

Responsible Person	Joanna Bott, Head of Student Services
Approving Body	Academic Quality Committee
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Queries	joanna@metfilm.co.uk

1. Introduction

1.1. MetFilm School 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 MetFilm School should the student continue to attend. In these cases MetFilm School 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 MetFilm School 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 MetFilm School.

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 MetFilm School 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 fulfil their academic potential. It is important that this emphasis on personal responsibility is clearly communicated to students from the outset.

3.2. MetFilm School is legally obliged to make any reasonable adjustments necessary to facilitate the study of disabled students, including students with diagnosed mental health conditions. MetFilm School 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 MetFilm School is satisfied that there are no alternatives available that will reasonably safeguard the safe and healthy working conditions for all staff and students of MetFilm School.

4.Scope

4.1. This policy applies to all students registered on programmes offered by MetFilm School

4.2. When invoking this policy and procedure, MetFilm School 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. MetFilm School 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 levels – Levels 1, 2 and 3. The levels represent the degree of concern and/or the perceived seriousness of the situation.

6.2. The procedure can be entered at any level; however, in most cases Levels 1 and 2 should be considered before escalation to Level 3.

6.3. If the concerns are not remedied by the recommended and agreed actions at one level the next level may be instigated.

6.4. Level 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 level 1 meeting should be led by the Course Leader.

6.5. Level 2 is used where there is continued and ongoing concern following Level 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 Deputy Director to consider whether referral to Level 3 is appropriate.

6.6. A Level 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 MetFilm School. In most cases escalation to this level will follow attempts to address concerns through levels 1 and 2. In the following cases it may be appropriate to proceed directly to level 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 MetFilm School 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 MetFilm School 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. Return to Study

7.1 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. Evidence must be provided to the School in English.

7.2 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.

7.3 Students returning to study following an absence due to health reasons will be placed on the School's Fitness to Study Report. The student will be supported in their return to study by the School's Wellbeing team to ensure the student is supported through the remainder of the student journey.

8. Appeal

8.1. A student may appeal against a decision of a Level 2 'Fitness to Study' meeting and Level 3 'Fitness to Study Panel meeting. A request to appeal will only be accepted if there is evidence of the following

8.1.1. Procedural irregularity

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

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

9. Responsibility for the Health & Wellbeing Fitness to Study Policy

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

9.2. The Leadership Team will be notified of any decision to withdraw a student following a level 3 Fitness to Study panel meeting

9.3. The policy is reviewed annually.