

Policy and Procedure for Precautionary Suspension of Student from Placement

This policy and process applies to the following:

All programmes leading to registration with a Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) e.g. Nursing & Midwifery Council (NMC), Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC), General Optical Council (GOC), British Psychological Society (BPS)

To be read in conjunction with:

- Fitness to Practise Policy
- Cause for Concern Process
- Student Learning Agreements
- Professional Codes for Regulatory Bodies
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Student Charter
- Precautionary Suspension of Study
- Student Conduct Guidance
- Disclosure and Barring Service Process
- Programme Handbook

Equality and Diversity Statement

“City, University of London is committed to promoting equality, diversity and inclusion in all its activities, processes, and culture, under its Public Sector Equality Duties and the Equality Act 2010. This includes promoting equality and diversity for all, irrespective of any protected characteristic, working pattern, family circumstance, socio-economic background, political belief or other irrelevant distinction”.

Where relevant to the policy, decision making panels will ensure a reasonable gender balance (with at least one man and one women) and will actively consider representation of other protected characteristics.

Date approved: August 2019

Governance: Board of Studies and Practice Education Committee

Date of Next Review: February 2021

Disclaimer

The information in this Process is correct at the time of review in August 2019. The School reserves the right to make amendments to the process provided that such amendments are (i) as a result of changes to Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body regulations (ii) as a result of unforeseen events or circumstances beyond the City's control or (iii) are deemed reasonably necessary by City.

1. Context

- 1.1 The policy outlines the general principles and purpose to be implemented and should be read in conjunction with the Precautionary Suspension from Practice Procedure which sets out the process by which the policy will be applied, and accompanying guidance and policies which aim to facilitate the use of the Policy and Procedure.
- 1.2 The University has a duty to protect patients, carers, service users or clients from harm that may be caused by students on placement. The University also has a duty of welfare to students and seeks to protect them from harmful situations that are a direct result of their placements.
- 1.3 This policy has been developed in the School of Health Sciences to support the student, academic and placement staff when a student's conduct is deemed sufficiently unsafe or unsatisfactory for the student to be removed from the placement pending an investigation.
- 1.4 The purpose of the Precautionary Suspension of Student from Placement Policy and Procedure is:
 - 1.4.1 To comply with the requirements of the appropriate Professional Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) through clear responsibility and accountability
 - 1.4.2 To safeguard the health and wellbeing of patients/clients and general public
 - 1.4.3 To protect the student while an investigation is undertaken

2. Programmes

- 2.1 This policy applies specifically to students that are following a programme of study that involves placements in a healthcare environment.
- 2.2 If the student is following a programme of study that leads to eligibility to apply for professional qualification and registration with the relevant professional statutory and regulatory body, the appropriate PSRB standards and guidelines should be considered in conjunction with this policy.

3. Application of this policy

- 3.1 The School will at all times consider the most appropriate process to be followed when managing concerns about students' conduct or an incident in placement.
- 3.2 The policy is not intended to deal with a student's academic performance, extenuating circumstances or complaint.
- 3.3 The policy refers to different processes available to deal with conduct or an incident in placement, such as Cause for Concern Process or Fitness to Practise Process, which are initiated to support the student and placement staff when investigating an incident.
- 3.4 The School seeks to create an open, transparent and flexible culture to resolve issues as they arise, where equality and diversity are in line with the Equality Act 2010.

3.5 If a student's behavior gives rise to concerns regarding their fitness to practise, or their practice may be detrimental to the patient, client, service user or placement staff, this policy will be invoked and the student may be removed or suspended, without notice, from the placement environment.

3.6 It is intended that such precautionary suspension be in the interest of the student and all other people involved, achieved with the minimum disruption to the patients, service users, clients or staff and that the student is reported to the appropriate individuals to assess the case and refer to relevant School or University processes where appropriate.

4. Data protection

4.1 The policy will be operated in accordance with the University's duties under the Equality Act 2010, the Data Protection Act 1998, the General Data Protection Regulations 2017, and the Freedom of Information Act 2000. Staff operating the Precautionary Suspension from Practice Policy should refer to the Procedure and accompanying Guidance for further information about student confidentiality.

4.2 The University subscribes to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (OIA) scheme, and this policy and associated regulation is therefore subject to its review. The University is committed to complying with any formal decision and/or recommendations issued by the OIA arising from a student complaint considered by the OIA, noting that the student complainant is not bound to comply with the University decision.

1. Introduction

1.1 The procedure should be read in conjunction with the Precautionary Suspension from Placement Policy, relevant University Regulations and accompanying Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies (PSRB) standards and guidance.

2. Precautionary suspension from placement

2.1 This procedure has been written to support placement and academic staff who consider a student's conduct to be either sufficiently unsafe or so unsatisfactory as to warrant removal of the student from the placement as a precaution whilst a full investigation is carried out.

2.2 The suspension from placement is a measure taken to protect the patients, clients, service users or placement staff from unsafe or unprofessional conduct by the student. Suspension from placement also protects the student whilst the incident or behavior is investigated.

2.3 Precautionary suspension will be undertaken if the student contravenes PSRB requirements and/or University statutes and guidelines for conduct. The following list is not exhaustive and serves to provide examples of such inappropriate behavior/conduct that warrants suspension:

2.3.1 the student appears to be incapable of undertaking duties or demonstrate skills when required to do so in a safe and timely manner;

2.3.2 the presence of a student constitutes a serious risk to patients, clients, staff, fellow students, her/himself or property (e.g. severe aggression, suffering from an addiction or substance misuse);

2.3.3 the conduct of the student is subject to criminal charges and alleged offences, which are connected with, or may affect the student's performance, suitability for duties or to continue as a student on the programme;

2.3.4 the student demonstrates unprofessional behavior associated with e.g. time keeping, professional responsibility, or an incident or complaint has occurred involving others and an investigation needs to be carried out;

2.3.5 the student is unable to demonstrate that they are of good health and capable of safe and effective practice with or without reasonable adjustments.

3. Procedure

3.1 Where an issue or concern is identified by either an academic or placement staff member, and in their judgement it is safe and appropriate to do so, an attempt should be made to address the issue or concern with the student in order to prevent the issue escalating and requiring suspension from placement.

3.2 If placement staff remain concerned about the conduct of a student they should raise the issue with the Programme Director.

3.3 If the allegation or concern is considered serious, either the placement staff or Programme Director should arrange a precautionary suspension from

placement even at an informal stage to protect the student and/or members of the public.

3.4 Every effort should be made to communicate the decisions and rationale for suspension from placement to the Programme Director, relevant placement staff and the student as soon as a decision to suspend is taken.

3.5 The student should be advised to take advice from the Students' [Union Advice](#) Service and make written records of the events that preceded their precautionary suspension from placement.

4. Referral to Cause for Concern Process

4.1. If the academic or placement staff member deem the student conduct warrants formal intervention, they should raise the issue with the Programme Director using a Cause for Concern form giving clear evidence regarding the nature of the issues. If the issue is raised by a member of the public or a fellow student, a member of staff will normally act as liaison to complete the form.

4.2. This should be done immediately after the suspension from placement or at least within 10 working days and the student informed in writing that the concern has been raised and advised to gain support from their Personal Tutor and the Student's Union Advice Service

4.3. Once a Cause for Concern referral has been made, the Cause for Concern Process should be followed
https://cityuni.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/wo_SHSWorHub/Eo73hmVN_jFBjToAZtv_s2e8BwqVUI9RpdnBHsDnMoO9sug

5. Referral to Fitness to Practice Procedure

5.1 Where it has not been possible to resolve the issue through the Cause for Concern Process and there are ongoing significant concerns that prevent the student from returning to placement following precautionary suspension, the student must be informed in writing that they have been referred to the Fitness to Practise Panel, and provided with the School's Fitness to Practise Policy.

5.2 There may also be occasions when a student's conduct is deemed sufficiently serious or an individual's safety is compromised to an extent that it is necessary to immediately refer to a Fitness to Practise Panel.

5.3 The Programme Director will trigger the referral to the Fitness to Practise Panel and will liaise with the Quality and Student Support Team for guidance and support prior to referral to the Fitness to Practise Panel.

5.4 The Fitness to Practise referral form is completed by the Programme Director or the Dean (or nominee) ensuring that:

- All relevant sections are completed and the form is signed
- Concerns leading to the referral, including action instigated at programme level through relevant processes, are outlined in chronological order to assist clear understanding of the concerns and the case

- All evidence referred to is submitted with the relevant form in a coherent, sequential and timely manner. Statement and evidence submitted by the student must be provided with the referral form.
- Highlight any implications that the Fitness to Practise Panel should be aware of, e.g. placement requirements, seconded student etc.
- Grounds for referral on the basis of which the referral will be considered by the Panel are listed clearly, are relevant, and are linked to the PSRB requirements
- The referral form must be accompanied with confirmed minutes from the preceding process

5.5 Once a Fitness to Practise referral form has been completed and submitted, the Fitness to Practise Procedure should be followed

https://cityuni.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/wo_SHSWorkHub/EmL8a1p6aAdKrnGcl6AEti8BW6fMggOzq58_76LJiP1zXw

5.6 All involved parties should be informed of outcomes at each stage and all documentary evidence will be made available to all parties throughout the process, including referral to Cause for Concern Process or Fitness to Practise Panel and any appeal (unless material must be excluded for data protection or other compliance reasons).

6. Links to Useful Guidance

Professional Statutory and Regulatory Bodies Regulations, Standards and Codes
British Psychological Society https://www.bps.org.uk/
General Optical Council https://www.optical.org/ Standards for optical students https://www.optical.org/en/Standards/standards-for-optical-students.cfm Guidance for student registrants https://www.optical.org/en/Education/guidance-students/index.cfm
Health and Care Professions Council http://www.hcpc-uk.co.uk/ Guidance on conduct and ethics for students http://www.hcpc-uk.org/audiences/studentsandapplicants/conduct/ Standards of conduct, performance and ethics http://www.hcpc-uk.org/publications/standards/index.asp?id=38 Fitness to Practise http://www.hcpc-uk.org/registrants/ftp/
Nursing and Midwifery Council https://www.nmc.org.uk/

The Code for Nurses and Midwives

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/globalassets/sitedocuments/nmc-publications/nmc-code.pdf>

Guidance for Students – professional conduct of nursing and midwifery students

<https://www.nmc.org.uk/education/becoming-a-nurse-or-midwife/when-studying-to-be-a-nurse-or-midwife/>

University/School Regulations and Policies

Cause for Concern Process

https://cityuni.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/wo_SHSWorkHub/Eo73hmVN_jFBjToAZtvs2e8BwqVUI9RpdnBHsDnMoO9sug

Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedure

https://cityuni.sharepoint.com/:f:/s/wo_SHSWorkHub/EmL8a1p6aAdKrnGcl6AEti8BW6fMggOzq58_76LJiP1zXw

Disclosure and Barring Service Process

<http://www.city.ac.uk/health/courses/selection-process/dbs>