

Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure 2019-20

Effective for employees, students, governors and volunteers September 2019

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Pat Brennan-Barrett	Principal

Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure - 2019-20

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1.Introduction

Northampton College is committed to supporting students and fully recognises the importance of a student's health and wellbeing in relation to his/her academic progress as well as the quality of the wider student experience.

This document outlines the policy, procedure and support available to both students and staff when a student's health and wellbeing is having a detrimental impact on their (or other members of the College Community's) ability to:

- study (i.e. they are no longer able to carry out essential tasks and/or activities required by their course/study programme);
- independently (or with a reasonable and appropriate level of support/adjustment) remain safe and/or healthy;
- carry out the functions of their role (e.g. in the case of teaching staff – the level of impact of one individual impacts disproportionately and unfairly on the ability to teach a whole cohort of students).

It ~~also~~ should also be used where the student's behaviour (as a result of their health) is, or is at risk of, negatively affecting the:

- teaching, learning and/or experience of other students;
- day to day activities of Northampton College and/or a placement provider.

It is not intended to give guidance on wider matters relating to students with health (mental and/or physical) needs but instead to ensure a consistent, sensitive and fair approach to managing specific situations which arise and become problematic within their period of studies at Northampton College,

This policy and procedure has not been designed to replace other policies, such as the Enrolment Policy, and Student Behaviour Policy. The most appropriate policy will be used for individual cases but in some instances, where student behaviour or risk is a significant factor, the College may choose to initiate another process either alongside or in place of the Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure.

2.Policy

2.1 Purpose & Scope

This policy aims to ensure that all students are treated fairly and sensitively to protect the interests of the student and balance them with the needs of other students and staff, ensuring that Northampton College continues to provide an appropriate and supportive environment for all.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- support students and staff in managing scenarios and incidents that cause significant concern and that require an appropriate level of intervention;
- provide a non-judgemental, consistent, sensitive and co-ordinated approach to the management of a situation where it is apparent that a student's mental and/or physical condition may prevent him/her from gaining benefit from educational and social provision at a particular time; and/or is adversely affecting the student experience or that of others; and/or has extended beyond the pastoral support that exists within the College;

- enable staff to identify the boundaries of the support which can be provided internally and the appropriateness of referring the student onto other agencies;
- identify and implement reasonable adjustments (where appropriate);
- ensure appropriate support for students affected by, or involved in, the interaction with other students in the aforementioned circumstances;
- safeguard and promote the welfare of students affected by serious or long term conditions and to minimise disruption to the teaching, learning and support of other students;
- ensure 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;
- ensure students are supported to study to the best of their ability, and wherever possible to meet the required learning outcomes and complete their course;
- ensure students are able to make informed decisions regarding their available options;
- consider the lawful application of temporary suspension or permanent exclusion and the justification for such an action.

It should be noted that it is not appropriate to use this Policy or Procedure for:

- Unforeseen events or medical conditions of a limited duration;
- Situations where the students may be better advised to suspend their studies;
- Meetings with academic staff as part of the course, where renegotiation can take place on short term adjustments to the study and assessment schedule.

2.2 Data Protection & Confidentiality

Northampton College staff are governed by the requirements of the General Data Protection Regulation May 2018. Under these, all data relating to a person's physical or mental health is regarded as sensitive, personal data.

In all cases where, in the member of staff's judgement, it would be in the student's best interest to disclose sensitive information (e.g. so that appropriate support may be considered) the student's explicit written consent should be obtained where possible. Once written consent has been obtained, it is the responsibility of the individual relaying the information to ensure that it is done under the terms agreed and that colleagues with whom the information is being shared are aware of the limitations of its use

At the time of the student giving the College the explicit written consent, the College must inform the student about who the information will be shared with, what it will be used for and their rights to object.

In the majority of cases if a student chooses not to consent, this decision should be respected. In this scenario, the implications of non-disclosure in terms of additional support should be made clear. However, there are rare occasions when the student's consent is withheld, or it is impracticable to try to obtain it, when confidentiality may be broken. These include:

- When the student's mental health has deteriorated to the extent of threatening his/her personal safety or that of others;
- When the student is at risk of serious abuse, violence, radicalisation or sexual exploitation;
- When the student's behaviour is adversely affecting the rights and safety of others;
- Where the College or a member of staff would be liable to civil or criminal procedure if the information was not disclosed (e.g. If a crime had been committed);

- Where the student is under the age of 18 or would be considered an adult with care and/or support needs (see Northampton College Child Protection & Safeguarding Policy).

2.3 Support

In the case of students who are under 18, parents/carers/next of kin should be involved as a minimum at Level 2 of this policy/procedure.

During all stages of the procedure, students may seek support and be accompanied to meetings by a member of their medical/mental health support team, Northampton College staff (e.g. from one of the support teams), or a parent/carer. The role of the individual accompanying a student is not to offer formal representation, but to offer support and advice to the student concerned.

When appropriate, the Safeguarding, Additional Learning Support, and Human Resources teams will offer support to students and staff affected by an incident or ongoing situation.

Appropriate advice, guidance and support should be made available to students at all stages of the implementation of the Procedure. The support should respond to an individual's needs and circumstances. This list is not exhaustive but gives some examples of what may be considered – welfare/pastoral support (in academic areas or through central support services), counselling, signposting to external agencies/partners (including mental/medical health professionals), additional academic and/or additional non-academic support (e.g. careers, study skills, learning support, financial).

2.4 Request for an Independent Review

Providing the student has sound grounds to do so (e.g. they believe an unjust decision was made based on a procedural or other irregularity; the outcome is believed to be too severe or disproportionate; there is new evidence that should be considered – in which case this must be submitted with the request) they may request an independent review of their case and of a decision made under the Fitness to Study Policy by following the procedure outlined in Section 4.

2.5 The Procedure

The Policy's Procedure has three main levels. Selection of what level should be used in the first instance is based on the degree of concern and/or the perceived seriousness of the situation.

See Appendix 1 for a summary of the levels, details of staff involved and possible outcomes and Appendix 4 for a procedural flow chart.

	Level of Concern	Level of Risk	Level of Response Required
Level 1	Initial Concerns	Low	Not requiring any immediate additional professional interventions
Level 2	Ongoing and/or further concerns	Medium	May imply a need for appropriate interventions from one or more Northampton College or external support services
Level 3	Serious, persistent and/or critical concerns	High	Immediate intervention (as appropriate)

The initial assessment of risk level would normally be completed by the Academic/Curriculum Area (in consultation with Northampton College Safeguarding and Additional Learning Support teams, as and when appropriate, but particularly for medium/high risks concerns).

The procedure can be entered at any level and appropriate staff should provide support/advice and guidance at any stage; however, in the majority of cases Levels 1 and 2 should be used before escalation to Level 3. If the concerns are not remedied by the appropriate actions at one level, then the next level may be instigated. If a student presents with significant concerns and is escalated directly to Level 3, this should happen in discussion with the Assistant Principal Student Services and with the agreement of an Assistant Principal and / Curriculum Manager (or appropriate nominees when these are not available).

Reasonable adjustments to this procedure can be made, when considered appropriate, for students with additional needs or to allow for other factors that would otherwise place a student at a disadvantage. If the College and student agree, any meetings may be held by telephone conferencing or other appropriate means.

Where a panel meets to review an individual student's set of circumstances, it is a panel decision as to the appropriate action to be taken, rather than any one individual. Although when a consensus decision cannot be reached, a member of the Executive Management Team, taking account of all the discussion and evidence discussed, will make the final decision.

The college reserves the right to withdraw a student from a study programme where concerns are identified about their fitness to study at stage 4 of its behaviour policy. This right can only be exercised by a member of EMT and will only be invoked in cases where it is believed the behaviour policy being implemented could be at detriment to a student's wellbeing. Retaining this right enables the student to engage with the college at a later date without the restriction of and formal exclusion.

2.6 Level 1 - Initial Concerns (Low Risk)

Level 1 is appropriate in situations where a student's behaviour or wellbeing causes a concern but does not present an immediate crisis (e.g. a noticeable deterioration in health, appearance, attitude, behaviour impacting on attendance, ability to meet deadlines, and/or participate in student activities

Level 1 concerns would normally be handled 'locally'. This would be through the academic coach/personal tutors that exist within the programme/curriculum areas; For apprentices this would be assessors with concerns raised with Team Leaders. Additionally, the student may be supported by a member of staff that holds a responsibility for pastoral support within areas (where this exists) and/or by central support services (as appropriate). Where the concerns relating to mental and/or physical health are having an ongoing detrimental effect on that individual or others within the College, or the position is deteriorating, there is likely to be a need to refer onto specialist services (internal and external).

When the situation is handled 'locally', the area should firstly:

- Collate any other relevant information about the student (e.g. non-attendance, missed deadlines);
- Clarify what action has been taken so far, and whether anyone has discussed these concerns/issues with the student previously.

Concerns should be discussed with the student at an appropriate time and in an appropriate manner. This could be as part of a pre-booked tutorial or a specifically arranged meeting (which take place at an appropriate and agreed time and location). The following points should be considered and included (see Appendix 3) as appropriate:

- Parents/carers should be invited where a student is under 18 (and for over 18s with consent) when the level and/or nature of concern is such that parent/carer involvement would be deemed appropriate.
- For apprentices, employers should be involved for all students (unless it is judged their involvement may be detrimental to their employment prospects or wellbeing.) If under 18, parents/carers should be included as above.
- Identify and explain the concern(s) being raised, giving clear, accurate examples.
- Provide an opportunity for the student to give their perspective of what is happening and what they feel they need.
- Clarify relevant Northampton College boundaries and rules that the student needs to be aware of.
- Highlight any other policies or procedures within the college that the student should be aware of.
- Clarify the student's personal responsibility, e.g. behaviours/standards expected.
- Consider what would be helpful and make the difference to the student in order to support him/her and to minimise further concerns.
- Signpost the student to any relevant Northampton College Support Services that he/she may benefit from (e.g. support from the Student Services, Learning Support, and/or Safeguarding teams).
- Signpost the student to available self-help services
- Advise the student to seek professional help via their GP (if appropriate).
- Clarify agreed actions and options to support the student and minimise the concern (e.g. extended deadlines, accessing Support Services, submission of Extenuating/Special Circumstances).
- When appropriate, agree areas where risk assessments may need to be undertaken.
- Agree a date to meet again to review the situation and who needs to attend. The length of time between the meeting and the review should be agreed by all present, taking into account relevant academic and personal factors. Expectations for progress and what actions should have been taken by this agreed date need to be made clear.

Explain that a continuation of the same or any additional concerns could result in escalation to Stage 2 of this procedure.

A written record of the meeting should be made, circulated to all present and retained in an appropriate format and secure location (with appropriately controlled access).

A review meeting should be arranged with the student at least 2 weeks after the initial meeting. This review meeting should address the following points:

- Review how the student has been since the first meeting;
- Explanation/exploration of any further concerns arising;
- Exploration of further/ongoing support required;

- Agreement of any further action. If the concern has been resolved no further action may be necessary. If concerns continue or have increased, escalation to Stage 2 should be considered.

2.7 Level 2 – Ongoing and/or Further Concerns (Medium Risk)

Level 2 should be applied if the situation immediately dictates a medium level risk response; or the situation being monitored 'locally' in Level 1 does not show improvement over a reasonable time period (as agreed within the Stage 1 meeting) and/or escalates in anyway, such as:

- complaints from other students regarding behaviour;
- a student refuses to access support/engage with the actions previously agreed;
- and/or the situation is not improving or worse still deteriorating (e.g. further disengagement from studies, exhibiting behaviour that is causing significant concern)

An appropriate member of curriculum/programme area staff (such as the Assistant Principal /Curriculum Manager) and (where relevant) an appropriate member of specialist/support staff (e.g. Safeguarding, Learning Support) should meet the student and parents/carers (when appropriate).

The student (and parents/carers, when appropriate, employer for apprentices) should be informed of the meeting (see Appendix 2) and provided with the following information:

- Details of the purpose of the meeting;
- A copy of the Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure;
- Whether the student needs to provide any specific documents (e.g. professional/medical evidence);
- Who will attend the meeting;
- An explanation that the meeting will be confidential and that personal information relating to the health of the student will only be shared with those who have a direct involvement in the meeting initially;
- Explanation that the student can be accompanied by someone in a supportive capacity (see Section 2.3).

The meeting should address the following points (see Appendix 3):

- The purpose of the meeting and explanation of the ongoing concern;
- The student should be given the opportunity to explain his/her perspective on the issues raised;
- Clarify relevant Northampton College boundaries and regulations;
- Clarify the student's responsibility at the College;
- Consider what would be helpful or make the difference to the student in relation to his/her support in order to minimise the concerns;
- Signpost the student to any relevant specialist services/agencies (see Section 2.3);
- Discuss options available (which could include extensions, alternative study arrangements, interruption, part time study, withdrawing potentially with an exit award);
- Agree appropriate SMART actions;
- Clarify the consequences of failing to complete the agreed actions, and/or a continuation of the cause for concern;
- Agree any interim monitoring or measures;

- Agree a date to meet again to review.

As with a Level 1 intervention, a written record of the meeting should be made, circulated to all present and retained in an appropriate format and secure location (with appropriately controlled access).

A review meeting should be arranged with the student at least 2 weeks after the initial meeting. This review meeting should address the following:

- Review of how the student has been since the Stage 2 meeting;
- Review of whether agreed actions have been undertaken;
- Explanation/exploration of any further concerns arising;
- Consideration of new or on-going relevant mitigating evidence;
- Exploration of further /on-going support/adjustments that may be necessary;
- Agreement of whether a further action plan is necessary. If the concern has been resolved no further action will be necessary. If concerns continue or have increased a further action plan may be put in place, or a Level 3 meeting may be suggested;
- Produce/ review/update of any risk assessments that may already be in place.

In cases where the student is invited but fails to attend the Level 2 meeting (without providing adequate reason and/or notice), the situation should be discussed in the student's absence with all staff members involved in the procedure and a report of the discussion and concerns raised should be made. If there are straightforward options about how to proceed; agreed expectations, support options and plans should be communicated in writing to the student within 5 working days. If the situation is more complex or unclear, steps should be taken to escalate to a Level 3 meeting.

In cases where suspension from studies' is proposed as an appropriate action, there must be a clear action plan agreed for a return to study to be considered, and responsibilities for arranging meetings and obtaining evidence and documentation must be confirmed and included in the meeting notes. When appropriate, Northampton College will seek legal advice.

A decision may be made to follow other related policies (such as the Student Disciplinary Policy) or to proceed urgently to a Level 3 intervention. A clear decision making process should be followed to ensure the student is treated fairly and independently under the most relevant policy.

2.8 Level 3 – Serious, Persistent and/or Critical Concerns (High Risk)

Level 3 of the procedure is used where there is significant serious or persistent concern about a student's health, wellbeing and/or behaviour, safety and/or ability to study and cope at Northampton College. In most cases escalation to this stage will follow attempts to address concerns through Levels 1 and 2. However, in some cases it may be appropriate to proceed directly to Level 3, for example:

- Where health, wellbeing and ability to study is seriously compromised;
- Suicidal intentions and means;
- Persistent non-attendance due to ill health;
- When all other options to deal with the situations and policies have been explored locally and a wider Northampton College perspective is required;
- When a higher level of decision making and authority is required;
- Where there are serious concerns regarding risk to the health and safety of the student and/or where there is a perceived threat and risk to others;

- Where a student's health and wellbeing is having a significant and detrimental impact on their (or other members' of the Northampton College Community) ability to study independently and safely;
- Where it becomes apparent that an individual student's support needs are potentially beyond the confines of Northampton College;
- Where an individual student's health and wellbeing is having a significant and detrimental impact on other students' ability to study and/or ability to take part in wider aspects of student life;
- Where an individual student's health and wellbeing is having a significant and detrimental impact on a member of staff's ability to undertake the requirements of their role.

2.8.1 Level 3 Case Conferences

Level 3 intervention requires a case conference to discuss the individual case and agree appropriate action(s). It will:

- be convened and chaired by an Assistant Principal or a Member of The Executive Team (or appropriate nominee);
- include appropriate representation from the academic area (e.g. Curriculum Manager) the Assistant Principal Student Services (or appropriate nominee) Additional Learning Support Manager (or appropriate nominee).
- involve parents/carers (in the case of adult students , when it is felt appropriate to do so with the student's prior consent); and for apprentices, the employer where appropriate.
- be convened within 5 working days from the decision to take this action;
- consider any mitigating or medical evidence that has not been previously considered under the earlier levels of the procedure;
- consider relevant information that should be requested from those who have provided support (internal specialists and external agencies) as appropriate;
- involve the student and provide the opportunity for them to bring someone to support them, as detailed in Section 2.3; the chair of the case conference should ensure that there is an appropriate person available to provide support if the student does not bring somebody with them.
- manage sensitive data and information discussed as outlined in Section 2.2 of this Policy & Procedure.

The student should be informed of the case conference and its purpose in a clear, written statement from the member of staff coordinating the meeting (see Appendices 2 and 3), at least 2 working days before the meeting, although wherever possible more notice should be given.

The student should be encouraged to prepare in advance for the meeting by obtaining any necessary documentation and reports and giving consent for disclosure of medical reports. The student may wish to write a short summary report for the meeting.

In preparation for the meeting, the key College departments may be invited to write a summary report of the present and past relevant/key issues. The contribution of representatives will be subject to data protection legislation and/or professional codes of confidentiality. This information will be sent to the Chair and may be circulated to people attending the meeting.

The case conference may consider various options in discussion with the student, including additional support strategies, reasonable adjustments, exclusion, suspension or withdrawal on the grounds of ill health.

A panel decision may be taken on whether the student should be required to take a leave of absence from their studies whilst appropriate means of addressing the situation are being considered.

Due care and consideration will be exercised in reaching this situation to avoid, as far as possible, the student being placed in a more vulnerable situation or a situation that increases the vulnerability of other students.

The agreed course of action will be communicated, in writing, by the Chair of the case conference within 5 working days. The manner of communication will be agreed with the student at the case conference so they are aware of the next steps.

In the event that the student chooses not to attend the meeting, the aspects outlined above should be considered in his/her absence and those present at the meeting will consider and agree the best course of action. In the case of apprentices, employers will be notified of the outcome where appropriate. If the process leads to withdrawal or suspension, employers will always be notified of the decision in writing within five working days.

2.8.2 Level 3 Interim Conferences

In rare emergency situations an immediate interim conference can be held to make decisions about the immediate wellbeing of a student.

This interim conference needs to be:

- chaired by an appropriate member of Northampton College staff (e.g. the Safeguarding & Wellbeing Manager, a Curriculum Manager or Assistant Principal, and involve other appropriate staff as the urgency of the situation allows and requires;
- flexible in its format so quick decisions and action can be taken to ensure a student is kept safe;
- formally recorded;
- followed up with a full case conference (as detailed above) within 5 working days of any decisions taken at the interim conference;
- able to put in place effective interim measures (e.g. temporary suspension, recommend hospital treatment, contact with next of kin etc.) to safeguard an individual or individuals
- in exceptional circumstances (but particularly in the case of under 18s or adults with care and/or support needs) make a decision to contact a next of kin without gaining the student's consent if the student is deemed to be at significant risk.

2.8.3 Post Level 3 Case Conferences

A report of the meeting and all agreed actions should be documented by the Chair of the case conference. A copy should be sent to the student and to all other attendees of the meeting no later than 5 working days after the meeting has taken place. The decisions taken must be clearly documented along with information regarding the student's right to formally request a review of this decision, as outlined in the Appeals section of this procedure.

In cases where suspension or withdrawal is the outcome, the meeting should consider and make clear to the student what is required to happen before they would be permitted to return to study and the estimated timeframe of the suspension/withdrawal.

Where the student's parent/carer is not able to be involved in the practical arrangements, the Student Services or Wellbeing teams will endeavour to assist. In some cases, it may be necessary to involve external agencies, such as the GP, Community Mental Health Teams, the police etc.

It is possible that a student may pose an extreme and immediate risk of harming themselves and/or others. In such circumstances, the appropriate emergency services should be called. This should be followed up by ensuring key staff are alerted. If a student indicates they have suicidal thoughts, it is during surgery opening hours and they consent to see a doctor, a member of the Safeguarding or Wellbeing teams will ring to request an emergency appointment. If urgent support is required out of hours staff will call 111 or 999 as appropriate.

3. Return to Study

Following a period of absence from the College for recuperation or treatment, it may be appropriate for the student to resume studies. If this is the case, it will be necessary to ensure that the student is assisted by their curriculum area, with advice from the Safeguarding or Wellbeing teams.

Northampton College will require the student to produce appropriate confirmation of their health and ability to resume studying from an appropriate recognised medical or health professional who has sufficient knowledge of the health and wellbeing of the student during the period of interruption and the potential impact that returning to study might have. If a student suspended their studies due to psychiatric ill health, they will need a formal assessment by a psychiatrist before returning to study. In some cases (particularly in circumstances related to deteriorating physical health and medical conditions), Northampton College may also consider it necessary to have an independent occupational health assessment (which will be arranged and co-ordinated by the wellbeing team in conjunction with medigold).

The academic teams, working in partnership with support services, will conduct a review of the documentary evidence of the student's mental and/or physical wellbeing and contextualise it within the demands of the course/programme of study. A joint decision should be made as to whether, and/or on what basis an individual can return to study.

Northampton College support teams (e.g. the Safeguarding & Wellbeing teams) can provide assistance with drawing up a 'Return to Study Plan' in consultation with the student. The plan should address and include:

- Details of any specific study related support and any support reasonably required in the short term;
- Any longer term support or reasonable adjustments required and any conditions that might or will apply to that provision;
- Details of any formal reviews that may need to be built in as a condition of return to confirm that the student is fit enough to study at Northampton College;
- A risk management plan that takes account of the experiences that led to the initial suspension of studies.

Any return to study will be subject to the student's co-operation with this process and full adherence to any agreed conditions which are subject to regular review during agreed timescales.

4. Request for an Independent Review

Providing a student has grounds to do so (see Section 2.4) they may request an independent review of decisions made under this policy and procedure.

A student wishing to request this should do so in writing (addressed to the Executive Office) within 10 working days of receiving their written outcomes from Level 2 or 3 meetings. The letter must clearly stipulate that they are requesting an independent review of the decision made under the Fitness to Study Policy, their grounds for requesting a review and include any relevant evidence.

The student's letter, case notes and all evidence will be passed to an independent (equal or higher level) manager to that involved in the original meeting, who will be responsible for carrying out an independent review and ensuring appropriate records are kept.

The request for an independent review will be considered and the outcome will be confirmed in writing within 15 working days of consideration

Appendix 1 – Fitness to Study Procedure Grid

	<i>Level of Concern & Level of Assessed Risk</i>	<i>Level of Response Required</i>	<i>Chair of Meeting/Lead</i>	<i>Other Staff to be invited</i>	<i>Potential Outcomes</i>
<i>Level 1</i>	Initial Concerns (Low Risk)	Not requiring any immediate additional professional interventions	Personal Tutor/ Academic Coach /Curriculum Manager	As required	Advice/guidance/signposting; discussed, agreed & documented actions; agreed date for review discussions (to consider whether further action plan or escalation to level 2 required); record of discussion kept & circulated
<i>Level 2</i>	Ongoing and/or further concerns (Medium risk)	May imply a need for appropriate interventions from one or more WUC or external support services	Curriculum Manager/Assistant Principal	Specialist staff (e.g. welfare or learning support), other curriculum/programme area staff	Advice/guidance/signposting; discussed, agreed & documented actions; agreed date for review meeting (to consider whether further action plan or escalation to level 3 required); record of discussion kept & circulated.
<i>Level 3</i>	Serious, persistent and/or critical concerns (High Risk)	Immediate intervention (as appropriate)	Assistant Principal/Executive Management Team Member (or appropriate nominee)	Curriculum Manager Safeguarding Managers (or appropriate nominee) Other relevant staff	Report including agreed actions & details of the appeals process; possible suspension, withdrawal.

Appendix 2 - Template letter advising of a Level 2/3 Meeting

Name
1st Line
2nd Line
3rd Line
Post code
Date

Dear

Level 2/3 Fitness to Study Meeting

I am writing to invite you to a Level 2/3 Fitness to Study meeting. A copy of the policy and procedure which explains the purpose of this meeting is enclosed with this letter. The reasons for a Level 2/3 meeting are laid out below. Any supporting evidence/paperwork will also be enclosed for your information and review.

XX XX XX

The details of the meeting are:

Time : XX

Date : XX

Location : XX

WUC staff to be in attendance: XX

I enclose with this letter an agenda so you have an outline of what will be discussed and know what to expect.

The meeting will be confidential and personal information relating to your health will only be shared with those who have a direct involvement in the meeting initially. Although we would advise that you should review Section 2.2 of the policy/procedure to understand Northampton Colleges approach to data protection and confidentiality in this context.

You are welcome to request help/support and can be accompanied to this meeting by a member of your medical/mental health support team, Northampton College staff (e.g. from one of Northampton College support teams), a parent/carer or a Student Union representative. The role of anyone accompanying a student is not to offer formal representation, but to provide you some support and advice. If you are under 18 your parent/carer is invited to attend this meeting and as such will be sent a copy of this letter separately. If you are over 18 and we feel it is helpful/important/appropriate we may also request (with your consent) that a parent/carer attends with you.

We would encourage you to provide up to date medical assessments/reports/evidence relevant to discussions which you consent to be shared with those who will be attending the meeting.

Please send these, along with confirmation that you will be able to attend or notification that we need to find an alternative slot to XX@Northamptoncollege.ac.uk as soon as possible. Please also feel free to write and send a short summary report of the situation from your perspective.

Please note if you were to choose not to attend or fail to attend without providing adequate reason/notice the meeting will still go ahead.

After the meeting, you will receive written confirmation of what has been agreed and next steps within 5 working days.

Yours sincerely,

XXnameXX

XXpositionXX

XXcontact detailsXX

cc. parent/carer (if under 18 or with consent, when appropriate, for over 18)

Enc. Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure; Template Agenda; supporting paperwork/evidence

Appendix 3 - Agenda for Fitness to Study Meeting

1. Explain the purpose for the meeting and the Fitness to Study Policy/Procedure
2. Detail the concern(s)
3. Student to provide their perspective and any relevant background information (including any new mitigating or medical evidence)
4. Review all supporting paperwork/evidence/docs from other sources
5. Clarify Northampton College boundaries and rules and highlight any other relevant policies/procedures
6. Clarify expectations (eg. standards and behaviours)
7. Discuss support needed/available (including signposting to external and internal help/support/agencies) and reasonable adjustments
8. Discuss next step options
9. Agree SMART actions (incl any interim measures required to safeguard an individual or individuals/adjustments/support/risk assessments to be carried out etc)
10. When appropriate - Agree details of a review meeting (date and who should attend), progress expected, any interim monitoring arrangements & explain consequences of lack of improvement/deterioration
11. Explain next steps of policy/procedure

Appendix 4 – Fitness to Study Process Flowchart

