

## Raising Concerns Guidance

The following guidance has been developed for:

- Individuals, who are subject to a raising concern.
- Leads, who will be contacted by the QAEU when a concern is raised about an individual in their Trust or module team.

### **I have been named in a raising concern – what happens next?**

- If a concern is raised about you or your team, you will be contacted by the undergraduate lead at your site or the lead for your module. The leads are typically responsible for relaying the information contained within the raising concern, but may devolve this responsibility to an appropriate colleague or UCLMS' Academic Lead for Quality.
- It is recommended that you have a face-to-face meeting with your lead to discuss the concern. You will be given the raising concern report to review - typically at the meeting, but you can have it in advance if you request it.
- Please discuss any comments or questions you have about the concern with your lead as they will be able to support you and/or answer any questions you may have. You should mention if you feel that the student's report does not accurately represent what happened so this can be fed back to the QAEU. You are encouraged to exercise your right to respond to the concern so your response can be fed back to the QAEU.
- An appropriate response will depend on the nature and significance of the concern. However, the QAEU expects a professional response, which should include acknowledgement of the student's perception of events and their concern, an evaluation of the events and why they occurred and your personal reflections. Any queries about what constitutes an appropriate response should be discussed with your lead or the QAEU.
- You should not contact the student yourself or get feedback from other students to include with your response.
- If you are a doctor, UCLMS requires each raising concern to be recorded in your appraisal portfolio (academic and NHS) and these should be discussed at your next appraisal. They should also be included as part of the evidence for your revalidation with the GMC.
- If the concern is of a serious or recurring nature, the QAEU reserves the right to escalate the complaint: this may involve your Trust, Responsible Officer or academic line manager at UCL.
- A one-off raising concern will be closed on receipt of an appropriate professional response. The QAEU will communicate to the student who raised the concern that the matter has been resolved and any actions taken. The situation will be monitored through the SEQs.

## **What is the role of the undergraduate lead in the raising concerns process?**

There are three main duties of the undergraduate lead:

### **a) Relaying the raising concern report to the relevant individual**

The undergraduate leads are responsible for relaying the information contained within the raising concern report to the individual concerned<sup>1</sup>. As this can be a sensitive matter, it is recommended that the lead meets with the individual face-to-face. This will provide the opportunity to discuss the matter fully and allow the lead to support the individual involved. The lead should share the full report with the person involved either before or during the meeting.

### **b) Guiding the individual to take reasonable actions demonstrating a reflective and honest response**

There are a range of responses and actions that may be taken, depending on the nature and the significance of the concern. UCLMS requires all raising concerns to be recorded in a doctor's portfolio (academic and NHS) and discussed at their appraisal. They should also be included as part of the evidence for the individual's revalidation with the GMC.

The undergraduate lead may delegate the responsibility of liaising with the individual to a third party, for example the relevant module or year lead, provided the latter is confident and able to discuss the matter with the individual. The feasibility of this is highly dependent on the third party and their relationship with the individual concerned.

Undergraduate leads may refer the discussion to the Academic Lead for Quality in certain circumstances and by agreement.

### **c) Communicating the resolution of the raising concern to the QAEU**

Communication with the QAEU will help to resolve the raising concern in a timely manner. This can be done through the undergraduate lead, but equally a response from the individual or team is welcomed. Once resolved, the QAEU will close the case and monitor the situation through future SEQs. The QAEU will then communicate to the student that the matter has been resolved and the outcome of the process.

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<sup>1</sup> In the instance of a site or module lead being the subject of a raising concern, this role will be undertaken by the Director of UCLMS or year lead respectively

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

- 1) Can the individual, who is subject to a raising concern, meet with the student who has raised it?**

No. Although the student may agree to their name being disclosed to the individual, there must be no repercussions on them after they have submitted a report.

- 2) How does the undergraduate lead or individual know if the remedial action taken is sufficient and appropriate?**

Every concern is different and each case should be treated individually. The individual should demonstrate reflective behaviour by taking proactive steps to resolve the situation and to address the issues that prompted the student to submit the raising concern report. The QAEU can support and advise if the response is appropriate or if further action is needed.

- 3) Is it compulsory for doctors to discuss the concern in their appraisal?**

Yes. According to the GMC's revalidation guidance, doctors should record compliments and complaints in their portfolio.

- 4) What should be done if the individual disagrees with the student's version of events?**

Individuals who are the subject of a raising concern are encouraged to exercise their right to respond. If they feel that the student's report does not accurately represent what happened, they should discuss this with their lead and this will be fed back to the QAEU.

- 5) Can supporting statements from other students or colleagues be submitted as part of the response to the concern?**

This is not needed. What is required is a simple and short statement about the concern and an evaluation of it with reflection.