

Fitness to Practise Policy

Section 1 - Purpose and Objectives

(1) The objectives of this Policy are to:

- a. support students in their learning to become safe practitioners who exhibit professional behaviours that are considered appropriate both at the University and while on practical placements;
- b. ensure the early identification of Fitness to Practise concerns and implement intervention strategies (remediation) to assist students to attain acceptable standards in all aspects of their practice;
- c. balance remediation and rehabilitation of unacceptable practise with the need to prevent harm to the student and those they come in contact with while undertaking practical placements; and
- d. safeguard the reputation of the University and its placement providers (placement organisations).

(2) In addition, a number of award programs offered by the University entitle graduates either to apply for registration with a professional body or, in some cases, have automatic eligibility for registration in a profession by virtue of their graduation with a specific UQ award. As a result, the University has a responsibility to ensure students enrolled in these programs have opportunities to develop the requisite knowledge, skills and attitudes to be safe practitioners and are educated about the expectations for professional conduct in their chosen professions.

(3) Successful students must be able to demonstrate appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour, be sufficiently able, both physically and mentally, to undertake the demands of the student's intended profession, and must be able to demonstrate they have the necessary knowledge and skills expected of student practitioners at the respective stage of their program of study.

(4) The purpose of this Policy is to guide the management of cases where a student undertaking a program that has a practical placement component has exhibited behaviour that has given cause for concern as to their Fitness to Practise in that program.

Section 2 - Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

| Term | Definition |
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| Concern | Actions or issues that call into question a student's ability to undertake practical placements successfully either within or external to the University. |
| Course | A distinct unit of study within a program for which a result is given. |
| Decision-maker | A person listed as a decision-maker under section 11 of the Fitness to Practise Procedure . |
| Fitness to Practise | Refer to clause 10. Encompasses a broad range of factors including: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. conduct b. performance c. compliance, and d. health This will be influenced by the standards expected by the student's intended profession. |
| Patient/Client | A person or animal receiving professional services. |

| Term | Definition |
|------------------------|---|
| Placement Organisation | The organisation at which the student's practical placement is undertaken. The type of placement organisation is not limited, and includes business, government departments, non-government service providers, non-profit organisations, and volunteer organisations. The University of Queensland is considered a placement organisation under this definition. |
| Practical Placement | (also known as work integrated learning, clinical immersion, clinical placement, clinical practice, externship, fieldwork, industry experience, industry study, internship, practicum, teaching practice, work placement) is a course, course component, or other activity that provides students with practical experiences in the application of theoretical concepts and knowledge in an authentic work environment. |
| Procedural Fairness | Requires the procedures used by a decision-maker in dealing with an allegation to be fair and requires: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. adherence to established principles of natural justice; and b. a hearing appropriate to the level; and c. impartiality of the decision-maker; and d. evidence to support the finding. |

Section 3 - Policy Scope/Coverage

(5) This Policy applies to students enrolled in programs and courses that include a practical placement component.

(6) This Policy seeks to address issues of competence and concerns relating to patient and public safety.

(7) Where possible, academic performance will be managed using the relevant University rules and policies.

Section 4 - Policy Statement

(8) Students must conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the standards of behaviour set out in the University's [Student Code of Conduct Policy](#) as well as any relevant codes or guidelines issued by their Faculty, discipline professional body, registering authority or placement organisation.

(9) Students must demonstrate during their studies that they have the required aptitude, knowledge, skills and attitudes expected of student practitioners at the appropriate stage of their education and training within their profession.

(10) Students enrolled in programs or courses that include practical placements may, for the purpose of this Policy, have concern(s) raised about their Fitness to Practise in situations where they:

- a. engage in conduct outside the bounds of that considered acceptable or worthy of the membership of the profession (conduct); and/or
- b. demonstrate performance that is not consistent with the profession's established standards (performance); and/or
- c. exhibit disregard for, or are unable to meet, the rules, regulations or standards for practising as a member of the profession or for undertaking professional practice with a professional practice provider (compliance); and/or
- d. display a disability or health condition that impairs their capacity to practise as required by the profession (disability or health).

(11) In many programs with a practical placement component, the University has identified pre-placement requirements that students must meet, in order to be eligible to undertake practical placements. These pre-placement

requirements are intended to assist both students and staff to identify circumstances where a student may be unable to comply with the requirements for a program or course, for example, legislative obligations or health-related requirements. Pre-placement requirements may be detailed in the relevant program rules and/or program information including student placement agreements and deeds entered into by students with placement providers (placement organisations).

(12) Where the University initiates action under this Policy and associated procedures, and a student's Fitness to Practise is being considered, the following principles will apply:

- a. The procedures followed must be consistent with the requirements of procedural fairness;
- b. Interactions between members of the University (staff and students) and members of the wider community who are involved in a practical placements should be based on an assumption of mutual respect;
- c. The safety of those involved in a practical placement, both students and others, will be of paramount importance;
- d. Outcomes arising from the application of the Policy and procedures must be appropriate and proportionate;
- e. Wherever reasonable and practicable, actions taken under this Policy will have an emphasis on remediation and support; and
- f. Confidentiality must be respected and maintained by all parties within the constraints of the need to investigate and to hear a concern, subject to any legal requirements for disclosure and in accordance with other University policies, procedures and guidelines.

(13) If a student's behaviour or condition poses a serious concern for the welfare of others, or is unreasonably disruptive to the community in which they are learning, or results in an inability to meet the requirements of a program, the University may require that the student's studies be interrupted or, in cases where remediation is impracticable, discontinued.

Status and Details

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