

The Academic Regulations

Appendix 17:

Fitness to Practise Procedure

2026-27

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Summary

Edge Hill University offers a number of programmes which enable a variety of associations with external bodies. These include programmes which:

- are regulated and enable qualifying students to be accepted into a specified profession, following the University confirming that they are fit to practise.
- are regulated and enable qualifying students to apply for membership of, or register with, a specific regulated professional body.
- enable qualifying students to apply for membership or accreditation of a non-regulated professional body.
- include a professional practice element which involves contact with children, or adults at risk, or which lead to professional registration but are not necessarily regulated.

For the purposes of this document, the term 'regulated programme' will be used to refer to all types of programmes outlined above.

In awarding qualifications from regulated programmes the University must be satisfied that students will be fit and proper entrants into their chosen profession. Sometimes, concerns are raised regarding a student's suitability to enter their chosen profession.

Appendix 17 describes the process by which the University details, investigates and deals with allegations of impaired fitness to practise. It covers a range of programmes which include a professional practice element and are either regulated or which may lead to professional accreditation, membership or registration. Please note, the University reserves the right to invoke this procedure in exceptional circumstances other than those listed above.

Nothing in this policy is intended to restrict lawful freedom of speech or academic freedom as protected under the Education (No.2) Act 1986 and the Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Act 2023. However, all individuals are expected to express their views in ways that are consistent with professional standards and the law.

Glossary of Terms

Term	Meaning
Local	When we describe a process or panel as ‘local’ we mean meetings or panels held and decisions made at a department or faculty level, not an institutional level.
Protected Characteristic	These are specific aspects of a person’s identity defined by the Equality Act 2010. The protection relates to protection from discrimination. Protected characteristics include (but are not limited to): • Age • Disability • Gender reassignment • Marriage and civil partnership • Pregnancy and maternity • Race • Religion and belief • Sex • Sexual orientation
Professional, Statutory or Regulatory Body (PSRB)	These are designated external bodies which endorse or regulate certain professions. A list of these PSRBs is annexed to this document.
Regulated programmes	These include programmes which: • are regulated and enable qualifying students to be accepted into a specified profession, following the University confirming that they are fit to practise. • are regulated and enable qualifying students to apply for membership of or register with a specific regulated professional body. • enable qualifying students to apply for membership or accreditation of a non-regulated professional body. • include a professional practice element which involves contact with children, or adults at risk or which lead to professional registration but are not necessarily regulated.
Senior member of university staff	Cases are considered by a range of senior university staff as appropriate to the circumstances. This term includes

	directors, faculty deans and associate deans, heads and associate heads of departments or support areas.
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Purpose

This document is aimed primarily at students ('you'), whether currently enrolled, external or interrupted, and details the University's ('our', 'we') approach and procedure for dealing with fitness to practise cases. It includes the process the University will follow where concerns are raised regarding a student's suitability to enter their chosen profession. There is an operational guide available for staff to aid consistent implementation of this procedure.

These regulations apply to all Edge Hill students studying on a regulated programme and/ or a programme which includes a professional practice element which involves contact with children, or adults at risk.

Regulations

1. Introduction and scope

1. Fitness to practise is the ability to meet professional standards. This includes character, professional competence and health. In line with the OIA Good Practice Framework, the University applies this standard to all regulated programmes.
2. Edge Hill University offers a number of programmes which enable a variety of associations with external bodies. These include programmes which:
 - are regulated and enable qualifying students to be accepted into a specified profession, following the University confirming that they are fit to practise.
 - are regulated and enable qualifying students to apply for membership of or register with a specific regulated professional body.
 - enable qualifying students to apply for membership or accreditation of a non-regulated professional body.
 - include a professional practice element which involves contact with children, or adults at risk or which lead to professional registration but are not necessarily regulated.
3. In delivering these programmes, we facilitate arrangements for students to undertake practice placements in suitable professional settings. The University also offers other programmes that contain professional practice elements which involve contact with the public, including children and adults

at risk. These programmes may or may not lead to professional accreditation or recognition.

4. For the purpose of this procedure, all applicable programmes including those that incorporate professional practice elements as described in 1.2 above, shall be referred to as regulated programmes. The programmes which fall under this procedure, and their associated professional bodies, is [listed at Annex A](#).
5. To be successful in a regulated programme/professionally recognised qualification, you must achieve in both academic and non-academic areas and satisfy the University that you are suitable to undertake practice placements. Ultimately, when awarding qualifications from regulated programmes we must be satisfied that you are a fit and proper entrant into your chosen profession.
6. At the outset of your regulated programme, the programme team will explain the standards of professional and personal behaviour expected of you in your chosen profession, and the values that underpin those standards. Your programme team will ensure that you are well-equipped for professional life and are enabled to learn, understand and practise the standards expected. However, it is *your responsibility* to understand, maintain and follow these standards and to seek clarification and/or support if required.
7. If, during your programme, concerns are raised about your suitability to continue on your regulated programme or enter into your chosen profession, the University will follow the process in this document. The concerns may be for reasons related to your personal or professional conduct, or your health or wellbeing. In such circumstances it is essential that the University monitors and notes all concerns to ensure that you are fit and proper to enter professional practice.
8. The fitness to practise process is distinct from a non-academic misconduct process. When concerns are raised, the University's aims in following this procedure are:
 - to ensure your safety and the safety of those around you, including members of the public, and to safeguard public confidence in the profession.
 - to support you to return to good practice and successfully enter your chosen profession.
9. This procedure does not apply if you are not meeting the required academic and/or practical standards for your programme of study. Academic failure is considered under the relevant academic progression processes outlined in the University's Academic Regulations.
10. If you successfully complete a regulated programme, this means the University is declaring its belief that you are fit to enter your chosen profession. Where reasonably possible, any identified concerns relating to your fitness to practise must be concluded before this time. This means that

- if you are referred to this procedure in your final year of study your award will not be confirmed until the procedure has been concluded and your programme of study completed.
 - if you are referred to this procedure after you have completed your academic elements or concluded the programme, your award will not be confirmed until the procedure has been concluded.
 - in certain circumstances, the University has the discretion to revoke an award. Please refer to Appendix 24 – Revocation of Awards for more details.
11. Once started, a fitness to practise process will be followed through to completion. This applies irrespective of any of the following:
- The process has been paused
 - Your study is interrupted
 - You voluntarily withdraw from the programme concerned
 - You voluntarily withdraw from the University
 - The University withdraws you from your programme
 - You are withdrawn from the University
12. Professional and regulating bodies reserve the right to apply any appropriate assessments for determining suitable entrants to the profession concerned. This may include a separate test of fitness to practise in addition to those administered by the University.

Relationship with other procedures and regulations

13. The University does not normally run multiple processes that relate to the same issue, however, we recognise that a case may involve more than one process. We will determine how best to manage this on a case-by-case basis and ensure you are not disadvantaged. Normally, the fitness to practise procedure will be paused while any of the following procedures are progressed to conclusion:
- Complaints about the same issue being considered under this procedure
 - Academic Misconduct Procedure
 - The Support and Return to Study Procedure
 - The Non-Academic Misconduct Procedure
 - Any external procedures, for example a police investigation
- Where this procedure is paused, precautionary measures may also be applied. Please see [Section 6](#) for more details about precautionary measures.
14. If you breach any other university regulations or procedures which bring your fitness to practise into question, we will also consider the matter under these procedures.

2. Identifying fitness to practise concerns

Most fitness to practise concerns are likely to originate from non-academic elements such as your personal or professional conduct or your physical or mental health. Concerns are not usually raised if you are unwell (either physically or mentally) but may be raised if you fail to manage or engage with appropriate or required treatment or demonstrate a lack of insight. [Annex B](#) details some examples of what constitutes impaired fitness to practise, but it is important to note that the list of examples is not exhaustive. In addition, some examples may fall under more than one category of concern.

Personal conduct

- 1 Your personal conduct during your studies, on placement, or outside of your studies may call your fitness to practise into question. Poor or irresponsible behaviour outside of your studies reflects on the profession you wish to enter – you could breach the code of your professional body or bring your profession into disrepute. It can also raise concerns about your safety and suitability to enter professional life.
- 2 Examples of personal misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Being investigated for, or a confirmed criminal conviction or caution for an offence committed in the UK (particularly if the offence involved children or adults at risk).
 - Being investigated for, or a confirmed criminal conviction outside of the UK, which would be an offence if committed in the UK (particularly if the offence involved children or adults at risk).
 - The abuse of legal and/or illegal substances, such as alcohol, illegal drugs, prescription medication etc).
 - Aggressive, violent, intimidating or otherwise disruptive behaviour, towards others irrespective of whether this leads to a criminal conviction or caution.
 - Engaging in behaviour (whether in person or virtually) that is threatening, harassing or discriminatory towards any person or class of persons who may have (or whom you believe may have) a protected characteristic under the terms of the Equality Act 2010.
 - Inappropriate use of social media.

Professional conduct

- 3 When you are studying on a regulated programme, you are expected to display the same standards of professional behaviour as those expected of those in the profession you aim to join. If your conduct during formal

teaching and/or while on professional placement does not meet those expected standards, we may invoke this procedure.

- 4 Examples of professional misconduct include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Failure to follow the University's student regulations which may lead to a non-academic misconduct investigation.
 - Committing academic misconduct at any stage.
 - Demonstrable poor attitude to teaching and learning.
 - Falsifying records or feedback given in relation to university assessments and/or practical tasks undertaken while on professional placement.
 - Failure to follow good practice as determined by your professional body (eg failure to ensure client confidentiality; failure to obtain patient consent in the health care sector).

Physical and/or mental health

- 5 The University's regulatory duty under the Equality Act 2010 means that we do not discriminate on the grounds of disability or any other protected characteristic when admitting applicants to any of our academic programmes. We are also obliged to ensure that applicants who are admitted onto regulated programmes are safe and suitable entrants to the profession concerned. We therefore expect you to be honest in sharing your support requirements with us on application and for the duration of your programme.
- 6 We operate on the assumption that you are fit to practise unless evidence arises that demonstrates otherwise. This incorporates any disabilities you may declare and any reasonable adjustments we make that support you to fulfil the core competencies of your programme and work safely in a professional environment. It also includes considering or making reasonable adjustments to learning and assessment methods. In such cases we act on the advice from the University's disability support staff and/or an Occupational Health practitioner or other specialist.
- 7 Your physical or mental health condition alone is not usually sufficient to conclude impairment. However, your failure to seek the appropriate help or engage in treatment to manage any condition or lack of insight may call into question your fitness to practise.
- 8 Nevertheless, some matters relating to your physical or mental health may require this procedure to be invoked. Depending on your programme of study, examples of such matters include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Failure to be immunised against serious communicable diseases.
 - Failure to inform the University and/or placement provider of your medical condition, to ensure both your safety and wellbeing and that

of others with whom you come in to contact in your professional capacity.

- Failure to obtain treatment and/or follow a care/treatment plan for ongoing physical or mental health conditions.
- Unwillingness to access medical and/or other support available to you.
- Lack of insight into how your medical condition could impact upon your safety and wellbeing, and that of others with whom you come into contact in your professional capacity.
- Changes to your medical condition which require new adjustments that would be deemed unreasonable and/or impractical in a professional setting.

- 9 If you are unable to demonstrate the necessary competencies, having exhausted all options for support and reasonable adjustments, this procedure may be invoked. Please note, the University's relationship with PSRBs means we are obliged to investigate any concerns raised about a student's fitness to practise. We may also be obliged to disclose an outcome from any stage of this procedure to the relevant PSRB or to include it in a reference.

3. Your duty to disclose

- 1 As a student on a regulated programme, you are expected to always act with honesty and integrity. Part of your responsibility is to declare any previous findings relating to your fitness to practise when applying to join a regulated programme.
- 2 You are obliged to disclose any relevant findings made by another university and/or educational establishment and/or a regulatory body from the sector in which you wish to qualify. This is irrespective of time lapsed, or whether the findings are from within or outside the UK. This information will be requested as part of the application, interview and/or admission processes.
- 3 Such disclosures are required to enable the University to decide whether it is appropriate to enrol a student on a regulated programme.
- 4 Failure to make relevant disclosures will be treated as a serious disciplinary matter by the University as this calls into question your honesty and integrity. This may mean that these procedures are invoked.
- 5 The expectation to disclose is ongoing for the length your programme, not just at registration. Some regulated programmes require you to make an annual disclosure of good health and character. If you are not sure whether you need to make a disclosure, or whether you can sign such a disclosure honestly, please seek advice from your faculty. You are also required to

disclose if you are subject to any criminal, social services or other third party investigation.

4. Raising concerns

- 1 The University will consider any information submitted to it which gives us reasonable cause to believe that your fitness to practise may be impaired. This is known as a Cause for Concern. Sources of information may include, but are not limited to, the following:
 - Placement provider employees
 - University employees
 - Students (including self-referrals)
 - Witnesses
 - Police and other government agencies
 - Regulatory bodies
 - General public
2. Where the police or courts or other professional body are already involved in a case, the University will normally wait for the outcome of the external investigation or proceedings before conducting an internal investigation. This means that in such cases any fitness to practise investigation would be paused. We will keep in touch with you, any other student(s) involved and with the police or relevant authority during this process. We may, however, need to conduct a risk assessment and take temporary precautionary action to protect you, the University community and service users. Where an investigation is paused or dependent on the outcome of an external investigation, this could impact on our timeframe for completing the fitness to practise process. There are more details about this in [Section 6](#).

Anonymity and confidentiality

3. If a person makes an anonymous complaint about you, for example, under raising a concern or whistleblowing procedures, the University will consider how to manage these. Those investigating the concerns will normally need to know the identity of the person making the complaint so that they can rule out the possibility that the report has been made maliciously.
4. In exceptional circumstances the University may proceed with an investigation using the information provided anonymously. Witnesses who are giving their professional opinion are not expected to be anonymous. If the witness does not agree to the student knowing their identity it may not be appropriate to rely on their evidence.

5. Where evidence comes from service users during a practice placement, the placement provider and University must protect the confidentiality of service users. This is particularly important where those service users are children or adults at risk.

5. Initial concerns about your fitness to practise

1. While you are a student you are expected to display the same standards of professional behaviour as those required in the profession you aim to join. This means you are expected to adhere to whatever professional codes of conduct apply to your chosen profession. This includes the requirement to demonstrate integrity, accountability and professionalism.
2. Each faculty has designated channels to submit a cause for concern. Once a report has been received the appropriate person/ faculty staff member will review the report. The most appropriate person will differ depending on your programme, department, school or faculty but will be senior and experienced enough to make decisions. However, for the purposes of this procedure we will refer to this person as the Investigating Officer.
3. In reviewing the report, the Investigating Officer will take the following factors into account:
 - The nature and seriousness of the concern raised.
 - Any guidance issued by the University and/or the relevant PSRB that relates to the nature of the concern.
 - Any evidence which supports the allegation, for example, a statement, letter, copies of text messages or emails.
 - Any relevant information from your student record which is legitimate to consider. For example, any previous fitness to practise concerns, academic or non-academic misconduct matters.
4. Once the review is completed, the Investigating Officer will determine whether a risk assessment is required before deciding which of the following steps is appropriate. Please note, these steps are not necessarily sequential. Each step is explained below.
 - a. No further action is required.
 - b. A Stage 1 low level concern is identified. This may be considered to completion by the Investigating Officer alone or with a group of senior staff to address the concerns and decide on potential actions. Where available the Investigating Officer may refer you to a local procedure specific to your programme or faculty. Please see [Section 7](#) for further details.
 - c. A Stage 2, further investigation into the allegation is necessary. The Investigating Officer may conduct this investigation themselves or refer your case to another independent staff member for investigation. Alternatively, this could require referral to another procedure, for

example Support to Study or Non-Academic Misconduct. Please see [Section 1](#) for more information.

- d. The allegation and evidence received is so serious that the Investigating Officer may decide that your immediate suspension from placement and/or the University is required while further investigation or action takes place.
- e. A Stage 3 fitness to practice panel is required. Direct referral (ie without any preceding steps) is appropriate when an external investigation or other university procedure has determined the facts of the case and no further investigation is necessary.

No further action required

If there is insufficient evidence to show that your behaviour has fallen short of the standard expected, the faculty will record that a report has been received but no further action will be taken. This will not be recorded on your personal student record.

6. Risk assessment and precautionary actions

- The University reserves the right to risk assess at any point and impose any precautionary action we consider appropriate. We dynamically risk assess situations throughout all our investigations to ensure the safety of yourself or any other person, particularly children, adults at risk and the public. In line with safeguarding legislation, we may consider whether a child or adult at risk involved and refer a case to the [University's Safeguarding Policy](#).
- Where further investigation into your fitness to practise is deemed necessary, the University has an obligation to consider the risk and implement measures before a full investigation can take place. The actions taken to manage risk are known as precautionary actions.
- A risk assessment may be undertaken by the Investigating Officer in the case, a senior member of staff within the department or a panel of key senior members of staff. It considers all elements of the allegation and measures this against a number of factors. These include, but are not limited to the following:
 - Programme of study.
 - Any programme placements where academic learning takes place.
 - Your safety or that of any other person, particularly children, adults at risk and the public.
 - Potential impact on the profession you aim to enter.
 - Potential impact on the University's reputation.
- A risk assessment may result in precautionary action to safeguard you or others. For example, if a child or adult at risk is involved in this case.

- Following a risk assessment, we may decide to put temporary conditions in place. These can include anything deemed reasonable and appropriate in an attempt to ensure the safety of you or others, for example, a temporary suspension from your placement and/or studies. In such cases we will inform you and your placement as soon as possible. We will tell you in person or via MS Teams where possible, but you will also receive the information in writing. There is more information about temporary suspension in [Annex C](#).
- The University will automatically review your risk assessment if we are notified of a material change in the circumstances of your case.
- Your temporary suspension from placement and/or the University will remain in place until the conclusion of the process unless advised otherwise. If external investigations (for example, a criminal investigation) are ongoing, the suspension will also remain in place until they are resolved.

7. Stage 1 - Low level concern

- There is evidence that your behaviour has fallen short of the standard expected on your regulated programme. Examples of this include (but are not limited to) the following: poor punctuality, missing submission deadlines, unauthorised absence from teaching sessions.
- While these concerns alone may not raise immediate concerns about your ability to practise safely, they must be addressed as repeated behaviours may indicate more serious concerns regarding your fitness to practise.
- The Investigating Officer will contact you in writing to explain that a low level concern has been identified and will detail the next steps. This may include:
 - a meeting with your tutor or programme lead, or other person or group specific to your programme or faculty.
 - addressing the concern with further education, training, monitoring (eg via an action plan) or supervision. You may also be referred to one or more support mechanisms, eg the Mental Health and Wellbeing Team or Occupational Health.
 - Issue you with an official warning regarding expectations about your future conduct. This warning will be taken into consideration should any further concerns arise. This information may be included in references for future study or employment.
- Low level concerns may be considered to completion by the Investigating Officer alone, or with a group of senior staff to address the concerns and decide on potential actions.

- The faculty will record the low level concern and the steps taken to address it. This will also be recorded on your profile for the duration of your programme. Please remember that persistent low level concerns or repeated patterns of behaviour may require further investigation and raise concerns about your fitness to practise.
- A case may be referred directly to panel if an external investigation or other university procedure has determined the facts of the case and no further investigation is needed. If it is necessary to refer your case directly to a fitness to practise panel (See [Section 5.4e](#)), this will be approved by a Head of Department or equivalent.

8. Stage 2 - Further investigation into your fitness to practise

1. The information received may have called into question your fitness to practise. Alternatively, repeated low level concerns may have reached a point where the usual methods to address these are no longer effective. In any case, the Investigating Officer has concluded that further investigation into the concern is necessary.
2. The Investigating Officer will *always* recommend an investigation into your fitness to practise in the following circumstances:
 - You pose a risk to yourself or any other person, particularly children, adults at risk, and the public.
 - Your conduct fundamentally conflicts with the professional standards expected and may undermine the public's trust in the profession.

In either of the above circumstances, the University will make a risk assessment and may impose a temporary precautionary action while the investigation is conducted. Please see [Section 6](#) for details.

3. Although the investigation process may differ slightly depending on your department, school or faculty, the following elements will always be included:
 - An independent member of staff from your faculty will be appointed to conduct the investigation. This may be the existing Investigating Officer or another independent staff member who has had no previous involvement with you or the matter, but who has knowledge and/or experience of your chosen profession's standards and/or code of conduct.
 - The investigator will offer to meet with you to understand your circumstances and reasons for your behaviour/perceptions of the allegations made. A record of this meeting will be made and you will be

asked to confirm that it accurately represents the discussion that took place.

- The investigator will speak to anyone they believe is relevant to obtain full details of the allegation. This includes, but is not limited to
 - the person who raised the concern about your behaviour
 - your named contact at your placement (if this is not the person who raised the concern)
 - any other placement staff who witnessed or observed your behaviour or any incident mentioned in the report
 - your personal tutor or any other academic member of staff where relevant

Meeting notes will be taken for each meeting, or a written statement obtained where any person is unable to meet with the investigator.

- The investigator will also obtain and review all other evidence available regarding the allegation. This includes, but is not limited to, your student record, any other medical or occupational health records, CCTV, letters, texts, images etc.
4. Having obtained all the evidence available, the investigator will then consider whether there is sufficient evidence to determine whether your fitness to practise is impaired. Concerns may be considered to completion by the Investigating Officer alone, by a local panel, or with a group of senior staff to address the concerns and decide on potential actions.
 5. A fitness to practise investigation should distinguish between failure in academic assessment and concerns about fitness to practise.
 6. In all cases, the faculty will record that an investigation has taken place and detail the outcome and any sanction imposed. In most cases, this information will remain on your record indefinitely.
 7. If the investigator decides that your fitness to practise was impaired on a circumstantial basis, the following outcomes are available:
 - i. Issue you with an official warning regarding your future conduct. This warning will be taken into consideration should any further concerns arise. This information may be included in references for future study or employment.
 - ii. Require you to sign an undertaking in relation to your future conduct. This may include a requirement to seek support for your physical and/or mental health to ensure there is no risk to yourself or others. To complete a reflection piece or issue an apology where necessary.
 - iii. Refer you for monitoring under the University's Stage 1 low level concern arrangements. This outcome may require you to be considered under a return to study process.

- iv. To temporarily interrupt you from your studies for a specified period of time while you seek support for your physical and/or mental health to ensure there is no risk to yourself or others. After this time you will be required to engage with a return to study process.
 - v. Any reasonable action, including (but not limited to) referral to the Support to Study process or other support services, to enable you to successfully undertake or return to a regulated programme. This may also include requiring you to repeat part of the programme.
8. These outcomes are time-bound and are intended to support and enable you to successfully complete your regulated programme of study.
 9. If the investigator determines that the concern is of a more serious nature, and that your fitness to practise is severely impaired they may recommend that a Stage 3 fitness to practise panel is convened. In exceptional circumstances you may be immediately suspended from your studies and placement until this process is completed.
 - You have the right to appeal the outcome of this investigation. Please see Section 10 for details of how to do this.

Return to study

10. If you are temporarily interrupted from your studies, you must be able to satisfy the University that you are suitable and safe to rejoin or continue with your programme of study.
11. If the decision to interrupt you from your studies was made by your faculty, they will contact you prior to your expected return date and invite you to attend a meeting to discuss your return with your programme lead, personal tutor and/or a senior departmental representative.
12. If the decision to interrupt you from your studies was made by a fitness to practise panel, the Student Casework team will contact you prior to your return and invite you to a reconvened independent panel meeting. The panel will reassess your fitness to practise and decide whether you may resume your studies.
13. In both cases, you will be required to demonstrate that you now meet all the normal health and personal conduct criteria required for entry into your programme. This means you will be required to provide the University with the relevant information regarding your health and wellbeing, along with medical and other supporting evidence as appropriate. You will also be required to provide evidence to demonstrate you have met any conditions which were imposed, for example, that you attended any specified courses.

9. Stage 3 - Fitness to practise panel

Administration

1. The Student Casework team convenes all fitness to practise panels and will communicate with you throughout the process. There are details on how we will do this in [Section 11](#).
2. You will receive a pack of information at least 10 working days before the meeting takes place. The pack will include the date, time and location of the panel meeting as well as the following:
 - Details of panel members and any other attendees. Please note, it is *your responsibility* to notify us, as soon as possible, if you believe there may be a conflict of interest with any of the panel members or attendees.
 - A copy of all the evidence that will be provided to panel members.
 - Details of your right to provide any evidence you wish the panel to consider in advance of the meeting.
 - Details of any witnesses called by the University or panel and information on your right to call your own witnesses.
 - A copy of this procedure.
 - A copy of The Role of a Student's Friend which contains information on your right to be accompanied to the meeting by a supporter/friend or representative of the Students' Union. It also explains the University's position on legal representation during an internal process.
 - Information about support you can access during the fitness to practise process.
3. At least five working days before the meeting, you should provide the Student Casework team with a copy of all the documentation you intend to rely upon at the meeting. Please note, if you provide your documentation later than this we cannot guarantee it can be included when panel members are considering your case. You should also inform the Student Casework team of the name(s) of any supporter or witness(es) you have arranged to give evidence at the meeting. You are responsible for contacting any witnesses you wish to give evidence on your behalf and for making arrangements for those witnesses to attend the hearing.
4. You are expected to attend the panel meeting and it is in your interest to do so. In exceptional cases, such as verifiable illness, the Head of Student Casework may agree to reschedule the meeting at your request. However, if

you have been given sufficient notice of the date and time of the panel and do not attend, the meeting may go ahead in your absence. The decision to continue in your absence will be made by the Head of Student Casework.

Panel composition

5. Each panel will consist of four individuals, as follows:

- Chair – this is senior member of University staff from a faculty or department other than your own.
- One member of academic staff from your own faculty but not from your specific programme.
- One representative of Edge Hill Student's Union.
- One external professional representative from the profession you have chosen to study. In cases of a dual award, we may invite two external representatives (one from each area).

The panel will not include any person who has previously been involved in your case, or who has had any previous dealings with you.

A regulations secretary (usually the Head of Student Casework) and a notetaker also attend panel meetings to support the proceedings. They are not part of the panel and are not involved in decision-making.

Terms of reference and panel process

6. The fitness to practise panel has the following terms of reference:

- i. To consider the allegation of impaired practise in regard to the evidence presented.
- ii. To make an independent decision on your fitness to practise.
- iii. Where impaired fitness to practise is proven, to determine the outcome in line with the offences and sanctions listed below.
- iv. To inform you and the relevant assessment board of their decision.

7. In all fitness to practise cases, the burden of proof is on the University. That is, the Investigating Officer must prove that you have done what you are accused of doing. For example, if you are accused of being rude to service users during a placement, the Investigating Officer needs to produce evidence to prove this and explain how it has impaired your fitness to practise. Where there is any dispute about the facts within the case, the standard of proof applied will be the balance of probability.

8. The role of the panel is to make an independent decision on your fitness to practise and take appropriate action based on all the evidence gathered and presented. This includes evidence from the Investigating Officer and yourself.
9. To ensure a fair hearing takes place, the University has a set process for fitness to practise panels with which they must comply. This process is detailed in [Annex D](#) in the form of an agenda and ensures that the panel considers all available information that is relevant to the case.
10. When all the evidence has been presented, the panel will deliberate in private. Panel members must base their decision on the evidence that has been presented to them by the Investigating Officer and yourself.
11. The panel will then conclude whether or not your fitness to practise is impaired. Impairment is considered under these procedures as a student's inability to perform their studies and future practise. Please refer to [Annex B](#). In making this decision, the panel will also consider whether your behaviour
 - may be a risk to children, adults at risk and/or the public.
 - fundamentally conflicts with the standards expected of the profession and/or may undermine the public's trust in the profession.
 - demonstrates a continued pattern, lack of insight or lack of accountability.

Panel outcomes

12. When deciding the appropriate outcome, the panel will
 - consistently apply the principles set out in this procedure, with support from the Regulations Secretary where required.
 - consider the outcomes in order of increasing seriousness, as listed below. The consideration of each outcome and its appropriateness or relevance will be recorded.
 - consider any previous disciplinary and/or fitness to practise record and, if relevant your health record.
 - balance the requirement to maintain consistency with previous decisions made in similar cases concerning other students, alongside your individual circumstances.
 - agree that the outcome is appropriate and proportionate for the circumstances of the case and give reasons for the decision.

13. If the panel decides that your fitness to practise is *not impaired*, they may still determine that the concern should be addressed further including the outcomes listed in 8.6 of this procedure.
14. If the panel finds that your fitness to practise is impaired, it must decide the extent of the impairment when tested against the terms of reference and agree what action to take.
15. If the panel decides that your fitness to practise was *temporarily impaired or impaired on a circumstantial basis*, the following outcomes are available:
- i. Issue you with an official warning regarding your future conduct. This will remain on your record indefinitely and may be included in references for future study or employment. You may be expected to declare this should you register with a professional body.
 - ii. Require you to sign an undertaking in relation to your future conduct. This may include a requirement to seek support for your physical and/or mental health to ensure there is no risk to yourself or others. You may be required to engage with another university process, for example Support to Study.
 - iii. Refer you for monitoring under the University's Stage 1 low level concerns arrangements. This outcome may require you to be considered under a return to study process.
 - iv. To temporarily interrupt you from your studies for a specified period of time while you seek support for your physical and/or mental health to ensure there is no risk to yourself or others. After this period you will normally be required to be considered under a return to study process.
 - v. To defer their decision on fitness to practise, allowing you to undergo enhanced monitoring and meet specific conditions. This may include repeating part of a programme. Once these conditions have concluded, regardless of whether they have been fully met, your fitness to practise will be reviewed based on the new information and evidence.
 - vi. Any reasonable action, including (but not limited to) referral to the Support to Study process or other support services, to enable you to successfully undertake or return to a regulated programme. This may also include repeating part of the programme.
16. These outcomes are time-bound and are intended to be supportive in nature and enable you to successfully complete your regulated programme of study. You must be able to satisfy the University that you are suitable and safe to rejoin your programme of study. This will normally require you to be

considered under a return to study process as outlined in [Section 8 – Return to study](#).

17. If the panel decides that your fitness to practise is *seriously or severely* impaired, the following outcomes, including a combination of these, are available:
- i. Any of the outcomes outlined in 8.15 above or any of the following additional outcomes.
 - ii. Place conditions on your continued registration on your regulated programme. Such conditions should not be arbitrary in nature but designed to ensure that your future conduct and/or physical and/or mental health is appropriately monitored to ensure both your safety and that of others. For example, you may be required to redo a placement or repeat a year.
 - iii. Any reasonable action, including referrals to support services, to enable you to understand any implications of a period of interruption or transferring to an alternative course and to enable you to successfully return to study on your current or an alternative programme.
 - iv. Fail and withdraw you from your current programme of study but permit you to apply to transfer or apply either immediately or in the future to an alternative non-professional/non-regulated programme. **In addition, you may also be permitted to apply to an alternative professional programme after a stand-down period of two years.** Admission is not guaranteed and any future application to a professional programme will be subject to a declaration of any previous fitness to practise outcome and will be assessed in line with the relevant programme's admissions and regulatory requirements.
 - v. Fail and withdraw you from your current programme of study but permit you to apply to transfer or apply either immediately or in the future to an alternative non-professional/non-regulated programme. Admission is not guaranteed and will be subject to meeting all relevant entry requirements. There will be no time-based restrictions; however, any new programme must not lead to, or support application for, professional registration. **You will not be permitted or accepted to apply for an alternative professional programme of study at Edge Hill University at any point in the future.**
 - vi. As a last resort, the panel may decide that you are failed and withdrawn from your programme of study and permanently expelled

from the University. **This means you are not permitted to study on any programme at Edge Hill University, now or in the future.**

18. If the panel believes there is evidence of exceptional or personal circumstances which impacted on your fitness to practise, it has the discretion to impose a lesser sanction that would ordinarily be applied. In doing so, any decision would be made in line with the standards outlined in Section 8.2 of this procedure.
19. In exceptional circumstances, where an award has already been conferred, the Panel may determine that revocation of the award should be considered. In such cases, the Panel will make a recommendation to the Vice-Chancellor or nominee from the University Executive for a final decision.
20. In deliberation, the panel will aim to reach a unanimous decision regarding whether or not your fitness to practise is impaired and what action should be taken. Where this is not possible, a majority decision will be accepted, or a fresh panel will be convened.
21. In exceptional cases, the panel may decide that additional information, not previously available from the Investigating Officer or yourself, is required before a decision can be made. In such cases, we will notify you and explain the reasons for the delays in the panel's decision and the outcome being communicated to you. You will normally be sent a copy of the additional information considered by the panel.
22. Where there is any dispute about facts within the case, the standard of proof applied will be the balance of probability.
23. The Student Casework team will inform you in writing of the panel's decision and any sanction, within five working days of the decision being made. This notification will include a summary of the meeting, including the reasons why the panel made its decision, and will also advise you of your right to lodge an appeal.
24. A copy of the panel's decision will be shared with your faculty and any other relevant University staff who need to enact the specified outcomes. We may also be obliged to inform your PSRB that a fitness to practise process has been followed. We may also inform the relevant placement provider, school, or trust that the fitness to practise procedure has been followed and whether or not impairment was found.

Complaints and counter-allegations

24. In cases where you have made a complaint or counter-allegation linked to your fitness to practise proceedings, we may pause the fitness to practise

process to allow the complaint to be investigated. This will be considered on a case-by-case basis, ensuring a fair and thorough approach. If the complaint is upheld, the findings may be taken into account as part of the fitness to practise process.

Please note, complaints regarding practice placement providers should be raised with the placement provider in the first instance with support from the University.

10. Appeals against fitness to practise outcomes

- If you are dissatisfied with a fitness to practise decision at Stage 2 or Stage 3, you have the right to submit an appeal, however your appeal must meet one or more of the following grounds:
- Procedural irregularity in the fitness to practise process.
- Bias or the perception of bias at any point in the process.
- New evidence has come to light which, for good reason was not previously available and which may undermine the decision.
- The decision was unreasonable or disproportionate in all the circumstances.
- To lodge an appeal, you must submit a completed [fitness to practise appeal form](#) to the Head of Student Casework within 10 working days of the decision being communicated to you. It is your responsibility to ensure all evidence and information to support your appeal is included in this submission.
- Appeals submitted outside the specified deadline will normally be ruled invalid. In exceptional circumstances, the Head of Student Casework may accept an appeal submission after the specified date. In such cases you must contact the Head of Student Casework and detail in writing the reasons for the delay in submitting your appeal. You should also state when you will be able to submit your appeal request. The Head of Student Casework reserves the right to extend a submission deadline or to rule that a late appeal submission cannot be accepted.

Initial consideration

- When the Head of Student Casework has received your completed appeal form, they will appoint a senior manager of the University to consider your grounds for appeal.
- The senior manager will decide whether your appeal meets one or more of the grounds outlined above and, where relevant, whether there is appropriate or sufficient evidence to support the case.

- You will be notified of the decision in writing no later than 20 working days after lodging your appeal with the Head of Student Casework. If a decision cannot be made in that timeframe we will write to you explaining the reason for the delay and advising a new date by when you can expect a decision.
- If the senior manager determines that your request *does not* meet the specified grounds for appeal, they will advise the Head of Student Casework. Your notification of this decision will include a Completion of Procedures letter explaining that the University's internal procedures have been completed. You should refer any further request for review to the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator \(OIA\)](#).
- If the senior manager determines that your request *does meet* one or more of the grounds for appeal, they will advise the Head of Student Casework that an appeal panel should be convened.

Appeal panel administration

- The Student Casework team convenes all appeal panels and will communicate with you throughout the process. Please see [Section 11](#).
- At least 10 working days before the meeting takes place, you will receive written notification of the date, time and location of the appeal panel meeting. This notification pack will also include the following:
- Details of the appeal panel members and any other attendees. It is your responsibility to notify us, as soon as possible, if you believe there may be a conflict of interest with any of the panel members or attendees.
- A copy of all the evidence that will be provided to appeal panel members.
- Details of your right to provide any further evidence you wish the panel to consider in advance of the meeting.
- A copy of this procedure.
- A copy of The Role of a Student's Friend, which contains information on your right to be accompanied to the meeting by a supporter/friend or representative of the Students' Union. It also explains the University's position on legal representation during an internal process.
- Information about support you can access during the appeal process.
- At least five working days before the meeting, you should provide the Student Casework team with a copy of any further information you intend to rely upon at the meeting. Please note, if you provide your documentation later than this we cannot guarantee it can be included when appeal panel members are considering your case. You should also inform the Student Casework team of the name(s) of any witness(es) you have arranged to give evidence at the meeting. You are responsible for contacting any witnesses you wish to give evidence on

your behalf and for making arrangements for those witnesses to attend the hearing.

- By submitting an appeal you have called for the appeal panel to take place, therefore you are expected to attend the appeal panel meeting. In exceptional cases, such as verifiable illness, the Head of Student Casework may agree to reschedule the meeting at your request.

Appeal panel composition

- An independent appeal panel will consist of four individuals:
- Chair: a senior member of University staff, including a member of the University's Executive or Senior Leadership Team who has had no involvement with your case
- One senior academic member of your faculty.
- One representative from Edge Hill Students' Union.
- One external professional representative from your chosen profession who is licensed to practise by the relevant professional body. In cases of a dual award, we may invite two external representatives (one from each area).

The panel will not include any person who has previously been involved in your case or who has had any previous dealings with you.

A regulations secretary (usually the Head of Student Casework) and a notetaker will also attend the meeting to support the proceedings. They are not part of the panel and are not involved in decision-making.

Appeal panel process

- As you have called the appeal panel, it is your responsibility to present a case which demonstrates and supports your ground(s) for appeal.
- To ensure a fair hearing takes place, the University has a set process with which appeal panels must comply. The process is detailed in [Annex E](#) in the form of an agenda and ensures that you are able to present your case and that all relevant matters are explored.
- The panel will not re-hear the case but will instead consider whether the grounds for appeal have been met. The appeal panel will hear only from those individuals from whom it is necessary to make the decision. This will ordinarily be limited to yourself and the Chair of the original panel. However the appeal panel holds absolute discretion to determine who it hears from.
- When all the relevant evidence and information has been presented, the appeal panel will deliberate in private. Appeal panel members

must base their decision on the evidence that has been presented to them.

- The appeal panel must then conclude whether
- you have presented sufficient evidence which undermines the original decision to such an extent that it cannot stand.
- there is not sufficient evidence to call into question the original decision.

Appeal panel outcomes

- When deciding the appropriate outcome, the appeal panel will
- consistently apply the principles set out in this procedure, with support from the regulations secretary where required.
- consider the outcomes in order of increasing seriousness, as listed in [Section 9 – Panel outcomes](#) The consideration of each outcome and its appropriateness or relevance will be recorded.
- consider any previous disciplinary and/or fitness to practise record, and, if relevant, your health record when determining the most appropriate outcome.
- balance the requirement to maintain consistency with previous decisions made in similar cases concerning other students, alongside your individual circumstances.
- agree that the outcome is appropriate and proportionate for the circumstances of the case and give reasons for the decision.
- If the appeal panel decides that there is not sufficient evidence to call into question the original decision, your appeal will be rejected and the original decision upheld.
- If the appeal panel upholds the appeal and decides there is sufficient evidence to question the original decision – whether in full or in part – they will consider the appropriate course of action. They may substitute the original decision with any other decision that could have been made by the original panel or make any other recommendations it considers reasonably necessary to address the issues.
- If the appeal panel is unable to decide on the outcome, for example, where a significant amount of new information has been brought to light, they may decide that your case should be considered in full by a new investigating officer or fitness to practise panel.
- Where there is any dispute about facts within the case, the standard of proof applied will be the balance of probability.
- The appeal panel will aim to reach a full outcome by unanimous decision, based on the evidence provided. Where this is not possible, a majority decision may be accepted.
- The Student Casework team will notify you of the outcome, in writing, within five working days of the decision being made. This letter will

give detailed reasons about why the appeal panel came to its decision and explain that the University's internal procedures have now been completed.

- There is no further right of appeal within the University following consideration by an appeal panel and we will issue you with a Completion of Procedures letter.

11. Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA)

- If you remain dissatisfied with the outcome of your appeal, you have the right to refer the matter to the OIA, provided your referral meets the OIA's rules and requirements. Matters concerning academic or professional judgement are not normally accepted by the OIA.
- Please note, the OIA will normally only review issues that have been dealt with through the University's internal procedures and where a Completion of Procedures letter has been issued. You must take your complaint to the OIA within 12 months of receiving your Completion of Procedures letter.

12. How we will communicate with you during the fitness to practice process

1. We will use a variety of methods to communicate with you, including telephone, email, text, face to face and online meetings.
2. Our main way of communicating information will be via email (which may include letter attachments). When we email you we will use your university email address. Access to your university account will normally remain open during the fitness to practise process, including for any appeal. However, if access to your University account has been removed during this or another process, we will use the alternative email address you provided at enrolment/registration.
3. It is your responsibility to make sure we have the correct contact details for you and to check your emails regularly. We will save all correspondence to your fitness to practise case.

13. Timeframes

- This procedure specifies timeframes for us and you to provide or respond to information.
- In line with OIA guidelines, we aim to complete the fitness to practise process within 90 days of you being notified of the concerns. Sometimes, circumstances beyond our control may impact on the timeframe or alter the process somehow. For example, where external

investigations need to be concluded it may take longer than 90 days to complete the process. We will keep you informed about the progress of the investigation and when the case is likely to conclude. We will also ensure you are able to access any support you require and will communicate any changes to the other parties involved.

- We understand that fitness to practise proceedings can be concerning for you and we always aim to conduct all investigations, meetings and appeals as quickly as possible.
- We expect you to update us regularly and communicate any changes to your situation in a timely manner.
- Please note our timeframes do not include public holidays or University closure days.

14. Support for you

Reasonable adjustments

- If you decide to share information about a disability or condition, we can talk about any reasonable adjustments which may make it easier for you to participate fully in this process.
- The kinds of reasonable adjustments we can make include, for example:
 - Extending a deadline or changing a panel date if your condition prevents you from meeting the original commitments.
 - Holding a meeting (including a panel meeting) online rather than in person.
 - Accepting a written statement from you instead of attending a meeting.
 - Pausing the process and re-starting it when you are well.
 - Providing documents to you in your preferred format, font, colour or size.
- If you wish to request any reasonable adjustments, you must do so by emailing the Head of Student Casework with your request at least five working days before the meeting takes place. We cannot guarantee that all requests will be met.
- Adjustments we cannot make or which we deem to be unreasonable include, for example:
 - Exempting you from adhering to any element of the procedure which fundamentally changes the procedure or challenges its validity.
 - Altering any element of the existing procedure which fundamentally changes the procedure or challenges its validity or which sets a precedent that may disadvantage other students now or in the future.

- Deviations from the procedure which would invalidate the procedure itself.

Sources of support

- Support is available to you when concerns arise and at all stages of the fitness to practise process. University sources of support include the following:
- [Edge Hill Students' Union Advice Centre](#) (SU). The SU can help you navigate the fitness to practise process and can also accompany you to panel meetings. Please read Role of the Student's Friend for more details and information regarding on the University's position on legal representation during an internal process.
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing team](#), who can provide emotional support during this process.
- [Student Support team](#)
- [Inclusion team](#) or [SpLD](#) if you require any reasonable adjustments throughout the process.
- [Student Services](#) can also provide money advice and careers support.
- Disability support services/Occupational Health services.
- Your personal tutor.
- Immediate, confidential and professional support is also available from the [Edge Well 24/7 student assistance programme](#).

15. Record keeping and disclosure

- For all students on regulated programmes the University must keep accurate and up-to-date records relating to student conduct and ability to practise safely. The specific information recorded may differ depending on the PSRB associated with your programme. Each regulated programme has a specific staff member who keeps a secure log of all fitness to practise concerns.
- As a minimum, the log must contain the following information:
- Student name and ID.
- Nature of the concern raised.
- The stage at which the matter was dealt with, that is, a low level concern, referred for further investigation or a University fitness to practise panel.
- Whether your fitness to practise was found to be impaired.
- Any outcome or sanction imposed as a result.
 - Records will be retained according to the University's Information Governance policies.

Disclosure to PSRBs and the Disclosure and Barring Service

- All personal and sensitive information is processed, managed, and stored by the University in line with data protection principles. Any

necessary actions/ outcomes resulting from this procedure will be shared with relevant people when there is a legitimate, statutory, or legal requirement to do so. This may include, for example, to support your studies and professional placements/practice.

- We will normally obtain consent before sharing your personal information. However, we may share information without direct consent where it is deemed that there is a potential risk to you, other students concerned, colleagues and/or the public.
- The University reserves the right to report any findings it has made about your fitness to practise to the designated professional bodies, regulators and/or organisations as appropriate. Ordinarily, such disclosures are only made where the Dean of Faculty deems that it is appropriate and proportionate to do so in order to protect others from any risk you pose to others.
- Please note that in certain areas, for example the Medical School, the University is legally required to disclose any fitness to practise issue to the relevant regulator. This includes fitness to practise issues considered by a formal panel, committee or hearing irrespective of the outcome. This obligation is explicit in the relevant programme/module handbooks provided to all students. In sharing information, the University acts within the prevailing data protection principles.
- In line with the Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006, the University is also under a legal duty to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person who:
 - Has harmed or poses a risk of harm as a result of their conduct, to a child or adult at risk.
 - Satisfies the harm test (ie they have taken no action to harm a child or adult at risk, but the potential exists that they may do so in future)
 - Has been convicted of, or received a caution for, a relevant offence.

Key to Relevant Documents

- Appendix 8 – Academic Misconduct Procedure
- Appendix 16 – Support to Study Procedure
- Appendix 22 – Academic Appeal Procedure
- Appendix 23 – Role of a Student’s Friend
- Non-Academic Misconduct Procedure
- Student Complaints Procedure

Annex A - Regulated programmes included in this process

Please note, this list is subject to change and is updated annually in this procedure. Please visit the [Professional Accreditations webpage](#) for the most up to date details.

If you are not sure whether your programme is included in the fitness to practise process, please refer to your programme handbook or check with your programme team.

Faculty of Health, Social Care and Medicine

Name of programme	Professional body
Nursing and Midwifery • FDS Nurse Associate • FDS Nurse Associate - Apprenticeship • RNDA BSc Nursing - Apprenticeship • BSc (Hons) Midwifery • MSc Midwifery • BSc (Hons) Nursing – all routes • MSc Nursing - all routes • MSci Nursing – all routes • PG Dip Nursing – all routes	Nursing & Midwifery Council
MNSW (Hons) – all routes	Nursing & Midwifery Council Social Work England
MSci (Hons) Nurse Paramedic (Adult) This programme is being taught out	Nursing & Midwifery Council Health & Care Professions Council
BSc (Hons) Paramedic Practice	Health & Care Professions Council
BSc (Hons) Clinical & Professional Paramedic Practice	
BSc (Hons) Operating Department Practice	
BSc Operating Department Practice - Apprenticeship	
BSc (Hons) Clinical & Professional Perioperative Practice	

Name of programme	Professional body
Social Work • BA (Hons) Social Work • MA Social Work • PG Dip Social Work	Social Work England
MCh (Master of Surgery) – all pathways	Royal College of Surgeons of England
MSc Surgical Care Practice – all pathways	
MBChB Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery	General Medical Council
MMed (Medicine) – all pathways	
MSc Physician Associate Studies	
BSc (Hons) Nutrition and Health	Association for Nutrition
MSc Advanced Clinical Practice	NHS England
MSc Advanced Clinical Practice Apprenticeship	
PD Dip Education Mental Health Practitioner for Children and Young People	British Psychological Society
PG Cert Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner: Specialist Adult Mental Health	
University Advanced Certificate. Mental Health & Wellbeing Practitioner: Specialist Adult Mental Health	
BA (Hons) Counselling and Psychotherapy	Not regulated
BSc (Hons) Counselling and Psychotherapy	
BSc (Hons) Child & Adolescent Mental Health & Wellbeing	
BSc (Hons) Critical Approaches to Counselling & Psychotherapy	
PG Dip Senior Wellbeing Practitioner: Children and Young People	
PGCert Supervision: Children and Young People's Mental Health and Wellbeing	
BA (Hons) Health and Social Wellbeing	
BSc (Hons) Integrated Health and Social Care	
PGCert Health Professions Education	
MSc (Hons) Child & Adolescent Mental Health & Wellbeing	
MSc Psychotherapy and Counselling – Contemporary Creative Approaches	

Faculty of Education

Name of programme	Professional body
BA (Hons) Primary Education with QTS	Department for Education
BA (Hons) Primary Early Years Education with QTS	
PGCE Primary Education with QTS: all routes	
PGCE Primary Early Years with QTS	
PGCE Secondary Education with QTS (11-16): all subjects	
BA (Hons) Secondary Education with QTS: all subjects	
PG Dip Education (Dyscalculia)	British Dyslexia Association
PG Cert Education (Dyscalculia)	
PG Cert in SPLD (Dyslexia)	
PG Cert Special Educational Needs Coordination	National Association for Special Educational Needs

Faculty of Arts and Sciences

Name of programme	Professional body
Sports Therapy	Society of Sports Therapists
• BSc (Hons) Sports Therapy	
• MSc Sports Therapy	

Annex B – What constitutes impaired fitness to practise?

Indications that your ability to meet professional standards as a student or future practitioner is impaired include (but are not limited to) the following:

Examples	Examples
• Academic misconduct at any level • Non-academic misconduct offences • Health and safety breaches • Failure to disclose convictions or other required information • Inaccurate or falsified information • Unsafe practice, incompetence or requiring too much supervision • Behaviour away from your studies, including criminal conviction, disruptive behaviour, inappropriate use of social media • Safeguarding concerns • Poor mental or physical health or serious physical impairment that interferes with your ability to practise safely • Poor communication or language skills	• Unprofessional behaviour, for example: ○ Lack of respect, aggressive or poor attitude, laziness ○ Indiscipline, failure to follow dress code, inappropriate use of mobile phone, poor timekeeping, poor attendance ○ Failure to self-reflect, lack of insight ○ Failure to engage with investigations into unprofessional behaviour ○ Poor self-management, lack of personal accountability ○ Dishonesty ○ Breaking patient confidentiality • Failure to seek help or engage with appropriate services in relation to health issues

Source: Office of the Independent Adjudicator Good Practice Framework

Annex C – Temporary suspension

1. A risk assessment may be undertaken by the Investigating Officer in the case, a senior member of staff within the department or a panel of key senior members of staff. Based on the outcome of the risk assessment, a decision may be to temporarily suspend you from practise and/or study in accordance with this procedure.
2. The University assesses risk dynamically. At any stage in these procedures it may be determined that it is appropriate to temporarily suspend you from practise and/or study until the concern has been fully investigated.
3. Temporary suspension in this context is a precautionary measure serving to prevent any potential harm to the public or persons within the Edge Hill community. It may also be applied to limit the prospect of damage to public confidence in the profession concerned.
4. Temporary suspension is a holding measure and is not indicative of the final outcome.
5. If you are temporarily **suspended from practice or related activity only**, you are not permitted to attend your practice setting and your placement will be on hold. You may still continue to attend study and student activities at the University.
6. If you are **suspended**, this means you are prohibited from participating in one or more elements of your university life. These elements include your academic activities, placements, university facilities and halls of residence, teams and societies, specific buildings and university grounds or premises.
7. When determining whether suspension is appropriate, staff should ensure that a suspension is legitimate and proportionate in the circumstances.
8. If it is decided that you should be suspended, the relevant staff member will notify you in writing as soon as possible, setting out the reasons they believe the suspension is necessary.
9. Temporary suspension from the University and/or placement will remain in place until the conclusion of the process unless advised otherwise. If external investigations (for example, a criminal investigation) are ongoing, the suspension will remain in place until they are resolved.
10. Suspensions will be kept under regular review to ensure that they remain necessary. The University will keep you updated as appropriate.

Annex D – Agenda for fitness to practise panels

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, panel members will discuss the case in private and highlight any areas which they believe require discussion.

1. The Chair will call for you and the Investigating Officer to enter the room and will
 - welcome you and the Investigating Officer to the meeting and introduce each member of the panel.
 - outline the panel's remit and the procedure that will be followed.
 - confirm there is no conflict of interest between yourself and any panel member.
- 2 The Chair will invite the Investigating Officer to present the case that your fitness to practise is impaired. The Chair will then
 - invite you student to ask the Investigating Officer any questions.
 - invite the panel to ask the Investigating Officer any questions.
- 3 The Chair will invite the Investigating Officer to call upon any witnesses (one at a time) to provide relevant evidence. For each witness, the Chair will:
 - introduce the panel and outline their remit.
 - invite the witness to present their evidence.
 - then invite questions from the Investigating Officer, yourself and panel members.
- 4 When the witness' evidence has been presented, the Chair will thank them for attending and ask them to leave the room. Witnesses should remain outside the room in case any further information is required during the hearing.
- 5 The Chair will invite you to respond to each of the concerns raised.
- 6 The Chair will then invite questions from the Investigating Officer and panel members.
- 7 The Chair will invite you to call upon any witnesses (one at a time) to provide relevant evidence. For each witness, the Chair will:
 - introduce the panel and outline their remit.
 - invite the witness to present their evidence.
 - then invite questions from yourself, the Investigating Officer, and panel members.
- 8 When the witness' evidence has been presented, the Chair will thank them for attending and ask them to leave the room. Witnesses should remain outside the room in case any further information is required during the hearing.
- 9 When the Chair is satisfied that all relevant information has been provided, they will ask you if you have anything further to add. The Chair will then ask whether you feel you have had a fair opportunity to present your case to the

panel and explain the next steps to you. That is, panel members will deliberate and you will be notified of the outcome in writing within five working days of the panel meeting taking place.

- 10 The Chair will then ask you and the Investigating Officer to leave the room and advise that you can both release your witnesses.
- 11 The meeting will close.

Annex E – Agenda for fitness to practise appeal panels

Prior to the formal commencement of the meeting, panel members will discuss the case in private and highlight any areas which they believe require discussion.

- 1 The Chair will call for you and the Chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel (CFTPP) to enter the room and will
 - welcome you and the CFTPP to the meeting and introduce each member of the appeal panel.
 - outline the appeal panel's remit and the procedure that will be followed.
 - confirm there is no conflict of interest between yourself and any panel member.
- 2 The Chair will invite you to outline the grounds on which you are appealing and to present your case.
- 3 The Chair will then
 - invite the CFTPP to ask you any questions.
 - invite panel members to ask you any questions.
- 4 The Chair will invite you to call upon any witnesses (one at a time) to provide relevant evidence. For each witness, the Chair will:
 - introduce panel members and outline their remit.
 - invite the witness to present their evidence.
 - then invite questions from yourself, the CFTPP and panel members.
- 5 When the witness' evidence has been presented, the Chair will thank them for attending and ask them to leave the room. Witnesses should remain outside the room in case any further information is required during the hearing.
- 6 The Chair will then invite the CFTPP to outline their position in relation to each of the grounds on which you are appealing.
- 7 The Chair will then
 - invite you to ask the CFTPP any questions.
 - invite panel members to ask the CFTPP any questions.
- 8 The Chair will invite the CFTPP to call upon any witnesses (one at a time) to provide relevant evidence. For each witness, the Chair will:
 - introduce panel members and outline their remit.
 - invite the witness to present their evidence.
 - then invite questions from yourself, the CFTPP and panel members.
- 9 When the witness' evidence has been presented, the Chair will thank them for attending and ask them to leave the room. Witnesses should remain outside the room in case any further information is required during the hearing.

- 10 When the Chair is satisfied that all relevant information has been provided, they will ask you if you have anything further to add. The Chair will then ask whether you feel you have had a fair opportunity to present your case to the panel and explain the next steps to you. That is, panel members will deliberate and you will be notified of the outcome in writing within five working days of the panel meeting taking place.
- 11 The Chair will then ask you and the CFTPP to leave the room and advise that you can both release your witnesses.
- 12 The meeting will close.

End matter

Item	Information
Title	Appendix 17: Fitness to Practise Procedure
Policy owner	Head of Student Casework
Approved by	Academic Board
Date of approval	July 2025
Date for review	July 2027