

How This Guide helps

The following step by step guide provides you with basic information and advice on what to do if you are investigated as part of the Fitness to Practise process. If you would like additional support, you can contact us using the details below. Please note that an adviser will not be able to predict the outcome of any Fitness to Practise meeting.

Contact Details



023 8059 2085



advice@susu.org



The Advice Centre - SUSU



susu.org/support

Wellbeing

It is important to recognise that it is normal and natural to feel some anxiety when you are following a formal process and that the University has support in place to help you with your wellbeing. You can contact the Universities Wellbeing Team on studenthub@soton.ac.uk or by calling **023 80 599 599**. They are available **24 hours a day, 7 days a week**.

Step 1: The regulations

Read the Regulations Governing Fitness to Practise in The University Calendar using the following link: [Fitness to Practise regulations.](#)

Pay attention to what your duties are as a student studying on a professional course, the concerns that may trigger a Fitness to Practise investigation, and where you can seek help and support in the process.

Note the regulations also provide normal timescales of the process and list the potential outcomes of an informal meeting, a Fitness to Practise Investigation, and a full Fitness to Practise Panel.

Step 2: Summary of the process

The Fitness to Practise process consists of several stages. Minor, or 'low-level' concerns about conduct, health or behaviour are dealt with internally within the faculty, giving student support and an opportunity to improve prior to formal steps. For more serious concerns, or if there is no improvement despite support, a more formal procedure may commence. When the formal process is initiated, an investigator will be nominated to decide whether your Fitness to Practise may be impaired. If the investigator finds your Fitness to Practise may be impaired your case will be referred to the chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel (for lower-level concerns), or your case may be referred directly to the full Fitness to Practise Panel.

The full Panel has the authority to make the decision about your progression on the course, depending on the seriousness of the concerns raised. The final stage is a Fitness to Practise Appeal, which can be lodged by the student following the outcome of the full Fitness to Practise Panel if they have evidence supporting one or more of the relevant grounds.

Step 3: Fitness to Practise Meeting & Student

Once you have read the Fitness to Practise regulations, be clear at which stage of the Fitness to Practise process you are.

Prepare for any upcoming meetings by reviewing any concerns raised, relevant guidance or codes of conduct written by the relevant professional body such as the GMC or the NMC.

Read our Student Statements: Fitness to Practise Guide which can be found here: [Future to Practice Statement Writing Guide](#)

You will see why drafting a student statement early on is a key part of helping you managing this process as it:

- Helps you to focus on the key points you wish to make in any meetings
- Enables you to share key points with your companion /Adviser before the meeting
- Presents you with an opportunity to reflect on any concerns that have been raised


We strongly recommend that you speak to The Advice Centre if you are called to a fitness to practice investigation as the process can seem complex and you may find guidance throughout helpful.

Disclaimer:

While care has been taken to ensure that information contained in The Advice Centre publications is true and correct at the time of writing, changes in circumstances after the time of publication may impact on the accuracy of this information. The Advice Centre and SUSU cannot accept responsibility for any actions taken as a result of advice given in this publication.

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Providing free, independent, and confidential advice and information.

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