

# Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study Policy

Version number	Date approved (including committee)	Reason for production/revision	Author	Proposed next review date
V2.3	13/08/19 ExCo	Annual review	Head of Student Services	Biannually and as required
<b>Related policies</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Equality &amp; Diversity Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Equality &amp; Diversity Charter</li> <li>• Student Mental Health Policy and Procedure</li> <li>• Student Charter</li> <li>• Disability Policy and Procedure</li> </ul>				
<b>External Reference</b>				
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Equality Act 2010, <a href="https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents">https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents</a> The policy has been informed by the Equality Act 2010 consolidated, simplified, strengthened and replaced previous legislation, consolidating equality legislation with respect to nine protected characteristics.</li> <li>2. <a href="#">UK Quality Code for Higher Education</a>, Advice and Guidance: <i>Enabling Student Achievement</i>. ICMP is committed to supporting students and has developed procedures to ensure that student support needs are addressed, and resources are in place to provide advice and guidance.</li> <li>3. <a href="#">UK Quality Code for Higher Education</a>, Advice and Guidance, Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access. ICMP has developed practices and processes to ensure that there is a reliable, fair and inclusive admissions system.</li> </ol>				

## **1. Introduction**

- 1.1. The Institute of Contemporary Musical Performance is committed to supporting students and recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to his/her academic progression and wider student experience.
- 1.2. Occasionally a student may suffer from a condition which could endanger either their own health and safety or the health and safety of other members of ICMP, should the student continue to attend. In these cases ICMP will need to ascertain whether the student is fit to study.

## **2. Purpose**

- 2.1. The purpose of this policy and related procedure is to outline the steps that ICMP will follow when concerns are raised about the fitness to study of one of its students.
- 2.2. It is intended as a supportive procedure which can be used by staff when a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour is having a detrimental impact on their ability to progress academically and function at ICMP.
- 2.3. This procedure should be used for any student whose ability to cope with student life, to study or progress on their course is compromised as the result of their health, wellbeing or a disability.
- 2.4. Any Student who is absent due to serious health issues (including mental health) or injury is requested to attend a 'Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study' meeting.

## **3. Aim**

- 3.1. It is the aim of ICMP to foster independence, self-awareness and personal responsibility amongst students. In this context it is also important that students take an active part in the process, and take appropriate steps to manage their own health and wellbeing in order to fulfill their academic potential. It is important that this emphasis on personal responsibility is clearly communicated to students from the outset.
- 3.2. ICMP is legally obliged to make any reasonable adjustments necessary to facilitate the study of disabled students, including students with diagnosed mental health conditions. ICMP makes every effort to give disabled students access to courses; the provisions of this policy relating to intermission and withdrawal should only be invoked where ICMP is satisfied that there are no alternatives available that will reasonably safeguard the safe and healthy working conditions for all staff and students of ICMP.

## **4. Scope**

- 4.1. This policy applies to all students registered on programmes offered by ICMP.
- 4.2. When invoking this policy and procedure, ICMP will offer support to the student in question. The level and form of support will vary according to the circumstances of the student.

## **5. Principles**

- 5.1. The best interests of the student are considered in relation to their personal situation, their health, wellbeing and/or any disability they may experience
- 5.2. Students are supported to study to the best of their ability, and wherever possible to meet the required learning outcomes and complete their course
- 5.3. Students who are experiencing difficulties in relation to their health, wellbeing and/or disability are supported to address their difficulties at the earliest appropriate point.
- 5.4. Students are able to make informed decisions regarding options available
- 5.5. Any reasonable adjustments that the student may be entitled to are considered and where appropriate put in place
- 5.6. ICMP staff work together where appropriate so that students experience a consistent and fair process

## **6. Fitness to Study Process**

- 6.1. The procedure has 3 Stages – The stages represent the degree of concern and/or the perceived seriousness of the situation.
- 6.2. The procedure can be entered at any stage; however, in most cases stage 2 should be considered before escalation to stage 3.
- 6.3. If the concerns are not remedied by the recommended and agreed actions at one level the next level may be instigated.

### **STAGE 1 – EMERGING CONCERNS**

- 6.4. Stage 1 is used when there is 'Cause for Concern' about a student's health, wellbeing and/ or behaviour and the impact this has on their ability to progress on their chosen course of study. Examples may include a significant deterioration in health, appearance, attitude, which is impacting on attendance and ability to meet deadlines, succeed academically, or participate in normal student life. A Stage 1 meeting should be led by the Programme Leader or Deputy Programme Leader.

### **STAGE 2 – CONTINUED AND ONGOING CONCERNS**

- 6.5. Stage 2 is used where there is continued and ongoing concern following stage 1, or when there is significant concern about a student's health, wellbeing, behaviour, safety and/or ability to study, and where an immediate response or further investigation is required. In cases where it is unclear whether the student's situation presents a risk of harm to themselves or others advice should be sought from the Head of Student Services or Dean of Academic Studies to consider whether referral to stage 3 is appropriate.

### **STAGE 3 - SERIOUS OR PERSISTENT CONCERN**

- 6.6. A stage 3 'Fitness to Study Panel' is convened where there is serious or persistent concern about a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour, safety and/or ability to study and cope at ICMP. In most cases escalation to this level will follow attempts to address concerns at stage 1 and 2. In the following cases it may be appropriate to proceed directly to stage 3:
  - Where health, wellbeing and ability to study is seriously compromised.
  - Where there are serious concerns regarding risk to the health and safety of the student
  - Where there is a perceived threat and risk to others.
- 6.7. The panel may or may not include the student and will be dependent on judgements about their ability to contribute or benefit from the meeting. For example, in crisis situations, or where the panel is concerned that a student's attendance at a meeting would be unduly stressful, or where the student is in hospital.
- 6.8. A 'Fitness to Study Panel' will ensure that ICMP considers all possible options to enable the student to continue with his/her studies. The meeting will consider the student's present situation taking into account past relevant experiences, whilst also considering ICMP procedures and regulations.
- 6.9. The panel will also consider whether it may be in the students' best interest to consider intermit or withdraw from study.

## **7. Students detained under the Mental Health Act**

- 7.1. In that instance that a student is sectioned under the mental health act and/or hospitalised due to a mental health crisis the following will be initiated:
- 7.2. At the point at which the student notifies us that they have been sectioned or hospitalised they will be temporarily suspended from studies. The student will be advised to seek appropriate treatment of their problem in order that they may return fit to study. ICMP would only proceed with accepting a student back onto a course if

medical evidence from an appropriately trained clinician is provided. The evidence needs to confirm the following as appropriate:

- 7.3. the student is no longer legally detained under the mental health act 1983 or they are having extended periods of section 17 leave with view to being taken off a section in the foreseeable future
- 7.4. Confirmation of the students' diagnosis and fitness to study. In addition, the student should provide copies of their care plan and risk assessment to ascertain the level of primary care input and follow up from a clinical service.
- 7.5. In the instance that a student has previously been sectioned under the mental health act and/or hospitalised due to a mental health crisis and one of the following applies:
- 7.6. It has not been possible to put in place further adjustments;
- 7.7. The student did not take advantage of the adjustments put in place;
- 7.8. If the student's health, wellbeing or behaviour worsens or has an adverse effect on the health or wellbeing of the ICMP community.
- 7.9. The student will be requested to attend a stage 3 Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study meeting

## **8. Return to Study**

- 8.1. In all cases the student will be asked to provide satisfactory evidence that he/she has overcome the original difficulties and is well enough to return to study. This evidence must include an independent medical report, and may also include other evidence, for example submission of a piece of academic work, or further evidence presented by the student to demonstrate their recovery.
- 8.2. The precise nature of the evidence required from the student will be dependent on the individual circumstances in each case, but in all cases it is expected that this will involve a report from a recognised, independent health professional with sufficient knowledge about the health and wellbeing of the student during the period of interruption, and the potential impact that returning to study might have.

## **9. Appeal**

- 9.1. The student has the right to appeal against the decision. A request to appeal will only be accepted if there is evidence of the following:
  - 9.1.1. Procedural irregularity
  - 9.1.2. Bias or failure to reach a reasonable decision in handling the process.
  - 9.1.3. Evidence of further material circumstances which could not reasonably have been expected to have been submitted for consideration by the Panel.

## **10. Responsibility for the Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study Policy**

- 10.1. The Head of Student Services is responsible for the implementation and operational review of this policy.
- 10.2. The Executive Committee will be notified of any decision to withdraw a student following a stage 3 Fitness to Study panel meeting
- 10.3. The policy is reviewed annually.