students find themselves on the wrong course and want to change. If this applies to you, be very sure that you do want to change and that you know what course you really want to do. There is no automatic right to change course and you may find yourself unable to because there is no place on your preferred course or you do not have the entry requirements for it.

It is harder to make a change the longer you stay on a course. If you change within the first two weeks of starting your course, you may be able to start more or less seamlessly on another. However, if you leave it until later into your first year, or even your second year, it is likely that you will have to start your new course from scratch.

Speak to either your Personal Tutor, Departmental Senior Tutor, Dean of Students or Faculty Senior Tutor or Student Union Advice Centre before you make a decision. They will be able to advise you of the academic, personal and financial implications of changing course. Discuss it with family and friends.

Once you have made a decision, you can approach the department or other University to see if there is a place for you on your chosen course and how and when you should apply. Another University might ask you to apply through the UCAS process. Your present department will have to agree to the transfer.

Discuss the matter of fees and student funding with the Student Advice Centre. You may not be completely funded on your new course, depending on when you transfer.

Postgraduate Supervision

If you have any problems with your supervisor or supervisors, it is important to address it as soon as you can.

It is possible to change supervisors although you would have to be aware that there may not be another suitable person in your department.

Places to get advice

Students' Union Advice Centre |
Dean of Students or Faculty Senior
Tutors | Postgraduate Officer

There is a comprehensive guidance to postgraduate supervision that sets out the responsibilities of the University, the department, the supervisor and the student. warwick.ac.uk/services/academicoffice/gsp/staffandexternal/hp-contents/guidelines_on_supervision_and_monitoring_-_updated_july_2016.pdf

Complaints

Complaints against the University

Everyone hopes that there are no problems while you are attending the University of Warwick, but sometimes things do go wrong and, if they cause you a problem, you can make a complaint to the University.

The University has a 3-stage complaints procedure, and it is hoped that complaints can be resolved early without the need to escalate to stages 2 & 3.

If by the end of the 3 stages you are still not satisfied with the outcome, you can refer your complaint to the OIA (Office of the Independent Adjudicator) who will consider your complaint further (oiahe.org.uk).

Full information on the process can be found at: warwick.ac.uk/services/feedbackcomplaints/students/complaints

If you want to discuss a complaint and want help in pursuing it, the SU Advice Team can help you.

Complaints against the Students' Union


The Students' Union exists to provide services for our members/students. Hopefully we get it right, but if you do feel that we have not met the standards we ought to have done, the SU has its own complaints procedure which is separate from the University.

The SU complaints procedure can be found at: warwicksu.com/complaints

OIA: Office of the Independent Adjudicator

When all of the University procedures have been exhausted, you should get a completion of procedures letter from the University. If you are unhappy with the outcome, there is the opportunity for a final complaint to the OIA within 12 months of the completion of procedures letter.

For information about the OIA, please see their website (oiahe.org.uk) or contact the SU Advice Centre.



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warwicksu.com/advice

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