

<Creative Academy>

<Fit to Study>

Overview

A university Fitness to Study policy is a supportive framework, not a disciplinary process, designed to assess and support students whose health or wellbeing significantly impacts their academic engagement, safety, or the university community. It focuses on identifying support needs, creating action plans, or arranging breaks, typically involving stages from informal consultation to formal panel reviews.

Key Components of a Fitness to Study Policy:

- **Purpose:** To help students manage health issues (physical or mental) while ensuring a safe, effective learning environment.
- **When it's Used:** Concerns arise if a student poses a risk to themselves/others, disrupts teaching/learning, or cannot engage with their studies.
- **Stages of Procedure:**
 - **Stage 1 - Early/Informal Concern:** Initial discussion with tutors or welfare staff to identify support.
 - **Stage 2 - Continued/Moderate Concerns:** Formal meetings and the creation of a [Support to Study Action Plan](#).
 - **Stage 3 - Serious/Persistent Concerns:** A formal [Fitness to Study Panel](#) review, which can result in enforced suspension or withdrawal.
- **Outcomes:** The goal is to agree on a path forward, which might include temporary interruption (suspension), reduced load, or specific support measures.
- **Return to Study:** If a student suspends studies, the policy includes a procedure to facilitate their return.

Policy Overview

The 'Fit to Study' policy for the Creative Academy underscores our commitment to the mental and physical well-being of our students. The policy also ensures students gain the physical & mental resilience to succeed in the highly competitive creative industries. The policy has been developed with the staff, student reps and student council, ensures that all students are capable of participating fully in the practical and academic components of our dance programs and have the resilience, focus, aptitude, and health necessary to meet the demands of rigorous dance training. This policy sets the framework for supporting students in maintaining and managing their health and well-being throughout their degree.

This policy applies to all full-time and part-time students enrolled in the dance & musical theatre degree programmes.

Creative Academy is an adult learning environment in which students are treated as mature individuals and expected to have the capability to study and live independently alongside people of all ages and from a variety of backgrounds. Creative Academy is committed to supporting its students to ensure they can succeed and match their own and the university's high expectations for their academic and personal progress. In order to maintain and enhance the quality of life in the university community, students need to conform to certain standards of behaviour, and the Creative Academy has a Student Learning Contract, Dealing with Unacceptable Behaviour Guidance, Student Code of Conduct and UWL Student Disciplinary Regulations in place which will be applied in the case of students whose behaviour falls outside these standards.

Although, some students find studying and living in the university environment more challenging than their peers. In making this commitment, therefore, Creative Academy recognises the potentially negative effect of health and wellbeing issues on students' learning. Creative Academy is passionate and committed to diversity and inclusion, so where possible and where appropriate, we will provide reasonable adjustments for students who may need additional assistance due to their protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 in order to provide equal access to learning opportunities.

Policy Principles

- **Student Well-being:** The health and well-being of students are paramount and integral to academic and professional success.
- **Early Identification and Support:** Issues impacting fitness to study should be identified as early as possible and addressed with appropriate support.
- **Inclusivity:** Students from all backgrounds, including those with disabilities or chronic health conditions, will be supported to engage fully with their studies.
- **Confidentiality:** Student personal health information will be handled with the utmost confidentiality and sensitivity.
- **Fairness and Transparency:** Processes concerning fitness to study will be conducted fairly, with transparency and respect for the students involved.

- Collaboration: The policy will encourage collaboration among university staff, health professionals, and students to create a holistic approach to health management.

Fitness to Study Requirements

Physical Fitness: Given the physical nature of dance, students are required to maintain a level of physical fitness conducive to full participation in all dance activities.

Mental and Emotional Fitness: The mental and emotional demands of performance and study will also require students to maintain mental and emotional resilience.

Health Assessments: Students may be required to undergo periodic physical and mental health assessments administered by qualified professionals to confirm their fitness to study.

Personal Responsibility: Students are responsible for their health and must comply with guidance and instructions to maintain their fitness for their course.

Support and Resources

Health Services: Students will have access to some on-campus health services, including physical therapy (additional cost), listening service, and wellness workshops (Pilates & Yoga).

Adaptive Measures: Reasonable adjustments will be made to coursework, schedules, and performances for students with stated disabilities or health conditions.

Fitness Programmes: Students will have access to tailored fitness programs and nutritional guidance designed to support the unique requirements of dancers.

Peer Support: The Creative Academy fosters a peer network to boost camaraderie and mutual well-being, including student representatives and Student Council.

Procedures for Concerns about Fitness to Study

- **Informal Stage:** Concerns may initially be addressed through informal discussions with academic advisors (Heads of Year & Personal Tutors) or health professionals.
- **Formal Stage:** Should concerns persist, a formal review may be convened, ensuring the student has support and representation.
- **Action Plan:** An individual action plan will be developed including support measures, timelines, and review dates.
- **Referrals:** Where necessary, students may be referred to external health professionals for further support or treatment (this can include deferment and extension of studies).
- **Withdrawal stage:** If a student whose ongoing medical conditions have posed significant challenges to their capacity to continue with their studies effectively. In accordance with our Fitness to Study policy, we have reached a juncture where considering withdrawal from their academic program is necessary to prioritise their wellbeing and health. **Withdrawal from studies:** The student may be withdrawn from the course if the Panel decides that there is no reasonable prospect of the student re-engaging with their studies (including cases where the student will not be able to complete the studies within their course registration period). This would only be in the most serious cases and would comply with the Creative Academy & University of West London policies and regulations.
- The decision to propose withdrawal is not taken lightly. After a thorough review of the case, including consultations with academic staff, and, with due consideration to the student's academic records and personal circumstances. we may conclude this step is essential for both their health and academic integrity. Nonetheless, we acknowledge the importance of

providing a pathway for the student to resume their studies should their health improve sufficiently.

To this end, it is imperative that prior to any potential re-enrolment, the student must provide a comprehensive medical report from a qualified healthcare provider/professional. This report must confirm that the student is medically fit to return to their studies and can participate fully in academic activities without detriment to their health or academic performance. This precaution aims to safeguard the student's health and ensure that they are poised for success in their academic endeavours upon their return.

I understand the implications this decision may have on the student and assure you it is made with their best interests at heart. We appreciate your attention to this sensitive matter and anticipate your cooperation in the process of facilitating this medical assessment and any subsequent steps.

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Reintegration into Study

After any period of leave due to health concerns, the Creative Academy will provide a structured reintegration plan tailored to the student's needs.

Confidentiality and Data Protection

- All personal data will be processed in compliance with Creative Academy data protection

By implementing this policy, Creative Academy commits to actively supporting the health and well-being of our students, recognising that a dancer's body, spirit and mind are their most valuable instruments.

Please note if the Creative Academy at any point in your study feels you are a threat to yourself or others we will inform your next of kin/emergency contact or the local authorities.

Reviewing this statement or policy

This policy or statement will be annually reviewed to ensure it is fit for purpose, up to date and effective. Student representation will be part of the process to ensure that it is fair and clear. Any changes will be uploaded to the website, ensuring that it is accessible to prospective and current students. For general enquiries and/or complaints regarding this statement, please contact the Creative Academy using the information below:

- By phone - 01753 875400
- By email - info@creativeacademy.org
- By post - Creative Academy, 73a Stoke Poges Lane, Slough, Berkshire, SL1 3NY
- By website - using the contact us page on www.creativeacademy.ac.uk
- For complaints - please see the complaints process on the website