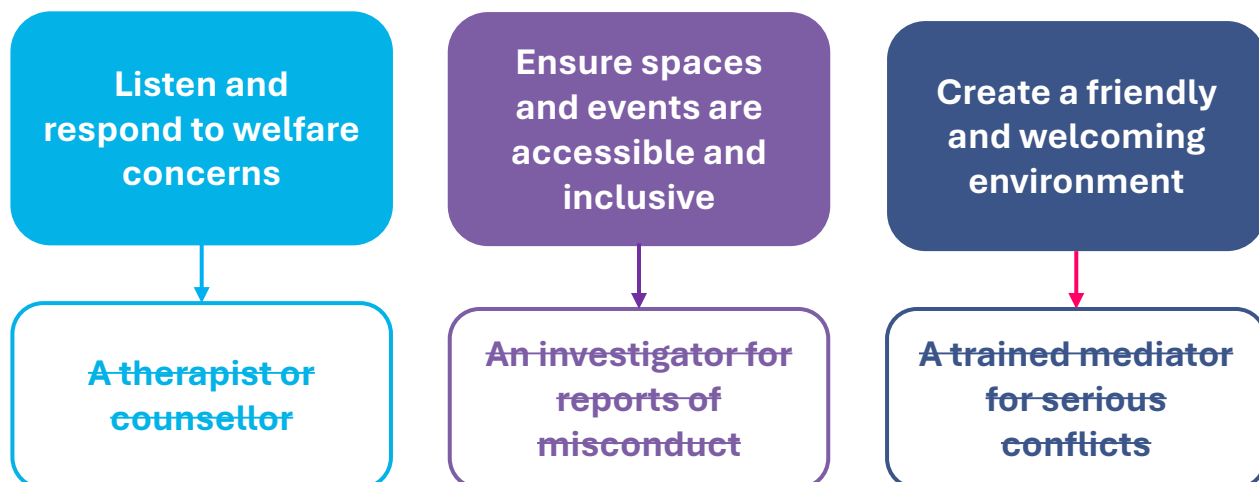


This doc is designed to help club and society execs deal with common welfare concerns – we hope it helps!

Your responsibilities: a reminder



Approaching Welfare Concerns

Your club/society members may see you as a safe person to chat about welfare issues with. They may vary, but you should take them all seriously.

They can include:

- Stress or mental health conditions
- Worries about the club environment
- Interpersonal dynamics between members
- Reports of harassment or discrimination

Welfare concerns may be presented in different ways: said jokingly, posed as a question, said casually as part of a story, or second hand through another member. They can happen in different contexts too, including when alcohol is present.

No one expects you to be a professional counsellor or therapist; however, how you first respond is very important.

Key Skills

Active Bystander

Sometimes, you will need to respond to harmful or inappropriate behaviour, in a way that is safe, supports members, and promotes a positive and respectful culture.

Potential ways to intervene include the 5 Ds:

- **Distract** from the problematic behaviour
- **Delay** your intervention and check in with the affected person when you can
- **Directly** challenge the behaviour and support the person affected
- **Delegate** the intervention to someone in a position of more respect, authority or influence
- **Document** what you saw in case you need it later

You must always prioritise your safety, but can hopefully use Active Bystander skills to support others more confidently. See the [Warwick We Act website](#) for more details.

Active Listening

It is important that members feel heard and supported when sharing their experiences. Some ways to ensure members' concerns are centred in conversations:

- Avoid jumping in, talking about your own experiences, or getting distracted.
- Make sure you ask how they are feeling, affirm them and remind them that they can decide what to do next.
- Ask them what they need or want in this situation.
- Make sure you do not judge their decisions – your role is to help them understand what options they have, rather than decide for them.

Key Skills

Maintaining boundaries

Remember, you are not a trained therapist or investigator! You should provide initial support and sympathy, but it is not your job to take on other people's concerns as your own, or to be anyone's sole source of support.

Your members should be aware of this. You can let them know and set your own boundaries – such as through hosting welfare drop-ins at specified times or choosing when to respond to messages.

If you feel like your boundaries are hard to communicate or are being crossed, you can speak to the [SU Advice Centre](#) or **Student Activities Team** for advice.

Signposting

Most people find a listening ear and friendly face to be the most helpful when they need to share something, but sometimes you will need to signpost to professional support. For example, when someone shares a welfare concern that can't be eased through an informal chat, where you are worried about the mental or physical safety of a member, or when multiple members of your club/society are involved in a complicated incident.

The main avenues to signpost to are [Report and Support](#), the [SU Advice Centre](#), the **SU Student Activities Team**, [Warwick Wellbeing](#) and [Warwick Mediation](#). More details on how these services work are available below.

What if... You hear about an incident of sexual misconduct, harassment, or discrimination?

Someone in your club or society may have told you about an incident of sexual misconduct, harassment or discrimination. This can include spiking, inappropriate touching, pressure to drink, offensive words, racialised comments, etc.

See the [Report and Support site](#) for more details of inappropriate behaviour.

What If...

Your member is in immediate danger or is severely distressed?

1) If you are on campus, call the **Community Safety Team** on 024 7652 2222.

If you are off campus, call **999**.

It's a good idea to save the CST emergency number to your phone

2) If there is no immediate danger, take them to **a more private, safe and comfortable space** and reassure them you're there to help.

3) You don't have to take the disclosure as it's not your role to do this.

Signpost the person to [Report and Support](#), or help them to fill out the Report and Support disclosure form online.

Remind your member that it is their decision about what action they may want to take next, depending in what they need.

Remember! You shouldn't be taking disclosures that put you at risk – please direct your member to **Report and Support** or ask for help for yourself through the **SU Advice Centre**.

You can always notify your **Student Activities Coordinator** if you need further support .

What if... You hear about an incident of sexual misconduct, harassment, or discrimination?

What if?

Something happened on SU property?
(e.g. the Copper Rooms, T-bar or the SU Atrium)

Contact **a member of SU staff**, including First Aiders, bar staff, door staff, or Steve Russel, SU Designated Premises Supervisor.

Trained staff members can decide if a member needs to be banned or ejected from the premises, following licensing laws.

This can be reported through **Report and Support**, who will contact the SU themselves and decide on next steps.

Something happened off-campus
(e.g. in Coventry / Leamington / another University / on a domestic tour / on an international tour)

1) You should still go through **Report and Support**. Support will always be given, whether the behaviour occurred off campus or at another University, or within or outside of term time.

2) Let your **Student Activities Coordinator** know, so that they can signpost you to further support if needed and make sure the SU is aware of the incident.

What if... You hear about an incident of sexual misconduct, harassment, or discrimination?

What if?

Something happens between different societies or sports clubs?

Seek support from your **Student Activities Coordinator** to advise next steps.

Use the [SU Complaints process](#). In some incidents, this may still have to go to Report and Support, or a joint investigation with the University.

Your members now feel uncomfortable attending club or society events or there are accusations against another member or exec

These dynamics would be discussed with **Report and Support**. Making a disclosure doesn't automatically trigger any investigation, which means Report and Support can help figure out inter-society/club dynamics without a formal process.

The [SU Advice Centre](#) will support any affected members, and can help come to an agreement with an exec about how to move forwards.

You can consider the [University Mediation Service](#), who use trained mediators to help resolve inter-personal conflict or disputes – but only if both parties want to.

What if... You hear about an incident of sexual misconduct, harassment, or discrimination?

What if?

Someone is acting inappropriately but you don't feel it merits Report and Support (e.g., repeated sexist comments).
You feel like resolving this would improve the relationships within your club/society.

1) Employ **Active Bystander skills**, including intervention and calling out inappropriate behaviour.

If you feel comfortable having a 1-1 chat, you could have a conversation with the member to remind them that they are behaving unacceptably.

Not all intervention has to be direct. Discuss the issue with your exec to remind your club/society of your values and design an intervention with peer support.

2) Go to your **Student Activities Coordinator** or the **SU Advice Centre**, who have experience dealing with similar situations and advise you on the best next steps to take.

3) Consider **the University Mediation Service**, who use trained mediators to help resolve inter-personal conflict or disputes – but only if both parties want to.

What if... You hear about an incident of sexual misconduct, harassment, or discrimination?

What if?

Your exec wants to exclude a member from society events or sports training due to allegations of inappropriate behaviour

Please do not go through unofficial processes to exclude members from society or club events. There is a risk of inconsistency, conflicts of interest, and unfairness, and this is not permitted by the SU. An unofficially excluded member can make a complaint of unfair treatment, and your society / club may face adverse consequences.

The SU can only ban members from society or club events following University advice and the evidence of a Report and Support investigation or SU complaint. Reassure your members that these avenues are safe, thorough and reporter led.

If there a member of exec that is safe and confident enough to approach the member, consider having a polite but firm conversation to reiterate that their behaviour is making members feel uncomfortable, and that if this escalates it may have to go through an official report.

What if... Your members have issues with the process of reporting?

People aren't always comfortable or happy with the process of reporting an incident. You can support them and your club/society through the process, but you must not assume all the responsibilities on yourself, or complete informal investigations within the exec.

What If...

Your members don't want to go to Report and Support, are unsure about reporting or don't want any actions to be taken?

This is a very common and completely normal attitude to have. **Your member can still access support through [Report and Support](#)**, who will not implement any sanctions or complete formal investigations without a student's consent.

Remind your members that Report and Support is a trauma-led service where students can choose what support they need and what actions they want.

The [SU Advice Centre](#) can accompany any affected students to make a report, come with them to meetings, and ensure they are supported through their decision making.

The **University Wellbeing service** has a [Sexual and Domestic Abuse Advisor](#) who can be contacted directly by emailing wellbeing@warwick.ac.uk , or through a referral from Report and Support, the Advice Centre or Wellbeing.

Remember! It is important that you do not become the person who provides support to members, or feel like you are responsible for investigating any incidents.

Trained support services know how to deal with this and will ensure that everything is done safely and fairly.

What if... Your members have issues with the process of reporting?

What if?

Someone has a report made against them and they feel scared, upset or unsure how to act

When a report has been made against someone, they will be allocated a trained **Liaison Officer** from Report and Support. These people have supported Reporting and Responding parties before and will be able to talk to the responding party about how they feel, and what their options are within their club / society / course / accommodation.

Your member made a report through Report and Support but is unhappy with the outcome

This is primarily be a matter to be discussed with **Report and Support**, including the individual's Liaison Officer. It could include an appeal to the outcome of the case.

Remind your members to be respectful of the process, and not to spread gossip about details of the case.
Confidentiality is crucial for members' comfort and safety. from a R&S perspective there is an appeal

What if... You are worried about your members wellbeing?

You may hear about your members' mental health concerns, which could range from anxiety about coursework, to worries about the social dynamics of the club, to underlying mental health conditions. Clubs and societies are important to provide safe social spaces that support wellbeing, and so have an important role to play.

What If...

Your member is in an immediate crisis or is severely distressed?

1) Ensure your member is in a safe, comfortable and private place.

2) If you are on campus, call the **Community Safety Team** on 024 7652 2222
If you are off campus, call **999**

3) If needed, direct them to specialist services, primarily [Wellbeing and Student Support](#).

Someone in your club or society comes to you with a mental health concern

1) If you have capacity, set up a **welfare check-in** with the member in a comfortable and informal setting, such as over a coffee or walk.
Often, the most important support you can provide is a friendly face and listening ear.

2) Signpost them to [University Wellbeing](#), including their daily drop-in appointments or online advice. You can even offer to go with them if they are worried.

3) You can also ask for support from the [SU Advice Centre](#), who are well trained to listen to welfare concerns and who can refer on to other professional services if needed.

What if... You are worried about your members wellbeing?

What If...

The issue is beyond your capacity or is triggering in some way

1) Signpost the member to the [Wellbeing and Student Support](#) drop-in sessions.

Do not feel obliged to 'solve' this person's problems if you also find the topic difficult. You can tell the member that you are unable to listen to this currently, but that there is support out there.

2) Consider asking another exec member to step in. Brainstorm how the exec can use its resources and networks to support this member through their challenges.

You are concerned about the mental health of a different member of your club or society who has not directly approached you (e.g. they are making concerning comments or have been acting out of character.)

1) If it is a concern **that does not threaten this member or another person's safety**, consider setting up a welfare check-in with the individual member in a comfortable and informal setting, such as over a coffee or walk. You can gently let them know that you are concerned about their wellbeing as they haven't been acting like themselves recently, to give them space to open up.

2) Consider leading a group welfare event to provide peer support that doesn't individually approach any students.

3) You can take your concern to [Warwick Wellbeing Services](#) themselves, who will reach out to a student if friends say they are concerned.

What if... You struggle setting boundaries or knowing how to communicate them?

There is no shame in this – it is difficult to establish and communicate boundaries! Still, boundaries are the most important thing to protect your own mental health. You can practice setting these and it will become easier with time.

Has someone told you a very serious concern that feels beyond your control?

“This sounds really difficult, and I think it's a bit beyond what I can provide practical help with. If you want, we can both go to SU Advice/ Report and Support/Wellbeing, and we can see how they can help in a more structured way?”

“I’m quite worried about how this is impacting you. Why don’t we both sit down and look at what support you can find through the SU / Uni?”

Does the disclosure trigger or upset you in any way?

“I’m sorry, but this isn’t a topic that I feel very comfortable discussing as it's a bit personal. Can I suggest you talk to X about this instead – I know they can support you too”

“Hey, I’m feeling a bit uncomfortable right now. If it’s okay, I’ll just take a second outside and see if I can find X for you to chat to”

“This sounds quite serious, and I’ve experienced something similar before. Just before you go into too many details here, I’d suggest going to SU Advice/Report and Support, I know they’ll be better at providing you routes forwards”.

What if... You struggle setting boundaries or knowing how to communicate them?

Do you feel like your boundaries are being crossed, or that you are being used as a therapist by your members?

“Hi, I just wanted to let you know that I’ve been a bit overwhelmed by the welfare concerns I’ve been getting recently. I’m not a trained professional, so it’s important that people don’t see me as someone that can solve all their problems. I’m happy to listen to what’s on your mind and help if I can, but the best route for practical support would be SU Advice/Report and Support/Wellbeing”

If you are unsure how to set or maintain boundaries, please talk to the SU Advice Centre, VP Welfare and Campaigns, VP Societies or VP Sports for advice and support.

How do official processes work?

Report and Support

What is it?

Report and Support is the University's online platform for reporting and receiving support related to bullying, harassment, discrimination, sexual misconduct, relationship abuse and/or hate crime.

You will receive support regardless of where or when an incident happened – anywhere on or off campus, within or outside of term time, recently or in the past. It is a reporter-led and trauma-informed service, which means that no actions will be taken on the behalf of a reporting party without their consent.

They can also help deal with any connected issues to allegations, such as accommodation, academic work/groups, financials and social groups.

How does it work?

1. Make a disclosure through the online Report and Support platform. When you do this, you can choose to either report anonymously, or with details, and this will not trigger any formal report to the University.
2. A trained Liaison Officer will reach out within 2 working days and arrange a meeting online, in-person or over the phone. This first meeting is confidential (unless there are any immediate safety concerns) and the Liaison Officer will talk through both reporting and support options.
3. It's up to the student on what happens next. They don't need to take any formal action if they don't want to. A Liaison Officer can signpost support services only, if that's all they want. If a student chooses to raise a formal complaint, their Liaison Officer will support them through that and explain that process.

How do official processes work?

SU Advice Centre

What is it?

The SU Advice Centre is a free and confidential service that offers advice and guidance to all student members. The team of friendly advisors are not employed by the University, which means they provide independent advice about academics, housing, finances, interpersonal conflict, mental health and more.

How does it work?

1. Make an enquiry through the online Advice Centre Enquiry form. This means adding your name, student ID and contact details, and then filling out a brief description of the nature of your enquiry.
2. An Advisor will then get back to you within 2 working days to discuss your concern – this can be done in person in the SUHQ or over Teams.
3. You and the Advisor can then examine appropriate next steps and help you work through them – for example, they can refer you to services such as Wellbeing, help mediate a difficult conversation with another student, or contact a landlord.
4. If what you really need is a friendly face and listening ear, the Advisors are more than happy to chat over a cup of tea, and provide advice and support where needed.

How do official processes work?

Wellbeing and Student Support

What is it?

This is the central University wellbeing service, which provides disability support, counselling and psychotherapy services, sexual and domestic abuse support services and self-help resources.

How does it work?

1. Attend an online or in-person consultation with the Wellbeing and Student Support team, who can help identify the best next steps for the particular situation. Consultations are available 10-3 from Monday-Friday each week, with an average wait time of 15 minutes.
2. After a consultation, the Wellbeing team will signpost to the relevant service and send information, links and referral forms later that day.
3. Students will then be invited to attend the relevant service, whether that is an internal referral to University individual counselling, group therapy, online courses, etc., external referrals to a GP or the NHS, or signposting to other external organisations.

How do official processes work?

University Mediation Service

What is it?

Warwick Mediation is an early intervention service that offers free, impartial and voluntary mediation for interpersonal conflicts. Trained mediators are able to identify issues within conflicts and support both parties to reach a mutual resolution.

How does it work?

1. Complete an enquiry form online. Enquiries can be made by individuals considering taking part in mediation, or by anyone who wants to find out more about the service and potentially signpost someone else.
2. The enquiry will be assigned to a trained mediator who will be in touch within 3 working days to arrange a conversation to discuss the issues and if mediation would help.
3. If mediation goes ahead, students will be assigned to two trained co-mediators. The mediators will be in touch with all students involved in the dispute to arrange individual meetings to discuss the issues they are facing and to answer any questions about the process.
4. After all parties have met with the mediators, a joint mediation meeting will be arranged and facilitated to discuss the issues at hand and ideas for resolution.

FAQs

What training can my exec access to feel confident with welfare concerns?

The SU provides mandatory training for Welfare Officers to understand which skills and responsibilities are important for welfare concerns, online via **Evolve**. Other exec members can check out the [Exec Resources](#) on the SU website, or ask the **SU Student Activities** team for further information.

The University regularly runs training sessions on [Active Bystander Skills](#), which take place face-to-face over a few hours to equip execs and individuals with confidence to intervene and deal with challenging scenarios.

You can also access **the [Report and Support Ready training](#)** which is currently being redeveloped, and can be taken by your exec to understand the process of Report and Support more clearly.

Any club and society can also request bespoke Report and Support training from the team at any point in the year, which explains how Report and Support works, and can be tailored to the needs of the club/society. Email reportandsupport@warwick.ac.uk

Why can't my club/society just remove members that have accusations against them?

It is unfair to remove members from society/club events or training without a proper investigation. Even though execs might want to follow their own processes, we advise against these as they are not standardised and execs are not properly trained to handle investigations. We need to know that we have examined all the evidence in order to make an informed decision – otherwise we risk setting a precedent for arbitrary exclusions to be applied to members indiscriminately.

Why can't the SU remove members on my behalf?

The SU can only temporarily or permanently remove members from societies or clubs when advised during, or as the outcome of, an active case going through Report and Support, or following an official SU complaint.

We can remove members on your behalf if we have enough evidence that this would be a reasonable measure to protect the safety of our students. Only the SU President or Designated Premises Supervisor can do this at the outcome of an investigation, otherwise we risk arbitrarily removing members from events or spaces without clear reason.

Why do I have to go through Report and Support?

The SU doesn't have the expertise and resources to deal with the breadth of enquiries that get submitted to Report and Support. Although our Advice Centre Advisors are well trained and experienced to provide advice and support on a variety of matters, they cannot carry out investigations or impose sanctions.

The SU works very closely with Report and Support, and trusts their mediation and support skills. The Advice Centre can walk students through the process of making a Report and can accompany them through any disciplinary procedures that may follow.