

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Policy has been developed by the UCL Institute of Education (IOE) for use to assess fitness to practice when considering whether students meet the professional standards of conduct for the awards on all Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programmes at the IOE.

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- 4.2 Under this Policy, any named officer may delegate his or her responsibilities to another appropriate member to guard against any conflict of interest and in the interests of progressing the panel in a timely manner.
- 4.3 Where this Policy provides for actions to be carried out within certain time periods, IOE will use all reasonable efforts to comply with these time limits. Where this is not possible the student will be notified as soon as possible of reasons for any delay together with a deadline by which the action will be carried out.
- 4.4 In considering issues of fitness to practice under this Policy, IOE shall pay due regard to relevant legislation and guidelines issued by relevant regulatory bodies. Additionally, in cases relating to a student's health, IOE shall act in accordance with its duties under the Equality Act 2010 and the Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.
- 4.5 Information on the fitness to practice requirements specific to the programme, including any requirements to notify the regulatory body, along with reference to this document are included in:
information provided during the application and admissions process;
information sessions during induction; and
the Programme Handbook, as appropriate.
- 4.6 The procedure will be operated with due consideration to student confidentiality.

5. Fitness to Practice Process

5.1 Raising a concern

- 5.1.1 Cause for concern as to a student's fitness to practice can be raised relating to a wide range of behaviours, including, but not limited to:
Criminal conviction, caution, reprimand or equivalent;
Drug or alcohol misuse;
Aggressive, violent or threatening behaviour;
Persistent inappropriate attitude or behaviour;
Academic misconduct;
Dishonesty or fraud (whether or not linked to the professional role);
Unprofessional behaviour or attitudes;
Health concerns and lack of insight or management of these concerns.
- 5.1.2 Reports of any issues of fitness to practice shall be submitted to the Head of the Academic Department in which the student is registered, or, in the case of initial teacher education, to the Head of ITE, as soon as possible after the act, incident or behaviour complained of or, in the case of repeated acts, incidents or behaviours, as soon as possible after the most recent instance.
- 5.1.3 A cause for concern report may be submitted by any person. Cause for concern reports submitted anonymously will not normally be considered, except in exceptional circumstances, for example those concerning matters of potential health and safety of the reporter.
- 5.1.4 The cause for concern report should:
Note the reason(s) for referral, information should be provided in chronological order

Note any actions taken prior to the referral
Be accompanied by evidence of the concern(s)

- 5.1.5 In cases involving allegation of serious fitness to practice issues, the Head of Academic Department or Head of ITE may recommend to the Faculty Tutor that the student is suspended

5.2.7 The Investigating Officer shall produce a Fitness to Practice report outlining the concerns raised, details of the investigation undertaken and concluding one of the following:

- a) that there is no case for impaired fitness to practice; or,
- b) there is a case for impaired fitness to practice and the matter should be referred to the Fitness to Practice Committee.

5.2.8 In the case of 5.2.7 a), if any support needs are identified in the initial investigation, the Department should ensure that these are implemented or that the student is made aware of where they can seek advice or guidance. All reasonable efforts are made to enable the student to continue on his/her programme of study. The on-going fitness to practice of the student should be monitored as normal.

5.2.9 The investigation must normally be concluded within 15 working days of receipt of the original report.

6. Fitness to Practice Hearing

6.1 Arranging a Fitness to Practice Panel

6.1.1 In the case of 5.2.7 b), the Clerk will make arrangements for the student's case to be considered at a Fitness to Practice Panel.

6.1.2 On receipt of the Fitness to Practice report of the initial investigation, the Clerk will write to the student, enclosing the report, and supporting information. The notification will inform the procedure to be followed and the date and time of the meeting. It shall also include:

The names of any witnesses which, on the basis of the Investigating Officer's report, the Panel proposes to call to give oral evidence at the meeting;

Copies of any documents, including those which have been obtained in the course of the Investigating Officer's investigation, and that are to be submitted to the Panel as evidence;

Information that the student may be accompanied by a 'companion', who should normally be a currently registered student of the University, a member of staff of the University, a sabbatical officer or student adviser of the Students' Union;

Information on relevant student

6.2 **Fitness to Practice Panel membership and attendance**

- 6.2.1 The IOE will establish a 'Panel Pool' of members for the Fitness to Practice Panel on an annual basis.
- 6.2.2 The membership of the Panel will be drawn from the IOE academic

6.5 **After the Fitness to Practice Panel Meeting**

- 6.5.1 A report of the Panel meeting, and a letter outlining the decision of the Panel and conditions, will be sent to the student, the and any other relevant parties, normally within 10 working days of the meeting.
- 6.5.2 The student will be given an opportunity to comment on whether the report is an accurate record of the meeting. They should be given ten working days to respond.
- 6.5.3 A copy of the findings, decision and conditions will be placed on the student's file in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998.
- 6.5.4 Where applicable, if a student's registration has been terminated on the ground