



Fitness to Study (Learn)	Policy Name:	Fitness to Study (Learn)
	Policy Reference	LeD001
	Applies To:	AoG Inc.
	Approved By:	Board of Directors
	Approval Date:	26/11/2020
	Next review Date:	26/11/2022
	Policy Lead:	Operations Manager
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PART 1 – Policy Statement:
AoG Inc. is committed to supporting the overall well-being of learners, including the recognition that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health plays an important part in learning and academic achievement.
Background/Introduction/Statement/Preamble
The Board of Assemblies of God Incorporated has formed a fitness to study (College) or learn (Leadership Development) process to be operationally outworked which will support our leadership development goals and objectives.
Definitions
Scope (if relevant)
<p>This policy and set of procedures apply in cases where a learner’s fitness to study is a cause for concern, and where all other avenues, including pastoral support, have been exhausted. Particular areas for concern include, but are not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learner behaviour that would normally be dealt with through misconduct procedures but may be the result of an underlying physical or mental health issue; • Learner physical or mental health difficulties that may adversely affect the health, safety or well-being of themselves or others; • Learner unsatisfactory academic or learning performance that may be the result of an underlying physical or mental health problem; • Learner behaviour that adversely affects those around them and/or calls into question their suitability for ministry. • Learner support needs that fall outside the scope of the support and other services which the College or Leadership Development can reasonably be expected to provide. <p>In extreme cases, where the risk to the learner, to others or to AoG Inc. and its workers (staff & volunteers) is very high, an immediate emergency suspension may be considered,</p>

by senior workers, to be the most appropriate course of action. If so, the procedure will move immediately to the second stage of the procedures in Appendix 1.

It is expected, however, that most issues can be resolved informally. In such cases, workers will speak to those involved and, where appropriate, agree and implement a personalised action plan. Only when informal intervention has proven unsuccessful, and other procedures have been deemed inappropriate will the more formal procedures under this policy be undertaken.

Where informal measures have proven unsuccessful, where a learner has not engaged with the process, where action plans have not been met and where other processes are deemed not to be appropriate, formal steps will be followed in accordance with the procedures in Appendix 1 or 2 as appropriate.

Objectives/Purpose

We recognise that there may be instances where a learner's physical or mental health may give rise to concerns about the learner's fitness to study, for example the capacity to engage with the academic or leadership programme and/or to function more widely as a member of the College or Leadership Development community. This policy provides a process to address instances where a learner's fitness to study is a cause for concern, and where all other avenues, including pastoral support, have been exhausted.

Roles & Responsibilities

The College shall have a pastoral team to support all Higher Education students.

The Leadership Development Team shall ensure their workers are aware of this policy and associated procedures.

PART 2 – Version History of the Policy:

Policy Author	Version #	Summary of Changes

PART 3 – Procedures

3.1 Review Meeting

A Review Meeting will be convened, comprising appropriate staff (for example members of College Academic Faculty, Pastoral Team, Leadership Development Coaches among others).

3.2 Fitness to Study Panel / Fitness to Learn Panel

A panel will be convened only if:

- A learner has been subject to an emergency suspension;
- A learner has been referred by a Review Meeting;
- A learner does not agree with, or is not engaging with, the recommendations of a Review Meeting.

Members of the Panel will comprise individuals who were not involved in the Review Meeting (for example Principal or senior Leadership Development Team members).

3.3 Return to Study following suspension

The decision to allow a learner to return will be made by the Review Meeting or the Fitness Panel that made the initial recommendation, or as many members thereof as possible.

3.4 Right of Appeal

Learners have the right to appeal against any decisions made by a Review Meeting or Fitness Panel.

Students would do this through the College Student Complaints and Appeals procedure.

Individuals undertaking Leadership Development activities would do this through appeal to the Leadership Development Director.

The Board of Governors or National Leadership Team will not usually be involved in earlier elements of this process, and may chair an appeal process should the procedure reach this stage.

PART 4 – Linked Policies:

Policy	Number #	Summary
Health & Safety	H&S01	Health & Safety

PART 5 – Appendices:

Number #	Appendix Name
1	College Fitness to Study Procedures
2	Leadership Development Fitness to Learn Procedures

APPENDIX 1 - COLLEGE PROCEDURES

Review Meeting - Stage 1
<p>1. The College Dean will convene a Review Meeting which may include a member of the Pastoral Team and a member of Academic Faculty. Due to the low numbers of College staff, it may occasionally be the case that one person may attend the Review Meeting in two roles.</p>
<p>2. Before the Review Meeting, relevant external professionals (for example, psychiatrists, GPs, mental health workers, probation officers) may be consulted in conversation with the student. The Panel may call witnesses and/or view written statements, as appropriate. The student will also be able to submit documents for the Review Meeting to consider and will be given a copy of any documents seen at the Review Meeting. The student may request to attend all or part of the Review Panel meeting. The Chair will decide whether the student should attend. If the student does attend, they will have the right to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.</p>
<p>3. After the Review Meeting a letter will be sent to the student setting out the decision reached, and the reasons for the decision. It is expected that any action recommended will be different from that already attempted as part of the informal procedure. Outcomes may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. No further action;b. Monitoring the student for a prescribed period of time. This will normally include an agreed action plan setting out what is expected of the student, and what support will be provided, and regular review meetings between the student and a nominated staff member. <p>The student will be made aware that failure to comply with the action plan will move the procedure to a second stage. This specific arrangement may include a temporary suspension of studies. This would normally be with the agreement of the student and Academic Staff. If the student does not agree, the procedure moves to the second stage.</p> <p>In serious cases, the case may be referred immediately to a Fitness to Study Panel, under the second stage of the procedure.</p>
Stage 2 – Fitness to Study Panel
<p>1. This will be convened only if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. A student has been subject to an emergency suspension;b. A student has been referred by a Review Meeting;c. A student does not agree, or is not engaging, with the recommendations of a Review Meeting
<p>2. Members of the Panel should usually comprise a member of the Board of Governors and a member of the Pastoral Team who was not involved in the Review Meeting.</p>
<p>3. The Panel will have access to documents from the Review Meeting and may call for further medical evidence (this will require the written permission of the student) and/or for further witness statements. As with the Review Meeting, the student will also be able to submit documents for the Panel to consider and will be given a copy of any documents seen by the Panel. The student may request to attend all or part of the Review Panel meeting. The Chair will decide whether the student should attend. If the student does attend, they will have the right to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.</p>

4. Possible outcomes may include:

- a. A limited suspension, to allow the student to be assessed by a health professional and/or to access additional support services, or for the College to obtain further information. This will be reviewed within four weeks of the suspension (see, below, Return to study following a suspension);
- b. A longer suspension. This will only be considered in serious cases, where there is no reasonable prospect of the student re-engaging with their programme. This will be reviewed regularly, and in particular if a review is requested by the student (see, below, Return to study following a suspension);
- c. Recommending that a student may only study by Distance Learning. This will normally be when the main problem relates to behaviour that calls into question the ability or unwillingness to engage with the on-campus lecture programme.

Return to study following a suspension

1. The decision to allow a student to return should be made by the Review Meeting or the Fitness to Study Panel that made the initial recommendation, or as many members thereof as possible.

2. The Meeting or Panel should be reconvened to consider whether the student is fit to return to study. This may involve requesting further medical evidence from the student regarding the ability to fully engage with the requirements of the programme, including lecture attendance and/or participation in placement activities.

3. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made and appropriate support offered. The expectation is that the student will take personal responsibility for fully engaging with this support.

Right of Appeal

Students have the right to appeal against any decisions made by a Review Meeting or Fitness to Study Panel, through the Student Complaints and Appeals procedure.

The Director of Studies will not usually be involved in earlier elements of this process, so that they can head up the Appeals process should the procedure reach this stage.

Sharing Information

We will not normally give information to third parties who ask for it, except with express permission, or when we are legally allowed to do so. (Third parties include GPs, parents, placement providers, the Police, friends, and landlords). If a student's conduct may be in breach of the criminal law, Mattersey Hall may refer this to the Police. We might decide that it is appropriate to discuss professional suitability matters and their outcomes with third parties, or refer matters to them. If it is not clear whether we should share information, we will normally be guided by what will benefit the student, or by our legal or statutory obligations.

APPENDIX 2 - LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT PROCEDURES

Review Meeting - Stage 1
<p>1. A Review Meeting will be convened, including representation from coaching and support teams (eg pastoral, disability, health & safety as and when appropriate). The meeting will usually be chaired by a Head Coach.</p>
<p>2. Before the Review Meeting, relevant external professionals (for example, psychiatrists, GPs, mental health workers, probation officers) may be consulted in conversation with the learner. The Meeting may require witnesses and/or view written statements, if and when appropriate. The learner will also be able to submit documents for the Review Meeting to consider and will be given a copy of any documents seen at the Review Meeting. The learner may request to attend all or part of the Review Panel meeting. The Chair will decide whether the learner should attend. If the learner does attend, they will have the right to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.</p>
<p>3. After the Review Meeting written communication will be sent to the learner setting out the decision reached, and the reasons for the decision. It is expected that any action recommended will be different from that already attempted as part of any informal procedures either previously undertaken or proposed. Outcomes may be:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. No further action;b. Monitoring the learner for a prescribed period of time. This will normally include an agreed action plan setting out what is expected of the learner, what support will be provided, and regular review meetings between the learner and a nominated mentor. <p>The learner will be made aware that failure to comply with the action plan will move the procedure to a second stage. This specific arrangement may include a temporary suspension of the learning programme. This would normally be with the agreement of all parties. If the learner does not agree, the procedure moves to the second stage.</p> <p>In serious cases, the case may be referred immediately to a Fitness to Study Panel, under the second stage of the procedure.</p>
Stage 2 - Fitness to Learn Panel
<p>1. This will be convened only if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. A learner has been subject to an emergency suspension;b. A learner has been referred by a Review Meeting;c. A learner doesn't agree, or is not engaging with, the recommendations of a Review Meeting
<p>2. Members of the Panel will comprise: a senior member of the Leadership Development Team who was also not involved in the Review Meeting, and independent senior members of AoG Inc Teams & Departments.</p>
<p>3. The Panel will have access to documents from the Review Meeting and may call for (further) medical evidence (this will require the written permission of the learner) and/or for (further) witness statements. As with the Review Meeting, the learner will also be able to submit documents for the Panel to consider and will be given a copy of any documents seen by the Panel. The learner may request to attend all or part of the Review Panel meeting. The Chair will</p>

decide whether the learner should attend. If the learner does attend, they will have the right to bring a friend or representative to the meeting.

4. Possible outcomes may include:

a. A limited suspension, to allow the learner to access additional support services and/or be assessed by a health professional, or for the Leadership Development Team to obtain further information. This will be reviewed within four weeks of the suspension (see, below, Return to Learning following a suspension);

b. A longer suspension. This will only be considered in serious cases, where there is no reasonable prospect of the learner re-engaging with their programme. This will be reviewed regularly, and in particular if a review is requested by the learner (see, below, Return to study following a suspension);

c. Cessation of learning opportunity.

Return to Learning following a suspension

1. The decision to allow a learner to return should be made by the Review Meeting or Fitness to Learn Panel that made the initial recommendation, or as many members thereof as possible.

2. The Meeting or Panel should be reconvened to consider whether the learner is fit to return to learning. This may involve requesting further medical evidence from the learner regarding the ability to fully engage with the requirements of the programme.

3. Where appropriate, reasonable adjustments will be made and appropriate support offered. The expectation is that the learner will take personal responsibility for fully engaging with this support.

Right of Appeal

Learners have the right to appeal against any decisions made by a Review Meeting or Fitness to Learn Panel, through an Appeals procedure.

The Director of Studies will not be involved in earlier elements of this process, so that they may head up the Appeals process should the procedure reach this stage.

Sharing Information

If the matter requires review of AoG Status, this will be undertaken through the Office of General Manager providing a full report to the National Leadership Team.

We will not normally give information to third parties who ask for it, except with express permission, or when we are legally allowed to do so. (Third parties include GPs, parents, placement providers, the Police, friends, and landlords). If a learner's conduct may be in breach of the criminal law, AoG Inc may refer this to the Police. We might decide that it is appropriate to discuss professional suitability matters and their outcomes with third parties, or refer matters to them. If it is not clear whether we should share information, we will normally be guided by what will benefit the learner, by our AoG Bye-Laws and/or by our legal or statutory obligations.