School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice

FITNESS TO PRACTISE POLICY

Revision	Date	Owner/s	Approved by	Next review
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1 Fitness to Practise Policy

1.1 Introduction

The primary statutory obligation of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) as a regulator of nursing and midwifery education, and the Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) role as the regulator of 15 health professions, is to protect the public and maintain public confidence in the professions. In line with the Nursing and Midwifery Order (2001) and The Health Professions Order (2001), the NMC and HCPC require that all prospective applicants, enrolled students and registrants are of good health and good character. Providers of approved NMC and HCPC programmes therefore have a responsibility to ensure that all students meet the relevant Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Body (PSRB) requirements for entry to and, as students, continued maintenance on approved programmes leading to registration. To achieve this, the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice must evidence "robust, effective, fair, impartial and lawful Fitness to Practise procedures to swiftly address concerns about the conduct of students that might compromise public safety and protection" (NMC 2018, p. 7). The HCPC requires that education and training programmes must have "thorough and effective processes in place for ensuring the ongoing suitability of learners' conduct, character and health" (HCPC 2017, p. 27).

1.2 Purpose of the Fitness to Practise Policy

The policy has been produced by the School Fitness to Practise Committee in having delegated authority to oversee all policy and related procedures relating to student Fitness to Practise. Membership of the committee can be found in Appendix 1. The policy aims to make explicit the School's intentions, expectations and actions in respect to assuring applicants' and students' Fitness to Practise. The policy therefore applies to all applicants and students (undergraduate, postgraduate, including health and social care professionals) during the course of their programme and, where relevant, up to and including the point of confirming eligibility to register with the NMC or the HCPC.

The policy presents the procedures which will be exercised by the School to inform decision making and outcomes in those situations where a student's Fitness to Practise may be compromised through evidence of concerns related to behaviour and/or professional conduct, or by virtue of a health condition/disability which may render that individual not being deemed Fit to Practise.

The policy has been developed with regard to relevant equal opportunities legislation and complies with the commitment of Robert Gordon University (RGU) towards equality and diversity including the University's Equality and Diversity Policy, accessible from:
www.rgu.ac.uk/diversity

The Policy should also be read with reference to:

- Robert Gordon University's Academic Regulations (particularly regulation A3 – 2; Student Conduct Procedure and A3 – 3; Student Fitness to Practise Procedure), accessible from:
  www.rgu.ac.uk/academicregulations

- Student Mental Health Policy and Recruitment and Admissions to Higher Education Policy (2017), both accessible from Academic and Student Life at:
  www.rgu.ac.uk/policies

1.3 Definitions – Health and Good Character

Good practice related to robust Fitness to Practise Policy recommends clear definitions of "good health" and "good character".

Good Health requires that an individual is capable of safe and effective practice without direct supervision as a practitioner either with or without reasonable adjustments i.e. a requirement of both NMC and HCPC approved courses is that the student is fit to practise. Good health does not mean the absence of a health condition and/or disability. Many people with disabilities and health conditions are able to practise with or without adjustments put in place to support their practice. However, while adjustments can be applied, changes to the required level of professional competencies and standards cannot.

Applicants to, and students during their approved educational programme are required to tell the School about any health conditions and/or disability which could impact upon their ability to practise safely and effectively.

Students are also required to attend to their own health needs throughout their programme of study; failing to do so could have an impact on others as well as themselves. Students should register with a General Practitioner (GP) if they have come to live locally. Academic staff and personal tutors can provide further sources of support provided by RGU and these can be accessed via the Support and Advice Services webpages:
https://www.rgu.ac.uk/life-at-rgu/support-advice-services/

Good Character requires that an individual's character is such that they are capable of safe and effective practice without direct supervision. This includes a consideration (though not limited to) of any:

- criminal proceedings.
- investigations/sanctions from PSRBs.
- conduct which may amount to a breach of the requirements of professional codes.
- failure to meet attendance requirements set by the School without following due process for reporting absences (as well as other obligations of students detailed in the university regulations A3 – 2 and A3 – 3).
- conduct related to repeated concerns about professionalism, attitudes and behaviours while on campus or in practice placement.
- concerns related to academic misconduct as defined within the University Academic Regulations A3 – 2, 6.1, 6.1.1 and 6.1.2.
- concerns related to conduct which may bring into question an individual's Fitness to Practise as defined within the University Academic Regulations A3 – 3, 6.1, 6.2 and 6.3.

Further NMC information in relation to health and character as a student can be accessed from: https://www.nmc.org.uk/education/becoming-a-nurse-midwife-nursing-associate/guidance-for-students/ [Accessed 21 September 2022].

Further information regarding how the NMC assess health and character when students come to register can be accessed via the NMC at: https://www.nmc.org.uk/registration/joining-the-register/health-and-character/ [Accessed 21 September 2022].

Further HCPC Guidance on health and character can be accessed from: https://www.hcpc-uk.org/resources/guidance/guidance-on-health-and-character/ [Accessed 21 September 2022].

It is an expectation that all students access and read these publications.

1.4 Applicant and Student Responsibilities

The School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice requires that:

- Applicants will be open and honest in relation to health, disability and/or any criminal convictions, cautions, pending charges or other relevant information, at the time of applying to the course.

- Students must register with an accessible GP so they can have access to independent medical care.
- When undertaking the course/programme, students will be open and honest in relation to any health, disability and/or any criminal convictions, cautions, pending charges or other relevant information that arise during their course/programme. The student should communicate any changes/issues with their personal tutor at their earliest convenience.
- Students accept that there may be times when they are less/not able to accurately assess their own level of health and be willing to be referred to relevant services for assessment and support.
- Students should never depend upon their own assessment of the level of risk their health may pose to others and seek relevant professional advice at all times.
- Students will abide by all requirements for professional conduct and behaviour as defined by the University and the associated PSRB standards.

Students will be required to ensure that they are familiar with and abide by the relevant PSRB Standards or Codes and to work toward being able to apply the relevant Standards or Codes at the point of registration. See:

https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/ OR
https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/

The NMC and HCPC also provide guidance on using social media responsibly and raising concerns for the safety and wellbeing of people in their care. See:

https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/guidance/ OR
https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/

The principles and themes covered in these publications are integrated into student learning throughout approved programme curricula and applied in both the context of theory and practice learning. In addition, students are explicitly directed to the School Fitness to Practise Policy through course induction, Stage re-induction, personal tutor contact, all module areas within Moodle and other relevant sources e.g. Student Handbook.

All pre-registration students undertaking approved NMC or HCPC courses are required, as a minimum requirement, to declare their good health and good character on an annual basis. Within the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice this is managed through an online questionnaire which students will complete on an annual basis and will then be assessed, signed off

by the relevant personal tutor. Failure to complete this or provide accurate information may result in the student being subject to the Student Misconduct Procedure. The sections which follow outline the procedures that the School will apply in cases concerning Fitness to Practise in relation to health and wellbeing as well as conduct.

2 Fitness to Practise – Health and Wellbeing

2.1 Assessment of Health Conditions and/or Disabilities

Opportunities for declaring a health condition and/or disability are available through UCAS and RGU course application forms.

Additionally, all staff associated with the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice provide a supportive environment to enable students to share health or disability concerns, and all students are provided with information on the University's Inclusion Service within their Student Handbook.

Applicants or students who declare health conditions or disabilities will be assessed, as appropriate, through the Occupational Health provider and/or Inclusion Service in relation to the compatibility of the applicant's or student's health condition or disability to the relevant approved programme. Many people with a health condition and/or disability do not require any adjustments to support their learning; however, where it applies the assessment will focus upon what reasonable adjustments can be made to support the applicant or student to achieve entry to the NMC or HCPC register or, for students who are already NMC or HCPC registrants, maintain their status on the relevant register.

2.2 Reasonable Adjustments

All staff within the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice have a responsibility to ensure that they fulfil their duty to make anticipatory adjustments to teaching, learning and assessment practices and promote positive attitudes towards applicants and students with a health condition and/or disability. In addition to anticipatory adjustments, applicants may require individual reasonable adjustments to the interview and selection process, and students may also require individual reasonable adjustments to the academic and/or practice-based learning environment.

The NMC and HCPC state that students with health conditions and/or disabilities are permitted to have reasonable adjustments considered in relation to their practice learning. However, while reasonable adjustments may

be made to the way in which a student is supported to meet a competency or standard, the competency or standard itself cannot be adjusted. Therefore, via the School's Fitness to Practise Policy and related procedures, a decision will be made before a student starts a course, and at relevant points within the programme, as to whether they will be able to meet all the competencies of the course, considering what reasonable adjustments can be made if, for example, they have a health condition/disability. Other factors to consider when determining if an adjustment is reasonable are:

- The need to maintain academic and practice competence standards.
- The financial cost of making the adjustment and the financial resources available.
- The practicality of the adjustment.
- The effectiveness of the adjustment.
- The health and safety of the individual, patients and clients, fellow students, placement team members.

2.3 Process following Assessment of a Health Condition and/or Disability that requires Individual Reasonable Adjustments

Information about health and/or a disability is regarded as confidential and, as such, staff within the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice respect the sensitive nature of such information. Agreement with, and consent from the student will be sought on how their requirements will be communicated to academic staff, practice supervisors, practice assessors and practice staff. Students have a responsibility to attend all arranged appointments with Occupational Health. Following assessment by Occupational Health and/or the Inclusion Service[1], students are expected to engage with the Inclusion Champion for the School if they are invited to do so. Agreed reasonable adjustments for practice learning experience are at the discretion of the School. Recommendations that compromise the student's ability to safely achieve required course/programme competencies are not considered reasonable.

Where there are valid concerns regarding a student's fitness to practise in relation to their health and wellbeing, the University's Academic Regulation A3 – 3: Student Fitness to Practise Procedure will be applied. This will only be

[1] All students who have a health condition covered by relevant disability legislation must be referred to the University's Inclusion Service if they are not already registered e.g. in cases where reference to this is made in the OHS assessment report.

applied in cases "if a student's health or disability is likely to compromise or has compromised their ability to meet the required competencies and practise safely" (NMC 2019, p. 13). A schematic flow chart, based on Regulation A3 – 3, of the procedure is presented in Appendix 2.

3 Good Character

3.1 Protection of Vulnerable Groups Scheme (PVG) and Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) Check

The PVG Scheme is established by the Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007, and it helps to ensure that people whose behaviour makes them unsuitable to work with children and/or protected adults can't do 'regulated work' with these vulnerable groups. The DBS scheme is the equivalent scheme for England and Wales.

Applicants are made aware through marketing literature and the School webpage that a PVG Scheme Record is required, and that in line with the Rehabilitation of Offender's Act 1974 (Exclusions and Exemptions) (Scotland) Amendment Order 2015, applicants are required to disclose convictions and relevant spent convictions. All applicants who accept a place on an approved course that involves practice learning experience in a clinical practice area will undergo a criminal record check through the PVG scheme in Scotland. Once applicants join the PVG scheme their membership records will be automatically updated if any new vetting information arises. **If any applicant/enrolled student fails to join the PVG scheme following communication and acceptance of an offer for a course/programme within a defined period, their enrolment on the course/programme may be withdrawn (this would be managed through the Student Fitness to Practise Procedure).** This criminal record check must be completed prior to commencing practice learning experience in a clinical practice area. Vetting information is defined as conviction information retrieved from the criminal justice systems and non-conviction information held by the Police that are considered relevant. European and overseas clearance is required from applicants who have stayed out with the UK for 13 weeks duration or longer. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide evidence of good character from another country. All students who take a 6 month or longer break from a course/programme that involves practice learning experience within a clinical area will undergo an updated criminal record check through the PVG scheme prior to re-entering the course/ programme.

For students residing in England or Wales, the DBS scheme will be accessed.

3.2 Managing Issues related to the Assessment of Good Character – Applicants

The following list is not exhaustive; however, it provides an indication of the type of situations, in regard to applicants, that will be referred to the School for further consideration and risk assessment to determine whether application to the course continues to be processed or rejected:

- Traffic offences that have involved substance misuse or loss of human life.
- Offences that are punished by fines, community service, or a term in prison.
- Vetting information recorded by the Police.
- Information that the individual is under consideration for listing.
- Failure to disclose information, or lack of openness and/or non-truth telling.

In such cases the risk assessment tool (see Appendix 3) will determine whether the case requires to be escalated to the School's Fitness to Practise Committee. If so, the committee will review the information and undertake arisk assessment based on relevant PSRB guidance. This will in turn inform decisions as to whether to accept or reject an applicant (satisfactory PVG/DBS being a condition of entry to the course/programme).

3.3 Managing Allegations related to Breaches of the Requirements for Good Character – Enrolled Students

Individual situations which lead to the involvement of police or criminal proceedings, or call into question good character, may impact upon progression on the course/programme and these situations will be considered in accordance with Section A3 – 3 of the University's Academic Regulations, Student Fitness to Practise Procedure. Any *substantiated* cases of misconduct which bring into question the conduct or character of students enrolled on approved courses/programmes within the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice will be liable to the sanctions provided for in the Student Fitness to Practise Procedure.

All students should note that the following list (although not exhaustive) would make it unlikely that they would be permitted to remain on course/programme or in the case of applicants, be accepted onto a course/programme (extracted from the NMC Guidance on Health and Character, NMC 2019):

- Serious sexual misconduct (including child pornography)
- Conduct involving dishonesty, fraud or deception
- Offences that involve neglecting, exploiting, assaulting or otherwise harming patients/people, which are so serious that it may be harder for them to be remediated
- Conduct involving hostility to others based on their race or ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or disability
- Conduct involving a breach of trust and/or abuse of position
- Custodial sentence (including suspended sentence) or conviction for specified offence.

Furthermore, normally if a student were to be subject to a second sanction through the Fitness to Practise Procedure for concerns related to conduct, a recommendation would be made to the university Vice Principal that enrolment is terminated, and they are withdrawn from the course/programme.

Students should note that if they are permitted to remain on their course/programme following the application of a sanction, that they must declare any charges, cautions, conviction or conditional discharge when applying to join the NMC and HCPC register.

Cases related to students who are existing registrants will be referred to the employer and guidance sought from the PSRB if required. Students in this category would be required to notify their employer and the NMC or HCPC if they receive a police charge, caution, conviction or conditional discharge as well as informing the School if they are an enrolled student. As per the guidelines related to conduct and applicants, students in this category would also be required to declare any cautions, convictions on application to their course/programme.

A schematic flow chart, based on Academic Regulation A3 – 3, of the procedure applied in cases where there are concerns related to conduct is presented in Appendix 4.

3.4 Managing Allegations related to Breaches of the requirements for Good Character – Academic Misconduct – Enrolled Students

Honesty and integrity are key factors in assessing the suitability of a student's character. The School will investigate all allegations of academic misconduct by applying University Academic Regulation A3 – 2; Student Conduct Procedure. Academic misconduct is defined by the University as any attempt by a student(s) to effect an unfair advantage in an assessment and this may include (though is not limited to):

- Plagiarism
- Contract cheating
- Falsification or fabrication of data
- Collusion
- Bribery
- Personation
- Cheating.

It should be noted that any student who assists a fellow student, or student(s), to commit misconduct shall be deemed to have committed misconduct and will be dealt with in accordance with the Student Conduct Procedure.

It is important that adherence to the expected levels of academic integrity is understood by students. The University provides guidance to students in this respect. A short video entitled Academic Integrity and Academic Misconduct has been produced for this purpose. This can be accessed at: https://www.rgu.ac.uk/about/governance/academic-governance/academic-regulations

A schematic flow chart, based on Academic Regulation A3 – 2, of the Procedure applied in cases where there are concerns/allegations related to academic misconduct is presented in Appendix 5.

3.5 Regulation A 3 – 2: Student Conduct Procedure and Regulation A 3 – 3: Student Fitness to Practise Procedure

It should be noted that the Student Conduct Procedure which should be used when an allegation relating to a student who falls within the remit of student misconduct. Within the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice and as outlined in this policy, this would be applied in cases of academic misconduct. Exceptionally, where the allegation relates to both Fitness to Practise and Student Misconduct, then a joint Fitness to Practise and Misconduct Hearing may be conducted. Alternatively, the Dean may determine the Procedures run consecutively.

References

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL (HCPC), 2017. *Standards of conduct, performance and ethics*. London: HCPC.

HEALTH AND CARE PROFESSIONS COUNCIL (HCPC), 2022. *Guidance on health and character*. London: HCPC.

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL (NMC), 2018, *Realising professionalism: Standards for eduction and training. Part 3: Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes*. London: NMC.

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL (NMC), 2019. *Health and character as a student.* London: NMC.

NURSING AND MIDWIFERY COUNCIL (NMC), 2022. Joining the register: g*uidance on health and character*. London: NMC.

Appendix 1: Fitness to Practise Committee

School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice

Fitness to Practise Committee - Membership

- Academic Strategic Lead: Learning, Teaching and Assessment (Convenor)
- Academic Team Lead – Undergraduate Nursing
- Academic Team Lead - Practice Learning
- Academic Team Lead – Paramedic Practice
- Lead Midwife for Education
- Course Leaders
- School Inclusion Champion
- Midwifery Clinical Representative
- Adult Nursing Clinical Representative
- Mental Health Nursing Clinical Representative
- Children and Young People's Nursing Clinical Representative
- Specialist Community Public Health Clinical Representative
- Paramedic Clinical Representative
- Lay members
- Ex officio – Dean
- School Operations Manager
- Secretary/PA to Dean.

Quorum for individual cases relating to good health and/or good character

For the Committee to be quorum at least 3 members of School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice academic staff and a minimum of one clinical representative are required to be present. If assessing an applicant's suitability to enter a course and the case is in relation to a midwifery applicant, the Lead Midwife for Education and/or the Midwifery Clinical representative must be present.

Frequency/Agenda/Note taking

There will be 3 meetings per year and as required to consider individual cases. Each meeting will have an agenda, a record of members in attendance and a note taken of the proceedings and outcome. Meetings in relation to individual

cases are regarded as confidential business and therefore the note of the outcome will be stored within the Dean's Office. The Committee also assumes responsibility for monitoring trends related to Fitness to Practise and Academic Misconduct as well as any trends from Practice Learning Support Plan data and reporting these to School Academic Board.

Governance

The School's Fitness to Practise Committee is responsible to the Dean and will report on a semester basis to School Academic Board.

Appendix 2: Fitness to Practise Procedure – Health and Wellbeing

(Please also refer to University Academic Regulations A3 – 3: Student Fitness to Practise Procedure.)

1. Concerns regarding health and wellbeing escalated to Course Lead/Academic Team Lead.
2. Concern and accompanying evidence triaged to the convenor of the Fitness to Practise Committee to confirm (or otherwise) if this is escalated to a Fitness to Practise Hearing – this includes the completion of a Fitness to Practise Concern Form (see below) and accompanying evidence.
3. If escalated to a Fitness to Practise Hearing this will be arranged within 10 working days of receipt of the Fitness to Practise Concern Form.
4. Fitness to Practise Hearing[2] takes place – the convenor will examine the facts and may consult with other staff and students as appropriate. The student is given the opportunity to explain circumstances of the case and to submit any relevant mitigating evidence for consideration.
5. The student is determined as fit to practise or not fit to practise. If fit to practise then no further action against the student is required. If not fit to practise the convenor will decide upon an appropriate outcome[3].
6. Within 5 working days of the Fitness to Practise Hearing the convenor shall prepare notes of the meeting which are to be signed by the student and convenor and provide the student with a copy of the signed notes, notification of outcome and advise the student of their entitlement to appeal ((see academic regulation A3 – 3; 8. Student Fitness to Practise Procedure: Appeals).

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[2] Normally the Fitness to Practise Hearing shall include Academic Strategic Lead (convenor), Academic Team Lead who shall normally be registered with the relevant professional, statutory, regulatory body, a healthcare professional from another School, a relevant external representativefrom the Fitness to Practise Committee and/or lay member and any other parties relevant to the allegation.

[3] In cases where the student is determined not fit and the approved outcome is termination of enrolment the convenor will meet with the student to communicate this outcome.

FITNESS TO PRACTISE CONCERN FORM

In accordance with *Regulation A3 – Section 3, 7.1*, where there are valid concerns regardinga student's fitness to practise then the Head of School shall be informed in the first instance.The mechanism for raising these concerns shall be through completion of this *Fitness to Practise Concern Form*, normally completed by the Course Leader.

The form should be completed as fully as possible prior to submission to your Head of School.

Surname/Family Name			
Title		Forename(s)	

Address *[all correspondence relating to thisappeal will be sent to this address]*	
Telephone Number(s)	
Email Address *[If you want correspondence to also be sent to a personal email account,please provide details]*	
RGU Enrolment Number	
School	
Course	
Stage	

The *Student Fitness to Practise Procedure* shall apply to all students enrolled on health or social care courses of the University leading to registration as a health or social care professional with a professional, statutory and/or regulatory body. A requirement of such courses is that the student is fit to practise. Where concerns are raised relating to a student's fitness to practise then the Student Fitness to Practise Procedure will be applied.

Such concerns may relate to [though are not limited to] the following (please tick relevant box:

(i) Good character	
(ii) Behaviours	
(iii) Professional conduct	
(iv) Health and wellbeing	
(v) Safeguarding	
(vi) Other	

Exceptionally, a professional, statutory and/or regulatory body may have requirements over and above the University's Student Fitness to Practise Procedure and any such requirements shall be detailed within the relevant Course Specification(s) (*Regulation A3-Section 2, paragraph 6*).	

Please provide details of the specific concern, including PSRB requirements as appropriate.
List of Documentary Evidence submitted with this form
1. 2. 3.

Name of staff member who has completed the form	
Date	

For use by Head of School

	Yes	**No**
Refer to Fitness to PractiseHearing		
Refer to Joint Misconduct andFitness to Practise Hearing		

Appendix 3: Risk Assessment Tool – Applicants to Courses

School of Nursing, Midwifery and Paramedic Practice

Fitness to Practise Committee

Risk Assessment for Applicants with a Conviction, Caution, Pending Charges or other Relevant Information

Name of applicant:
UCAS number:
Course applied for:
Proposed year and stage of entry:

Question(s)	**Circle answer**	**Additional Notes**	**Risk Assessment**
Did the applicant disclose past convictions/cautions on the application form? AND/OR Did the applicant contact the University regarding convictions, cautions, pending charges or other relevant information?	YES / NO		If No, question applicant about why: • If mitigating circumstances, then complete assessment. • If no mitigating circumstances, end application process if appropriate. If Yes, complete this assessment.

Risk level in relation to questions:	Additional notes	High	Medium	Low
What was the sentence?		Custodial	Suspended, community, conditional discharge	Warning, caution, reprimand, fine, absolute discharge
When was the offence committed?	Date:	In the past 3 years	Between 3 and 10 years	More than 10 years before
Is the type/nature of the offence relevant to the safety of patients and service users? If yes, in what way?		Yes	Some link	No
Is there a pattern of specific offences? If yes, state that pattern:		Yes	Some instances	No pattern
Has the applicant supplied additional references?	YES / NO			
How do the referees rate the applicant's suitability for a nurse or midwifery course?		Referees declare applicant unsuitable	Referees share some reservations	Referees declare applicant suitable
Does the applicant offer any mitigating circumstances concerning past offence/s?	YES / NO	No	Some mitigating circumstances	Yes

Additional considerations	Answers
What has changed since offence occurred?	
Applicant's attitude towards offence/s?	
Any concerning factors to be considered (e.g. intent of harm/exploitation/breach of trust:	
Where relevant, who else has been consulted about this disclosure?	

FITNESS TO PRACTISE COMMITTEE DECISION

On consideration of the risk assessment form and information submitted by the applicant the Fitness to Practise Committee believes that the applicant should / should not proceed with the admissions process for the following reasons:

Signed: ..... **Date:** .....

Appendix 4: Fitness to Practise Procedure – Conduct

(Please also refer to University Academic Regulation A3 – 3: Student Fitness to Practise Procedure.)

1. Concerns regarding conduct -character/behaviours/professional conduct- escalated to relevant Course Lead/Academic Team Lead.
2. Concern and accompanying evidence triaged to senior staff to confirm (or otherwise) if the alleged misconduct is escalated to a Fitness to Practise Hearing – this includes the completion of a Fitness to Practise Concern Form and accompanying evidence.
3. If escalated to a Fitness to Practise Hearing, this will be arranged within 10 working days of receipt of the Fitness to Practise Concern Form.
4. Fitness to Practise Hearing takes place – the convenor will examine the facts and may consult with other staff and students as appropriate. The student is given the opportunity to explain circumstances of the case and to submit any relevant mitigating evidence for consideration.
5. The student is determined as fit to practise or not fit to practise. If fit to practice, then no further action against the student is required. If not fit to practice, the convenor will decide upon an appropriate outcome.
6. Within 5 working days of the Fitness to Practise Hearing the convenor shall prepare notes of the meeting which are to be signed by the student and convenor and provide the student with a copy of the signed notes, notification of outcome and advise the student of their entitlement to appeal (see Academic Regulation A3 – 3; 8. Student Fitness to Practise Procedure: Appeals).

Appendix 5: Misconduct Procedure

(Please also refer to university academic regulations A3 – 2: Student Conduct Procedure.)

1. Concerns regarding academic integrity (e.g., plagiarism) identified by module team[4] and escalated to relevant Course Lead/Academic Team Lead.
2. Concern and accompanying evidence triaged to senior staff to confirm (or otherwise) if the alleged misconduct is escalated to a Misconduct Hearing.
3. Course Administrator/Convenor arranges a Misconduct Hearing – relevant documentation prepared for Misconduct Hearing.
4. Misconduct Hearing takes place, convened by a member of senior staff and evidence presented by relevant Academic Team Lead.
5. Misconduct not established/established – if established, appropriate sanction applied.
6. Within 5 working days of the Misconduct Hearing, prepare notes, student and member of senior staff sign as accurate.
7. Provide student with copy of signed notes, notification of sanction and advise student of entitlement to appeal (see Academic Regulation A3 – 2; 8. Student Conduct Procedure: Appeals).

[4] Please note that all assessments must be assessed for similarity score prior to marking.