



**UNIVERSITY
ACADEMY 92**
MANCHESTER

Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure

Implementation date:

February 2020

Version number:

1

<u>Document type</u>		Strategy
	X	Policy
		Regulations
	X	Procedure
		Code of Practice
		Guidance
<u>Area of UA92 business</u>		Governance & Compliance
	X	Student Affairs
		Academic
		Finance & Operations
		External Affairs
		Other
<u>Document Name:</u>		Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure
<u>Author:</u>		Student Well-being Officer
<u>Owner (if different from above):</u>		Director of Student Affairs
<u>Document control information:</u>		
Version number:		1
Date approved:		25 th March 2020
Approved by:		UA92 Academic Committee
Implementation date:		February 2020
Review due:		February 2023
Document location:		UA92 website
<u>Consultation required:</u>		
Equality & Diversity		
Legal considerations (including Consumer Rights)		
Information Governance		
Students		Yes – via Academic Committee
Employee Engagement Forum		N/A
External		N/A

REVISION HISTORY			
Version	Date	Revision description/Summary of changes	Author

Document: Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure
Implementation from: February 2020
Review date: 2020/21
Owner: Director of Student Affairs

1. Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- 1.1 Outline what 'fitness to study' is.
- 1.2 Identify when the fitness to study procedure should be used i.e. in cases where student disciplinary and safeguarding procedures are not most appropriate.
- 1.3 Provide a clear and supportive procedure for individuals to address concerns relating to a student's fitness to study.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies to all current students and apprentices registered on a UA92 course.
- 2.2 This statement relates only to enrolled students and current students who have taken a temporary suspension of study. It does not apply to applicants.
- 2.3 There is a potential overlap between this policy and other UA92 policies (see section 7; 'Related Documentation'). UA92 reserves the right to suspend action under this procedure if it considers that the matter would be more appropriately dealt with under another policy/procedure.
- 2.4 In this policy and procedure, any reference to named members of UA92 staff also includes reference to their nominee and named staff may delegate their responsibilities to other appropriate members of staff without invalidating the procedure. The identity of nominees or members of staff to whom responsibilities are delegated will be notified to the student or apprentice.
- 2.5 Advice on how to use this policy and procedure is available from the UA92 Student Well-being Officer.
- 2.6 UA92 will keep a record of any Fitness to Study cases and evidence collated as part of the investigation into a student's fitness to study. Students or apprentices are advised to also keep their own records. Records will be retained in line with the UA92 retention policy.

3. Policy statements

- 3.1 UA92 is committed to supporting students and recognises the importance of their health and well-being in relation to their academic progress and wider student experience.

Document:	Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure
Implementation from:	February 2020
Review date:	2020/21
Owner:	Director of Student Affairs

- 3.2 The fitness to study procedure is a supportive process, intended to be used when a student's health or well-being is having a detrimental impact on the health, safety, well-being or learning of the student and/or others in the UA92 community.
- 3.3 UA92 is committed to providing a safe and comfortable environment for all and has a duty of care to respond appropriately where there are concerns relating to a student's fitness to study and the impact this may have on the student and/or others.

4. Definition

- 4.1 The term 'fitness to study' as used in this policy encompasses all aspects of student life (including student accommodation) and not just the student's ability to engage with their studies.
- 4.2 A student is considered 'fit to study' when they are physically and mentally well enough so that, with any necessary and reasonable support and adjustments in place;
- They can engage with their academic studies and submit assessments with a reasonable chance of obtaining the qualification they have registered for;
 - Their behaviour does not unreasonably disrupt other members of the UA92 community;
 - They do not put their own health and safety at risk, or that of others.

5. Procedure

- 5.1 An individual can report concerns about a student's fitness to study directly to the Director of Student Affairs and/or Student Well-being Officer via email. The UA92 reporting tool can also be used but only in a 'non-anonymous' capacity, to enable us to contact the reporter for additional information/clarification, and in order to act on the information provided.
- 5.2 An initial meeting will be held by a multi-disciplinary team (MDT) to consider the information provided and to assess the anticipated risk to the student and to others. The student would not typically attend this meeting. This MDT membership will typically consist of;
- Director of Student Affairs or nominee
 - Student Well-being Officer or nominee
 - Registrar and Secretary or nominee
 - Academic colleague (typically from a different subject area to that of the student)

- 5.3 Following consideration of the information provided, the MDT will consider whether additional information is essential and obtain this if necessary. The MDT may then take a number of actions included, but not limited to;
- i. Developing an action plan for the student
 - ii. Arranging for further assessment and/or support
 - iii. Suspension of studies
 - iv. Outline a requirement for the student to access specified support.
- 5.4 The action plan will be communicated to the student in writing as soon as possible, and where appropriate the student will be invited to discuss the outcome of the fitness to study procedure with the most appropriate member of UA92 staff.
- 5.5 In cases where a suspension of studies has been recommended, the student can apply for exceptional and mitigating circumstances (EMC) for assessments due during the period of suspension (if imminent) and/or a period during which their studies were impacted as a result of the fitness to study process.
- 5.6 Circumstances will be considered on a case by case basis by the EMC panel and there is no guarantee that exceptional and mitigating circumstances will be approved if there is not sufficient and compelling evidence.
- 5.7 In cases where a suspension of studies has been recommended, the student would be invited to attend a meeting (either virtually or in person) with the MDT prior to their 'return to study' date, to enable the team to identify any support needs upon returning to study and to re-assess risk.
- 5.8 Medical evidence may be requested to support a student's return to study in some instances, and the MDT reserves the right to extend a suspension of studies or recommend a withdrawal from study, if it is considered to be the appropriate course of action.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 The student may appeal against a decision made by the MDT in writing to the UA92 Registry team (registry@ua92.ac.uk) within ten working days of the decision being communicated to the student.
- 6.2 The decision will then be reviewed and the student will receive a response within one calendar month of UA92 having received the appeal.

- 6.3 If the student is not satisfied having completed UA92's appeals procedure, they will be entitled to request a review of the case under the rules of the scheme of the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) as set out in the Completion of Procedures letter. Information about OIA and its processes can be found at www.oiahe.org.uk.

7. Related Documentation

- [Student Code of Behaviour and Disciplinary Policy](#)
- Safeguarding Policy
- [Summary of Terms and Conditions for Students](#)
- Exceptional and Mitigating Circumstances Policy and Procedure
- [Academic Appeals Policy and Procedure](#)