Talking about risk

If direct or indirect reference is made to risk it is important to ask explicit questions to establish nature and severity of the risk e.g. Are you having thoughts about ending your life / hurting someone else? Do you have thoughts about how you might act on this? Do you have access to the means? Do you feel you are at imminent risk of acting on these thoughts? Are you able to keep yourself safe until tomorrow?

What will help you keep yourself safe? Who else knows how you feel? Can we contact them to support you?

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**Check**

- No immediate risk but there is a serious concern e.g. high level of distress, intense anxiety, seems very low or notably withdrawn.
- Some risk present: possible self-harm, ideas of hopelessness, life not being worth living, no plans or access to means (see above on how to talk about risk):
  - Has support, is able to specify who and what the support is and will access it.
  - Able to keep themselves safe until next working day and can describe to you how they will do that e.g. spend time with friends, plan a positive activity etc.

**Significant difficulty and/or hard to assess**

- High level of distress, intense anxiety, appears very low, frequent use of self-harm.
- Some risk present e.g. frequent thoughts of suicide with some planning, ambivalent or non-committal about maintaining safety (see Talking about Risk box).
- OR signs of confusion or disorientation.
- OR thoughts or speech seem a little jumbled, hard to make sense of.
- OR expressing unusual ideas.
- OR signs of poor self care, appears dishevelled.

**Check**

- Give description of your concern, ID no of student and they will take steps to support the student.
- Provide information on University support:
  - Counselling & Mental Health Service, DASS, Advice and Response.
  - Health Assured student helpline 24/7 0800028 3766
  - Samaritans 116 123
  - NHS Direct 111
  - Shout is a 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis. TEXT Shout to 85258
  - 24/7 Helpline 0800 953 0285 Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS FT gmmh.nhs.uk

**Email the Counselling Service.** They will advise and take next steps on next working day: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk

**Arrange a follow-up with the student to see if they accessed help.**

**Call 999**

- If you are on University premises call Security on 0161 306 9966 (extn. 69966 from an internal phone).
- If the student of concern is in a university halls of residence contact the Duty Advisor: www.manchester.ac.uk/reslife/info/contact
- And call 111 for advice/guidance or 24/7 helpline Line 0800 953 0285.

**Out of hours**

- Email the counselling service. Someone will get back to you on the next working day: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk
- And call 111 for advice/guidance or 24/7 helpline Line 0800 953 0285.
- If you are on University premises call Security on 0161 306 9966 (extn. 69966 from an internal phone).
- If the student of concern is in a university halls of residence contact the Duty Advisor: www.manchester.ac.uk/reslife/info/contact
- Provide student with sources of crisis support - same list as above.

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**Serious but not an emergency**

- Significant but not an emergency
- Risk of immediate harm to self or others.
- Has made a attempt to self-harm or end life e.g. has taken overdose, has made a deliberate and serious attempt to self-injure.
- OR serious physical injury or illness.

**Check**

- High level of concern.
  - Very distressed, agitated and unpredictable and their behaviour is unmanageable.
  - Cannot engage in a plan to keep safe.
  - Risk of immediate harm to self or others.
  - Has made a attempt to self-harm or end life e.g. has taken overdose, has made a deliberate and serious attempt to self-injure.
  - OR signs of poor self care, appears dishevelled.

**Action**

- Provide information on University support:
  - Counselling & Mental Health Service, DASS, Advice and Response.
  - Health Assured student helpline 24/7 0800028 3766
  - Samaritans 116 123
  - NHS Direct 111
  - Shout is a 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis. TEXT Shout to 85258
  - 24/7 Helpline 0800 953 0285 Greater Manchester Mental Health NHS FT gmmh.nhs.uk

**Email the Counselling Service.** They will advise and take next steps on next working day: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk

**Arrange a follow-up with the student to see if they accessed help.**

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**Significant difficulty and/or hard to assess**

- Risk of immediate harm to self or others.
- Has made a attempt to self-harm or end life e.g. has taken overdose, has made a deliberate and serious attempt to self-injure.
- OR serious physical injury or illness.

**Check**

- Email: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk
  - Give description of your concern, ID no of student and they will take steps to support the student.

**Action**

- Provide information on University support:
  - Counselling & Mental Health Service, DASS, Advice and Response.
  - Health Assured student helpline 24/7 0800028 3766
  - Samaritans 116 123
  - NHS Direct 111
  - Shout is a 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis. TEXT Shout to 85258
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**Email the Counselling Service.** They will advise and take next steps on next working day: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk

**Arrange a follow-up with the student to see if they accessed help.**

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**Significant difficulty and/or hard to assess**

- Serious or possibly serious risk: e.g. has taken overdose, has made deliberate attempt to self-harm, suicidal intentions, serious attempt to self-harm or end life.

**Check**

- Email: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk
  - Give description of your concern, ID no of student and they will take steps to support the student.

**Action**

- Provide information on University support:
  - Counselling & Mental Health Service, DASS, Advice and Response.
  - Health Assured student helpline 24/7 0800028 3766
  - Samaritans 116 123
  - NHS Direct 111
  - Shout is a 24/7 text service for anyone in crisis. TEXT Shout to 85258
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**Email the Counselling Service.** They will advise and take next steps on next working day: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk

**Arrange a follow-up with the student to see if they accessed help.**

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**Sharing information**

Use the student’s ID and initials as a reference in an email rather than name. Provide an up-to-date phone number for the student if you have it.

If you are unsure about what action to take, or want to discuss your concerns contact counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk and the duty practitioner will contact you.

**www.counsellingservice.manchester.ac.uk/trainingforstaff**