

## Fitness to Study

The University of Liverpool wants to ensure that students who are struggling due to their health are given reasonable support to help them complete their studies. If you have a disability, a mental health condition or any other long-term health problem; the University may have a legal obligation to make 'reasonable adjustments' to support you.

The [University's Fitness to Study Policy](#) is intended to make sure that you are getting the support you need.

In some cases, students' behaviour may affect other students or staff. If a student's behaviour, for whatever reason, is affecting others, the University can take steps to terminate their studies or to enact a period of suspension.

You can find out what support services the University offers on our [website](#).

### What happens if I am called in for a meeting?

In the first instance, meetings should usually be held in an informal manner. The aim is to work with you to make sure you are aware of the support available to you and how to access it. The member of staff should outline their concerns, discuss support, offer to refer you to the relevant support services and where appropriate, implement agreed support measures. They may ask you to moderate your behaviour or to seek help with presenting issues. Any request of this nature should be followed up in writing.

If your health, safety, wellbeing or behaviour continues to cause concern, your case may be referred to the University Advice and Guidance Team.

### Referral to the Advice and Guidance Team

If the Advice and Guidance Team do not think that the matter should be considered under the Fitness to Study Policy, they will inform the Head of Student Support Services, who will get in touch with you to offer support.

If the referral is accepted under the Fitness to Study Policy, you will be invited to attend an initial interview with a named member of Student Services. You can contact the Guild Advice Service for advice and support with this.

At the interview, you will be given an opportunity to discuss your perceptions of the situation and the member of staff will outline their concerns. You will be invited to help carry out a risk assessment to identify risks and to propose measures to mitigate them. Following this, you will work with the member of staff to develop a mutually agreeable Individual Student Learning Plan (ISLP). This may include utilising internal support teams, but may also include referral to external services. The plan will be communicated to you in writing.

If it is not possible to agree upon an ISLP, the member of staff will inform the Head of Student Services who will decide whether to escalate the matter to the next stage of the procedure, or to arrange a meeting with you to try to agree upon an ISLP.

If you do not adhere to the ISLP, the matter will be escalated to the next stage, a Case Review Panel.

## Case Review Panel

If you have not been able to agree upon an ISLP, or if you have not adhered to an ISLP, you will be invited to attend a panel meeting and to provide the panel with a written statement of your views and any medical evidence. We strongly recommend that you attend the meeting where possible. A Guild Adviser can accompany you to the meeting for advice and support.

The panel will make final recommendations, which may be one of the following:

1. You will be asked to undertake an Occupational Health Assessment. In this case you may either:
  - a. Be required to suspend your studies until the assessment is available; or
  - b. Be allowed to continue your studies whilst the assessment is ongoing (with or without an ISLP).
2. You will be allowed to continue with your studies with a new ISLP in place;
3. You will be allowed to continue with your studies without an ISLP in place;
4. You will be required to suspend your studies until you are fit to return (usually a minimum of 12 months);
5. You will be required to withdraw from your studies.

## What happens if I am referred to the Occupational Health Physician?

If the Occupational Health Physician reports that you are not fit to study on health grounds, then they will also indicate any steps which may allow you to recover fitness to study in future and any adjustments which the University should make to enable you to reach the necessary standards. Where possible, they will indicate how long it may take for the steps and/or adjustments to allow you to meet the standard required.

The Case Review Panel will reconvene for a meeting, which you may be invited to. If you are, a Guild Adviser can accompany you for advice and support.

The panel may recommend one of the following:

1. You will be allowed to continue with your studies with a new ISLP in place;
2. You will be allowed to continue with your studies without an ISLP in place;
3. You will be required to suspend your studies until you are fit to return (usually a minimum of 12 months);
4. You will be required to withdraw from your studies.

## Return to Study

If your studies are suspended, you are encouraged to maintain contact with the named member of Student Services staff during the period of suspension.

Three months before the end of your period of suspension, you will be asked if you intend to return. You may be referred to the Occupational Health Physician who will report on whether they consider you fit to return to your studies. If you are not well enough to return to your studies after the initial period of suspension, a further period may be allowed.

You would only usually be permitted to return from suspension at the start of an academic term, and you would be expected to return to the same mode of study you were originally undertaking (i.e. full or part time). If you wish to request a change to the mode of study, this will be considered by the Case Review Panel.

## Appeals

If you have been required to suspend or withdraw from your studies, you have the right to appeal against this decision. A Guild Adviser can support you through this process.

Appeals should be made in writing to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and usually should be received within **14 calendar days** of the initial decision. You should specify the grounds of your appeal and provide additional evidence where possible.

Your appeal will be considered by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor and a Student Representative Officer, who may invite you to meet with them. If you are, a Guild Adviser can accompany you for advice and support.

The Deputy Vice-Chancellor will normally write to you with the outcome within **28 calendar days** of receipt of the appeal.

There is no further right of appeal within the University, but you may be eligible to request a review by the [Office of the Independent Adjudicator](#) for Higher Education of the University's decision.