

Policy and Procedure Title: Fitness to Study

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Approved by:	Colin McLean Registrar	
Approving Authority:	Academic Council	
Head of Function responsible:	Colin McLean Registrar	
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Revision History

Revision No	Description of Change	Issue Date	Status
0	New Policy	06/04/2017 12/2/2018	Approved by Academic Processes Committee Approved by Academic Council

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.2 IT Sligo ("**the Institute**") is committed to broadening access to education and to ensuring that learners of all backgrounds, identities and abilities are enabled and encouraged to enter, successfully participate in and complete higher education. This Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure (this "**Policy**") is intended to be used to respond to and manage concerns regarding a student's fitness to study and/or concerns regarding a student's capacity and/or concerns regarding a student's mental and/or physical health including issues with addiction, collectively referred to herein as "**fitness to study**".
- 1.3 Concerns regarding a student's fitness to study will be treated with sensitivity and understanding in a supportive environment where students will be encouraged to seek appropriate support from the outset from both internal and external resources.
- 1.4 Concerns about a student's fitness to study should be acted upon promptly. Early intervention and support can minimise risk of deterioration in health and well-being.
- 1.5 The aim of this Policy is to treat concerns regarding student fitness to study seriously and to address them as quickly as possible. Concerns about a student's fitness to study should, as far as possible, be resolved informally as outlined below. However, where the matter cannot be resolved informally, the matter may progress under the formal procedure set out in this Policy.
- 1.6 The dignity of all persons involved will be respected at all times and all concerns will be handled with appropriate discretion. The process as conducted, will be cognisant of the rights of students and appropriate support will be provided. In the operation of this Policy, the Institute will remain mindful of its legal obligations, including its obligations under equality legislation.

2 PURPOSE

- 2.1 The purpose of this Policy is to:
- protect the public, students, placement providers and the Institute;
 - guide students who experience issues that may affect their ability to study;
 - provide a suitable framework for the effective management of fitness to study issues that may arise during a student's programme of study.

3 SCOPE

- 3.1 This Policy applies to all students throughout their period of registration. This includes students registered on full time and part-time courses, undergraduate courses, taught and research postgraduate courses, on-line courses or whilst on exchange programmes or placement with the Institute irrespective of the mode or place of study and includes students:
- 3.1.1 on campus including students visiting the Institute for a period of study or research;
- 3.1.2 placement, field trips, study abroad or any other Institute related activity away from campus;
- 3.2 This Policy also applies to former students seeking a return to study whose registration has previously been suspended under this Policy.
- 3.3 This Policy should be read in conjunction with the Institute's:
- Code of Conduct contained in the Student Charter (the "**Student Code**")
 - Fitness to Practice Policy and Procedure
 - Health Fitness Screening Procedure (**Draft**)
 - Mental Health Policy
 - Other relevant policies and procedures, programme regulations or guidelines

4 GENERAL PRINCIPLES

- 4.1 Where in this Policy reference is made to any named Institute office-holder, such reference is to be read as including reference to his/her appointed nominee.

- 4.2. This Policy sets out how the Institute may respond to instances where a concern is raised regarding a student's fitness to study, including potential fitness to study and the type of action that may be taken to manage the matter and support the student, including students on placement etc.
- 4.3. While the Institute endeavours to treat concerns regarding a student's fitness to study with sensitivity and understanding, in exceptional cases it may determine that a student is unfit to study with the result that his/her registration with the Institute may be suspended and/or terminated.
- 4.4. Where a student withdraws temporarily from a course of study and/or goes off-books and/or is suspended, the Institute will, as appropriate, endeavour to assist the student in a return to study, subject to any certification requirements.
- 4.5. A student is entitled to be accompanied by an appropriate person, such as, a staff member, a fellow student, or a Students' Union representative in a supportive capacity at each stage of the procedure. Legal representation will not normally be allowed.
- 4.6. Matters dealt with under this Policy will be dealt with according to the individual circumstances. Whilst the Institute anticipates that such cases will be exceptional, it reserves the right at any level of this Policy to vary the process it follows in dealing with a matter in the interests of fairness and/or health and safety.
- 4.7. Where an issue arises pursuant to an Institute policy and/or the Student Code, the Institute or its nominee as per the relevant policy/Student Code, may decide to adjourn for the time being any proceedings pursuant to that policy and/or the Student Code, if it is considered that concern and support are more in the student's best interests, than continuing such proceedings. In such cases, the Institute or its nominee as per the relevant policy/Student Code may impose such conditions or requirements as are appropriate in the circumstances.
- 4.8. Where, in the opinion of the Registrar, a case raises issues relevant to more than one Institute policy, then the Registrar shall decide which of the Institute's procedures and/or policies should have priority or be the most appropriate in the circumstances, and may direct the continuation of some procedure(s) and/or policies and the suspension of others pending the outcome of the former.
- 4.9. The procedure under this Policy may be initiated at any level, without any requirement for an earlier level to have been commenced or exhausted. The level at which the procedure is initiated will depend on factors such as the nature of the concern, the seriousness of any risk posed, the student's perception of his/her behaviour and its implications and the response of the student to any steps taken by the Institute to manage the situation.
- 4.10. The processes under all levels of this Policy will be undertaken in a transparent manner, and the student will normally be informed of the identity and capacity of any persons with whom the Institute consults, including third parties, such as health professionals.
- 4.11. Unless the President decides otherwise, any decision being appealed to the President will retain full force and effect during the currency of any appeal.
- 4.12. In implementing this Policy, staff dealing with students at any and all levels of this Policy will consider what support may be offered to students both from within the Institute and externally. Students will be encouraged to seek support.
- 4.13. If the student fails or refuses to engage with the process provided for herein, the Institute has the right to continue with the process.
- 4.14. Should a student be unwilling or unable to participate at any level of this Policy or to attend a meeting/assessment, the Institute may nonetheless follow this Policy where it is reasonable to do so. The Institute may, where it is reasonable to do so, deal with issues on the basis of written reports and/or statements in the absence of the student. In addition, the Institute may consider any request from a student to proceed with a meeting in his/her absence on the basis of written reports and/or a written statement from the student.
- 4.15. Any person or body making decisions pursuant to this Policy shall seek to act in the best interests, both of any and every student concerned and of every other member of the Institute community.

- 4.16. Where an issue arises in relation to a student who is known to have a disability, and where the disability is relevant to the issue that has arisen, then in the first instance consideration shall be given to the level and types of support put in place for that student in conjunction with the Institute's Access Office Supports Services.
- 4.17. All matters raised under this Policy will be handled sensitively and with due consideration to confidentiality, however, it will not be possible or appropriate to maintain confidentiality in all circumstances.
- 4.18. Where there is a fitness to study concern regarding a student's health, the student may be referred to a relevant healthcare professional. The student is obliged under this Policy to attend such medical consultation as required. A process under this Policy can proceed notwithstanding the failure of the student to attend the nominated healthcare professional.
- 4.19. The staff member(s) dealing with the concern under this Policy will keep records of all relevant documentation supplied to him/her in accordance with Data Protection legislation.
- 4.20. The standard of proof applied at every stage of this Policy is the balance of probabilities.

5. GROUNDS FOR FITNESS TO STUDY REFERRAL

- 5.1. It is recognised that there may be instances where a student's physical or mental health may give rise to concerns regarding the student's fitness to study and/or mental health or capacity, including within a placement and/or as a member of the Institute's community and includes but is not limited to medical fitness to proceed with the student's course of study (including placements) or to participate in his/her courses to the standards required by the Institute. References to concerns relating to fitness to study, which shall be taken to include concerns relating to potential fitness to study, may arise where, for example, there is concern that:
 - 5.1.1. a student poses a risk to his/her own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of others;
 - 5.1.2. a student's behaviour is, or is at risk of, adversely affecting the teaching, learning and/or experience of other students;
 - 5.1.3. a student's behaviour is, or is at risk of, adversely affecting the day to day activities of the Institute or a placement provider; or
 - 5.1.4. a student's support needs fall outside the scope of the support and other services which the Institute can reasonably be expected to provide

5.2. Relevant Disability

It is the policy of the Institute to widen the access to higher education and to address the learning needs of an increasingly diverse student body. In so doing, it is committed to supporting, within available resources, all students with a disability in their endeavours to obtain an education at the Institute.

Students with a disability are welcomed and reasonable accommodation will be made, as appropriate. Where additional support is necessary, it must be feasible for the Institute to put same in place.

'Disability' is defined for the purpose of the Equal Status Acts 2000-2015 as:

- (a) The total or partial absence of a person's bodily or mental functions, including the absence of a part of a person's body,
- (b) The presence in the body of organisms causing, or likely to cause, chronic disease or illness,
- (c) The malfunction, malformation or disfigurement of a part of a person's body,
- (d) A condition or malfunction which results in a person learning differently from a person without the condition or malfunction, or
- (e) A condition, illness or disease, which affects a person's thought, processes perception of reality, emotions or judgment or which results in disturbed behaviour.

Fitness to Study means that an individual's health status is such that s/he is well enough to undertake his/her programme of learning. Good health does not necessarily mean the absence of any disability/specific learning difficulty or health condition. Many people with health conditions or

disabilities or specific learning difficulties are able to study with or without reasonable accommodation to support their learning, and are legally supported in this by the Equal Status Acts 2000 - 2015.

Individuals may, however, be rendered incapable to continue to progress in their programme of study, as a result of a health matter, either on a temporary or (rarely) a permanent basis.

To ensure that, where possible, the Institute can make reasonable accommodation to support students with a health and/or disability issue and to ensure that it meets its legal obligations to others, all students are asked to provide details, at first registration, of any disability or health condition that, in his/her opinion, may impact on his/her ability to undertake programmes of learning.

5.3 Disclosure

All students with disabilities or health conditions are encouraged to disclose their disability in the first instance to the Access Office to ensure that reasonable accommodation can be provided, as appropriate. The disclosure must be accompanied by appropriate medical certification.

By registering on their programmes at the start of each academic year, students are in effect declaring that they are fit for study. There is an onus on students to bring any issues of concern relating to their Fitness to Study to the attention of the Institute.

6 FITNESS TO STUDY – ROLES

In order to implement the provisions of this Policy in an appropriate manner, specific roles are assigned.

6.1 The Registrar

The Registrar will have overall responsibility for the management of this Policy. The Registrar has overall responsibility for decisions related to fitness to study concerns and the appropriate procedure to be utilised.

6.2 Head of Department

A serious concern regarding a student's fitness to study should be raised with the Head of Department where a student has failed to (or is judged unlikely to) resolve the concern within the existing informal supports or actions.

The Head of Department will work with the appropriate staff to address fitness to study concerns and complaints made and endeavour to have them resolved swiftly at an appropriate level.

6.3 Fitness to Study Committee

Where there is a continuing on-going concern or where there are concerns that immediate consideration and determination of a student's fitness to study is warranted, the Head of Department and/or the Registrar may decide to refer the Fitness to Study concern to a Fitness to Study Committee ("**FTS Committee**").

The FTS Committee will be convened by the Registrar as and when required.

The FTS Committee shall consist of:

- Two staff members of the Institute from the student's school
- One staff member of the Institute from a different school to the student

The Head of the student's department cannot be a member of the Fitness to Study Committee.

The Chair of the FTS Committee will be chosen by the Registrar and will be responsible for overseeing the process.

A member of the Institute's administrative staff will attend meetings of the FTS Committee for the purpose of taking notes and recording decisions made. This person is not a member of the FTS Committee and will not be involved in the decision making process.

The Institute will endeavour to ensure that the FTS Committee is gender balanced.

The FTS Committee shall submit an anonymised report to the Academic Council annually on the number and type of cases dealt with.

6.4 The President

The President of the Institute shall determine appeals from students in relation to decisions of

the FTS Committee.

7 PROCEDURE

7.1 Concerns about a student's fitness to study will be dealt with under this Policy, which has three levels of action:

- (i) Level 1: Informal Procedure
- (ii) Level 2: Formal Procedure
- (iii) Level 3: High Risk cases

7.2 Informal Procedure

7.2.1 Initial and/or emerging concerns about a student's fitness to study will normally be dealt with under the informal procedure.

7.2.2 In appropriate cases, the Relevant Person¹ will attempt to resolve the matter by informal discussions with the student. The informal discussions will include encouragement of the use of either the Institute's and/or other support services/interventions. Any suitable reasonable accommodations will also be considered during these discussions.

The following is an indicative list of potential supports:

- Student Counselling Service,
- Student Supports Services Officer
- Chaplaincy
- Access Office Supports
- Tutorial Support

7.2.3 The purpose of these discussions will be to resolve any issues by reaching agreement with the student on agreed actions, which will normally include an agreed timeframe and a review period. The student will be notified in writing of the agreed actions.

7.3 Formal Procedure

7.3.1 Stage One of the Formal Procedure ("Stage One")

Where:

- agreement/resolution cannot be achieved informally; and/or
- the student refuses and/or fails to engage with the informal procedure; and/or
- the student refuses and/or fails to engage with the agreed actions under the informal procedure; and/or
- the Relevant Person continues to have concerns; and/or
- it is more appropriate in the circumstances,

the formal process will be invoked. The issue will be formally referred to the Head of Department.

Fitness to study concerns should be made in writing using the FTtS1 Note of Concern Form at Appendix 1. Concerns must be clearly outlined and available supporting evidence included.

The Head of Department will:

- carry out a preliminary review of the issue and the available evidence;
- examine any supporting evidence/documentation from the person raising the concern;
- arrange a meeting with the student to discuss the concerns. The Head of Department shall inform the student in writing of this meeting, this letter shall also:

- (i) indicate clearly to the student that there is a concern about his/her fitness to study;
- (ii) clearly outline the nature of the concern;
- (iii) explain that the matter is being dealt with under Stage One of this Policy;
- (iv) outline the purpose of the meeting;
- (v) provide the student with a copy of this Policy;
- (vii) inform the student that s/he can bring an appropriate person, with him/her to the meeting for support (See 4.5 above); and

¹ The relevant Person will be one of the following, as appropriate, Member of Academic Staff, Programme Chair,

- (viii) inform the student that s/he will be given a full opportunity to respond to the concern.

The purpose of the meeting will be to:

- discuss the concern;
- discuss any support needs the student may have;
- seek to identify the student's perception of the concern; and
- give the student the opportunity to respond to the concern.

The Head of Department may invite other staff members to attend the meeting and may consult with and seek information from other persons in order to deal with the matter and to provide support to the student. The Head of Department will normally be accompanied at all meetings with the student and a contemporaneous record of the meeting shall be taken. The Head of Department will consider all the relevant information and documentation, which will include input from the student (if any) and can include medical input.

The Head of Department may take such action as is appropriate in all the circumstances, including, but not limited to one or more of the following:

- (i) decide that no further action is to be taken; or
- (ii) put in place support arrangements; and/or
- (iii) make reasonable accommodations for the student; and/or
- (iv) require the student to provide a letter of certification and the Certification Section will apply; and/or
- (v) draw up an action plan with the agreement of the student on agreed actions which will normally include an agreed timeframe and a review period; or
- (vi) recommend that the student take a leave of absence from his/her studies; or
- (vii) recommend that the student avail of an exit award, if one is available, subject to compliance with the Institute's regulations ;
- (viii) refer the matter to the Registrar to determine whether it should be considered under another Institute Policy; or
- (ix) refer the matter to the FTS Committee (Formal Stage Part 2).

The decision of the Head of Department will be communicated to the student in writing within [15] days of the meeting between the student and the Head of Department. Where the decision cannot be communicated within 15 working days, the student may be informed in writing of the revised timescale for receiving a response and the reason(s) for the delay. A copy of the decision and any associated documentation will be retained by the Head of Department.

Where the student has not complied with the requirement to submit a letter of certification or has complied but the Head of Department has or continues to have serious concerns, which are not allayed by the letter of certification, the Head of Department shall consult with the Registrar and the Registrar may decide:

- (i) if a further assessment is required and the Assessment Section shall apply; and/or
- (ii) to impose such conditions on admission, readmission or accommodation, as the case may be, as are appropriate in the circumstances; and/or
- (iii) to suspend the student or to continue a suspension, as the case may be and the Suspension Section shall apply; and/or
- (iv) refer the matter to Stage Two of the Formal Procedure.

Where a student wishes to return to study, s/he must submit a letter of certification to the Head of Department and the Certification Section shall apply.

7.3.2 Stage Two of the Formal Procedure ("Stage Two")

If:

- agreement/resolution cannot be achieved at Stage One; and/or
- the student refuses and/or fails to engage with Stage One and/or
- the student refuses and/or fails to engage with the agreed actions at Stage One; and/or
- the Head of Department continues to have concerns; and/or
- the Head of Department refers the matter to be considered at Stage Two; and/or
- it is more appropriate in the circumstances,

Stage Two will be invoked and the matter will be referred to the FTS Committee.

The following procedure shall be followed by the FTS Committee:

- (i) Students will be notified in writing by the Registrar that their case has been referred to the FTS Committee;
- (ii) Students will be informed of the nature of the concern, the purpose of the hearing and who will be present at the hearing;
- (iii) Students will be provided with a copy of this Policy, a copy of any written records from Stage One, if applicable, and any material, which is intended to be referred to at the hearing e.g. doctors reports;
- (iv) Students may submit documents for consideration at the hearing, these must be submitted at least 2 days prior to the hearing;
- (v) A minimum of 10 days' notice of the date of the hearing will be provided, but the student may choose to waive this if the Institute can convene a hearing in advance of the notice period;
- (vi) Where a student intends to be accompanied at the hearing by an appropriate person (See 4.5 above), notice must be provided by the student to the FTS Committee in advance of the hearing;
- (vii) Decisions of the FTS Committee shall be taken by a simple majority;
- (viii) A record, written or otherwise, of the proceedings shall be made;
- (ix) The FTS Committee will consider all the relevant information and documentation, which will include input from the student (if any) and can include inter alia medical input ;and
- (x) Students will be formally notified, in writing, of the outcome of the hearing and their right to appeal.

The FTS Committee may take such action as is appropriate in all the circumstances, including, but not limited to, those actions available to the Head of Department under Stage One as well as recommending to the Registrar that the matter be dealt with under the Student Code or other relevant policy.

Where the student has not complied with the requirement to submit a letter of certification or has complied but the FTS Committee has or continues to have serious concerns which are not allayed by the letter of certification, the FTS Committee shall consult with a medical practitioner of its choosing and may then:

- (i) seek a further assessment and the Assessment Section shall apply; and/or
- (ii) impose such conditions on admission, readmission or accommodation, as the case may be, as are appropriate in the circumstances; and/or
- (iii) decide to suspend the student or to continue a suspension, as the case may be and the Suspension Section shall apply; and/or
- (iv) terminate the student's registration.

Where a decision is made to direct an international student to withdraw or to take a leave of absence, the International Office shall also be notified in writing to ensure that partner institutions, scholarship agencies, etc are notified as necessary.

Where a student wishes to return to study, s/he must submit a letter of certification to the FTS Committee and the Certification Section shall apply.

7.4 High Risk Cases

- 7.4.1 Where the student poses a significant risk to his/her own health, safety and/or wellbeing and/or that of others, the Head of Department may refer a case directly to Stage Two.
- 7.4.2 In appropriate circumstances, the Head of Department may refer the matter to the Registrar seeking a temporary suspension pending a full hearing in accordance with Stage Two and the Power to Suspend section shall apply.
- 7.4.3 Where the Head of Department has serious concerns about a student's fitness to study, s/he may require the student to undergo assessment and the Assessment Section shall apply.

7.5 Appeals

- 7.5.1 The student may appeal the decision of the FTS Committee by writing to the Institute's President within 5 working days from the date of the communication of the FTS Committee's decision notification.
- 7.5.2 The student may appeal the Stage Two outcome to the President on the grounds that:
- The Institute failed to follow the process set out in this Policy and this had a material effect on the decision.
 - The decision of the FTS Committee was inconsistent or disproportionate to the evidence provided.
 - The evidence produced at the Stage Two meeting with the FTS Committee was factually incorrect or the student has new and material information or evidence, which was not previously available and would have a material effect on the decision.
- 7.5.3 The student must specify the ground(s) on which the appeal is made.
- 7.5.4 Where a student wishes to pursue the appeal, but is unfit to do so for reasons of physical or mental ill health, the appeal hearing may be postponed for up to but not greater than three months from the date of the decision and in all cases there must not be any unreasonable delay.
- 7.5.5 The President will normally review the student's appeal within 15 working days of receipt of the appeal and may make one of the following decisions:
- Dismiss the appeal (in whole or in part)
 - Uphold the appeal (in whole or in part)
 - Direct that the FTS Committee undertake a further meeting with the student on the basis of new evidence
 - Impose an alternative decision.
- 7.5.6 The President will communicate his decision to the student normally within 15 working days of the determination of the appeal. The decision of the President is final and may not be appealed further.

8 ASSESSMENT SECTION

- 8.1 Where under this Policy, a student is required to undergo a medical examination or assessment for the purpose of obtaining an opinion as to the student's fitness to study:
- 8.1.1 If the assessment is under Stage 1 of this Policy, the Registrar shall nominate an appropriately qualified person;
- 8.1.2 If the assessment is under Stage 2 of this Policy, the FTS Committee shall nominate an appropriately qualified person;
- 8.1.3 If the assessment is in relation to a High Risk case under this Policy, the Registrar shall nominate an appropriately qualified person;
- In all cases the assessment shall be at the expense of the Institute.
- 8.2 The FTS Committee shall inform the Registrar should a student not comply with a requirement to undergo an assessment under Stage 2 of this Policy.
- 8.3 The Registrar may suspend a student who has not complied with a requirement to undergo an assessment; and the Suspension Section shall apply.
- 8.4 Where a student has complied with such a requirement, but the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate, has or continues to have serious concerns about the relevant issue, which are not allayed by the assessment, and the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate, may then
- 8.4.1 impose such conditions on admission or re-admission, as the case may be, as are appropriate in the circumstances, or
- 8.4.2 decide to suspend the student or to continue a suspension, as the case may be; and the Suspension Section shall apply.

9 POWER TO SUSPEND

- 9.1 In circumstances where the Registrar or the FTS Committee has decided to suspend a student, the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate, shall as soon as practicable, inform the student of that decision in writing.
- 9.2 The suspension will remain in place until such time as the student complies with the direction of the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate, and/or an appropriately qualified person, nominated by the Institute, certifies the student fit to proceed with his/her programme of study and the Return to Study provisions below are complied with.
- 9.3 If a decision is made to impose a temporary suspension/exclusion, consideration will be given to whether arrangements can reasonably be put in place for the student in order to minimise the impact on his/her studies.
- 9.4 The suspension will be kept under review by the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate.
- 9.5 A student who is subject to a suspension may appeal that decision provided the appeal is in writing and made within 10 working days of the written notification of the decision to the student. The Appeal can be made to the President. Any decision being appealed will retain full force and effect during the currency of the appeal.

10 CERTIFICATION SECTION

- 10.1 In circumstances where this section applies, the required letter of certification shall be provided by an appropriately qualified physician or psychiatrist or other medical professional who is unrelated to and independent of the student. In certain circumstances, the Institute may nominate an appropriately qualified professional in this regard.

11 RETURN TO STUDY

- 11.1 The Institute is committed to assisting students to return to study where a return to study is appropriate. A return to study will be dependent upon the student satisfying the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate in accordance with this Policy, that s/he is fit to study and that s/he has complied with any conditions attached to his/her return.
- 11.2 A request to return to study must be made by a student in writing to the Registrar or the FTS Committee as appropriate.
- 11.3 The Registrar or the FTS Committee, as appropriate, may require the student to submit a letter certifying that he/she is fit to return to the Institute; and the Certification Section shall apply.
- 11.4 For the purposes of this section of this Policy, students are fit to return to the Institute if they are:
- 11.4.1 able to proceed with their courses of study, and
 - 11.4.2 to participate in their courses to the standards required by the Institute, and
 - 11.4.3 do not constitute a potential danger to either themselves or others or a potential cause of undue disruption of Institute activities.
- 11.5 Where a decision is made not to approve a request to return to study, the student shall be informed of his/her right to appeal a decision to the President, the procedure for lodging an appeal and the time limit for lodging an appeal, which is 10 working days from notification of the decision).

12 DISCHARGE FROM FACILITY

- 12.1 The vast majority of cases in which a student has been admitted to a facility for the care and treatment of persons suffering from mental illness or mental disorder raise no issue under this Policy and it is only in exceptional cases that the circumstances or consequences of such admission are so serious that this Policy applies.
- 12.2 This section of this Policy applies to such students ("**such students**")

- 12.2.1 whom the Registrar knows to have been admitted to a facility for the care and treatment of persons suffering from mental illness or mental disorder and
 - 12.2.2 who discharge themselves from, or who have been discharged from, such a facility, and
 - 12.2.3 whom the Registrar believes constitute either a potential danger to themselves or others or a potential cause of undue disruption of Institute activities.
- 12.3 The Registrar may require such students to submit a letter certifying that they are mentally fit to return to the Institute; and the Certification Section shall apply.

13 REVIEW

The decisions of the FTS Committee shall be copied to the Registrar. The Registrar shall monitor implementation of this Policy and any proposed amendments to this Policy will be brought to the Academic Council for approval.

14 TRAINING

It is recommended that members of staff and particularly members of the FTS Committee receive training on fitness to study issues.

15 RECOURSE TO THE OMBUDSMAN

If a student feels that they have been unfairly treated or are not satisfied with the decision/outcome, it is open to them to contact the Office of the Ombudsman.

Contact details are as follows:

Office of the Ombudsman
18 Lower Leeson Street
Dublin 2
Tel: Lo-call 1890 22 30 30
Tel: 01 639 5600
Fax: 01 639 5674
Email: ombudsman@ombudsman.gov.ie
www.ombudsman.ie

Appendix 1

Note of Concern Form - FTtS1

Student Name:		
Student Number (if known)		
Programme:		
Address:		
Contact Number (if known):		
Email:		
Concern Raised by:	Name:	Signature:
Relationship to student (role/context):		

Factual description of the concern – Please give specific examples and provide any available supporting evidence

For Head of Department Use: Comments/Observations

Student Comments/Observations on the reported concern:

Agreed Action Plan points

Where a leave of absence/withdrawal is being considered, the student should check with the Fees & Grants Officer at the Admissions Desk for possible financial implications.

Review Date:

Declaration by Student:

I understand the nature of the concerns raised by the Institute in regard to my Fitness to Study. I understand the impact that these concerns may have upon others. I have agreed to work to implement the Action Plan set out above which has been drawn up to support me overcome the concerns raised. If I do not implement the Action Plan, the Institute will consider taking other appropriate action as appropriate/required.

Signed:

Date:

Witnessed:

Head of Department: