

Guidance for students when involved in formal casework.

The role of your friend or supporter.

The principles below apply to all formal University Procedures. This includes the Disciplinary / Assessment Irregularity Procedures, the Support to Study Procedure (Fitness to Study Panels), the Fitness to Study Practice Procedure, the Student Complaint Procedure and the Academic Appeal Procedure.

At formal stages within University procedures students are advised that they may be accompanied to a meeting by a friend or supporter.

- Normally only one friend or supporter is permitted to attend, although others may wait outside of the meeting room for you.
- If you wish more than one person to attend a panel hearing a request should be made to the Chair of the panel. The decision rests with the Chair.
- It is your choice whether you wish someone to accompany you and, if so, who you ask to attend. It is your responsibility to ask someone to accompany you and to brief them on the case.
- If you wish to be accompanied you are recommended to consider asking a member of the University community such as:
 - A friend from the University
 - A tutor from the University
 - A supporter from the Student Advice Centre - www.nusu.co.uk/sac
- You may if you wish ask someone from outside of the University community, such as a family member, to accompany you.
- For some professional programmes, and particularly for a Fitness to Study case, it may be appropriate for you to invite a union representative.
- University rules do not preclude you hiring a member of the legal profession to accompany you. You are however strongly advised that this is not normally required and can add significant cost to you, and may delay proceedings, without altering the facts of the case. Alternative, free, advice and support may be available from the Student Advice Centre - www.nusu.co.uk/sac.

Any friend or supporter that accompanies you:

- has no formal role in the meeting, although they will be invited to state their name and relationship to you and may be asked to contribute any comment at the end of the meeting;
- is expected to conduct themselves in a polite and respectful manner throughout the proceedings;
- is not expected to represent you or to answer questions on your behalf;
- is not expected to ask questions of witnesses; questions should always be controlled by the University staff conducting the meeting;
- is not expected to interrupt the proceedings; if there are interruptions the proceedings may be adjourned and when reconvened you may be asked to have an alternate friend or supporter.