



New City College – Fitness to Study Policy

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1.0 Aim

NCC recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to their academic progress and college experience. We aim to deliver a consistent and transparent process for supporting students facing mental and physical ill health. The focus at all stages is to provide structured support to enable students to succeed on their course. The policy seeks to promote early intervention, active collaboration between students, staff, and third parties and for students to return to full time study as soon as possible.

2.0 Purpose

The purpose of the Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure is a framework to inform and guide our response to situations where we are concerned that a student is not well enough to study. This policy does not replace the college expectation that all students must maintain the core expectations outlined within the [Study Programme Contract](#); enables the college to consider individual needs and implement reasonable adaptations to ensure that all students achieve their qualifications.

3.0 Handling Concerns and Disclosures

Personal data is handled, processed and stored in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) and the [New City College Privacy Notice for Students](#).

Sensitive, personal data and confidential information will only be disclosed to a third parties with the express, informed consent of the student to implement this policy.

However, there may be occasions where the College is obliged to disclose, notwithstanding that the student has refused consent. These include:

- where the student's behaviour threatens their safety or the safety of others
- where the member of staff or the College would be liable to civil or criminal penalty for failing to disclose.

Consent will be sought to share information we hold with all relevant staff members where it is deemed appropriate to ensure the support and safety of students and staff.

4.0 Initial Support and Guidance

Before this process is invoked, staff should be clear on the criteria for Fitness to Study (see the definition in section 7.1)

There must be evidence which supports an ongoing supportive dialogue between the student, curriculum and support staff, and where appropriate, a parent or carer.

Evidence of meetings, action plans and reviews should be present and available on [ProMonitor/MyConcern](#).

The College's view is that high-quality teaching with a collaborative and holistic support offer should enable most students to successfully transition through periods of personal change and challenge. Wider College support may include:

- Skills Coaches
- Pastoral Tutors
- Mental Health and Wellbeing Service
- Welfare Advisors
- Supported Learning Team
- College Counsellors
- Specialist Mental Health Advisors
- External Support Agencies

5.0 Procedures

5.1 Admissions

In accordance with the Admissions Policy, the College reserves the right to refuse admission, at the college's discretion and after full consideration by a senior manager, to an applicant who is unable to demonstrate fitness to study.

Admissions and applications, including criteria, responsibilities of students and the College can be found in the, this includes Safeguarding Risk Assessments and the Appeals Process. [Admissions Policy](#), this includes Safeguarding Risk Assessments and the Appeals Process.

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5.2 Fitness to Study

To be 'fit to study' a learner must be able to safely fulfil all aspects of their programme of study and enable the college to safely maintain the health and wellbeing of others.

Where a learner's health and wellbeing are having a detrimental impact on their studies a fitness to study meeting will be called. This is to

- a. explore whether a student with health needs is able to meet the demands of the qualification with a reasonable and proportionate amount of support.
- b. agree that with this reasonable adjustment a student has a reasonable chance of achievement and progression.

We have a two-step approach to this procedure

Step 1 – formal concern raised, fitness to study meeting and support plan

Concerns are raised and referred to the Senior Curriculum Manager (SCM). The vocational SCM will arrange a formal Fitness to Study meeting with the learner, parents/carers (if the student is under 18), SCM English and or maths (if relevant), as well as other internal/external professionals as appropriate. The curriculum SCM will

lead and chair this meeting, the purpose of which is to explore the options available to support the learner to continue with their programme of study.

By the end of the meeting a clear support plan with SMART monitoring targets to address the issues discussed will be produced and agreed. A 2-week review date will be set from this meeting. The SCM will upload this support plan to Pro Monitor and will discuss the outcome with their GCD.

The Support Plan, the actions could include

- reasonable adjustments, that can be offered in line with their curriculum. and for an agreed period.
- referral to support services within NCC
- referral to external agencies.
- full suspension of studies on health and wellbeing grounds to allow for remedial actions to take place (e.g. stabilisation of medication).
- a voluntary break in learning Students and parents/carers need to be aware that it may only be possible for a student to return to study at certain points in the academic calendar, depending on the circumstances of the student and the programme of study. If a voluntary break in learning is agreed at any stage of this Procedure, the college will be entitled to request satisfactory evidence that the original concerns have been overcome or are under control, before the student can be re- admitted at a suitable point in the academic year
- permission to disclose to the relevant staff as appropriate.

It is expected that the student will respond positively to the support plan and co-operate fully with accessing the outlined support. Whilst we hope that students will engage with this policy and procedure, if they do not do so, we may enact this policy and procedure without their agreement

Step 2 – Review of support plan meeting

The review meeting - the same personnel should be invited as far as practicably possible, for consistency.

Discussions will involve establishing whether further reasonable adjustments or support can be put in place to enable the student to successfully continue their studies. This is led again by the curriculum SCM they could if they wish invite further members to the meeting.

The outcomes of the meeting could be:

- a return to full time study
- a continuation of the support plan for another 2 weeks
- an enhanced Support Plan, which may include a suggested change in the mode of study (e.g. location, times).
- A voluntary break in learning. Students and parents/carers need to be aware that it may only be possible for a student to return to study at certain points in the academic calendar, depending on the circumstances of the student and the programme of study. If a voluntary break in learning is agreed at any stage of this

Procedure, the college will be entitled to request satisfactory evidence that the original concerns have been overcome or are under control, before the student can be re-admitted at a suitable point in the academic year

- A voluntary withdrawal from the course with a view to re-enrolling at a future date. Students will be supported with their exit from the course, and this will be organised by the curriculum SCM
- If a student deliberately fails to adhere to the support plan, then the disciplinary policy would be invoked

Immediate and Serious Concerns

Applies when an immediate, significant concern has been made and where a student's actions or behaviours are putting the health, safety, well-being or academic progress of themselves or other individuals at significant risk and/or are likely to adversely affect the reputation of the college. This can apply at any point in this process. The SCM will inform the campus Deputy Principal for review and action. Where appropriate external agencies (police and/or medics as appropriate) should be contacted by the Deputy Principal.

The Deputy Principal will place the student on a managed absence for not more than 5 days; to allow for a full assessment of the case. This is not a disciplinary action.

The Deputy Principal will convene a meeting with all parties within 5 working days. The meeting will be chaired by the Deputy Principal, additional staff invited to the meeting should be the relevant Group (or Deputy Group) Curriculum Director, and the Senior Curriculum Manager (others can be invited where it is appropriate to do so). Relevant external personnel could be invited.

In all cases involving students aged below 18, a parent or carer must be invited. If the student is over 18 years of age they are entitled to support, but not from any legal representative.

Medical evidence can be presented if the student wishes to.

Outcomes of this meeting could be:

- A revision to the existing support plan if there is one in place
- A new support plan if one was not in place
- In exceptional circumstances an agreement to study away from the campus may be agreed for a specific time limited period.
- Withdrawal from college - if the risks from an immediate or significant concern or a serious incident cannot be mitigated, this will be conducted as step 3. This could be part of this meeting.

The support plan will now be reviewed every two weeks by the Deputy Principal as well as the other parties until it is deemed that the learner can return to their programme of study. At this point the responsibility for monitoring will revert to the SCM.

Final case conference where a student is at risk of being withdrawn

This will be organised by the Deputy Principal who would invite all those from previous meetings, as well as the DGCD or GCD of the curriculum. The aim of this conference is to support the learner to continue, but if this is not possible then the objective is to get consensus on the need to withdraw. Where withdrawal is believed to be the best outcome based on the information and support available, the relevant Deputy Principal will have 5 working days to make a final decision. Any decision will be communicated in writing. The Deputy Principal will arrange for exit support.

Support to Exit

Where the outcome of the Fitness to Study meeting is to withdraw a student, they will be offered support to consider education or employment options. Withdrawal under the Fitness to Student Policy will preclude a student from applying for another course at the College until the following academic year, this should be on a case-by-case basis and reviewed by the relevant Principal.

6.0 The Right of Appeal

The student has a right of appeal when the decision has been made to withdraw. An appeal must be sent, in writing, to the Principal, within 5 days of receiving the outcome letter.

The learner's letter must clearly state the grounds for appeal. An appeal will only be considered when one or more of the following can be evidenced:

- Reasonable efforts have not been made to gather information
- New information has since become available that may have a bearing on the initial outcome reached
- There is evidence of prejudice or bias.

If any one of the above 3 grounds are satisfied, the Principal will review the evidence provided within the learner's appeal letter. The Principal's decision will be final.

7.0 Definitions

7.1 Fitness to Study

Fitness to study means the student is fit to safely continue with their current course or return/change to their current or another course.

Students must be able to benefit from the Programme of study or the required period with a reasonable chance of achievement and progression.

Students' mental or physical health needs should not unduly disrupt the learning, research, and work of others in the College community.

7.2 Reasonable Adjustments

Taking steps to ensure that there are reasonable measures in place to ensure that students are not placed at a substantial disadvantage due to their disability, difficulty or additional need. The criteria for judging '*reasonable*' include consideration that they do not compromise academic standards, health and safety or the relevant interests of other people including other students. New City College has a '*duty of care*' to the College community and considers the health and safety of everyone to be paramount. All reasonable adjustments should be financially reasonable and practical.

8.0 Legislation

- 8.1 Students with mental and physical health conditions are entitled to reasonable adjustments and appropriate support in relation to relevant legislation e.g., the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Equality Act, 2010, Keeping Children Safe in Education 2024 and the SEN Code of Practice.
- 8.2 All personal and sensitive information will be managed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR).
- 8.3 The funding of support for qualifying (funded) students is enabled through Additional Learning Support (ALS), High Needs Funding, or the Disabled Student Allowance (DSA) and aims to remove barriers to success and achievement by funding reasonable adjustments.

9.0 Related Policies

[Student Contract](#)
[Student Disciplinary Policy](#)
[Safeguarding Prevent Policy](#)
[New City College Privacy Notice for Students](#)
[Admissions Policy](#)

