

# Support to Study Policy



The Institute  
of Contemporary  
Music Performance

Version number	Date approved (including committee)	Reason for production/revision	Author	Proposed next review date
V3.2	15/06/22 Academic Board	Annual review	Head of Student Services	Biennially and as required

## Related policies

- Equality & Diversity Policy and Procedure
- Equality & Diversity Charter
- Student Mental Health Policy and Procedure
- Student Charter
- Disability Policy and Procedure
- Drug and Alcohol Policy

## External Reference

1. Equality Act 2010, <https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents> 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.
2. [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B4: Enabling Student Development and Achievement. 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.
3. [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), Part B: Assuring and Enhancing Academic Quality. Chapter B3: Learning and Teaching.
4. [UK Quality Code for Higher Education](#), Advice and Guidance, Admissions, Recruitment and Widening Access.

## **1. Introduction**

1.1. ICMP is committed to supporting students and recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to their academic progression and wider student experience.

## **2. Duty of Care**

2.1. At all times ICMP aims to support individual students and allow them to make their own decisions as to when to engage with their studies, however ICMP owes a "Duty of Care" to all members of its wider community to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of all its students, staff and visitors. The Support to Study policy and procedure provides ICMP with a mechanism to carry out its duty of care to those students who may not be in a position to be supported through the normal regulatory framework, and who may be a risk to either themselves or others.

## **3. Purpose**

- 3.1. 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.
- 3.2. 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.
- 3.3. The policy 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.
- 3.4. Any student who has / may have 8 weeks continued absence due to serious health issues (including mental health) or injury will be requested to attend a Support to Study / Return to Study or Fitness to Study meeting depending on the level of risk and case history.

## **4. Aim**

- 4.1. 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.
- 4.2. 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.

## **5. Scope**

- 5.1. This policy applies to both applicants to and all students registered on programmes offered by ICMP.
- 5.2. 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.

## **6. Definition**

6.1. The term 'student' is used throughout the policy and includes both current and prospective students / applicants.

## **7. Principles**

- 7.1. The best interests of the student are considered in relation to their personal situation, their health, wellbeing and/or any disability they may experience
- 7.2. Students are supported to study to the best of their ability, and wherever possible to meet the required learning outcomes and complete their course
- 7.3. 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.
- 7.4. Students are able to make informed decisions regarding options available
- 7.5. Any reasonable adjustments that the student may be entitled to are considered and where appropriate put in place
- 7.6. ICMP staff work together where appropriate so that students experience a consistent and fair process

## **8. Support to Study Process**

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

### **STAGE 1 – SUPPORT TO STUDY - EMERGING CONCERNS**

- 8.4. Stage 1 is used when there is 'Cause for Concern' about the health, wellbeing and/or behaviour of an applicant or student 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 performance, 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 – FITNESS TO STUDY - CONTINUED AND ONGOING CONCERNS**

- 8.5. 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 – FITNESS TO STUDY - SERIOUS OR PERSISTENT CONCERN**

- 8.6. 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.
- 8.7. 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.

- 8.8. A 'Fitness to Study Panel' will ensure that ICMP considers all possible options to enable the student to continue with their studies. The meeting will consider the student's present situation taking into account past relevant experiences, whilst also considering ICMP procedures and regulations.
- 8.9. The panel will also consider whether it may be in the students' best interest to consider intermit or withdraw from study.

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

- 9.1. 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:
- 9.2. 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:
  - 9.2.1. 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
  - 9.2.2. 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.
- 9.3. 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:
  - 9.3.1. It has not been possible to put in place further adjustments;
  - 9.3.2. The student did not take advantage of the adjustments put in place;
  - 9.3.3. If the student's health, wellbeing or behaviour worsens or has an adverse effect on the health or wellbeing of ICMP community.
- 9.4. The student will be requested to attend a stage 3 Fitness to Study meeting

## 10. **Return to Study**

- 10.1. Any student who intermits due to serious ill-health (including mental health) and any student who has / may have 8 weeks continued absence due to serious health issues (including mental health) or injury will be requested to attend a Support to Study / Return to Study or Fitness to Study meeting depending on the level of risk and case history.
- 10.2. The student will be requested to provide evidence in advance of this meeting if it was a requirement of the Support to Study and Fitness to Study process, which confirms that they are well enough to return to the satisfaction of the panel members.
- 10.3. The precise nature of the evidence required from the student will be dependent on the individual circumstances, 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.
- 10.4. The report should include specific detail about the appropriateness of the student's health in the context of the proposed Return to Study; examples of relevant questions will depend on the academic discipline, but may include:
  - 10.4.1. Consideration of risks associated with course of study/accommodation etc.
  - 10.4.2. Consideration of the number of hours and timeframe required for the student to complete all assessments.
  - 10.4.3. Consideration of the demands of work based courses;
  - 10.4.4. Consideration of the demands of small group work on the student;
  - 10.4.5. How equipped the student is to deliver presentations, either to large or small groups;

10.4.6. Evidence of a diagnosis of a medical condition that will assist in accessing support upon a return to study.

## **11. Appeal**

11.1. 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:

11.1.1. Procedural irregularity

11.1.2. Bias or failure to reach a reasonable decision in handling the process.

11.1.3. Evidence of further material circumstances which could not reasonably have been expected to have been submitted for consideration by the Panel.

## **12. Responsibility for the Support to Study/ Fitness to Study Policy**

12.1. The Head of Student Services is responsible for the implementation and operational review of this policy.

12.2. The Executive Committee will be notified of any decision to withdraw a student following a stage 3 Fitness to Study panel meeting

12.3. The policy is reviewed in accordance with ICMP's policy review tracking schedule.