



Fitness to Study Policy

1.1 This policy is intended to be used in circumstances where concerns are raised about an IIS student's fitness to study, i.e., their ability to engage or re-engage with their studies. This may include serious concerns about:

- a) Their wellbeing and personal circumstances.
- b) Their ability to meet the academic requirements of their programme.
- c) Their engagement with any support that has previously been put in place.
- d) Their behaviour towards other students or staff.

1.2 It is acknowledged that during the Fitness to Study process, sensitive data may be shared. This data will be handled in line with the IIS Data Protection Policy, related notices and procedures. In cases



- a) Students who are experiencing difficult personal circumstances are supported, wherever possible, to meet the required learning outcomes and complete their degree.
- b) The best interests of the student are considered in relation to their personal circumstances.
- c) Students can make informed decisions regarding options available.
- d) Where it is determined that it is not possible for a student to remain on their degree programme, decisions are taken consistently and fairly.

2.3 Serious circumstances which could lead to a referral to the Fitness to Study process include, but are not limited to:

- a) Health concerns, including mental health.
- b) Unsafe living environment.
- c) Risk of financial destitution or homelessness.
- d) Ongoing, long-term conflict or humanitarian crisis.
- e) Ongoing effects of a serious disruption to the student's life e.g., following a crime.



3.1 Fitness to Study is not to be used for circumstances which solely relate to the impact of any student on other members of the IIS community – the Student Disciplinary Procedure should be used



4.4 The student will be notified that they can bring one person to the meeting with them, either for personal support or in a professional category.

- a) Personal support may include a friend, relative or mentor, and in this case the person will be able to observe but not speak on behalf of the student.
- b) Professional support may include a caseworker from an advocacy service, and in this case the person may advise and provide additional relevant information. Legal representation at this meeting is not permitted.
- c) The student is asked to respond at least 2 working days in advance of the meeting in order to inform the panel who will be attending, and in what capacity.

4.5 The student will be asked to provide information for the panel to consider at least 2 working days in advance of the meeting. This includes any documentation or evidence that details how the student's circumstances are direct or indirect factors in difficulties engaging with their studies. If the student has requested information but will not be able to obtain it until closer to the date of the meeting, they must respond at least 3 working days before the meeting to notify the panel of this.

4.6 The referring party will be asked to submit written information about the reason(s) for the referral to Fitness to Study, including any specific concerns and their view of what may happen if there is no intervention.

4.7 The student's academic department and any internal services who have had related and relevant contact with the student will be asked to submit written information about any action(s) undertaken to support the student to date.

4.8 If there has been relevant contact with any external organisations, such as halls of residence or emergency services, these organisations may be asked to provide information to the panel.

5.1 Staff attending the panel will include the following (or their nominees):

- a) The Director (Chair)
- b) Head of Department of Graduate Studies (DGS)
- c) Head of Student Support
- d) A staff member with expertise in compliance with student visas



- c) A recommendation that the student returns to study with no further actions needed.
- d) A request for further information from medical professionals or other related third parties.
- e) A request for a meeting with the student.

7.4 Once a student has returned to study, a review meeting should take place within the first two weeks with a member of Student Services and an appropriate member of the student's academic department.

8.1 Any student wishing to appeal the outcome of a Fitness to Study Panel must do so under the Student Academic Appeals Procedure. An Appeal would be reviewed at Stage 1 of the Procedure, with no further right to appeal. A student would be issued with a Completion of Procedures following this.