

Fitness to Practise Procedure

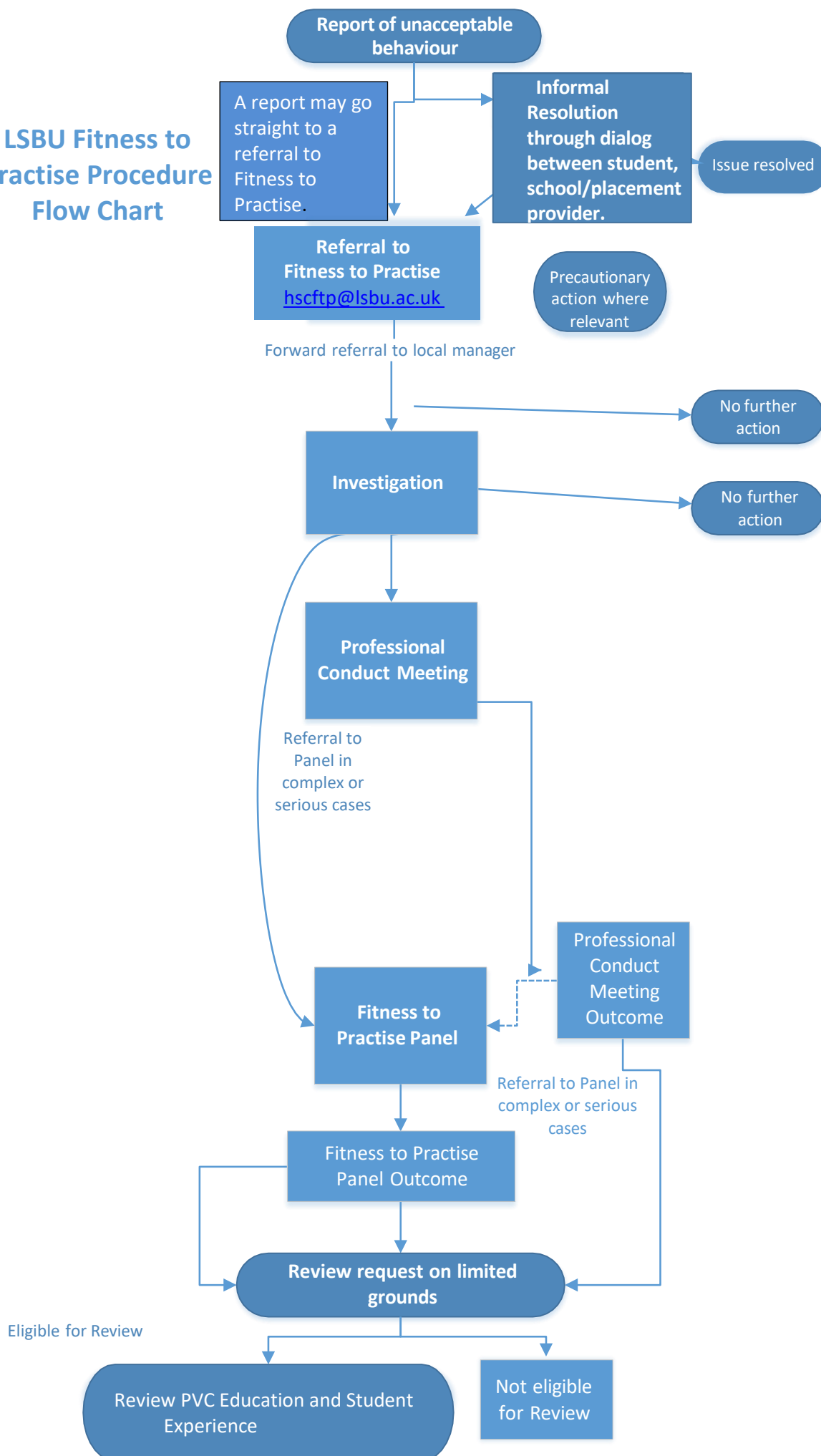
Policy last reviewed	October 2023
Approved by	The Quality & Standards Committee
Published on	LSBU website under About Us, Policies and Procedures tab https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures

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LSBU Fitness to Practise Procedure Flow Chart



Fitness to Practise Procedure

1. Introduction – the principles behind this procedure

- 1.1. The fitness to practise of a student may be called into question if their behaviour, competence, or health status causes concern in relation to their suitability to become a registered professional or work in an area of related health or social care practice.
- 1.2. This Fitness to Practise procedure covers all students in the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health who are undertaking a programme of study which involves patient, service user or carer contact, and/or allows for registration to practise as a professional.
- 1.3. Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics are set out by the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), Social Work England (SWE) and General Chiropractic Council who also provide guidance for the application of those standards for students in an educational setting. Additionally, the CDI publishes a Code of Ethics.
- 1.4. The professional body documents mentioned above define the professional standards which must be met by all students studying relevant programmes in the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health, and this procedure outlines the University processes to ensure these standards are maintained.
- 1.5 The over-riding principles underpinning this procedure are:
 - Protection and safety of patients, service users, carers, and the public
 - The declaration and upholding of appropriate standards of professional conduct by students.
 - Maintaining public confidence in the profession, and in the University.
 - Maintaining public confidence in students of the profession
- 1.6 The Fitness to Practise procedure is not a disciplinary process but is designed to ensure that you have every opportunity to demonstrate that you meet the relevant professional standards and values and are supported in doing so.
- 1.7 A decision made under this procedure about whether or not you are fit to practise is a matter of professional judgment. The burden of proof in fitness to practise cases rests with the University. In other words, it is for the University to prove that you are not fit to practise. Decisions will be made in accordance with the civil standard of proof i.e., on the balance of probabilities.
- 1.8 An attempt will be made where possible to resolve any concerns informally, in discussion with you and putting in place appropriate support as needed. Any investigation and necessary action will be undertaken as speedily as possible, normally within 90 days from the start of the formal process. This timeframe requires you to engage with the fitness to practise process by meeting all of the University's stipulated deadlines for submission of materials and attending the meetings you are invited to at each stage of this procedure.
- 1.9 There may be cases where, for good reason(s), the University will need to extend the timeframe for dealing with your case. When this is the case, we will contact you as soon as possible to explain the delay and set a new deadline for the next stage.

- 1.10 Meetings and hearings under this procedure will normally be held in person, but attendance by video or telephone conferencing may be permitted at the discretion of the local manager or Chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel, in which case all parties will be notified accordingly.

The local manager is an allocated academic member of staff who will be overseeing multiple aspects of this procedure.

2. Scope – who/what is covered by this procedure?

- 2.1. This procedure applies if you are a University student on a programme of study covered by paragraph 1.2 who:
 - a) is enrolled and registered at the University; or
 - b) was enrolled at the University at any time during the previous 12 months;
 - c) has interrupted your studies
- 2.2. The University reserves the right to carry out and/or complete the fitness to practise process if you withdraw from the University whilst the process is ongoing. As set out in paragraph 17.3, details of any formal fitness to practise process may be referred to in a reference given by the University on your behalf.
- 2.3. Reported unacceptable behaviour can be considered under this procedure whether it has taken place on, or outside of, University premises (e.g., a placement setting). In addition, unacceptable behaviour considered under the process of another institution (such as the placement provider) can still be considered under this Fitness to Practise procedure.
- 2.4. Unacceptable conduct may be dealt with under the Student Disciplinary Procedure or the Student Academic Misconduct Procedure unless it would more appropriately be dealt with under this Fitness to Practise Procedure. The Chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel will be consulted if it is not clear which procedure should be followed in a given situation. If another University procedure is initiated with respect to behaviour which is subsequently seen to fall under fitness to practise, the other process may be suspended or terminated and action under this procedure may be taken instead.
- 2.5. The University will take your circumstances into account when investigating incidents, and when deciding on a course of action. All efforts will be made to support students whilst they are under investigation. The Mental Health and Wellbeing team will be informed of an investigation if a student's mental health is considered to be affected or in question. Students who are registered with the Disability and Dyslexia Service (DDS), or who the University considers to have emerging mental health difficulties, can expect the University to consider their personal circumstances in the application of this procedure.
- 2.6. At any stage of this procedure the University may (at its expense) refer you for assessment by the University's occupational health service or other medical professional. Failure to co-operate with such a referral may itself be treated as an issue of fitness to practise. The University also operates a Fitness to Study procedure; students may find themselves subject to the application of both procedures at the same time.

3. Who is responsible for this procedure?

- 3.1. The PVC Education and Student Experience has overall responsibility for this procedure but has delegated day-to-day responsibility for overseeing its implementation to the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health and the Student Affairs team. All relevant members of staff have been made aware of the procedure and have received appropriate training.

- 3.2. The Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health and the University Solicitor will review this procedure from time to time (and at least every two years) to ensure that its provisions continue to meet our legal obligations and reflect best practice.

4. Support for Students

- 4.1. You are encouraged to seek advice and support regarding this procedure from the LSBU Students' Union Advisory Service
- 4.2. If you are invited to attend an investigatory interview, or a formal meeting or hearing under this procedure, you may be accompanied by a fellow student, a Students' Union representative or a Trade Union representative. You are not normally permitted to be represented by a legally qualified solicitor or barrister, but the University may allow legal representation at Fitness to Practise Panel hearings in exceptional circumstances, e.g., where your conduct may amount to a serious criminal offence. You must provide the name and contact details of your chosen companion to the University at least 3 working days before the meeting/hearing.
- 4.3. If you have a disability, you may additionally be accompanied by a support worker as may reasonably be required. The University will make reasonable adjustments to this procedure where it is reasonable to do so to prevent you from suffering substantial disadvantage because of your disability. The University's Student Wellbeing teams will be consulted.
- 4.4. The companion's role at the meeting will be to support you; you may consult with them for advice and support during the meeting, but they may not answer questions on your behalf (unless this is agreed in advance by the Chair as a reasonable adjustment for your disability).
- 4.5. Further details of support services offered by the University are set out at Appendix 2.

5. Professional Standards and Expectations of Students

- 5.1. It is your responsibility to be aware of the professional standards set by your relevant professional body.
- 5.2. All students in the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health sign the School's Directional Statement of Conduct Principles (<https://www.lsbu.ac.uk/about-us/policies-regulations-procedures>) annually, which clarifies the expected behaviours of students. The process of annually signing the declaration reinforces that students should be clear of the expectations upon them.

6. Application of the Fitness to Practise Procedure

- 6.1. Precise standards vary between professions, however, in general, fitness to practise has four elements:
- Suitable health.
 - Suitable competence.
 - Suitable conduct.
 - Suitable character.
- 6.2. **Suitable Health** - The University has an occupational health service. As part of any investigation or action under this procedure, a student may be referred to occupational health for an assessment of fitness to practise in relation to their health status. Any

such assessment will be taken into consideration by the local manager or Fitness to Practise Panel in making a decision under this procedure.

- 6.3. **Suitable Competence** - Students' competencies are demonstrated through the satisfactory completion of academic assessments and practice placements. Therefore, suitable competence is typically not considered under this procedure.
- 6.4. **Suitable Conduct and Character** - The intended use for this procedure is to review cases where a student's behaviour calls into question whether their conduct and/or character are suitable for the profession which they have entered or are seeking to enter. Investigation into any alleged behaviour or misconduct by a student will assess whether this conflicts with the professional standards set by the relevant professional body.
- 6.5. Any behaviour or action which breaches the Directional Statement of Conduct Principles and/or professional standards set by the relevant professional body applicable to the student may give rise to action under this procedure if it calls into question a student's fitness to practise.
- 6.6. Unacceptable behaviour must be addressed and if a student has a disability their behaviour will be addressed under this procedure. A claim that a student is mentally or physically unwell, under particular stress, or that a disability caused them to behave in an unacceptable way is not a defence to a case of fitness to practise. Any student who has a disability is encouraged to seek support from the University's Student Wellbeing team. Additionally, it is not a defence to claim that behaviour was caused or influenced by drugs or other substances, even if prescribed for a recognised medical condition.

7. Reporting Unacceptable Behaviour or Concerns about a Student

- 7.1. All University staff and students are responsible for reporting unacceptable behaviour which they witness or of which they have evidence. In particular, students who have signed the Directional Statement are expected to self-declare any cautions, criminal convictions, investigations or pending child safeguarding issues in which they may have become involved.
- 7.2. All University staff who either witness or become aware of a report of unacceptable behaviour or other concerns about a student through some other means (e.g., if the behaviour is reported to them in person or by email) should ensure that the matter is reported to the relevant Course Leader in writing within 24 hours of the incident. If the incident causes concern for service users and/or public safety the Course Leader should be informed immediately so that a decision can be taken, in consultation with the Dean, on whether you should be prevented from attending placement and/or suspended from the University in accordance with paragraph 11 below.

8. Informal Resolution

- 8.1. In the first instance, the relevant, Head of Division and/or Course Leader will assess if an informal resolution can be found. The purpose of informal resolution is to attempt to resolve issues that are straightforward, and that require little or no investigation. The aim is to put matters right **quickly**. To facilitate this, issues raised at this stage can be handled by a face-to-face discussion between the Associate Professor and you, or by asking an appropriate member of staff, for example the Course Leader, to deal with the matter. You will have an opportunity to quickly put forward your perspective at grass-roots level. Resolution might be achieved by providing an on-the-spot explanation of why the conduct occurred and/or an apology and explanation of what will be done to stop a similar situation happening again.

- 8.2. If an attempt at an informal resolution is made, the Associate Professor and/or Course Leader will take the decision, in discussion with the Host Trust, as to whether you are permitted to attend placement whilst a resolution is being sought. If an attempt at putting an informal resolution in place is not successful within five working days, then a referral under this Fitness to Practise procedure should be made.
- 8.3. In all cases that can be resolved at this stage the Personal Tutor/Course Leader will create an action plan for the student outlining the steps that will be taken in order to ensure the original inappropriate behaviour does not happen again. It will be the responsibility of the student to ensure that they comply with the action plan. If the student does not comply with/fails to achieve the goals set by the action plan, to be judged by the placement provider/ trust/university, another report of unacceptable behaviour may be raised which will go immediately to a referral for Fitness to Practise.

9. Referral to Fitness to Practise

- 9.1. Referrals to Fitness to Practise are to be made in writing and submitted to the Fitness to Practise Administrator by sending a Fitness to Practise Referral Form (Appendix 3) to hscftp@lsbu.ac.uk. Relevant documentary evidence should be submitted with the referral where appropriate. Once a referral has been made, all staff with prior involvement should refrain from discussing the case with the student until any subsequent actions under the procedure have been concluded.
- 9.2. Anonymous referrals or witness statements will not normally be accepted.
- 9.3. Occasionally, referrals may be made through other channels, such as cases that have been referred following the Character and Conduct Virtual Panel Protocol (see paragraph 10.3).
- 9.4. All accepted referral forms will be forwarded by the Fitness to Practise Administrator to the relevant local manager. The local manager will review the case within two working days and decide if the case is to be taken forward under this procedure.

10. Student Conduct under Police Investigation

- 10.1. If the University is made aware that a student is under current criminal investigation by the police or any prosecuting authority, the University Solicitor, the Deans of the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health, and the Chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel will be notified.
- 10.2. The University's typical policy is to support all students involved in police investigation in continuing their studies safely, and abiding by any bail conditions that may have been placed on them. Where appropriate, we will make reasonable adjustments to students' academic courses to help them ensure their own safety, the safety of others and/or to comply with any bail conditions. However, the safety of patients, service users and carers is paramount, and students may therefore be removed from or prevented from attending placement.
- 10.3. If a criminal investigation is concluded with a conviction or caution, this will be reviewed using the School's Character and Conduct Virtual Panel Protocol. If a criminal investigation is concluded without a conviction or caution, a local manager will review the facts of the case and decide if this procedure needs to be implemented due to the professional suitability of the student being brought into question.
- 10.4. If a complaint of misconduct reported under this procedure is also subject to police investigation, the local manager will ask you to give consent for the police to provide information to the University on the progress of the police investigations or require you

to keep the University informed accordingly.

- 10.5. The University reserves the right to either suspend or continue with the Fitness to Practise process in cases where the police investigation is ongoing or has been suspended or discontinued. This will be decided on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the University Solicitor and, where appropriate, in dialogue with the police. The University also reserves the right to proceed with the Fitness to Practise process where the student against whom the allegation of misconduct has been made has been acquitted in criminal proceedings.
- 10.6. Where you are unable or have been advised not to attend a fitness to practise hearing or say anything about a pending criminal matter, the University reserves the right to take a decision based on the available evidence.

11. Precautionary Action

- 11.1. If the local manager decides that the alleged behaviour is such that there is a significant risk to the student, patients service users, carers, other students and/or staff, the student should immediately be removed from placement following discussion with the Dean of the School and/or the Chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel.
- 11.2. In addition, if necessary, a request may be sent to the Head of Registry for the temporary suspension of the student from all or any part of University premises or University activity until the Fitness to Practise procedure is concluded; and/or that conditions be placed on the student (e.g., not to contact a named person). Students who are suspended will not be eligible to go to, or remain on, placement, but students shall not be suspended from the University merely because they have been removed from placement by the University and/or the placement provider.
- 11.3. The decision to suspend and/or to place conditions on you will only be made where the risk level is high and there are no alternative measures that could be put in place instead to mitigate the risk. It is, therefore, a precautionary, rather than a punitive, measure.
- 11.4. Any suspension/conditions will be limited to a specified period of time and reviewed regularly by the Head of Registry, but may be extended where necessary to do so
- 11.5. If you are suspended and/or conditions are placed on you, the Head of Registry will write to you setting out the decision and clear reasons for the decision, which will relate to the allegations made, supported by a statement of the basic alleged facts.
- 11.6. You can appeal against a precautionary suspension to suspend and/or place conditions on you to the Pro Vice Chancellor Education and Student Experience within 5 working days of the decision letter (making clear representations). The Pro Vice Chancellor Education and Student Experience (or nominee) will notify you of their decision within 5 working days of receipt of your appeal.
- 11.7. You can also request that the Head of Registry review the precautionary action decision if you can demonstrate that there has been a material change in the circumstances of the case.

12. Investigation by the Local Manager

- 12.1. On receipt of a referral under paragraph 9.4, the local manager will investigate the case.
- 12.2. The local manager will not investigate a case if:

- The referral report consists only of hearsay.
 - The behaviour has been addressed satisfactorily by another process and it is not deemed necessary to consider it under the Fitness to Practise procedure.
 - The behaviour can be addressed at an informal level.
- 12.3. If the local manager decides not to investigate you will be notified that concerns have been raised about your conduct but that no action will be taken under the Fitness to Practise procedure. The local manager may nevertheless initiate the Fitness to Study process or pass a suitable report to other University services, or a placement provider, who will take action to support the student(s) involved in the incident. Where a case has been closed without taking action under the University's Fitness to Practise procedure, the individual who made the referral will be informed.
- 12.4. If an investigation is undertaken by the local manager, your Host Trust and/or placement provider would be informed of the Fitness to Practise referral. This will not include any specific details without your permission; however, the Host Trust or placement provider have the right to remove you from placement if specific details are requested and you refuse to allow this information to be shared.
- 12.5. Prior to starting the investigation, the local manager should consider whether they could be deemed to have a conflict of interest, and if there is a conflict of interest ask another local manager to take over the investigation.
- 12.6. The investigation will be started as promptly as possible, and normally within 10 working days of the date of the Fitness to Practise referral being made. The University reserves the right to extend this period during holidays, exam times and particularly busy periods, where e.g., the case load is high, which may affect availability of local managers.
- 12.7. As part of the investigation the local manager will:
- Arrange to meet with you to discuss the concerns and hear your version of events.
 - Identify any other relevant witnesses and either interview these individuals or obtain written witness statements.
 - Seek documentary evidence where appropriate (e.g., emails, logs from relevant University systems or other relevant evidence).
 - Write a full report at the end of their investigation and submit this with a copy of the full investigation file to the Fitness to Practise Administrator
formerstudentcomplaintsandappeals@lsbu.ac.uk.
- 12.8. Where you are invited to an investigatory interview, the local manager will write to you at least 3 working days in advance inviting you to the interview and explaining the reason for the interview and the allegations made against you.
- 12.9. The local manager will provide a copy of the current Fitness to Practise procedure with the letter and remind you of the seriousness of the situation and the potential outcomes should your fitness to practise be found to be impaired.
- 12.10. You will also be invited to submit a written statement within 3 working days of the interview, and within 10 working days of the interview you will receive a copy of the notes of the interview for comment.
- 12.11. The local manager reserves the right to proceed with the investigation without meeting with you if they are satisfied that due notice of the date and time of the investigatory interview was given to you, and you are absent without reasonable explanation. The

local manager shall decide in their absolute discretion what constitutes “reasonable explanation.”

- 12.12. If at the end of the investigation, the local manager considers that, based on the evidence available, there are no reasonable grounds to believe that the alleged behaviour or conduct took place, the local manager will take no further action and the case will be closed and the individual who made the referral will be informed.
- 12.13. If at the end of the investigation, the local manager considers that, based on the evidence available, there are reasonable grounds to believe that the alleged behaviour or conduct took place, and that this means that your fitness to practise may be impaired, the local manager will invite you to a Professional Conduct meeting within 10 working days of completion of the investigation. Alternatively, the local manager can refer you straight to the Fitness to Practise Panel where he/she considers the matter to be complex or one which may warrant suspension or expulsion.
- 12.14. You will be normally notified of the decision of the local manager (and provided with a copy of the investigation report) within 5 working days of the conclusion of the investigation.

13. Professional Conduct Meeting

- 13.1. The local manager will invite you to attend a Professional Conduct meeting, providing the date, time, and place of the meeting. You will be given at least 7 working days’ notice to prepare your case based on the information provided by the University.
- 13.2. The notice will set out the allegations against you, the basis of those allegations and the likely range of outcomes if it is decided after the Professional Conduct meeting that your fitness to practise is impaired.
- 13.3. The local manager will also provide you with copies of all the relevant documents related to your case. In limited circumstances (e.g., a risk of harm to the witness), a witness’s identity may be kept confidential unless doing so would prejudice the fairness of the proceedings.
- 13.4. You will be invited to submit a written statement no later than 3 working days prior to the Professional Conduct meeting, together with any documents you wish to rely on and details of any witnesses you intend to call.
- 13.5. The local manager reserves the right to proceed with the Professional Conduct meeting in your absence if they are satisfied that due notice of the date and time of the meeting was given to you, and you are absent without reasonable explanation. The local manager shall decide in their absolute discretion what constitutes “reasonable explanation.”
- 13.6. The purpose of the Professional Conduct meeting is to consider the evidence gathered and to provide you with an opportunity to make representations. The local manager will then decide on the basis of the evidence and your representations whether the alleged conduct is proven. If the conduct is considered to be proven the local manager will ask you to submit any evidence in mitigation before they consider whether your conduct means that your fitness to practise is impaired.
- 13.7. If at this stage the local manager decides that the allegation is not proven, the local manager will take no further action, and the case will be closed and the individual who made the referral will be informed.
- 13.8. If the local manager considers that the allegation proven and that your fitness to practise is impaired, the local manager will take one or more of the following actions:

- Place conditions on you with an action plan to allow for you to improve your conduct. This may include referring you to relevant training or ordering you to pay repair and/or clearing up costs. The conditions will be reviewed within 2 months of being issued and, if you have not met them, further action may be taken under this Fitness to Practise procedure;
- Refer you to the University's occupational health service or other medical professional for assessment and/or treatment;
- Issue you with a formal warning;
- Refer the case to be considered by a Fitness to Practise Panel (paragraph 14 below).

13.9. During the decision process, the local manager will consider:

- Whether action has already been taken against you by another body (such as a placement provider).
- Whether there is evidence of contrition on your part (for instance evidence that you have apologised, made restitution, or improved your behaviour since the incident).
- Any previous action taken against you under this Fitness to Practise procedure.
- The professional body standards that apply to you.

13.10. When issued, a formal warning will:

- Be given in writing.
- Clearly notify you that you have been given a formal warning about your conduct which will be live for the remainder of your course.
- Remind you of your duties under the relevant Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.
- Be kept on your student record and form a permanent part of your record.
- In some circumstances, advise you to apologise or make appropriate restitution to named parties, and may request a copy of any letter of apology or restitution for the case file.

13.11. The local manager will notify you in writing of the outcome of the Professional Conduct meeting and the reasons for their decision within 10 working days of the meeting. You will also receive a copy of the notes of the meeting for comment and will be informed of your right to request a Review under paragraph 15.

14. Fitness to Practise Hearing

- 14.1. Fitness to Practise Panel hearings are undertaken when the local manager refers the case under paragraph 12.12 or 13.7.
- 14.2. You will be invited to attend the hearing of the Panel and sent copies of all the relevant documents and the names of the Panel members at least 10 working days before the Panel meeting. The letter invite will also clearly set out potential outcomes.
- 14.3. You have the right to present your case to the Panel in person (or in writing if you prefer to do so). All written documents must be received at least 5 working days prior to the Panel meeting, together with details of any witnesses you intend to call.
- 14.4. The Fitness to Practise Panel shall consist of:
- The Chair, who shall be a current member of one of the professions covered by

this Fitness to Practise Procedure, and also a senior member of the academic or management staff of the School, appointed by the Pro Vice-Chancellor Education and Student Experience

- One member of staff within the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health who is a registered professional in the same profession as the student being considered; or, where no such member of staff is available, a member of staff within the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health who is a registered professional in one of the professions covered by this Fitness to Practise Procedure.
- An external clinical member of staff who is not employed at the same organisation where the student has been attending placement.

- 14.5. No member of the Panel will have had significant prior involvement with you, or the current case.
- 14.6. Where you have a disability, the Fitness to Practise Panel will also include a member of the University's Disability and Dyslexia or Mental Health and Wellbeing Team.
- 14.7. The Fitness to Practise Administrator will act as secretary and adviser to the Panel. The Panel may also seek legal or other support from the University Solicitor or external advisers.
- 14.8. At the Panel hearing the local manager will present the case against you, including any evidence which has previously been disclosed to you. You will be able to respond and to present any evidence of your own.
- 14.9. The Panel reserves the right to proceed with the hearing in your absence if they are satisfied that due notice of the date and time of the meeting was given to you, and you are absent without reasonable explanation. The Panel shall decide in their absolute discretion what constitutes "reasonable explanation."
- 14.10. The Panel may be adjourned at the discretion of the Chair in the interests of fairness e.g., new evidence which has come to light which could not reasonably be disclosed in accordance with the prescribed timescales under this procedure.
- 14.11. Decisions of the Panel shall be made on a majority basis; where there is a tie, the Chair shall have a casting vote.
- 14.12. The purpose of the Panel is to consider the evidence gathered and to provide you with an opportunity to make representations. The Panel will then decide on the basis of the evidence and your representations whether the alleged conduct is proven. If the conduct is considered to be proven the Panel will ask you to submit any evidence in mitigation before it considers whether your conduct means that your fitness to practise is impaired.
- 14.13. The Panel will make one or more of the following decisions:
- a) To dismiss the case against you.
 - b) That the investigation has not been conducted properly and fairly, and that therefore the investigation should be quashed, and another local manager identified to investigate the issue afresh.
 - c) That, whilst you have behaved inappropriately or there are other concerns about your conduct, your fitness to practise is not impaired and the matter should be referred for consideration under another University procedure (e.g., Student Disciplinary Procedure, Fitness to Study Procedure, Academic Misconduct Procedure).
 - d) That your conduct means that your fitness to practise is impaired, but your

continuation on the course constitutes risk to the safety of service users in placement settings, in which case the Panel may:

- i. suspend you from the University for a specified period of time and may impose conditions on your return to study which will be reviewed by the local manager; or
- ii. exclude you from the course but with the opportunity to transfer to an alternative non-professional course at the University or to receive an exit award; or
- iii. exclude you from the University.

14.14. The Fitness to Practise Panel will notify you in writing of the outcome of the Fitness to Practise Panel and the reasons for the decision within 5 working days of the hearing. You will also be informed of your right to request a Review under paragraph 15. When the Fitness to Practise Panel makes a decision to suspend or exclude you, it will notify the Head of Registry of the decision. The Head of Registry will action the suspension or exclusion and write to you informing you of the suspension or exclusion.

15. Review

15.1. If you are dissatisfied with the outcome resulting either from the Professional Conduct meeting, or from the Fitness to Practise Panel hearing, you have 10 working days to request a Review of the decision by the PVC Education and Student Experience.

15.2. A request for a Review will be granted on limited grounds:

- a) there was a procedural irregularity at the formal stage (e.g., there was a material failure by the University to follow the Fitness to Practise procedure, clear reasons were not provided for the decision, or there is evidence of bias);
- b) the outcome was not reasonable in all the circumstances (i.e., no reasonable decision-maker, properly directing him/her/itself and taking into account the relevant facts, could have reached that decision); or
- c) new material evidence which you were unable, for valid reasons, to provide earlier in the process.

15.3. You should submit your request for a Review to the PVC Education and Student Experience in by going to myaccount – general enquiry – topic Fitness to Practise Stage 3 Review Request or by having someone submit such a request on your behalf (such a request should include your express written consent for your representative to deal with your request on your behalf) by emailing hscftp@lsbu.ac.uk. The request for a Review should set out your concerns clearly and succinctly and provide evidence to substantiate the issues raised (where possible) and outline what outcome you are seeking. The receipt of the request will normally be acknowledged within five working days of receiving it.

15.4. The PVC Education and Student Experience will nominate a senior member of staff from the Schools of Nursing and Midwifery & Allied and Community Health who has not been previously involved in the matter to decide whether the request for a Review is based on the permitted grounds and is hence eligible to be considered. The nominated member of staff will notify you of their decision within 5 working days of receiving the request.

15.5. If they believes that the grounds are not satisfied, you will be informed of the decision to reject your request for a Review and a Completion of Procedures letter (“COP”) will be issued to you (see paragraph 15.9 below for further information).

15.6. If he/she believes that one or more of the grounds for Review apply to your case, it will

be referred to the PVC Education and Student Experience. The PVC Education and Student Experience or their delegate will review all information collated for the original decision, together with any new evidence presented, on the papers (but may contact you and/or anyone else involved in the matter if he/she considers it necessary).

- 15.7. The outcome of the Review will be that the PVC Education and Student Experience either upholds the outcome made at the formal stage or makes a different finding which overturns the outcome.
He/she may remit the matter to the same or a different local manager/Fitness to Practise Panel to consider again or may impose a lower sanction.
- 15.8. The decision taken by the PVC Education and Student Experience at the Review stage is final. The outcome of the Review will be communicated to you by letter written within 28 days of the Review request being accepted.
- 15.9. If the outcome of the Review is favourable to you, you will not automatically receive a COP; however, you can request a COP within 30 days of the date of the outcome letter. Where such a request is made, a COP will be provided within 14 days of the request. We will issue a COP as soon as possible and in any event within 28 days.

16. Independent External Review

Once the Review stage has been completed, and within twelve months of the date of the COP, you are entitled to ask the Office of the Independent Adjudicator to review the University's handling of your case under this procedure. The process for doing so will be set out in your COP.

17. Record Keeping and Notification

- 17.1 A formal sanction or other action imposed in accordance with paragraph 13.7 or 14.11 shall be a permanent part of your student record.
- 17.2. It shall not be considered confidential that you have been subject to this procedure. The relevant members of the University staff [such as in Registry, School, Student Administration, Employability Services and HR (e.g., in cases where you are employed by the University as a Student Ambassador and/or Hourly Paid Lecturer, or in any other capacity)] and placement providers where relevant may be also notified. If you are an apprentice, the University will notify your employer.
- 17.3. Information will be shared with others in circumstances where there may be a risk to others if information were withheld. Unless a case has been dismissed, referral to Fitness to Practise procedures and outcomes (including any sanctions) will be made in all exiting student references and disclosed in accordance with any regulatory reporting requirements.
- 17.4. On the closure of all Fitness to Practise cases (including any Review), your Host Trust or organisation, the relevant Head of Department and Course Leader, and the individual who made the referral will be notified of the outcome.
- 17.5. Where the University considers it reasonable and appropriate to do so, it will inform the victim(s) of the misconduct of the outcome of the Fitness to Practise process.

18. Use of Data

- 18.1. The University will collect data on fitness to practise outcomes at each stage of this procedure and any complaints submitted by you to any regulators (including the OIA), and use the data:

- a) internally for reporting, evaluation, learning and training; and
- b) externally for discussion with regulators in the higher education sector.

18.2. The data used by the University for the purposes in paragraphs 18.1 a) and b) will be anonymised. Your personal data and sensitive personal data ("Personal Data") as defined by the Data Protection Act 2018 (the "DPA") may be disclosed to the University's members of staff, placement providers and regulators only for the purposes of dealing with an allegation of misconduct under this procedure, a complaint arising out of it and/or implementing any recommendations. Personal Data will not be shared with any other third parties unless the University has your express consent, has a statutory obligation to do so, or is otherwise permitted to do so under the DPA.

Appendix 1: Support for students

The University provides a number of student support services. These are open to all students. Students are encouraged to engage with the services and take up any appropriate support available to them.

The following are University-run services:

a) **Mental Health and Wellbeing team**

Support and advice to any student experiencing personal difficulties, who may be struggling to cope at university or who just needs someone to talk to. Appointments are available on the day by visiting the Student Life Centre helpdesk – you can also call 0207 815 6454 / email studentwellbeing@lsbu.ac.uk

b) **SilverCloud – online support anywhere, any time**

SilverCloud is an online self-help resource and can support you with anxiety, depression, body image or stress. It's free to use, just sign up with your lsbu.ac.uk email address:
<https://lsbu.silvercloudhealth.com/signup/>

c) **Disability and Dyslexia Support (DDS)**

Disability & Dyslexia Support (DDS) is a dedicated service for students who have a disability, mental health condition, long term medical condition or specific learning difficulty (including dyslexia). We also offer screenings for dyslexia throughout the year. Visit the Student Life Centre helpdesk, call 0207 815 6545 or email disability@lsbu.ac.uk.

d) **Student Advice**

Advice and guidance on financial and money management, and help with any personal, emotional, or academic issue you may face. Appointments are available on the day by visiting the Student Life Centre helpdesk – you can also call 0207 815 6454.

e) **Skills for Learning team**

The Skills for Learning team offer academic support in a range of areas (such as essay writing, presentation skills etc...). Appointments are available through the Student Life Centre or by calling 0207 815 6454.

Support is also available through the Students' Union. The Union provides free, confidential, and impartial advice and a place to talk during difficult times you may face as a student. You can book an appointment by calling 0207 815 6060 or by visiting the SU reception in the Student Centre (by the Venue bar).

Appendix 2: Fitness to Practise referral form

Fitness to Practise Incident Report/Referral Form

When completing this form please give as much detail as possible in relation to the concerns/incident that led to the referral. Please also send all evidence with the completed form to formerstudentcomplaintsandappeals.ac.uk

Your name:	Enter text here	
Your LSBU staff/ student ID	Enter text here	
Name of witness (if not you)	Enter text here	
Date of Incident (if applicable)	Time of Incident (if applicable)	Location of Incident (if applicable)
Enter text here	Enter text here	Enter text here
Does this report need to be treated in confidence, if yes, please explain why below (if completing this form for another individual please confirm this with them)		
Enter text here		
<i>If you request confidentiality, we will not give your name or any other details about you to anyone else. If we cannot fairly investigate your complaint without breaching your confidentiality, we will write to you to explain that we will not investigate</i>		
Name and ID number (if known) of student being referred	Enter text here	
Date of this form	Enter text here	
Please describe the incident/cause for concern in your own words below		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Please list the incidents/concerns in chronological order. • Please indicate how each incident/concern is linked to a potential breach of professional code and or the University Directional Statement of Conduct Principles. • Please give as much detail as possible 		
Enter text here		

Use this form to report any incident of unacceptable conduct by an enrolled University student

