



Student Fitness to Study and Reintegration Policy

Policy Details	
Policy Owner	Assistant Principal Student Experience
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1. Introduction and Purpose

- 1.1** USP College is committed to providing an inclusive, safe and supportive learning environment where every student has the opportunity to succeed.
- 1.2** The College recognises and values the diversity of its student community, including disabled and neurodivergent students, and is committed to removing barriers to participation wherever reasonably practicable.
- 1.3** The purpose of this policy is to provide a consistent framework for responding where a student's health or wellbeing may affect their ability to participate safely in education.
The College will always seek to:
 - i. support students to participate successfully in education wherever it is safe and appropriate to do so
 - ii. remove barriers through reasonable adjustment
 - iii. make evidence-based and proportionate decisions
 - iv. support successful reintegration following absence.
- 1.4** For the purposes of this Policy, 'Fitness to Study' refers to a student's ability to engage safely and effectively with their programme of study, with appropriate support and reasonable adjustments where required, without posing a significant risk to their own wellbeing, the wellbeing of others, or the effective operation of the College.
- 1.5** Withdrawal from study will only be considered where there is no reasonable alternative.

2. Statement of Intent

- 2.1** This policy applies to all students enrolled at USP College.
- 2.2** This policy may be used where concerns relate to a student's physical or mental health, disability, long-term health condition, neurodivergence, emotional wellbeing or other circumstances affecting their ability to participate safely and effectively in education. The College recognises that neurodivergence is not, in itself, an indicator of disability; however, some neurodivergent students may be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010.s
- 2.3** Where there is an immediate safeguarding concern, safeguarding procedures will take precedence.

3. Definitions

Reasonable adjustments are changes to policies, practices, teaching, assessment or the learning environment made to remove or reduce disadvantages experienced by disabled students in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

3. Legal Background

- 3.1** This Policy has been developed in accordance with the College's legal responsibilities to promote student welfare, ensure equality of opportunity, support participation in education and maintain a safe learning environment. The College is committed support to making reasonable adjustments for disabled students and ensuring that any decisions made under this Policy are lawful, proportionate, evidence-based and non-discriminatory.
- 3.2** When implementing this Policy, the College will have due regard to its duties under the Equality Act 2010, including the duty to make reasonable adjustments for disabled students, and the Public Sector Equality Duty to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations.
- 3.3** The College will also ensure that safeguarding responsibilities are considered alongside this Policy where concerns indicate that a student may be at risk of harm or present a risk to others. Where safeguarding concerns are identified, the College's Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy will take precedence, with the Fitness to Study process operating alongside safeguarding procedures where appropriate.
- 3.4** The College recognises that disability, long-term health conditions, mental health conditions and neurodivergence do not, in themselves, constitute a lack of fitness to study. Some neurodivergent students may also be disabled within the meaning of the Equality Act 2010 and will be entitled to reasonable adjustments where required. Regardless of whether a student meets the legal definition of disability, the College will consider appropriate support and proportionate adjustments to enable participation wherever reasonably practicable.

3.5 Relevant Legislation

The College recognises its duties under the following legislation:

- i. Equality Act 2010
- ii. Human Rights Act 1998
- iii. Education Act 2002
- iv. Children Act 2004
- v. Children and Families Act 2014
- vi. Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974
- vii. Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR

3.6 Statutory Guidance

- i. Keeping Children Safe in Education 2026
- ii. Working Together to Safeguard Children 2023
- iii. SEND Code of Practice (2015, updated 2024)
- iv. Information Sharing: Advice for Practitioners
- v. SET Safeguarding Procedures 2026

3.7 Related College Policies

This Policy should be read alongside the following College policies and procedures:

- i. Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy
- ii. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- iii. Student Behaviour Policy
- iv. Student Attendance Policy
- v. Health & Safety Policy
- vi. Data Protection Policy
- vii. Acceptable Use & Online Safety Policy

4. Principles

4.1 The College will ensure that all decisions:

- i. prioritise participation in education wherever it is safe to do so;
- ii. are based on current evidence rather than assumptions;
- iii. consider reasonable adjustments before restricting study;
- iv. involve the student wherever possible;
- v. take account of professional advice where available; and
- vi. represent the least restrictive option
- vii. recognise that every student's circumstances are unique and avoid assumptions based on diagnosis, disability or neurodivergence.

4.2 Decisions under this Policy will be based on the student's individual circumstances, the functional impact of their health or wellbeing on their ability to study safely and effectively, the available evidence and consideration of reasonable adjustments. Decisions will never be based solely on a diagnosis, disability or neurodivergent profile.

5. Roles and Responsibilities

RoI	Responsibility
Vice Principal Quality and Learner Journey	Strategic oversight, Chairs Stage Three Panel, approves outcomes where required
Head of Student Services	Coordinates the Fitness to Study process, convenes review meetings and monitors implementation of action plans

Curriculum Directors and Curriculum Managers	Identify concerns, implement reasonable adjustments and monitor academic engagement
Progress Coaches/Personal Tutors	Early identification, student liaison and review meetings
ALS Team	Advises on reasonable adjustments and specialist support
Safeguarding Team	Leads where safeguarding concerns arise
Students	Engage with agreed support and review meetings

6. Fitness to Study Process

Stage	Purpose	Possible Outcomes
Stage 1 - Early Support	Identify concerns, meet with the student, agree support and reasonable adjustments	Continue with support or progress to stage two.
Stage 2 – Formal Review	Multi-disciplinary review of evidence and support needs. Agree a Fitness to Study Action Plan.	Continue support, introduce further adjustments or refer to Stage Three.
Stage 3 – Review Panel	Senior review where significant concerns remain or risks cannot be safely managed.	Continue study, enhanced support, phased reintegration, temporary interruption or withdrawal in exceptional circumstances.

7. Decision making

7.1 Before any significant decision is made, the College will consider:

- i. current evidence;
- ii. professional advice;
- iii. safeguarding responsibilities;
- iv. reasonable adjustments;
- v. the student's views;
- vi. the impact of the proposed decision; and

- vii. whether the outcome is proportionate and represents the least restrictive option.
- viii. Withdrawal from study will only be considered where the College has demonstrated that reasonable adjustments and alternative arrangements have been fully explored.
- ix. the impact of the decision on the student's future education and progression.

8. Reintegration

- 8.1** A Reintegration Plan will normally be developed in partnership with the student and, where appropriate, parents, carers and relevant professionals.
- 8.2** Where a student returns following illness or interruption to study, a Reintegration Plan will normally be developed.
- 8.3** Plans may include:
 - i. phased attendance;
 - ii. amended timetables;
 - iii. reasonable adjustments;
 - iv. wellbeing support;
 - v. regular review meetings.
- 8.3** The aim will always be to support a safe and sustainable return to education.

9. Appeals

- 9.1** Students may appeal a Stage Three decision within ten working days where they believe:
 - i. the process was not followed correctly;
 - ii. relevant evidence was not considered;
 - iii. significant new evidence has become available; or
 - iv. the decision was unreasonable or disproportionate.
- 9.2** Appeals will be considered by a senior leader who has had no previous involvement in the case.
- 9.3** The outcome of the appeal is final.

10. Linked Policies

Other related Policies include:

- i. Safeguarding and PREVENT Policy
- ii. Additional Learning Support (ALS) Policy,
- iii. Student Behaviour Policy
- iv. Student Attendance Policy
- v. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- vi. Compliments and Complaints Policy

APPENDIX A – FITNESS TO STUDY DECISION FLOWCHART

