Goldsmiths
UNIVERSITY OF LONDON

Support to Study and Fitness to Practice – Policy and Procedures

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1 Introduction, Purpose and Scope

1.1 The Support to Study element of this Policy is an intervention procedure that can be initiated if students in full time or part time attendance are causing significant concern and/or presenting risk of harm to themselves or others, in turn leading to unsatisfactory academic progress or worsening their personal wellbeing. Normally this element will be employed for non-accredited programmes or those not requiring professional registration of the student.

1.2 The Fitness to Practice element of this Policy is an intervention procedure that can be initiated if students in full time or part time attendance are causing significant concern and/or presenting risks within a professional practice or accreditation programme which may, in turn, lead to unsatisfactory progress on placements or the classroom, and/or whereby they may cause the College concern in relation to professional practice registration.

1.3 Higher Education institutions have a Duty of Care to respond appropriately where there are substantial concerns relating to a student's health and wellbeing (including a deterioration of physical health, mental health difficulties, psychological, personality or emotional disorders) and the impact that this may have upon the individual and/or other members of the College community.

1.4 On professional practice programmes, the College must be satisfied that students on these programmes are suitable to enter their profession. This may be because of their conduct, professional attitude, health or wellbeing.

1.5 It may also be because the issues presenting will cause significant damage to the relationship between the placement provider and Goldsmiths and the College may need to safeguard professional and educational interests for the ongoing success of the programme.

1.6 Whereby a student is demonstrating concerns for their health or wellbeing, Support to Study elements of this Policy may be explored prior to the Fitness to Practice element beginning. The Head of Student Support will normally liaise with the School or Faculty to determine which route to initiate depending on the circumstances involved.

1.7 Goldsmiths is committed to promoting and celebrating diversity across its student body and ensuring that all students have an equal experience and opportunity and are fully supported to reach their academic potential.

1.8 This document outlines the procedure and support available where a student's health and wellbeing deteriorates to the point where there are concerns that a student may not be fit to study, including where they may be at risk of harm to themselves and/or others. It is designed to ensure a consistent and sensitive approach to managing situations.

1.9 Concerns for the health or wellbeing of a student can be raised by both staff and students, and this document is to be used by staff in any situation where a student's welfare is at risk and may cause the individual to fall behind on their programme. Other students (i.e. those who may raise a concern about another student) will not be expected to manage these situations and should always approach a member of staff, or a representative of the Students' Union if they have a concern.

1.10 Personal Tutors, Senior Tutors and Programme Leaders/Convenors are the staff members most likely to identify that a student is experiencing difficulties and will be provided with training, support and advice from Student Support Services to enable them to initially manage the situation using this procedure. Colleagues are encouraged to regularly review training offered by People and Organisational Development.

1.11 Whereby there is a severe concern for a student's professional conduct, which takes account of the requirements of the Professional, Statutory and Regulatory Bodies, the Fitness to Practice procedures of this Policy should take precedence, notwithstanding paragraph 1.16 of this Policy.

1.12 Each Faculty/School should ensure that all programme handbooks and inductions outline the expectations in terms of professional conduct required on professional practice programmes at the start of the academic year.

1.13 In situations where it is believed that a student's behaviour presents an immediate risk to themselves or others, the Emergency Services and College Security should be contacted in the first instance. The Head of Student Support should then be notified of the details of the incident and any action taken. The person witnessing the student's behaviour should not leave the scene until they have briefed the emergency services.

1.14 In the extremely rare circumstance that a student is incarcerated during their studies, consideration for their capacity to study should not be treated as a Support to Study issue. Student Conduct and College's Safeguarding Policy, if applicable, should be engaged.

1.15 Should a student have outstanding results or be missing marks for an element of the programme affected by either an ongoing or recently concluded Support to Study or Fitness to Practice case, they will not be permitted to continue on their programme or graduate until these cases have concluded.

1.16 Both the Support to Study and Fitness to Practice elements of this Policy are intended to be supportive to the enrolled student. For this reason, Student Support Services and/or the Head of Student Support will broadly lead on discussions at various stages throughout the procedures or provide advice to academic colleagues in terms of student support or reasonable adjustments.

1.17 Whereby a study or practice matter is discussed due to a student's personal misconduct, it may not be possible for the College to approach these conversations from the point of view of a supportive nature. These instances may include, but not limited to, criminal behaviour, conviction, safeguarding concerns or safety concerns.

2 Determining the Interventional Route: Support to Study or Fitness to Practice

2.1 On receipt of a concern relating to a student's study or practice, it will be necessary to understand the nature of the issues presenting. The Head of Student Support can provide advice via short case conference to determine the appropriate route through this Policy.

2.2 Whereby the issues arise on placement in relation to a professional issue, in all instances the first consideration will be for the School or Faculty to follow the Fitness to Practice procedure of this Policy.

2.3 In instances whereby a student is presenting issues that may be classroom-based or mental health related, it may be more appropriate and more supportive for the student if the Support to Study procedure of this Policy is followed.

2.4 Low-level concerns about a student's behaviour do not necessarily need to be considered through either route of this Policy and it may be more appropriate to have an informal meeting with the student, either locally at the School or Faculty level to discuss the concerns, or in the context of wellbeing support through Student Support Services.

3 Roles, Responsibilities and Decision Making Within the Policy

Role	Responsibilities	Decision making
Goldsmiths Student	To engage with the Policy when advised to do so by a Goldsmiths colleague. To present information and evidence where appropriate to assist Goldsmiths in decision making through this policy.	To understand outcomes at the various stages of the Policy and engage with the milestones created. To proactively engage with advice that could be in a student's best interest as appropriate

Role	Responsibilities	Decision making
		throughout the stages of this policy.
Student Support Services	To support a student with advice, information and guidance, as well as interventions that could assist a student in their learning. To advise a student on the best outcomes throughout this policy. To advise on the Policy to other Goldsmiths' colleagues in the context of supporting a student to succeed in their studies. To assist the School or Faculty with a Fitness to Practice case as requested.	To lead on Stage 2 of the Support to Study procedure. To form part of the panel at Stage 3 of the Support to Study meeting.
Head of Student Support	To own and update this Policy on behalf of the College. To advise on the most appropriate procedure to follow in relation to this policy.	To be a decision-maker or to nominate an appropriate decision-maker at a Stage 3 Support to Study meeting. To ensure that this Policy is operated with consistency across the College in relation to

Role	Responsibilities	Decision making
	To lead or nominate an appropriate colleague to lead a Stage 3 Support to Study meeting. To support the Fitness to Practice procedures, where appropriate.	Regulated or Accredited Programmes. To monitor this policy for statistical purposes, as required by Goldsmiths governance.
Academic Registry	To implement changes to a student's record during or after a Support to Study outcome. To act as adviser to those involved in this Policy in relation to enrolment and assessments of a student, where appropriate.	To enact the decision of the Chair of the Stage 3 Support to Study. To enact the decisions made under the Fitness to Practice procedures.
Schools/Faculties	To lead on the Fitness to Practice procedures of this Policy. To act as link to professional bodies and student placements. To inform and consult the Head of Student Support where appropriate for advice and guidance in relation to a Fitness to Practice case.	To be a decision-maker throughout the Stages of the Fitness to Practice procedure. To involve Student Support Services or the Head of Student Support throughout the Stages of the Fitness to Practice procedure, where appropriate.

Role	Responsibilities	Decision making
	To appoint an Investigating Officer, if applicable, within the Fitness to Practice procedures of this policy.	
Student Casework Team	To advise on instances whereby the case may be more appropriate within the Student Conduct Regulations, rather than this Policy. To ask the Head of Student Support to advise on whether a case presented to the Student Casework Team should be considered under this Policy in lieu of the Student Conduct Regulations.	To be involved in any Stage of the Support to Study or Fitness to Practice procedures of this policy, as applicable or appropriate. To act as advisory to this Policy for matters relating to the Student Conduct Regulations.
Professional Partners	To provide details of the Fitness to Practice issue to Goldsmiths. To provide input on ongoing support to the student as part of the process.	N/A

4 Appeals Under the Policy

4.1 For all cases under this Policy have taken the decision to Interrupt/Suspend/Withdraw a student may appeal to the Student Casework Team in writing to appeals@gold.ac.uk

4.2 There are three grounds for appeal:

- Any fresh evidence that could not reasonably have been made available at the time of the Stage 3 meeting;
- There were procedural irregularities in the conduct of the Support to Study and Fitness to Study Policy;
- or, That the outcome was not reasonable in the circumstances: that is, the decision made Stage 3 was not one a similar group could have made acting on behalf of the College with the same information available.

4.3 If the student wishes to challenge the decision made at Stage 3, they must do so in writing, where the case will be reviewed independently from the group involved and an outcome issued to the student. Normally this will be performed by a nominated colleague appointed by the Student Casework Team.

4.4 Once the review has been completed and the outcome communicated, the Support to Study or Fitness to Practice procedure will be concluded. If the student is unhappy with the decision made at the Appeal Stage, they are entitled to refer the matter to the Office of the Independent Adjudicator (OIA).

5 Investigatory and Disciplinary Procedures

5.1 There are occasions where a student who is experiencing mental ill health, ill health or presenting issues on the programme or on placement that may invoke the Student Disciplinary Procedure.

5.2 In such cases, they will not necessarily be exempt from investigation and potential disciplinary action. Each case will be considered on its own merits, with due regard given to the issues arising.

5.3 Similarly, it may be necessary to pause the Student Disciplinary Procedures in favour of looking at the case utilising this Policy. This decision will usually be made by Case Conference with the Head of Student Support and the Student Casework Team.

5.4 The Student Disciplinary Procedure and Student Conduct Regulations will, however, take precedence of decision. That is to say that if interventional actions taking through this Policy do not yield a behavioural change or a lessening of the issues arising, it may be necessary to suspend or withdraw a student following investigation. This decision will supersede any decisions made by this Policy.

6 Return to Study (Support to Study Only)

6.1 The Return to Study Process will be initiated if a period of interruption is an outcome of a Support to Study procedure and may be also used when it is known that the student is returning from a period of interruption following a critical illness which has necessitated hospitalisation.

6.2 Whereby an interruption is an outcome of a Support to Study meeting, it is important that the student is provided with clear guidance about what will happen when the interruption period is over and they are due to return to study in attendance.

6.3 In this case, the School, Faculty or a member of the Student Support Services team should nominate a named member of staff for the student to contact during their period of interruption if required, and that staff member should initiate contact with the student during that period. This contact might include but does not need to include strategies to help the student remain engaged with their studies at Goldsmiths during their defined period of interruption.

6.4 At the point that the student is proposing to return to study, a Return to Study meeting will be arranged in all circumstances. The Return to Study meeting will where possible be made up of the previous members who were present during the Support to Study Stage 3 Meeting with the intention of reviewing current circumstances and the reasons for interruption, what has changed and re-entry requirements. The student should first contact wellbeing@gold.ac.uk to state their intentions to return after the minimum interruption period has passed.

6.5 The student will be requested to provide evidence in advance of this meeting if it was a requirement of the Support to Study procedure, which confirms that they are well enough to return.

6.5.1 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.

6.5.2 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:

- Consideration of risks associated with course of study/accommodation etc.,

- Consideration of the demands of work based courses;
- Consideration of the demands of small group work on the student;
- Consideration of how well-equipped the student is to deliver presentations to both large and small groups.
- Evidence of a diagnosis of a medical condition that will assist in accessing support upon a return to study.

6.6 The decision on whether to allow the student to Return to Study will be made at the Return to Study Meeting.

6.7 If it is decided that a student is well-enough to resume his student, the Return to Study meeting will consider any further support or Reasonable Adjustments that could be implemented as part of a student's RASA.

6.8 In the event that the Return to Study meeting determines that the student should not return due to not being fit to study, a student may appeal in accordance with the Appeals section of this Policy.

6.9 The decision will be communicated in writing to the student prior to their planned return date by the School or Faculty or by Student Support Services, along with detail of any special arrangements that will be implemented to support their return.

6.10 The student's School or Faculty will determine the ongoing arrangements with respect to support and will arrange to review progress at regular intervals to minimise the risk of the recurrence of the original difficulties. After the student returns to study, if further concerns are raised about the student at a future point these concerns will be managed under this Policy.

7 Critical Illness of students

7.1 From time to time there may be a situation where a student finds themselves severely incapacitated, e.g. through injury or critical illness.

7.2 In such a situation, where it would be unreasonable to expect a student to submit a request for consideration of personal mitigating circumstances, deferral or apply for an interruption/suspension of study, it would be reasonable to act in accordance with instructions/requests from the student's duly authorised representative, e.g. parent, partner.

7.3 It is permissible under this Policy for the Head of Student Support to act in lieu of a student's capacity to decide about the remainder of their academic year or their programme following a period of hospitalisation or incapacitation, even if this goes against the wishes of the student's named representative, as their instruction may place the student at a disadvantage on their programme in accordance with point 7.4 of this policy.

7.4 In these circumstances, the Head of Student Support will weigh up information and evidence presented to them so that a fair and appropriate decision can be made about whether they will be able to catch up with academic work missed during the period of absence.

7.5 Academic Registry will be informed of the decision made by the Head of Student Support in relation to critical illness of a student and amendments to their student record will be carried out in accordance with the decision.

7.6 Efforts will be made by the Head of Student Support to ensure that the decision made does not negatively impact a student so that they are able to return to their students when their health permits. Any decisions made that may affect a student's ability to continue (due to maximum registration years, for example) will be discussed with the Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar.

7.7 In cases where maximum registration periods may be exceeded by this decision, the Head of Student Support will write to the Director of Student & Academic Services and Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar to appeal for an extension under grounds of ill-health.

7.8 The decision that the Head of Student Support makes in this scenario may still be appealed as outlined in this Policy after the period of hospitalisation or incapacitation has ended.

8 Matters arising in student accommodation (Fitness to Reside)

8.1 Ordinarily issues arising in Goldsmiths' student accommodation will be dealt with under the Student Accommodation Regulations and the student's accommodation licence agreement.

8.2 For the avoidance of doubt, this Policy is referred to in the Student Accommodation Regulations and the student's accommodation licence as "Fitness to Study Policy".

8.3 Accommodation Services will manage these cases within these regulations, including providing operational support and decision making for partnership agreements (e.g. Campus Living Villages properties within the Goldsmiths Student Village) in relation to their licence agreements.

8.4 In some cases, Accommodation Services will support the Support to Study procedures whereby issues are being presenting the accommodation as well as in the classroom or academic environment.

8.5 Accommodation Services may decide to terminate a student's accommodation agreement even if a separate decision is made at Stage 3 Support to Study regarding a student's enrolment.

8.6 In these circumstances, Accommodation Services will work with the student to ensure and safeguard that there will be an alternative accommodation for the student to enter, either in the short-term or the long-term, following departure from halls.

8.7 Should a student be interrupted, withdrawn or suspended, as is outlined in the Accommodation Regulations, the College shall be entitled to terminate their Accommodation Agreement (if applicable) upon withdrawal or interruption from or termination of the student's programme of study providing 28 days' notice to end the Accommodation Agreement. In such cases rebates may be claimed for the remainder of the term's accommodation fee and for the deposit.

9 Monitoring this policy

9.1 Data may be collected on the use of this policy as follows:

- Numbers of cases at each Level of the policy
- Numbers of interruption/suspensions of study

• Final outcomes e.g. Return to Study, Withdrawal

9.2 All of the above may be monitored by the College, including consideration of the data by gender, ethnicity, disability, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation where possible, to ensure fair and consistent application of the policy. Student Support Services will collect these data and will raise any issues which arise directly with the College or with School or Faculties, as appropriate.

9.3 Related College Policies may include, but not limited to:

- Safeguarding Policy
- Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech and Academic Freedom
- Student Conduct Regulations/Student Disciplinary Procedures
- Report and Support Policy (Against Sexual Violence Policy)
- Academic Misconduct Regulations
- Satisfactory Academic Progress Regulations
- Goldsmiths Academic Manual
- Student Accommodation Regulations
- IT Acceptable Use Policy.

10 Support to Study Procedure

10.1 **Stage 1 – Cause for Concern (First Support to Study Meeting):** Emerging or initial concerns about an individual student's practice, behaviour, conduct, health, safety or welfare should be raised as a cause for concern and a Stage 1 Support to Study meeting should be instigated.

10.1.1 Normally this will be conducted by the School or Faculty (perhaps Senior or Personal Tutor) but this meeting can also be instigated by Student Support Services, where appropriate.

10.1.2 If a student has concerns about a fellow student, they should discuss these with the member of the College staff they feel most comfortable with. This might be a Personal Tutor, Programme Leader, Students' Union officer or staff member, or student representative. The student will not be expected to deal with the situation themselves. If they have discussed the issue with a staff member, this person will make an appropriate referral or resolve the issue.

10.1.3 If concern is raised regarding a student representative the student will be referred to a Students' Union officer or staff member, who will make the appropriate referral.

10.1.4 If concerns have been identified by a member of staff, then that member of staff, or another with primary responsibility and/or knowledge of the student (e.g. Personal Tutor or Programme Leader) should meet with the student and listen to what is going on for them in an understanding manner whilst acknowledging that there are concerns about the student's wellbeing or professional practice or conduct.

10.1.5 The nature of the concerns should be clearly identified, and the student should be encouraged to discuss the issues, including the potential impact on themselves and others, including specific reference to the invocation of other student-facing procedures if appropriate. This is an informal conversation, but key references and action points should be recorded and communicated to the student.

10.1.6 It should be made clear to the student that the College has a duty of care to support students and to ensure that a student is well and fit to study. If appropriate, information should be provided about sources of professional support within the College that the student can access (e.g. Goldsmiths Students' Union, Amersham Vale GP Practice, Student Support Services). Staff members should, if necessary, assist and support the student in contacting support services.

10.1.7 The student and member of staff should agree a date to meet again to review the situation and to discuss the effectiveness of the support that the student has been accessing.

10.1.8 A written record of the Cause for Concern meeting must be sent to the student within 5 working days and the student to be advised that a copy will also be kept on their file. The student should be reassured that the purpose of keeping it on file is to ensure that the College is providing all necessary support to ensure that the student continues to be fit to study. The Support to Study and Practice Policy should also be shared with the student for transparency.

10.1.9 Students should be informed that if the concerns continue, additional causes for concern arise, or they refuse to engage in the process, this could result in their Support to Study being further considered by moving into a Stage 2 meeting.

10.1.10 Moving a case from Stage 1 to Stage 2 should be initiated within 2 weeks of the concerns worsening or continued unsatisfactory progress. The Stage 2 meeting should not be initiated in situations where the student would be unable to bring themselves up to date in time for an exam board or ahead of an assessment period (e.g. May/June or late summer assessments).

10.1.11 Staff members are encouraged to make three attempts to engage the student with this process as they are in the best position to have the initial meeting due to their direct observation of the Support to Study issues.

10.1.12 As highlighted above, should staff need advice and support or feel unsure about whether to invoke this procedure, they are encouraged to seek advice from the Deputy Head of Disability, Wellbeing and Advice or the Head of Student Support.

10.2 **Stage 2 – Continuing and/or Significant Concerns (Second Support to Study Meeting):** Continuing or significant concerns about an individual student's health, safety or wellbeing should be raised with or by Student Support Services so that the Stage 2 of the Support to Study process can be initiated.

10.2.1 Stage 1 may be bypassed, and concerns may be raised directly at Stage 2 when the concerns about the student's wellbeing and the impact on their academic studies are significant and need to be addressed as quickly as possible.

10.2.2 Stage 2 will be led by Student Support Services, who will work collaboratively with staff within the School or Faculty. Staff from the School or Faculty or other professional services should contact Student Support Services if they think there are grounds to move to Stage 2 or initiate the process at Stage 2 directly. The final decision on whether Stage 2 of the procedure is invoked will be taken by Student Support Services (Head of Student Support or Deputy Head of Wellbeing, Disability and Advice) after receiving information from other relevant staff.

10.2.3 Firstly, the student should be notified by their School or Faculty that due to ongoing concerns about their wellbeing, they have been progressed to Stage 2 of the Support to Study process known as Support to Study and to expect a meeting invite from Student Support Services inviting them in for a meeting.

10.2.4 The student will be invited to a Support to Study, Stage 2 meeting called a Support to Study Meeting, by a member of the Student Support Services and to include a member of the students' academic team and a member of Accommodation Services if required, to discuss ongoing wellbeing concerns. Ideally this should be arranged within 5 working days of the decision to move to Stage 2 of the procedure. The Support to Study Policy should be shared with the student.

10.2.5 The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the student's perception of the issues that have been identified and the impact that this is having on themselves and/or the College community. This meeting should be supportive and aimed at assisting the student to progress on their programme of study, refusal to engage may result in further escalation to Stage 3.

10.2.6 The student should be informed of the purpose of the meeting and be advised of documents they may be required to bring and that they are entitled to bring a person to support them at the meeting. The accompanying person could include a member of the Students' Union, a member of College staff acting in a supportive capacity, or a close family member. Disabled students may also be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. sign language interpreter or mental health worker). It would be advisable for the student to let the College know who is attending the Stage 2 meeting in advance, so that the College is aware of their support mechanism.

10.2.7 During the meeting an action plan will be devised to put in place all necessary support to enable them to re-engage with their studies. In cases where academic adjustments are required, the appropriate member of the Disability Team will be consulted.

10.2.8 Where appropriate, the agreed action will also take into account whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be put in place, or whether the limits of reasonableness have been reached at that time (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation).

10.2.9 The Stage 2 meeting action plan will have a specific review date, and the importance of keeping to the agreed action plan must be clearly outlined to the student. The student should be informed that if the wellbeing concerns continue, or any additional cause for concern arises, this could result in their Support to Study being further considered by moving to Stage 3.

10.2.10 If an action plan cannot be agreed at Stage 2, then the case must move to Stage 3. A report of the meeting and its outcomes will be documented by Student Support Services. A copy of the agreed Action Plan will be emailed to the student and shared with all attendees of the meeting.

10.3 **Stage 3 – Serious or Persistent Concerns (Third Support to Study Meeting).** Serious or persistent concerns can be raised about an individual student's engagement, actions or behaviour that is putting the health, safety, wellbeing or academic progress of themselves or other members of the College community at significant risk.

10.3.1 At this meeting, it will be decided if a student may continue on the programme at this time, taking into consideration whether the student is able to meet the requirements of the programme in time for an exam board, or whether the Head of Student Support will need to consider an interruption/withdrawal of study owing to persistent issues.

10.3.2 The Head of Student Support or a nominated representative will consider the previous meeting notes, action plans and any other relevant documentation and a timeline of events to determine whether a Stage 3 Support to Study meeting should be convened.

10.3.3 if a Stage 2 has already taken place, this Stage 3 meeting should ideally be arranged within 5 working days of the decision to move to Stage 3 of the procedure but this may depend on Staff availability.

10.3.4 Where the Head of Student Support has previously chaired a Stage 2 meeting for the same student, they shall either appoint an appropriate representative to chair the Stage 3 meeting or request that a member of staff with suitable seniority attend as an observer to ensure that due process is followed.

10.3.5 On rare occasions, it may be necessary to bypass Stage 1 and 2 and initiate the procedure at Stage 3 directly, if the concerning situation needs addressing urgently.

10.3.6 Those present at the Stage 3, Support to Study meeting may include (but are not limited to):

- The Student
- Student's representative (if required)
- The Head of Student Support or a nominated representative (Chair)
- A nominee of the Head of School/Faculty
- Academic representative
- Appropriate representatives from the Disability and/or Wellbeing team
- Student's GP or other relevant medical professional (where appropriate)

10.3.7 The student will be invited to the Stage 3, Support to Study meeting by the Head of Student Support or their nominee and advise that they can be accompanied by someone to support them through the meeting. Disabled students may also be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. sign language interpreter or mental health worker). The Support to Study Policy will be shared with the student.

10.3.8 The Stage 3 meeting will determine an agreed action:

- An enhanced Action Plan, or
- Interruption/Withdrawal (voluntary), or
- Interruption, suspension or withdrawal on health and wellbeing grounds to be decided by the Chair of the Stage 3 meeting.

10.3.9 Where appropriate, the agreed action will take into account whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be put in place, or whether the limits of reasonableness have been reached at that time (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and any other relevant legislation).

10.3.10 If the recommendation is that of an enhanced Action Plan, the plan will have a timely review date, and the consequences of not adhering to the Action Plan will be made clear, i.e. likelihood will result in interruption of study. A copy of the agreed Action Plan will be emailed to the student and shared with all attendees of the meeting.

10.3.11 In cases deemed to be urgent, particularly if the safety of others is perceived to be at risk, a student may be suspended with immediate effect, and before being given the opportunity to make representations. In this instance the student or his/her representative will be permitted to put forward in writing, with supporting evidence, an appeal after the interruption/suspension. This decision will be made by the Head of Student Support following a consultation with the Director of Student & Academic Services and Academic Registrar. If the agreed recommended action is a voluntary interruption/withdrawal of studies, the Head of Student Support will inform Registry Operations who will follow the process below to interrupt/suspend the student.

10.3.12 If the decision is to interrupt, suspend or withdraw the student due to the ongoing wellbeing concerns that have been identified through the Support to Study Procedure, then the Head of Student Support will inform the School or Faculty representative included in the Stage 3 meeting and Registry Operations, who will follow the process to Interrupt/Suspend/Withdraw the student.

10.3.13 The Chair of the Support to Study Stage 3 meeting will normally inform the student of the decision within 5 working days including details of the appeals process.

10.3.14 The decision to interrupt/suspend/withdraw through the Support to Study procedure will normally be conveyed to the student by the Associate Director face to face but also by email. Sometimes it will not be possible to convey this message face-to-face and so email will need to act as primary notification.

10.3.15 This meeting/communication will include a consideration of issues arising from interruption/suspension e.g. financial, academic etc. and Student Support Services will offer appropriate support and referrals in this case.

10.3.16 Interruption/suspension/withdrawal of studies through the Support to Study procedure will only be recommended in the most serious of cases, and when it is reasonable and feasible due to a student's lack of ability and/or unwillingness to engage with the process or continued unsatisfactory academic progress.

10.3.17 The interruption/suspension is intended to give the student time away from studies to address health and wellbeing issues, in order wherever possible to return to the College and resume study.

10.3.18 Upon interruption/suspension through the Support to Study procedure provision may be made to provide the student with the necessary resources to continue their studies from home (e.g. access to a local library, and other educational support mechanisms).

10.3.19 A student who is interrupted/suspended through the Support to Study procedure may be wholly or partly prohibited from entering College premises and from participating in College activities, including working at the College or Students' Union, or exercising their functions or duties of any office or committee membership in the College or the Students' Union.

10.3.20 As is outlined in the Accommodation Regulations, the College shall be entitled to terminate their Accommodation Agreement (if applicable) upon withdrawal or interruption from or termination of the student's programme of study providing 28 days' notice to end the Accommodation Agreement. In such cases rebates may be claimed for the remainder of the term's accommodation fee and for the deposit.

10.3.21 Interruption/suspension may be subject to qualification, such as permission to take an examination. A suspended student should seek guidance from their School or Faculty on how they might best continue their studies.

10.3.22 If a decision to suspend through the Support to Study procedure impacts upon a student's accommodation agreement in College Accommodation as outlined in the Accommodation Regulations, Accommodation Services will consider where appropriate a temporary or permanent change to a student's accommodation arrangements.

10.3.23 When a student has interrupted they will be asked to attend a compulsory Return to Study meeting towards the end of the interruption period to discuss their health and wellbeing, agree they are fit to return and to ensure they have a fully supported return to study. This should usually take place one month before reenrolment.

10.3.24 In cases of interruption/suspension/withdrawal of study through the Support to Study procedure the following must be informed by the Head of School or Faculty or their nominee:

- Registry Operations to ensure that any student records are amended accordingly and student record system has been updated;
- Programme Leaders to advise on academic status and any current module registrations;
- Relevant Professional Services Colleagues (e.g. Accommodation Services, Security Services);
- People and Organisation Development or the Students' Union if the student works for the College or the Union
- Relevant Professional Services Colleagues (e.g. Accommodation Services, Security Services);

• People and Organisational Development or the Students' Union if the student works for the College or the Union.

10.3.25 Suspensions made under Stage 3 will be reviewed by Legal and Governance Services, in line with Student Conduct Regulations.

10.3.26 A student may request to return to study and must do this by contacting the Head of Student Support in writing after the expiration of the period of interruption/suspension under Return to Study of this Policy to wellbeing@gold.ac.uk.

10.3.27 If a Return to Study is possible under the Student Conduct Regulations, then a review of the health and wellbeing of the student will be arranged by Student Support Services to ensure that the student is well enough to successfully return to their studies. This will require the student to submit medical evidence 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 on the student. An agreed action plan of support or another intervention that will help the student in reengaging with their studies in order to achieve their academic intentions at Goldsmiths prior to their return will be put in place.

11 Fitness to Practice Procedure

11.1 **Stage 1 – Cause for Concern (First Fitness to Practice Meeting):** where emerging or initial concerns about an individual student's practice, behaviour, conduct, health or safety are raised, a cause for concern conversation will be instigated in the context of their ability to Practice.

11.1.1 This will be led by the School or Faculty. 2 If a student has concerns about a fellow student, they should discuss these with the member of the College staff they feel most comfortable with. This might be a Personal Tutor, Programme Leader, Students' Union officer, professional partners or staff member, or student representative. The student will not be expected to deal with the situation themselves. If they have discussed the issue with a staff member, this person will make an appropriate referral, or resolve the issue. In the case of Fitness to Practice issues, sometimes behaviour or appropriate conduct can be dealt with by informal discussion with those involved before this procedure is invoked formally.

11.1.2 If concern is raised regarding a student representative the student will be referred to a Students' Union officer or staff member, who will make the appropriate referral.

11.1.3 If concerns have been identified by a member of staff, then that member of staff, or another with primary responsibility and/or knowledge of the student (e.g. Personal Tutor or Programme Leader) should meet with the student and listen to what is going on for them in an understanding manner whilst acknowledging that there are concerns about the student's professional practice or conduct. The Professional Partner may also discuss this issue with them as part of their professional placement activities.

11.1.4 The nature of the concerns should be clearly identified, and the student should be encouraged to discuss the issues, including the potential impact on themselves and others, including specific reference to the invocation of other student-facing procedures if appropriate. This is an informal conversation, but key references and action points should be recorded and communicated to the student.

11.1.5 It should be made clear to the student that the College has a duty of care to support students and to ensure that a student is well and fit to study. If appropriate, information should be provided about sources of professional support within the College that the student can access (e.g. Goldsmiths Students' Union, Amersham Vale GP Practice, Student Support Services). Staff members should, if necessary, assist and support the student in contacting support services.

11.1.6 The student and member of staff should agree a date to meet again to review the situation and to discuss the effectiveness of the support or advice given regarding behaviour or conduct and, if applicable, a review of the professional practice or conduct.

11.1.7 A copy of the Cause for Concern meeting notes must be sent to the student within 5 working days and the student to be advised that a copy will also be kept on their file. The student should be reassured that the purpose of keeping it on file is to ensure that the College is providing all necessary support to ensure that the student continues to be fit to Practice. The Support to Study and Fitness to Practice Policy should also be shared with the student for transparency.

11.1.8 Students should be informed that if the concerns continue, additional causes for concern arise, or they refuse to engage in the process, this could result in their Fitness to Practice being further considered by moving into a Stage 2 meeting.

11.1.9 Moving a case from Stage 1 to Stage 2 should be initiated within 2 weeks of the concerns worsening or continued unsatisfactory progress in terms of conduct or behaviour.

11.1.10 Academic staff members are encouraged to make three attempts to engage the student with this process as they are in the best position to have the initial meeting due to their direct observation of the Fitness to Practice issues.

11.1.11 As highlighted in this Policy, should any Goldsmiths member of staff need advice and support or feel unsure about whether to invoke this procedure, they are encouraged to seek advice from Student Support Services or the Associate Director: Student Support Services.

11.2 **Stage 2 – Continuing and/or Significant Concerns (Second Fitness to Practice Meeting):** where continuing or significant concerns about an individual student's health, safety or ability to Practice are raised with the School or Faculty. This is normally conducted by a member of academic staff but could be attended by Student Support Services, if appropriate.

11.2.1 Whereby improvements on the concerns identified at Stage 1 have not been sufficiently demonstrated, a Stage 2 Fitness to Practice meeting will be called.

11.2.2 A Stage 2 meeting will be led by the same academic colleague who led at Stage 1. They will work collaboratively with other staff within the School or Faculty, as well as professional partners. Staff from the School or Faculty or other professional services should involve Student Support Services if they think this would prove beneficial.

11.2.3 Firstly, the student should be notified by their School or Faculty that due to ongoing concerns about their conduct or behaviour within the Fitness to Practice, they have been progressed to Stage 2 of the Fitness to Practice procedure.

11.2.4 The student will be invited to a Stage 2 Fitness to Practice meeting to discuss ongoing concerns. Ideally this should be arranged within 5 working days of the decision to move to Stage 2 of the procedure. The Fitness to Practice Policy should be shared with the student.

11.2.5 The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the student's perception of the issues that have been identified and the impact that this is having on themselves and/or the College community, as well as their impact on their ability to continue the programme under professional practice. This meeting should be supportive and aimed at assisting the student to progress on their programme of study, the student should be reminded that refusal to engage may result in further escalation to Stage 3 and subject to an investigation.

11.2.6 The student should be informed of the purpose of the meeting and informed that they may be accompanied at the meeting. The accompanying person could include a member of the Students' Union, a member of College staff acting in a supportive capacity, or a close family member. Disabled students may also be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. sign language interpreter or mental health worker). It would be advisable for the student to let the College know who is attending the Stage 2 meeting in advance, so that the College is aware of their support mechanism. Student Support Services may also be in attendance to discuss access to these support mechanisms, as well as any relevant Professional Partner colleagues, if applicable.

11.2.7 During the meeting an action plan will be devised to put in place all necessary support to enable them to re-engage with their studies and improve on the conduct or behaviours presenting. In cases where academic adjustments are required, the appropriate member of the Disability Team will be consulted, or channelled by the Student Support Services attendee at the meeting.

11.2.8 Where appropriate, the agreed action will also take into account whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be put in place, or whether the limits of reasonableness have been reached at that time (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and other relevant legislation).

11.2.9 The Stage 2 meeting action plan will have a specific review date, and the importance of keeping to the agreed action plan must be clearly outlined to the student. The student should be informed that if the concerns continue, or any additional cause for concern arises, this could result in an investigation under this policy and their Fitness to Practice being further considered by moving to the final stage (Stage 3).

11.2.10 If an action plan cannot be agreed at Stage 2, then the case must move to Stage 3 and an Investigating Officer appointed to review the case before being escalated to Stage 3. A report of the meeting and its outcomes will be documented by the School or Faculty. A copy of the agreed Action Plan will be emailed to the student and shared with all attendees of the meeting.

11.3 **Stage 3 – Serious or Persistent Concerns (Third Fitness to Practice Meeting)**: Where serious or persistent concerns are raised about an individual student's engagement, actions, conduct or behaviour that is putting the health, safety or professional practice at significant risk, a Third Fitness to Practice meeting will be instigated.

11.3.1 The School or Faculty will identify an Investigating Officer who will:

- Outline the issues in full in accordance with the relevant professional body's conditions of registration and why the student may be presenting issues, concerns, behaviour or conduct that will result in the College not being able to accredit or register the student as 'fit' to Practice;
- Review evidence against the student, from placement providers, the College, other students or other testimony;
- Review supporting evidence and testimony from the student in relation to their conduct or behaviour;
- If appropriate, consult the College's other policies in relation to the issues presented;
- Present an outcome report for consideration by the Chair of the Stage 3 meeting;
- Outline initial recommendations for the Chair of the Stage 3 meeting.

11.3.2 The Investigating Officer will normally present their report to the student and the Chair of the Stage 3 meeting within 20 working days of the decision to escalate the case to Stage 3 from Stage 2. Only thereafter will the Stage 3 meeting be permitted to take place.

11.3.3 It may be necessary to suspend the student from their placement during the investigation period. In these instances, the student will not have right of appeal to continue their placement or professional practice requirements owing to the severity of the issues investigated.

11.3.4 If the outcome of the investigation results in another attempt for a student on their professional practice or placement, the School or Faculty will endeavour to place the student back into the same position as to when they paused their placement or professional practice requirements. However, sometimes it may mean that this is deferred to the next academic cycle. Likewise, it may be that the same placement or professional practice activity will not be available to the student again and may be subject to further fees, unless otherwise advised by the College.

11.3.5 The Head of School or Faculty, or a nominated academic representative, will consider the previous meeting notes, action plans, the Investigating Officer's Report and any other relevant documentation and a timeline of events to determine an outcome at Stage 3.

11.3.6 Those present at the Stage 3, Fitness to Practice meeting may include (but are not limited to):

- The Student
- Student's representative (if required)
- The Head of Student Supportor a nominated representative, if applicable to the case
- The Head of School/Faculty (Chair)
- Academic representative
- Appropriate representatives from Student Support Services, if applicable to the case
- The Professional Partner (if required)
- Student's GP or other relevant medical professional (where appropriate)

11.3.7 The student will be invited to the Stage 3 Fitness to Practice meeting by the Head of School or Faculty, or their nominee, and advise that they can be accompanied by someone to support them through the meeting. Disabled students may also be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. sign language interpreter or mental health worker). Th Fitness to Practice Policy will be shared with the student.

11.3.8 The Stage 3 meeting will determine an outcome of their Fitness to Practice:

- Interruption/Withdrawal (voluntary);
- Interruption, suspension or withdrawal on Fitness to Practice grounds to be decided by the Chair of the Stage 3 meeting, or;
- An alternative outcome in consideration of the Investigating Officer's report and recommendations.

11.3.9 Where appropriate, the agreed outcome will take into account whether there are any reasonable adjustments that can be put in place, or whether the limits of reasonableness have been reached at that time (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and any other relevant legislation).

11.3.10 In cases deemed to be urgent, particularly if the safety of others is perceived to be at risk, a student may be suspended with immediate effect, and before being given the opportunity to make representations. In this instance the student or his/her representative will be permitted to put forward in writing, with supporting 29 evidence, an appeal after the interruption/suspension to the Head of School or Faculty.

11.3.11 If the agreed recommended action is a voluntary interruption/withdrawal of studies, the Head of School or Faculty will inform Registry Operations who will follow the process below to interrupt/suspend the student.

11.3.12 The Chair of the Stage 3 meeting will normally inform the student of the decision within 5 working days including details of the appeals process.

11.3.13 The decision to interrupt/suspend/withdraw through the Fitness to Practice procedure will normally be conveyed to the student by the Head of School or Faculty face-to-face but also by email. Sometimes it may not be possible to convey the outcome face-to-face and email will become the primary method of communication. The communication will also include information about how a student could access support and their right of appeal under this policy.

11.3.14 A student who has been deemed not fit to practice may be offered the opportunity to switch to a programme of study that does not require professional registration, if appropriate.

11.3.15 As is outlined in the Accommodation Regulations, the College shall be entitled to terminate their Accommodation Agreement (if applicable) upon withdrawal or interruption from or termination of the student's programme of study providing 28 days' notice to end the Accommodation Agreement. In such cases rebates may be claimed for the remainder of the term's accommodation fee and for the deposit.

11.3.16 If a change of programme is possible in the circumstances, then a review of the health and wellbeing of the student will be arranged by Student Support Services to ensure that the student is well enough to successfully return to their studies. This may require the student to submit medical evidence from a recognised independent health professional with sufficient knowledge about the health and wellbeing of the student and the potential impact that returning to study on a different programme might have on the student. An agreed action plan of support or another intervention that will help the student in re-engaging with their studies in order to achieve their academic intentions at Goldsmiths will be put in place from this meeting and considered as a 'Return to Study' under this Policy.