

1. Guidance

1.1. General Guidance

The purpose of the *Raising an issue of Concern About a Student/Learner form* is to bring to the attention of the School of Health Sciences any concerns regarding the professionalism of a student/learner which may not be addressed via the formal assessment process, cannot be dealt with informally through a professional discussion or is deemed to be a professional issue of a significant concern.

Raising a concern allows appropriate support to be given to the student/learner in a timely way. This form can be completed by any member of the University (academic, administrative or support staff) a member of staff from a placement area, a fellow student/learner, or a member of the public.

Any students with an issue of concern about another student/learner are advised to meet with their Adviser prior to completing a Raising an issue of Concern Regarding a Student/Learner form.

If the concern is being raised by the practice placement environment the Link Lecturer/Visiting Tutor should be made aware that a concern has been raised whenever possible. The concern form should normally only be completed if there are issues which sit outside of the normal assessment processes e.g.:

The student/learner discloses that they have acquired criminal convictions, charges or cautions not previously declared.

There are concerns about a student's health and wellbeing that are not being adequately managed through an action plan or reasonable adjustment recommended by the school.

1.2. Concerns on Practice Placement

Most concerns about a student/learner whilst they are in practice can, and should be, managed using the practice assessment process. Concerns about a student's behaviour which may not be consistent with that of a professional (e.g., lack of appropriate communication skills, difficult relationships with staff and colleagues, issues of perceived poor attitude, poor attendance, timekeeping, dress etc.) should be brought to the student's attention using the assessment framework and support for this can be requested from the link lecturer / visiting tutor.

This form is not intended to capture concerns about a student's progress in relation to their placement learning outcomes. These concerns must be documented within the practice assessment documentation. The above list is not exhaustive and if you are unsure of 'what is a concern' please seek advice from a member of the school e.g., link lecturer / visiting tutor or course director.

On rare occasions a serious issue in practice arises which may result in a student/learner being removed from the practice placement area on grounds of safety. In these circumstances the immediate action to be taken would be to contact the link lecturer / visiting tutor in the first instance, failing that any member of the academic staff for advice. At the earliest opportunity a Raising an Issue of Concern Regarding a Student/Learner form must be completed.

2. Process

2.1. Concerns must be sent in writing, using the [Raising an Issue of Concern Regarding a Student/Learner form](#).

Completed forms will be reviewed by the relevant Fitness to Practice Lead in the University, who will decide on the next steps. Individuals who raise a concern will not be notified of the outcome of this investigation for data protection purposes.

Any information you provide through this form will be handled professionally, stored securely, and only shared with those who need it to fulfil its intended purpose. When you submit this form, it will not automatically collect your details like name and email address unless you provide it yourself.

2.2. Concerns raised regarding HSC students/learners may relate to any of the following (list not exhaustive):

- Health
- Character
- Moral and ethical values
- Commitment to improve
- Management of themselves or others
- Personal accountability
- Professionalism

2.3. The academic lead for Fitness to Practise will 'triage' all concern forms and determine the immediate response based on the seriousness and nature of the concern.

2.4. The Academic Lead for Fitness to Practice will normally respond to concerns within ten working days.

2.5. Triage of concerns is conducted using a heuristic approach based on the principles outlined in Appendix 1. The outcome of the initial triage and information gathering meeting may be one of the following:

Risk to the public

Pre-registration student/learner

If there is a risk to public safety posed by a pre-registration student/learner being in a placement setting the Academic Lead for Fitness to Practise will immediately recommend that the Head of School exercise their authority to suspend the individual from placement pending investigation and support.

Post-registration student/learner

If there is a risk to public safety posed by a post-registration student/learner being in a professional or employed setting the Academic Lead for Fitness to Practise will recommend that the Head of School notify the individual's employer on receipt of the concern.

Risk to others on campus

If there is a risk to others on campus posed by the individual then an *Ability to Engage Meeting* may be scheduled under the UEA Student Engagement Procedure. Advice and support will also be sought from UEA Security Services and the Police, as necessary.

High level concerns

An initial meeting with the student/learner, Academic Lead for Fitness to Practise, and course director is indicated.

In the initial meeting, or within five days thereafter, a decision will be made in relation to further investigative or disciplinary action.

In some cases, there may be a need to appoint an Investigating Officer to conduct a comprehensive investigation, especially where there appears to be an apparent case to answer in respect of professional misconduct or unsuitability.

Medium and Low-level concerns

Referral to Course Director and/or Adviser for a professional discussion/reflection on the concern raised.

Cases may be escalated to a “high level concern” following this meeting and input from Academic Lead for Fitness to Practise lead may be required.

Assessment related concerns

Assessment related concerns do not normally fall under the remit of the Fitness to Practise process.

Although competence is an important contributor to an individual’s Fitness to Practise, normally the Fitness to Practise Process should only be used when the assessment process cannot be used to address the deficit in competence.

Where practice or theory-based assessment gives concern about an individual’s fitness to practise, staff are encouraged to discuss the matter with the Academic Lead for Fitness to Practise before raising their concerns formally.

2.6. After concerns are triaged, the Academic Lead for Fitness to Practice will normally take one or more of the following of actions:

- No fitness to practise concerns found.
- No further action required following discussion with student/learner.
- Reflective Activity
- Refer to the UEA [Student Engagement Procedure](#)
- Refer to UEA Student Services / Student Union / Other support services.
- Issue a formal Head of School’s warning.
- Appoint Investigating Officer for further enquiry.
- Recommend that Head of School refer to Student Senate Disciplinary Committee (SSDC) under University General Regulations for students.

Appendix 1.

Triage tool for assessing issues of concern raised about students/learners

Criteria	Low Level	Medium Level	High Level
Risk	<p>Low level risk to service users/ other individuals/ educators.</p> <p>The risk is confined to the individual.</p>	<p>The concern if repeated, has the potential to have some degree of consequences for the public – whether that is a service user or a placement staff or fellow individuals or members of faculty and staff.</p>	<p>The individual has behaved in a manner which has put members of the public at risk of harm.</p>
Health	<p>The individual has health problems that are manageable, and they are taking adequate steps to ensure that their fitness to practise is not impaired by their health.</p>	<p>The individual has significant health problems that potentially put their fitness to practise in jeopardy.</p> <p>There is insight but the individual is not taking action to address the fact that their health may compromise their fitness to practise.</p>	<p>The individual is a risk to themselves or others.</p> <p>There has been deliberate act(s) of self- harm or intent to self-harm.</p> <p>There is evidence that the individual's health is impacting on others' safety and welfare.</p> <p>There is a lack of insight or state of psychosis.</p>
Conduct	<p>Appears to be a momentary lapse in judgement on the part of the individual.</p> <p>Misunderstanding of expectations.</p>	<p>Significant transgression of professional expectations.</p> <p>There may have been similar concerns raised previously with a failure to learn from debrief/feedback.</p>	<p>Clear breach of University Regulations and/or professional expectations.</p> <p>There is an element of dishonesty to the concern.</p> <p>There is a pattern of behaviour related to unprofessional conduct.</p>

Experience	<p><i>An inexperienced student/learner who may be unaware of the expectations of professional behaviour both inside and outside university/practise settings</i></p> <p>For example:</p> <p>The individual is unaware; has not been instructed, advised, or informed about professional behaviour and the expectations on them as a student/learner on a health course.</p> <p>They are in first year or first semester of their course.</p> <p>No previous concerns raised.</p>	<p><i>A student/learner who can be expected to be aware of expectations of professional behaviour. but the student/learner may be uncertain as to the precise nature and application.</i></p> <p>For example:</p> <p>The individual has received guidance or instruction about professionalism and professional behaviour but has not fully understood or demonstrated its application.</p> <p>They are in the second or later semester/term of their course.</p> <p>Previous low-level concerns have been raised</p>	<p><i>An experienced student/learner who is aware of, and understands the importance of, the requirements and expectations of professionalism and professional behaviour.</i></p> <p>For example:</p> <p>The individual is aware, e.g. has undertaken instruction in professionalism and professional behaviour.</p> <p>Clear instructions re expectations of professional behaviour have been given but have been ignored.</p> <p>They already hold professional qualification recordable with Nursing and Midwifery Council or Health and Care Professions Council.</p> <p>Previous concerns have been raised.</p>
Intent	<p>On the balance of probability, 'intention' is unlikely or doubtful.</p> <p>The evidence indicates that the action of the individual as unintentional or due to lack of knowledge.</p>	<p>On the balance of probability, 'intention' is probable but cannot clearly be substantiated.</p> <p>The evidence indicates that the action of the individual was because of carelessness, thoughtlessness.</p> <p>The individual is expected to be aware of the nature of the action as being considered 'unprofessional'</p>	<p>On the balance of probability, 'intention' can be substantiated.</p> <p>The evidence indicates that the action of the individual was deliberate and planned.</p> <p>The individual is expected to be aware of the nature of the action as being considered 'unprofessional'</p>