



Fitness to Study Information for Study Abroad Offices

Section 12: Fitness to Study

The University has established a common framework across departments/faculties and colleges for cases where questions arise as to whether a student is fit to study, or to return to study after a period of leave on account of medical, psychological, or emotional problems. Most such cases are dealt with under colleges' own procedures, but there is also a Fitness to Study Panel to which serious and difficult fitness to study cases can be referred if all other normal procedures at college or university level have been exhausted or are inappropriate.

'Fitness to Study' means an undergraduate or graduate student's fitness

- to commence a distinct course of academic study; or
- to continue with his/her current course of academic study; or
- to return to his/her current or another course of academic study

and his or her ability to meet

- the reasonable academic requirements of the course or programme; and
- the reasonable social and behavioural requirements of a student member (whether resident in college or not) without his or her physical, mental, emotional or psychological health or state having an unacceptably deleterious impact upon the health, safety and/or welfare of the student and/or other students and/or University or college staff.

If a student is referred to it by a college, a department or faculty, the Proctors, the Student Disciplinary Panel or the Student Appeal Panel, the eight-member Fitness to Study Panel has power to consider medical and any other appropriate evidence, to take expert advice (the student may be asked to attend a consultation with a medical or other expert), and to consider submissions made by or on behalf of the student concerned. At the end of the process, the Panel will decide (in the case of referrals by University authorities) or recommend (in the case of referrals by colleges) whether or not the student is fit to study. The Panel can also make decisions and recommendations about matters like continued access to University and college facilities and premises, with or without conditions.

If concerns about a student's fitness to study have arisen and have led to a referral in the context of disciplinary proceedings, those proceedings will be suspended while the fitness issues are determined. In cases where a student's condition or conduct gives rise to a need for immediate action, the Proctors are empowered to suspend that student from the University (for periods of up to 21 days at a time) pending consideration by the Fitness to Study Panel.

These procedures are set out in detail in Statute XIII, Part B and Council Regulations 1 of 2012, which are published on the University's web pages www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/