

# Supporting Students' Fitness to Study Policy

## Section 1 - Purpose and Scope

### Purpose

(1) This Policy is a structured framework designed to encourage a coordinated and responsive educational environment by focusing on early intervention, remediation and support for students. It reflects UQ's values and commitment to creating a community where:

- a. diversity is celebrated,
- b. all individuals are valued and empowered, and
- c. every student can thrive with the necessary support tailored to their individual needs in alignment with the [UQ Disability Action Plan](#).

(2) This Policy acknowledges that timely assistance is crucial for students facing challenges that affect their ability to study and/or apply their learning in a professional context and prioritises identifying and addressing at-risk behaviours, and behaviours of concern, before they escalate.

(3) The Policy will also:

- a. provide a framework for management and procedurally fair practice to support a student with an impairment or health condition that may affect their fitness to study,
- b. address issues of competence and concerns relating to the safety of patients, clients, members of the University, the public and others, and
- c. support the relationship between the University and its placement providers (external placement organisations).

### Scope

(4) This Policy applies to students enrolled at University of Queensland (UQ).

(5) This Policy works alongside the University's support measures and is intended to apply only if other policies and procedures are not more suitable.

## Section 2 - Principles and Key Requirements

(6) All actions under this Policy will be based on:

- a. the University's commitment to:
  - i. supporting student wellbeing and ensuring all students are given appropriate academic and non-academic support to assist them to complete study in their program, and
  - ii. fostering a safe environment for our community that considers both the interests of students and staff, and

iii. the University's standards of conduct and behaviour in accordance with staff and student Code of Conduct policies and our psychosocial risk management framework.

b. complying with external regulatory requirements and the conditions of placement organisations (also refer to the [Work Integrated Learning and Work Experience Policy](#) and [Procedure](#)).

(7) Programs and courses may include inherent requirements that students must satisfy.

(8) Students must demonstrate appropriate standards of conduct and behaviour, and be able to undertake the requirements of their program. They must demonstrate the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes expected of a student at the respective stage of their program.

(9) Students enrolled in programs or courses may have concerns raised about their fitness to study in situations where they:

- a. Demonstrate performance that is not consistent with the established standards; and/or
- b. Show disregard for, or are unable to comply with, the rules, regulations or standards for the institution; and/or
- c. Display an impairment or health condition that cannot be accommodated through a reasonable adjustment.

(10) Remediation and rehabilitation of unacceptable behaviours will be balanced with the need to prevent harm to the student and to protect the public and the broader community.

(11) If a student's behaviour, or factors related to their condition, poses a serious concern for the welfare of others, 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.

## **Students on placement**

(12) Several 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 and behaviour in their chosen professions.

(13) The University therefore recognises that there are additional factors, inclusive of vulnerable members of the general public and external environments not directly under the University's control, that need to be considered when assessing a fitness to study concern for students who are in a program that includes a placement activity, including work integrated learning and work experience.

(14) In addition to the concerns outlined above in clause 9, students involved in a program that includes a placement activity, may have concerns raised about their fitness to study if they show disregard for, or are unable to comply with, the rules, regulations or standards set in a student placement agreement with a placement provider, or student agreement. These requirements apply throughout the program, not only in the courses directly involving the placement.

## **Section 3 - Monitoring, Review and Assurance**

(15) This Policy and supporting procedure are monitored for suitability and relevance by the Academic Registrar and reviewed by the Academic Board through the University Teaching, Learning and Student Experience Committee.

(16) Monitoring the administration and management of fitness to study concerns, and implementation of this Policy,

will be performed by Executive Deans, the Dean, Graduate Research School and the Heads of academic organisational units that administer courses.

(17) The inherent requirements for a program will be reviewed through the University's academic program review process.

(18) Any person or committee who exercises any power or carries out any function associated with this Policy or Procedure must treat the matter in the strictest confidence, and adhere to the obligations of the [Privacy Policy](#) and [Privacy Management Procedure](#).

## Section 4 - Appendix

### Definitions, Terms, Acronyms

Term	Definition
Concern	Actions or issues that call into question a student's fitness to study, either within or external to the University.
Conduct	The manner in which a person behaves or acts, or fails or omits to act.
Course	A distinct unit of study within a program for which a grade is given.
Decision-maker	A person listed as a decision-maker in the Fitness to Study Procedure
Impairment	In relation to a student, means a student who has a physical or mental impairment, disability, condition or disorder (including substance abuse or dependence) that detrimentally affects or is likely to affect the student's capacity to undertake professional, placement, or other learning activities.
Inherent requirements	<p>Inherent requirements may be specified for a program or course. They are core activities, tasks and skills that are essential to successfully complete a program or course and may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• physical and cognitive requirements</li> <li>• communication and interpersonal skills</li> <li>• professional behaviour, and</li> <li>• ethical conduct.</li> </ul> <p>Inherent requirements may be influenced by the standards expected by a student's intended profession. For medicine, this includes the <a href="#">MDANZ Inclusive Medical Education Guidelines</a>.</p>
Patient/Client	A person or animal receiving professional services
Placement	A 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. Also known as work integrated learning, clinical immersion, clinical placement, clinical practice, externship, fieldwork, industry experience, industry study, internship, practicum, teaching practice, work placement or professional experience.
Placement organisation	The organisation at which a UQ student undertakes a placement. 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.
Procedural fairness	<p>The processes by which an outcome is reached and not the outcome itself. Procedural fairness requires the procedures used by a decision-maker in dealing with an allegation to be fair and requires -</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) adherence to established principles of natural justice</li> <li>b) a hearing appropriate to the level,</li> <li>c) impartiality of the decision-maker, and</li> <li>d) evidence to support the finding.</li> </ol>
Program	A sequence of study leading to the award of a qualification such as an undergraduate degree or diploma, and/or postgraduate qualification

<b>Term</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Student	A person enrolled as a student at the University at the time that the fitness to study concern was reported. This includes undergraduate and postgraduate coursework programs, non-award programs and higher degree by research programs.
The University	The University of Queensland, its land, sites or part of the land or sites, or an approved activity engaged in by a student of The University of Queensland.

## Status and Details

<b>Status</b>	Current
<b>Effective Date</b>	1st January 2025
<b>Review Date</b>	1st January 2030
<b>Approval Authority</b>	Vice-Chancellor and President
<b>Approval Date</b>	18th December 2024
<b>Expiry Date</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Policy Owner</b>	Kathryn Blyth Director, Academic Services Division and Academic Registrar
<b>Enquiries Contact</b>	Academic Services Division