

## **FIT TO REMAIN OR RETURN POLICY**

### **1 PURPOSE**

Students who are 'at risk', or who are reported as 'at risk' of harm to self or others are offered support at University College through the Fit to Remain or Return Policy and Procedure.

For the purposes of this policy, 'at risk' refers to a risk to the health and wellbeing of the student or the health and wellbeing of other students.

### **2 POLICY STATEMENT**

A residential college is not always the most appropriate place for students going through known or suspected mental or physical health issues, or who are displaying or participating in self-destructive behaviours such as suicide threats or attempts, self-harm, drug use and other associated 'at risk' behaviours. Moreover, such behaviours can have a large impact on the peer community. The College is not equipped to manage and/or supervise such 'at risk' behaviours. The College also has a duty to avoid placing the responsibility of support on other residents, staff, and resident tutors or youth workers as this can cause anxiety, stress, or academic disadvantage for them in turn. As part of the Fit to Remain or Return Policy and Procedure, the student may be asked to move off campus and to a place of better support, to maximize safety of the student or those around them.

### **3 POLICY**

- 3.1 Students suspected of being 'at risk' will be asked to an interview with the Dean of Students and Student Wellbeing Coordinator. This meeting will take place at any time of semester, as deemed necessary, in order to discuss and assess the wellbeing needs of the student, and the needs of the community.
- 3.2 At the sole, unfettered discretion of the Dean of Students, students may be required to provide the Dean of Students with evidence of their fitness to remain at or return to College. Such evidence will need to be provided by an appropriate medical professional and will be required to be to the satisfaction of the Dean of Students and Student Wellbeing Coordinator.
- 3.3 The student will be required to provide any evidence as requested by the Dean of Students within a reasonable period of time following the request for evidence to have been made of the student.
- 3.4 If the student is unable or refuses to provide requested evidence or if they are unable or refuse to attend any scheduled meeting, the Dean of Students and Student Wellbeing Coordinator may make an assessment of the student's fitness to remain or fitness to return based on the information available to them at that time and provide that assessment to the Head of College.
- 3.5 The ultimate determination of the student's fitness to remain or fitness to return will be made by the Head of College in discussion with the Senior Management team (Dean of Students, Dean of Studies and Commercial Manager).

### **4 PROCEDURE**

- 4.1 If the student does wish to seek to return or remain at College, s/he/they must:
  - 4.1.1 Provide a signed Permission to Obtain and Release Information Consent Form from relevant personal and professional supports involved in the ongoing care and support

of the student.

- 4.1.2 Give express and irrevocable permission to the College to inform appropriate members of the College staff and residential team of the student's condition/s and the on-going status of treatment to help support the student through this period.
- 4.1.3 Provide a letter describing a Management Plan from a medical professional including psychologist, counsellor, specialist, physiotherapist etc. about steps currently being taken to address the ongoing issue. This should include the frequency of on-going counselling; medical support, surgeries, medications etc.
- 4.1.4 Provide a letter from the student seeking readmission or to remain at College. This letter must include how the student expects to follow their Management Plan. This letter must also include details of emergency contacts in the case of direct action needing to be taken. This person should be a family member, guardian, or a health professional. This person must be able to be contacted at all times, given that crises often happen after hours or on weekends when college staff may be unavailable.
- 4.1.5 Agree to attend regular appointments with the Dean of Students or Student Wellbeing Coordinator while in residence to ensure that they continue to be fit to remain across the semester, and to enable altered support structures as the student's situation changes.
- 4.1.6 Agree to attend an appointment with the Dean of Studies to discuss any academic concerns arising and to be provided with relevant academic support structures. A separate Academic Action Plan may be created, and, if so, the student will be expected to follow the Plan in order to be considered fit to return and/or remain.
- 4.2 On receipt of and consideration of all relevant paperwork and reports, the Head of College in discussion with the Executive Leadership Team (Dean of Students, Dean of Studies, and Commercial Manager), and/or the Student Wellbeing Coordinator will decide regarding the students' fitness to remain or return.
- 4.3 Should it be determined that the student is fit to remain or return, but they subsequently fail to attend scheduled appointments, follow any aspect of their agreed Management Plan, or continue to display 'at risk behaviour' they may be required to submit further evidence of their fitness to reside at the College or may be asked to move offsite to access more appropriate support.
- 4.4 Should it be determined that the student is not fit to remain or return at such time, this determination will not carry the right of appeal, although the student is able to apply again after 6 months, and on the production of new relevant information.
- 4.5 **CONFLICTS WITH STANDARD RESIDENT TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

In the event any of the terms and conditions in this policy conflict with any of the standard resident terms and conditions, the terms and conditions set out in this policy will prevail.

## **5 COMMUNICATION AND IMPLEMENTATION OF POLICY**

This Policy will be communicated and discussed with staff at the Staff Annual Review and Planning Day and with students at their Semester 1 and Semester 2 Induction. Implementation of the Policy will commence immediately thereafter.

## 6 APPROVAL AND REVIEW DETAILS

Approval and Policy Owner	Details
Approval Authority	<b>Council</b>
Advisory Committee to Approval Authority	<b>N/A</b>
Policy Owner	<b>Dean of Students</b>
Next Review Date	<b>February 2026</b>

Version Control	Date Approved	Description of Change
V1	November 2020	Original
V2	January 2022	Changes to procedure: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Some paragraph re-formatting and language edits (i.e., <i>Fit</i> to Remain or Return rather than <i>Fitness</i>)</li> <li>- Clearer distinction between Policy and Procedural steps</li> <li>- Addition of clause 4.3</li> </ul>
V3	February 2023	Insert Clause 6: Communications and Implementation of Policy.
V4	February 2025	Insert defined term 'at risk'