

SEM

Fitness to Study Procedure

Effective September 2019
Next Review Date August 2020

SEM

Introduction and scope

SEM is committed to supporting students and recognises the importance of their health and wellbeing in relation to their academic progress and experience. The Fitness to Study (FTS) procedure is a supportive process used when a student's health or wellbeing is having a detrimental impact on their (or others') ability to progress academically and/or function in the SEM community effectively.

This procedure will be used to deal with instances which have led to:

- concerns about a student's fitness to study at SEM and/or ability to meet the learning outcomes of the course, notwithstanding reasonable adjustments;
- a negative impact on the health, safety, wellbeing and/or learning of the student and/or others with whom they have contact.

There is a potential overlap between this procedure and other SEM policies and SEM may choose to deal with any matter under another procedure it considers more appropriate.

In the event of any uncertainty about the scope of this procedure or who to contact in the first instance, the Head of Student Services and Administration will be happy to help with any advice or support needed:

Lawrence Allen
School of Electronic Music
Bexley Chambers
Manchester
M3 6DB
Tel: 0161 833 4722
E-mail: lawrence@semmanchester.com

The process

This procedure has three stages, based on the level of support needed by the student and/or the seriousness of risk. Depending on the concern raised, it may be appropriate to move straight to a higher stage. A student's willingness to engage with the process will also inform actions and decisions taken by SEM. If a student chooses not to engage, then this procedure may continue without their involvement. At any stage in Fitness to Study process, the student may be suspended from SEM on an interim basis.

At all stages, the student is entitled to be accompanied and/or represented by a person of their choosing, who may be a friend, family member, but who may not be a lawyer acting in a professional capacity.

Stage 1 – Emerging Concerns

When a concern about a student's health, safety or wellbeing is raised, the concerned member of staff should seek advice from the Head of Student Welfare.

Once the Fitness to Study Procedure has been agreed as the appropriate way forward, an informal meeting should be arranged by the member of staff or Head of Student Welfare with the student, to discuss the concerns and agree a way forward.

The outcome of the meeting should be confirmed in writing to the student, setting out agreed actions and arrangements for a follow-up meeting.

The follow up meeting can be used to either:

- a) agree that the concerns have been addressed and the Fitness to Study process can now be closed, or
- b) agree that the concerns have not been addressed and further meetings are required, or that escalation to stage 2 or 3 of the Fitness to Study Procedure is appropriate.

Stage 2 – Continuing Concerns

Where continuing or serious concerns about a student's health and wellbeing are raised, the member of staff should contact the Head of Student Welfare. Normally a stage 2 meeting would take place, involving the Head of Student Welfare, the student and the staff member who raised the concerns. The student will be notified in advance of the purpose of the meeting.

The meeting will include a discussion and assessment of the concerns raised and the impact this is having on the student and/or the wider SEM community.

An action plan will be drawn up, setting out support measures, follow-up deadlines/meeting dates and any conditions that the student is required to adhere to. The action plan will include a review date, and it will be made clear that failure to adhere to the action plan may result in Stage 3 being invoked.

Stage 3 – Significant or Persistent Concerns

This stage will be invoked when significant or persistent concerns are raised about a student that are putting them or others at risk.

A Case Conference will be convened with the student to establish the facts and discuss an appropriate course of action. The Case Conference will be attended by appropriate staff SEM staff members, normally the Head of Student Welfare, a tutor, and if considered necessary a director of SEM. The Case Conference will consider all reasonable options to enable the student to continue with their studies.

The student will be invited to attend the Case Conference and will be given at least 5 working days' notice of the date and time of the meeting. The student may submit any documents they wish to the Case Conference for consideration. The Chair of the Case Conference will decide how the meeting will be conducted, ensuring in particular that the student's views are heard.

If the student is unable to attend, the Case Conference panel may choose to suspend the student until they are deemed well enough to engage.

The student will receive written confirmation of the outcome of the Case Conference within 10 working days and will be required to comply with any actions agreed by the Case Conference panel. If actions are not followed, a further case conference will be convened. The outcome of the Case Conference will be one of the following:

- that no further action is required
- to agree an enhanced action plan with an agreed review date
- to agree a voluntary interruption of the student's studies
- to invoke a suspension of the student's studies for a specified period
- to invoke a withdrawal of the student from the course and the University, in line with
- any other action considered to be appropriate and proportionate

Returning to study following suspension or interruption

The student will be required to provide satisfactory evidence that they are fit to return to study and be part of the university community. The Case Conference panel will be reconvened, with the student present, to consider the information received and may decide:

- the student is fit to resume their course.
- the student is not fit to return to study at this time and should be suspended for a further specified period
- that the student be withdrawn from the course and/or SEM

A copy of the decision and associated reasons will be provided to the student in writing within 10 working days of the meeting of the Case Conference panel. Students should note that it may not be possible for them to return to exactly the same course following a long period of suspension or interruption, as the course may have been discontinued or significantly modified.

Appeal against the outcome of a Case Conference

The student may appeal against the outcome of the Case Conference by writing within 10 working days to the Head of Student Welfare, who will review the matter and respond to the student within 10 working days of receiving the appeal. The decision of the response to the appeal is final.

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