Student Statements: Fitness to Practise

How this guide helps

This guide sets out the key reasons for drafting a Fitness to Practise Statement, what to include in a statement and how to use your statement in a Fitness to Practise Panel meeting.

You may also wish to use this guide to prepare key points for a Fitness to Practise Investigation. You can discuss with your adviser how the statements for these meetings may differ.

One difference between preparing for these two meetings is that a letter informing you of a full Fitness to Practise Panel will ask that you submit any statement prior to the panel meeting. This is not normally requested before an Investigation meeting.

Reasons for a Fitness to Practise Statement

While there is no requirement to write a student statement, it is expected that you will provide a response to the allegations or concerns that led to the Fitness to Practise process.

A considered statement is recommended, because of the potential outcomes from the Fitness to Practise process.

A Fitness to Practise statement:

- Helps you to focus on the key points you wish to make in any meetings
- Enables you to share key points with your Adviser/companion before the meeting
- Presents an opportunity to reflect on any concerns that have been raised with you
- Answers the questions the Fitness to Practise Panel (or Investigator) may have
- Acts as a ‘script’ in your meeting
- Forms part of the official record of the meeting
- Is a written record to help with the decision-making process

Key features of your statement

Whilst it may be tempting to provide a detailed and comprehensive explanation, your statement should be a concise summary of key messages – one or two sides of A4 (between 500 & 700 words).

It should be a clear account of key points – to help with this consider having a clear structure that make use of:

- Headings
- Paragraphs
Headings, paragraphs & bullet points

Headings, paragraphs, and bullet points all help break up large blocks of text which enables you deliver those headline messages you wish to leave the Fitness Practice Panel to consider.

Introduction

A chance to ‘thank’ the Fitness to Practice Panel, outline the concerns that were raised and refer to any evidence submitted. An introduction also presents an opportunity to summarise whether the Fitness to Practice process has helped you think differently about the concerns that were initially raised with you (see the suggested section on ‘Lessons Learnt’).

Main body

An opportunity to link your response to the concerns under each separate heading. Your reflection and reference to the relevant professional codes of conduct maybe crucial.

Lessons Learnt

Part of a Fitness to Practise process is often to show insight into why concerns are being investigated as well as your ability to learn from any past mistakes.

Under ‘Lessons Learnt’ you can highlight any rehabilitative or corrective steps you have already taken or to outline an action plan for the future to avoid repeating past mistakes and provide examples of some strategies you will employ to prevent repeated incidents.

Include any relevant support you have accessed and if there are any difficult circumstances you want to be taken into account that are relevant. You may find our guide Wellbeing: describing it's impact helpful.

Remember to include in your statement the steps you have taken as well as those you plan to take.

Summary – While the Investigation or Panel meeting provides ample opportunity to present key facts you may wish to finish with a sentence summarising the key messages.

Further help

For further guidance on the Fitness to Practise process, contact The Advice Centre Tel: 02380 592 085 or e-mail: advice@susu.org

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