FITNESS TO PRACTICE PROCEDURE

Note: this Procedure is superseded by the Fitness to Practice Procedure approved by Academic Senate on 29 May 2018, with effect from Session 2 2018.

1 PURPOSE

To specify the procedure for dealing with fitness to practice issues during candidature, including the support available to students who experience fitness to practice issues.

2 SCOPE

This procedure applies to all students in the Doctor of Medicine program.

The procedure does not specifically address behaviours that may constitute student misconduct under the University’s Student Discipline Rules and Procedure.

The procedure does not specifically address Inherent Requirements which are the essential activities, components and academic requirements that must be met by all students in a program.

3 DEFINITIONS

Commonly defined terms are located in the University Glossary.

Macquarie University defines fitness to practice as a student’s ability to demonstrate clinical and/or professional competence, acceptable professional behaviour, and freedom from impairment that are necessary for a student to practice properly and safely throughout their studies in a Macquarie University professional program and in their future accredited profession. (Parker M, Med Teach 2006; 28: 399-403).

4 RESPONSIBILITIES AND REQUIRED ACTIONS

Information

Executive Dean

Ensure that information about fitness to practice is available to prospective and current students so that they are aware of the attributes and expectations required of them for the Doctor of Medicine program they are enquiring about or admitted to, and so that they are able to carry out their responsibilities in a professional, competent and safe manner.

Ensure that information is available about guidance and support in relation to fitness to practice requirements.

Ensure that information is available to students about how a student's fitness to practice may be evaluated.
Identification and Support

Student

Students are required to be ‘fit to practice’. The community and the profession require professional practitioners to have a range of physical, psychological and professional attributes that enable them to carry out their responsibilities in a professional, competent and safe manner.

Students are required to make themselves aware of the fitness to practice requirements for the program to which they are admitted.

Students are encouraged to self-identify and seek support according to the fitness to practice Schedule for the program to which they are admitted.

Academic and professional staff, and other members of the community

Academic and professional staff must notify the Academic Program Lead if they have concerns regarding a student’s fitness to practice.

Other members of the community involved in the teaching and learning of students must also notify the University if they have concerns regarding a student’s fitness to practice.

Procedure

Concerns regarding a student's fitness to practice will be treated according to the severity of the issue. Program-specific guidance relating to the grounds upon which this procedure may be initiated, and appropriate escalation measures based on severity and/or multiplicity, will be provided in a Schedule for the program that they are admitted to.

Academic Program Lead

If notified of concerns about a student's fitness to practice, determine the appropriate course of action as follows:

- dismiss the notification
- implement a remediation plan
- refer the notification to the Executive Dean

Executive Dean (or nominee)

Following referral from the Academic Program Lead, the Executive Dean may:

- dismiss the referral
- implement a remediation plan
- recommend to the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Registrar that the student be excluded from the program on the basis of a failure to meet Fitness to Practice requirements
- refer the matter to the University Hearing Committee on the basis of alleged student misconduct
- report the matter to relevant professional registration bodies or other external referral as appropriate
- take any other action as deemed appropriate.
Students may appeal against a decision according to the provisions of the Academic Appeals Policy.

5 RELEVANT LEGISLATION

Civil Liability Act 2002 (NSW)
Crimes Act 1900 (NSW)
Health Practitioner Regulation National Law (NSW) No 86a
Health Records and Information Privacy Act 2002 (NSW)

6 KEY RELATED DOCUMENTS

Academic Integrity Policy
Alcohol and Drug Policy / Schedule
Disruption to Studies Policy
Good Medical Practice: Code of Conduct for Doctors in Australia 2014 (Medical Board of Australia)
Health and Safety Policy
Macquarie MD Inherent Requirements Framework
Student Code of Conduct
Records and Information Management Policy
Student Discipline Rules and Procedure
Privacy Policy (under development)

7 NOTES

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<th>Approval Authority</th>
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<tr>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>Associate Dean, Learning and Teaching</td>
<td>Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic) and Registrar, with Academic Senate endorsement on 17 October 2017</td>
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<tr>
<td>7.2</td>
<td>Implementation Officer</td>
<td>Director, Academic Services</td>
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<td>Date of Commencement</td>
<td>17 October 2017</td>
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<td>7.6</td>
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<td>Superseded by the Fitness to Practice Procedure approved by Academic Senate on 29 May 2018, with effect from Session 2 2018.</td>
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<td>7.7</td>
<td>Documents Superseded by this Procedure</td>
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<td>Amendment History</td>
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