



# **Attendance and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure**

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Equality Impact Assessment Date: August 2022

## Contents

History of Changes .....	3
1. Purpose .....	4
2. Scope .....	4
3. Roles and Responsibilities .....	5
4. Student Attendance Procedure .....	6
5. Fitness to Study Guidance .....	7
6. Fitness to Study Procedure .....	9
7. Fitness to Study Right of Appeal .....	11
8. Break From Studies.....	12
9. Return to Study Review.....	12
10. Data Protection .....	13
11. Monitoring, Reporting and Review .....	13
Appendix 1: Flow Chart for Student Attendance and Fitness To Teach Procedures .	14
Appendix 2: Break from Studies/Suspension Letter under Fitness to Study .....	16
Appendix 3: Template for Initial Fitness to Study Meeting/Return to Study Meeting..	17
Invitees: Course tutor/key lecturer and student .....	17
Suggested Meeting Agenda:.....	17
Appendix 4: Template for Formal Fitness to Study Meeting .....	18
Appendix 5: Equality Impact Assessment .....	19

## History of Changes

Version	Description of Change	Authorised by	Date
1.1	Creation of policy	B Brownlee	August 2022

West Lothian College is an inclusive organisation and all policies, procedures, strategies, plans, provisions, criteria, functions, practices, and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services are assessed to consider the impact on staff and students covered by the Equalities Act 2010 by the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). Protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership (in employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

Please see end of this document for EIA.

## **1. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to provide a clear process to support student attendance and fitness to study. This policy:

- Describes the responsibilities of students to attend college wherever possible
- Explains the responsibilities of students to report when they are not able to attend college
- Sets out how the college will support students whose attendance and behaviour are starting to affect their chances of successfully completing their course of study.

## **2. Scope**

This policy relates to student attendance and fitness to study.

West Lothian College is committed to providing opportunities for learning in a caring and supportive environment which respects the individual. Students are most likely to succeed when they have excellent attendance at college and on work placements. This policy and set of procedures are written to ensure that there are clear and fair guidelines for students. It is designed to provide a framework to ensure that all students and staff are aware of the procedures in relation to absence reporting and monitoring of attendance.

Students must take responsibility for their own learning, and attendance at all classes at the college is compulsory unless the college has approved other modes of study.

The Student Attendance Policy and Procedure relates to all students whether studying full-time or part-time college courses where they have timetabled attendance. Students are expected to attend their course of study as timetabled but where a student requires time off from their course due to medical or other reasons, they are required to follow the procedure outlined in the Student Attendance Procedure below. Some students are not timetabled to attend specific classes, for example, work base candidates, and a separate guidance is issued to these students, their assessors and employers. This policy does not apply to them.

West Lothian College has an obligation to comply with the funding guidelines and policies issued to them by the Scottish Funding Council and the Student Awards Agency for Scotland. How these apply to students is laid out in the Student Funding Advice which is revised annually and published on the college website.

It is college policy to undertake weekly attendance checks during the academic year. The Student Attendance Procedure below details the actions which will be taken. Should attendance fall below the required level during each period, the college has the discretion to withhold student funding support for that period. Students will be notified of the monitoring periods on the college Student Funding Advice, published on the college

website. They will also be advised on any award letters issued by the college in relation to all college-managed student support funds.

The college recognises the importance of student retention and achievement and has a responsibility to identify and support students whose attendance is causing concern. Where this occurs, individual attendance will be discussed at a meeting with their lecturer and/or course tutor/key lecturer, where the student will be given support and guidance to improve their situation.

Where unauthorised absence affects the progression or likelihood of achievement of a course, we may move to the Fitness to Study Policy. This policy may be used to withdraw students from their course. This would be a last resort, but all steps are detailed in the Fitness to Study Procedure below.

This policy and procedure will consider the individual needs of the student as appropriate, noting differences created by age, disability, gender re-assignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, religion and belief, race, sex and sexual orientation and intersectional themes such as poverty, care experience and caring responsibilities.

### **3. Roles and Responsibilities**

Students attending timetabled classes need to attend college or online classes where this is approved and take responsibility for arrangements to ensure they can attend and maintain an excellent attendance rate. Students are also continuously encouraged to seek support and this will be available at all stages of study.

Students will be involved in the management of their own wellbeing wherever possible, though in cases where students are unable to participate in this, the processes should still be followed to the best of the college's ability where possible to do so.

In exceptional circumstances where there is no choice to meet in person such as extended hospitalisation, police custody, in prison and so on, the college may deal with issues using written reports or statements where the student, or their representative, is unable to attend.

Delivery staff (lecturers, assessors, instructors) have an obligation to do whatever they can to encourage students to attend college. This includes marking registers promptly, monitoring attendance and highlighting to students where attendance starts to drop.

Student Support staff, specifically the Student Support Officer, will proactively monitor attendance and follow up according to the guidance in this policy.

Student Funds staff will support attendance by correct application of the rules on student funding as laid out in the Student Funding Advice.

#### 4. Student Attendance Procedure

- Where required, lecturers, instructors and assessors must record attendance accurately and promptly every day using the college StaffAdvantage system
- Students must arrive on time for classes. Late arrival more than 15 minutes or leaving class early more than 15 minutes will be recorded as such in attendance registers. If a student is late or leaves early without prior agreement, the lecturer will raise this with the student at the earliest opportunity.
- If a student is absent, the lecturer will raise this with the student when next in class to ensure there are no issues, and that they are caught up with work missed, and also:
  - Email student direct, copying in course tutor/key lecturer and named student support OR
  - Contact course tutor/key lecturer with a list of names that were absent to chase, copying in named student support
- The course tutor/key lecturer will follow up with absences in person with the student at the earliest opportunity.
- Student Support will also follow up any absence with the student direct where a student has been absent twice in a two week period and also liaise with the course tutor/key lecturer about this.
- Student absence will be operated according to the annual update issued by student funds, whether or not the student receives funds. For current guidance on Student Funds, contact the student funds team or see the Guide published on the college website. This is to ensure consistency of practice regardless of student circumstances.
- Absence due to medical reasons will only be accepted for a maximum of four weeks over the college session. This will be pro-rata for short courses. Medical related absences must be covered by a self-certification for up to five college days. For longer absences, a doctors' letter, Fit Note or medical appointment evidence are required.
- Absences which exceed four weeks will result in the termination of any funding awards and may result in the withdrawal of the student from their course. If there are exceptional circumstances, including but not limited to extended illness, bereavement and so on, which prevent the student from attending college for a period more than this limit, the Learning and Skills Manager will contact the Student Funds Officer to discuss the student's situation and the likelihood of them being able to continue their studies. In particular, the Learning and Skills Manager will need to confirm to the Student Funds Officer that the student is still engaging with their learning which is a specific Student Funding Council requirement for any student funding.

- Students can self-certify short periods of sickness or any other absence for a maximum of 15 days in total each academic year. Sickness which exceeds five days in any period must be covered by a medical certificate issued by the student's General Practitioner. The medical certificate should be given to the Student Funds team for recording.
- In cases of sick dependents, the student must contact the Learning and Skills Manager immediately and a short absence may be authorised to allow arrangements to be put in place.
- 4 weeks maternity leave is allowed (6 weeks if a caesarean birth) and 2 weeks paternity leave.
- Where students are not able to attend college for short periods but are well enough to study, either on a planned or unplanned basis (for example, immobilised by a medical operation), they should communicate this to their lecturers and can discuss and agree with their lecturers how best to keep up with their studies

Students taking holidays out with the college holidays must notify their course tutor/key lecturer or Learning and Skills Manager.

Further Education Bursaries, Educational Maintenance Allowances, Childcare and Discretionary funds are not paid for periods where students take holidays out with the college holidays.

Where there has been unauthorised absence for 4 weeks, all funding awards will be terminated.

Students can check their electronic attendance record using StudentAdvantage and discuss any corrections with their course tutor/key lecturer or allocated Student Support Team Member in the first instance.

Notwithstanding what is written above, if a student's funding is withheld or withdrawn due to unsatisfactory attendance, the student has the right of appeal. Funding appeals must be made in the form of a letter or email and submitted to the Student Funds team.

Monitoring of compliance with this Attendance Policy will be carried out by the Student Funds staff, course tutor/key lecturer and Student Support staff. A flowchart of this is included in Appendix 1, and this will be reviewed annually and communicated to staff and students.

## **5. Fitness to Study Guidance**

Concerns about student's fitness to study may present in several ways whether on their own or in combination. This is not an exhaustive list, but some examples may include:

- Poor attendance
- A sudden decline in academic performance

- Lack of engagement with tutors
- A change or failure to respond to college communications
- Change in mood
- Social withdrawal
- Emotional distress
- Decline in personal hygiene (not a justification on its own)
- The sudden onset of mental or physical illness
- Signs or evidence of self-harming
- Drug or alcohol problems
- Regularly inconsistent or irrational behaviour or communication from the student
- Failure to submit work or fulfil other requirements of the course
- Repeated interruptions of study
- General failure to engage with the college, the course, and any support that has been offered

In the case where such concerns are raised by the student themselves, the course tutor/key lecturer, or Student Support staff, the college may move to apply the Fitness to Study Procedure.

The Fitness to Study procedure is not an alternative to disciplinary procedures, and in some cases, the disciplinary procedures may be more appropriate. A student's fitness to study may still be considered if other procedures (e.g. disciplinary) have already been invoked. The college may refer the case from one procedure to another that best fits the circumstances.

The concerns raised about a student's fitness to study may relate to a diagnosed illness or disability, but this procedure can still be used in such cases where there is no diagnosis.

If a concern about a student's fitness to study occurs while on placement, the college can discuss and consider alternative arrangements with the placement provider. If alternative arrangements are not possible, the student's placement may be withdrawn, deferred, or other arrangements made.

All matters relating to this procedure will be assessed according to the individual circumstances. In exceptional cases for example when violence to persons or property is involved, the college may adjust aspects of this procedure to ensure health and safety, equality and fairness are adhered to in every case.

Cases can be raised in several ways, such as through college staff (e.g. lecturers, support staff), other students, or third parties (such as GPs, other healthcare providers, placement providers). This procedure aims to provide early intervention, consistency, and collaboration between staff, the student, and any necessary third parties. Each individual circumstance will be dealt with sensitively, compassionately, and in a timely, coordinated manner.

Though this procedure aims to work with students in a cooperative way, in some cases it may be deemed necessary and appropriate for the student to take a break from studies, to suspend or even terminate the student's studies.

Use of this procedure is not to be used as, or taken as, a justification for students not engaging in essential criteria for their course (e.g. they can continue to complete assessments and attend placement, unless delay or cancellation of assessment or placement has been specifically agreed in an action plan)

In implementing this procedure, the college maintains its commitment to its duty of care, and any obligations towards students under The Equality Act 2010, including any reasonable adjustments.

## **6. Fitness to Study Procedure**

### *Initial Concerns and Informal Intervention*

Any initial concerns about the student regarding their fitness to study should be raised with their course tutor (further education courses) or key lecturer (higher education courses). After having consulted with the learning and skills manager, the course tutor/key lecturer will arrange an initial Fitness to Study meeting with the student, intended to be informal, supportive, non-confrontational and to establish the facts of what has been going on. The meeting should be held as soon as possible once the initial concern has been raised.

During this meeting, the course tutor/key lecturer will:

- Explain the Fitness To Study procedure, and tell the student where it can be accessed/provide them with a copy to read
- Outline the reason for having the meeting, explaining the concerns raised and give examples where appropriate
- Explain the impact the concerning behaviour may have/is having on the student (or where applicable, on other students)
- Discuss with the student how fitness to study is an important aspect towards being successful in their course, and encourage them to engage with the college on any support offered.

The content of the meeting will determine the outcome. Where possible and appropriate, course tutor/key lecturers/key lecturers should propose an action plan to address the concerns and ensure first contact is made with appropriate support, which the student should agree to. In instances where the student does not come to, or does not engage during the meeting, then a formal intervention and panel meeting should be called. A template for recording the initial meeting is given in Appendix 2.

### *Further Concerns and Formal Intervention*

It is hoped that following an initial intervention, the student's attendance and active engagement with the course will return to expected levels. Where initial intervention has been unsuccessful, or the student's circumstances require further intervention, a fitness to study panel may be called.

Regarding when to move to a formal meeting, a balance should be sought between being supportive and moving things on, as while this is progressing, the student may be falling behind. In general, it is recommended that after usual lecturer follow up, Student Support follow up and an initial Fitness to Study meeting, that the matter should progress to a formal meeting within 10 working days of the initial meeting. To ensure adequate notice is given, it is recommended to arrange to meet the student again 10 working days after the initial meeting, then a decision can be made in this period on whether this will be a formal meeting, or if improvement is made, to have the meeting to close off and note requirement improvement has been met.

The student should be given at least 5 days written notice of the panel, including an explanation of what the panel is for, who will be in attendance, and informing them that they can bring someone with them for support. The student should also be asked at this time, where appropriate, to bring with them any relevant documentation (for example, medical evidence). The staff included at the panel meeting should only be those who are relevant, and who can come up with solutions to the student's circumstances. This may include the course tutor/key lecturer, learning and skills manager, student support manager and any support staff assigned to that student/their class, along with any other relevant staff (e.g. student funds, a student association representative). During the meeting, the student will be informed of why they are there, given examples where appropriate and given the opportunity to ask any questions.

This panel meeting will continue even if the student does not respond to or engage with the college's communications.

The outcome of this panel meeting may be as follows:

- no further action is required
- an agreed action plan needs to be created
- previous action plans need revised or maintained
- break from studies of the student's studies for a defined, or undefined amount of time, or withdrawal from the course.

It may also be necessary to refer the case to one of the college's other procedures (e.g. the student disciplinary procedure).

There should be a written record of the meeting and any actions taken because of the meeting. Where action plans are agreed upon, they should include specific actions and

expectations, appropriate support to enable the student to complete these actions, and dates for review meetings.

An outcome report will be provided to the student as soon as possible after the meeting. A template is provided in Appendix 3

Any termination letter must be issued by the Vice-Principal – Learning and Attainment.

## **7. Fitness to Study Right of Appeal**

Where a student wishes to appeal against the decision of the panel, they should follow the procedure below.

If the decision is one in which the student has been advised to take a break from their studies, or their studies have been terminated, the student should not be on campus while the appeal is pending, although the student may receive permission to attend if it can be suitably demonstrated that it would be unreasonable to prevent them from studying during the appeal process, for example if circumstances have changed substantially since the panel meeting. However, this cannot be overruled where the student presents a danger to others.

The Fitness to Study appeal should be lodged within 10 working days of the panel decision. The appeal should be in the form of a letter or email and addressed to the Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources.

The appeal can only be brought on these grounds:

- The appeal process can be shown to have had an irregularity
- Further evidence in support of the student has become available.

The appeal should include any supporting evidence and should state on which of the two grounds above it is being made.

An appeal panel will be called. This will be made up of a Learning and Skills manager from another faculty, the Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources, and a Student Association representative and will review the outcome of the fitness to study panel and any additional supportive evidence provided.

The appeal panel may invite any relevant person to attend.

The outcome of the appeal panel will be provided in writing the form of a letter to all relevant parties within 10 days.

The decision of the appeal panel is final.

## **8. Break From Studies**

At any stage of this procedure, the student may be asked to take a temporary break from their studies. This is not punitive and will either be for the benefit of their own wellbeing or to protect the health and safety of others.

During their period of a break from studies, students should not be on the college campus other than for specific appointments and meetings, but they should be given learning resources and work to do to encourage them to keep up with their studies, or catch up if they have fallen behind.

Student Support can be provided online during this period, if it's judged helpful to allow the student to keep up with their studies.

In instances where the break from studies is for an unspecified amount of time, there will be continuous reviews every 2 weeks or at key stages to be agreed with the student.

During a period of break from studies, students are not expected to engage with the college, unless the student is currently receiving support from the college, such as student support, or counselling. Support and counselling can be arranged to be delivered online to try to help the student keep up with their studies, even if not on campus.

## **9. Return to Study Review**

In instances where the outcome of the fitness to study panel is a temporary break from studies, hopefully they will be able to return to study and should contact the course tutor/key lecturer in writing (email) to indicate this desire. A return to study review will take place prior to the student's return, ideally 10 working days beforehand, but this shouldn't delay return to studies where it is possible to return sooner.

However, students should only be encouraged to return to their studies if they can provide evidence that they are fit to resume their studies, for example, they have been able to complete the work given to them whilst suspended, or caught up with outstanding work, where this is the case, or other evidence has been provided.

During the return to study review, the student will meet with their course tutor/key lecturer, student support manager, and any other appropriate student support persons or student association representative. A return to study plan will be agreed with the student, and will include any relevant support, which the student must agree to engage with. The same template as the Initial Fitness to Teach meeting can be used and is provided in Appendix 1.

Once the student has returned to study, regular review meetings with the course tutor/key lecturer, student support manager, and relevant student support staff should take place until such a time as it is no longer deemed necessary.

## **10. Data Protection**

All information gathered in conjunction with the Attendance and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure will be processed in accordance with current data protection legislation and the framework of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002.

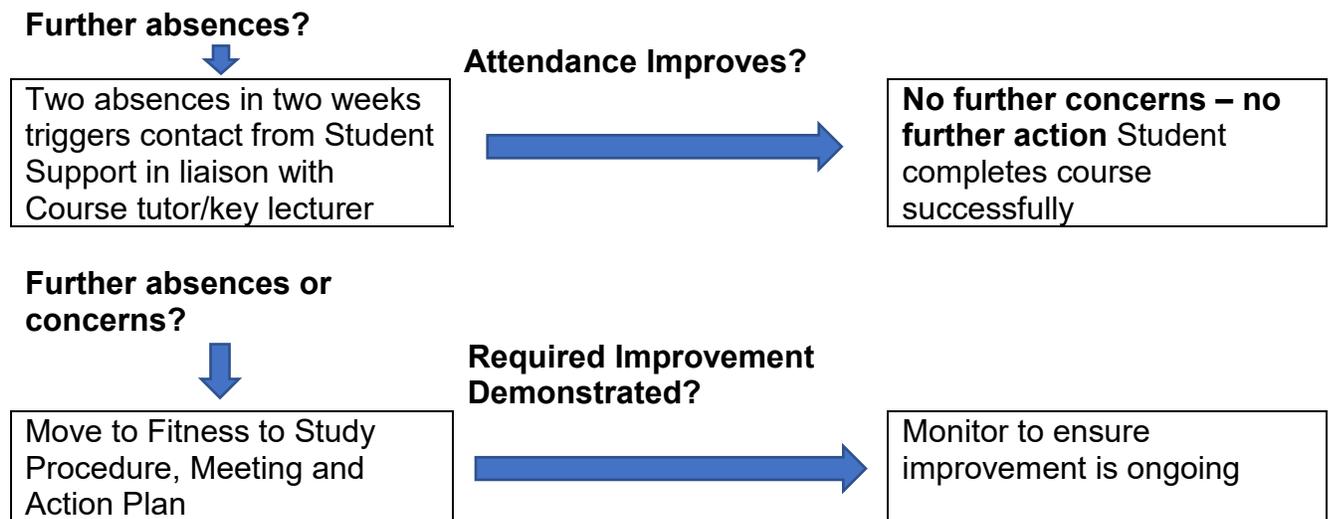
## **11. Monitoring, Reporting and Review**

This Attendance and Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure will be regularly monitored by the Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources, for example, the attendance policy on an annual basis to ensure it stays in line with Student Funds guidance. A report of instances of formal fitness to study meetings will be reported to the Equality and Widening Access Committee on an annual basis, to monitor the impact of these meetings and subsequent decisions.

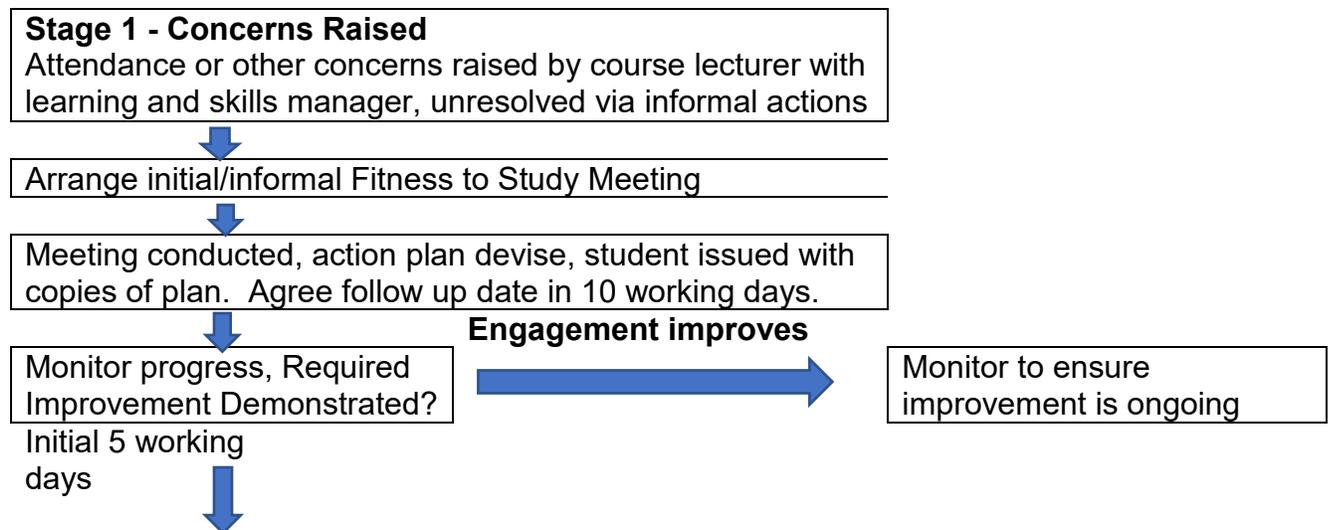
**Appendix 1: Flow Chart for Student Attendance and Fitness To Teach Procedures**  
**Flow chart for Student Attendance Procedure**

<b>Student comes to class late, or leaves early</b>
Record on register, follow up during class with individual

<b>Student is absent from class (planned or unplanned)</b>
Lecturer records absence on register and follows up informally asap to ensure they catch up with work missed, and one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o Email student direct, copying in course tutor/key lecturer and named student support <u>OR</u></li> <li>o Contact course tutor/key lecturer with a list of names that were absent to chase, copying in named student support</li> </ul> Course tutor/key lecturer may also discuss with student at weekly meeting



**Flow chart for Fitness to Study Procedure**



### Improvement Made?

#### Stage 2 – Formal Meeting

No, ensure student is given 5 days' notice of formal Fitness to Study Meeting and advised of right to representation.

Yes



Monitor to ensure improvement is ongoing, use arranged meeting to close off or decide further actions.

**Hold meeting, reach decision, communicate this to student**

### LSM takes appropriate action as follows:

Possible outcomes:	LSM Action	Timescale
No further action is required	Monitor to ensure engagement is ongoing	One working month
Agreed action plan to be created	Create action plan and monitor completion	One working month
Revise or maintain previous action plan	Revise plan	One working month
Break from studies from course for defined amount of time	Break from studies letter	Defined period
Break from studies from course for undefined amount of time	Break from studies letter	Undefined period
Termination of studies	Letter from Vice-Principal – Learning and Attainment	N/A

Appeal	LSM Action	Timescale
If the student wishes to appeal, they should follow the guidance in the policy, with the support of the Student Association or Student Support where this is helpful	None – Handled by Head of Service QSSLR	Within 10 working days of Formal meeting

## **Appendix 2: Break from Studies/Suspension Letter under Fitness to Study**

Dear

### ***Notice of Break from Studies/Suspension Under Fitness to Study Policy***

#### **Sentence to be adapted depending on situation**

We met today to give you a chance to explain several examples of your recent behaviour which are greatly worrying to us. They are also causing other students and staff to feel unsafe.

- Examples including dates
- 

We were not able to reach agreement about why you behaved like this or that your behaviour would improve.

For your safety, and the safety of others, we are now suspending you from college until further notice while we work to find a way for you to come back to your studies.

We want to meet with you again on XXXXX to explain some ways that could support you right now.

Suspension does not affect your bursary payment and we are working hard to get you back to college.

Yours sincerely

Faculty Learning and Skills Manager

## Appendix 3: Template for Initial Fitness to Study Meeting/Return to Study Meeting

### Template for Initial Fitness to Study Meeting and Action Plan or Return to Study Meeting and Action Plan

Invitees: Course tutor/key lecturer and student  
Student Support Team member, if required

#### Suggested Meeting Agenda:

##### Chair: Course Tutor/Key Lecturer

1. Welcome
2. Lecturer to explain the fitness to study procedure, and tell the student where it can be accessed/provide them with a copy to read
3. Outline the reason for having the meeting, explaining the concerns raised and give examples where appropriate
4. Explain the impact the concerning behaviour may have/is having on the student (or where applicable, on other students)
5. Discuss with the student how fitness to study is an important aspect towards being successful in their course, and encourage them to engage with the college on any support offered.
6. If appropriate, devise an action plan to support the student to regain expected levels of attendance and engagement with course.

#### Fitness to Study – Initial Meeting or Return to Study Review

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

Brief description of situation

Action Plan to Address Concerns:

## Appendix 4: Template for Formal Fitness to Study Meeting

### Suggested Invitees (not all need to be invited):

- Student and their representative, if wished
- Course tutor/key lecturer
- Learning and Skills Manager
- Student Support Manager
- Student Support staff and/or Student Support Officer
- Student Funds
- Student Association representative
- Other

### Suggested Meeting Agenda:

#### Chair: Learning and Skills Manager

1. Welcome and explain nature of meeting
2. Check right to representation
3. All agree wish to support student to return to successful study
4. Outline college concerns
5. Student present any evidence
6. Questions from any party
7. Close with timescale for decision and possible outcomes

Student's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Course \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Evidence presented at meeting by college</b>	
<b>Evidence presented at meeting by student</b>	
<b>Notes of Discussion</b>	
<b>Outcome of meeting:</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/>	No further action is required
<input type="checkbox"/>	Agreed action plan needs to be created
<input type="checkbox"/>	Previous action plans need revised or maintained
<input type="checkbox"/>	Break from studies for a defined, or undefined amount of time
<input type="checkbox"/>	Withdrawal from the course

## Appendix 5: Equality Impact Assessment

Before carrying out an EIA, you should familiarise yourself with the College's EIA Policy Statement and Guidance, along with further information and resources which are available on Sharepoint.

EIA covers **strategies, policies, procedures, plans, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services**, but will be referred to hereinafter as 'policy/practice'.

<b>Policy/Practice (name or brief description):</b>	<b>Attendance and Fitness to Study Policy</b>
<b>Strategy/Policy includes Equalities Statement of Inclusiveness? Yes/No</b>	<b>Text to be included in strategy/policy:</b>  The "Statement of Inclusiveness" below is included in the Policy  West Lothian College is an inclusive organisation and all policies, procedures, strategies, plans, provisions, criteria, functions, practices and activities, including decisions and the delivery of services are assessed to consider the impact on staff and students covered by the Equalities Act 2010 by the completion of an Equalities Impact Assessment (EIA). Protected characteristics are defined as age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership (in employment only), pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation.

<b>Reason for Equality Impact Assessment (choose from the following options):</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proposed new policy/practice</li> <li>Proposed change to an existing policy/practice</li> <li>Undertaking a review of an existing policy/practice</li> <li>Other (please give detail):</li> </ul>	This is a new Policy created to ensure that there are clear and fair guidelines for students and staff in relation to absence reporting, monitoring of attendance, and their fitness to study.
<b>Person responsible for the policy area or practice:</b>	
Name:	Beth Brownlee
Job title:	Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources
<b>An Equality Impact Assessment must be carried out if the policy/practice:</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>affects <b>operational</b> or <b>strategic functions</b> of the College</li> <li>is relevant to the promotion of equality (in terms of the Public Sector Equality Duty 'needs' as set out in the Policy and Guidance)</li> </ul>	
Why the EIA is being carried out	An EIA is relevant to this Policy because it relates directly to the removal of negative impact on students with a protected characteristic, and is intended to ensure all issues identified that may impact a student's attendance, and fitness to continue studying, are assessed and reasonable adjustments made so that students who are impacted are not at a disadvantage and are treated fairly.
<b>Equality Groups</b>	

Relevant to the Policy/Practice, identify which of the under noted equality groups are impacted upon:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Age</li> <li>• Disability</li> <li>• race (including ethnicity and nationality)</li> <li>• religion or belief</li> <li>• sex</li> <li>• sexual orientation</li> <li>• gender reassignment</li> <li>• pregnancy and maternity</li> <li>• marriage or civil partnership</li> </ul>	<p>Relevant to all protected groups except marriage or civil partnership</p> <p>Consideration has been made to the fact that there are multiple reasons (including a disability) such as cultural, religious, age, etc that will affect attendance. Many students will also disclose disability post enrolment, and therefore other equality considerations (such as different cultural attitudes and/or understandings of disability) that may affect disclosure have been considered.</p>

**Record your assessment against the following statements:**

Statement	Equality assessment
Detail the evidence of the needs of the identified equality groups and any gaps in information	
Will application of this policy/practice lead to discrimination (direct or indirect), harassment, victimisation, less favourable treatment for particular equality groups?	<p>It is recognised that the application of this policy may have the potential to discriminate indirectly or victimise students whose attendance is affected by illness or a disability as some disabilities may be hidden or undisclosed.</p> <p>It is also recognised that some students may not share the same cultural understanding and/or awareness of the importance of disclosing disability related needs, and therefore if information and access to support are dependent on self-identification, this may be an issue.</p> <p>However, the policy and processes also emphasise sensitivity, discretion, and confidentiality to mitigate any student concerns about stigma.</p>

<p>If yes, how will the policy/practice be changed to contribute to advancing equality of opportunity</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The process for assessing attendance and fitness to study will continue to be monitored by the Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources on an annual basis.</li> <li>2. The Head of Quality, Student Support and Learning Resources will also undertake regular reviews with students to ensure that individual needs are being met.</li> </ol>
<p>State how this policy/practice will foster good relations:</p>	<p>The policy will promote openness and transparency around the disclosure of student needs and thus support good relations with all protected groups.</p>
<p>Will the policy/practice create any barriers for any other groups?</p>	<p>No</p>
<p>If yes, how will the policy/practice be changed to contribute to advancing equality of opportunity</p>	
<p>Which equality groups or communities have been consulted in the development and review of this policy/practice?</p>	<p>None specifically</p>

<p><b>Equality Impact Assessment Outcome</b></p> <p>Select one of the four options below to indicate how the development/review of the policy/practice will be progressed and state the rationale for the decision. (Delete the options that do not apply):</p>	
<p><b>Option 1:</b> No change required – the assessment is that the policy/practice is/will be robust.</p>	

<p><b>Option 2:</b> Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations.</p> <p><b>Option 3:</b> Continue the policy or practice despite the potential for adverse impact, and which can be mitigated</p> <p><b>Option 4:</b> Stop the policy or practice as there are adverse effects cannot be prevented/mitigated against.</p>	<p><b>Option 2:</b> Adjust the policy or practice – this involves taking steps to remove any barriers, to better advance equality and/or to foster good relations. <b>Action complete: September 2022 policy amended to require annual review and reporting to monitor the impact on students.</b></p>
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**Monitoring**

When will the policy/practice next be reviewed?	April 2025 or as required by changes in policy or legislation
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**Publication of EIA**

<p>Can this EIA be published in full, now? Please state Yes or No</p> <p>If No – please specify when it may be published or indicate restrictions that apply:</p>	<p><b>Yes</b></p>
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**Sign-off**

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<p>EIA undertaken by</p> <p>Name: Date:</p> <p>Accepted by person responsible for the policy/practice named above:</p> <p>Name: Date:</p> <p>Referred by Equalities Committee</p> <p>Date:</p>	<p>Virginia Toyi</p> <p>31 August 2022</p> <p>Beth Brownlee</p> <p>1 September 2022</p> <p>Yes/No</p> <p>Referred on 1 September 2022</p> <p>Date of next Equality and Widening Access Committee is 22 September 2022</p>
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