

The British University in Egypt

Fitness to Study Procedure

Key Policy Information:

Author:	Academic Governance Office
Key Responsible Office:	Office of the Provost
Approved by (committee):	UTLC and Senate
Responsibility for Document Review:	Academic Governance Office
Date Created/First Draft	September 2026
Date Approved:	October 2026
Date Last updated:	October 2026
Date of next review	September 2028

Contents

1. Purpose.....	4
2. Stage 1 – Informal Support and Early Intervention	4
3. Stage 2 – Formal Fitness to Study Case Conference	5
4. Stage 3 – Fitness to Study Panel	8
5. Review and Monitoring	9
6. Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies and Return to Study.....	10
7. Appeals	10
8. Confidentiality and Records.....	11
9. Responsibilities	11

The British University in Egypt

Fitness to Study Procedure

1. Purpose

This Procedure explains how the BUE Fitness to Study Policy should be implemented in practice.

The procedure is intended to ensure that concerns are identified early, students are supported appropriately, responsibilities are clear and formal intervention is used only where proportionate and necessary.

The process should normally progress from **early intervention and support** → **coordinated formal intervention** → **formal Fitness to Study Panel**, although the University may move directly to a later stage where the circumstances or level of risk require this.

2. Stage 1 – Informal Support and Early Intervention

2.1 Identifying a concern

A Fitness to Study concern may be identified by:

- an academic member of staff;
- Personal Tutor;
- Programme Leader;
- Dean or Vice Dean;
- Student Support staff;
- Academic Services;
- the Student Support and Wellbeing Team;
- another professional service;
- a placement or external partner; or
- the student themselves.

Concerns may relate to academic engagement, attendance, behaviour, physical or mental wellbeing, significant personal circumstances, safety or other factors affecting participation.

The person identifying the concern should consider whether it can appropriately be managed through normal student support.

2.2 Immediate risk

If the concern indicates an immediate and significant risk to the student or another person, normal informal procedures should not delay appropriate emergency intervention.

The relevant emergency, medical, safeguarding, security or professional service should be contacted as appropriate.

Once the immediate concern has been addressed, the University should determine whether a Fitness to Study process is required.

2.3 Initial conversation

Where appropriate, the member of staff raising the concern should arrange an initial conversation with the student.

The student may be accompanied by one person of their choice at this meeting, in accordance with the Fitness to Study Policy. The companion may be a friend, family member, fellow student, Students' Union representative, or appropriate member of University staff.

The purpose is to:

- explain the concern;
- listen to the student's perspective;
- understand relevant circumstances;
- identify whether support is already in place;
- identify appropriate sources of support;
- consider reasonable adjustments; and
- agree appropriate next steps.

Staff should avoid attempting to diagnose a student's condition or provide specialist counselling.

Where the concern involves counselling, mental health, wellbeing or other matters within the remit of the Student Support and Wellbeing Team, the student should be referred to that Team, which operates under the responsibility of the Deputy Vice Chancellor for the Student Journey.

2.4 Informal support plan

Where appropriate, an informal support plan should identify:

- the concern;
- agreed actions;
- the person responsible for each action;
- any referral to the Student Support and Wellbeing Team or another service;
- any reasonable adjustments;
- the period of monitoring; and
- the date for review.

The student should receive confirmation of the agreed arrangements.

2.5 Review

The student's progress should be reviewed after an appropriate period.

Possible outcomes are:

1. the concern has been resolved and no further action is required;
2. support should continue;
3. the support plan should be amended;
4. a formal Fitness to Study Case Conference should be convened; or
5. an urgent response is required because circumstances have deteriorated.

3. Stage 2 – Formal Fitness to Study Case Conference

3.1 When Stage 2 may be initiated

A Stage 2 Case Conference may be appropriate where:

- informal support has not resolved the concern;
- the student has not engaged sufficiently with agreed support;
- the concern is persistent or increasing;
- multiple University services need to coordinate their response;
- there is a significant impact on academic participation or progression;
- there are concerns regarding the student's safety or the safety of others; or
- the circumstances are sufficiently serious to require formal consideration.

3.2 Convening the Case Conference

Academic Services should provide appropriate procedural support for the Case Conference.

The Chair should normally be a suitably senior academic leader with appropriate authority to coordinate the University's response.

Membership should be determined according to the circumstances and may include:

- the relevant Dean or nominee;
- Programme Leader or other academic representative;
- Academic Services representative;
- Student Support representative;
- Student Support and Wellbeing Team representative, where appropriate and subject to professional confidentiality;
- Disability or reasonable-adjustment support where relevant;
- other professional staff with relevant expertise.

Membership should be proportionate and should not include individuals who do not have a legitimate role in the case.

3.3 Terms of Reference for the Case Conference

The Case Conference is a formal, supportive and proportionate forum to consider the concerns, coordinate relevant University support and determine appropriate next steps.

The Case Conference should:

- consider the concerns and relevant evidence;
- consider the student's perspective and any relevant support needs;
- consider support and reasonable adjustments already in place or available;
- coordinate actions across relevant University services;
- determine whether the student may continue with support or proportionate conditions, whether a Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies should be considered, or whether the matter should be escalated to a Fitness to Study Panel; and
- identify responsibilities, monitoring arrangements and a review date where the student remains on study.

Academic Services should ensure that the outcome, rationale, agreed actions, responsibilities and review arrangements are appropriately documented and communicated to the student.

3.4 Student participation

The student should normally be invited to attend and should be:

- informed of the concerns;
- given reasonable notice;
- given an opportunity to provide relevant information;
- permitted to identify relevant support needs; and
- informed of the purpose of the meeting.

The student has the right to be accompanied by one person of their choice. The companion may be a friend, family member, fellow student, Students' Union representative, or appropriate member of University staff.

The Chair may restrict the participation of a companion where this is necessary to ensure that the meeting remains focused, fair and respectful, or where the companion's involvement would compromise confidentiality or the proper consideration of the case.

Where the student cannot or will not attend, the Case Conference may proceed where reasonable efforts have been made to facilitate participation and where sufficient information is available to make a proportionate decision.

3.5 Role of the Student Support and Wellbeing Team

Where wellbeing concerns are relevant, the Student Support and Wellbeing Team should manage the wellbeing-related aspects of the student's support.

The Student Support and Wellbeing Team may:

- meet with the student;
- provide counselling or wellness support;
- advise on appropriate support within its professional remit;
- make appropriate referrals; and
- contribute relevant information to a Case Conference where this can appropriately be shared.

The Case Conference should not seek confidential counselling information where that information is not necessary for the University's decision-making.

3.6 Evidence

The Case Conference should consider relevant evidence, which may include:

- attendance;
- academic engagement;
- academic performance;
- communications with the student;
- records of previous support;
- agreed support plans;
- information provided by the student;
- professional advice where appropriately available;
- reasonable-adjustment information; and
- other relevant evidence.

The absence of a medical diagnosis should not prevent the University from providing support or taking proportionate action.

3.7 Formal Support and Action Plan

Where continued study is appropriate, the Case Conference should establish a formal plan identifying:

- the concerns;
- the student's circumstances as relevant to the case;
- agreed support;
- responsibilities;
- reasonable adjustments;
- expectations of the student;
- monitoring arrangements;
- review dates; and
- circumstances that may lead to further escalation.

The student should receive the agreed outcome in writing.

4. Stage 3 – Fitness to Study Panel

4.1 When a Panel may be convened

A Fitness to Study Panel may be convened where:

- the Stage 2 support plan has not adequately addressed the concern;
- significant risk remains;
- the student has disengaged from the support process;
- there is a serious and persistent impact on study;
- continuation of study requires formal consideration; or
- the circumstances are sufficiently serious to warrant a formal institutional decision.

A Panel may also be convened without a preceding Stage 2 process where the seriousness or urgency of the circumstances makes this appropriate.

4.2 Panel composition

The Panel should comprise appropriately senior and independent University representatives.

The composition should ensure that:

- no individual has an inappropriate conflict of interest;
- academic and student-support perspectives are appropriately represented;
- the Panel has sufficient authority to reach the relevant decision; and
- the process is fair and proportionate.

Academic Services should provide procedural and administrative support.

4.3 Student participation

The student should normally be invited to attend the Panel, be informed of the concerns and evidence to be considered, and be given a reasonable opportunity to provide relevant information and explain their circumstances.

The student has the right to be accompanied by one person of their choice. The companion may be a friend, family member, fellow student, Students' Union representative, or appropriate member of University staff.

The Chair may restrict the participation of a companion where this is necessary to ensure that the meeting remains focused, fair and respectful, or where the companion's involvement would compromise confidentiality or the proper consideration of the case.

Where the student cannot or will not attend, the Panel may proceed where reasonable efforts have been made to facilitate participation and sufficient information is available to make a fair and proportionate decision.

4.4 Panel evidence

The Panel should consider relevant evidence and should not rely on unsupported assumptions.

The student should have an opportunity to provide relevant evidence and explain their circumstances.

4.5 Possible Panel outcomes

The Panel may determine that the student should:

- continue their studies without additional conditions;
- continue with a formal support and monitoring plan;
- continue subject to specified conditions;
- receive specified reasonable adjustments;
- take a Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies in accordance with the relevant University policy;
- be subject to a temporary suspension where necessary and proportionate, in accordance with the relevant University policy;
- return to study subject to specified conditions; or
- exceptionally, have their studies terminated where continuation cannot reasonably be supported.

The Panel should explain the rationale for its decision and provide the student with the outcome in writing.

Academic Services should ensure that the decision, rationale, agreed actions and any monitoring or return-to-study requirements are appropriately documented and communicated.

5. Review and Monitoring

Where a support plan is established, the responsible University staff should monitor progress against the agreed actions.

Monitoring should focus on whether:

- the student is engaging with agreed support;
- academic participation is improving;
- relevant risks are reducing;
- agreed adjustments are effective; and
- further intervention is required.

The University should avoid unnecessary monitoring or collection of sensitive information.

6. Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies and Return to Study

Any Break in Studies or Suspension of Studies arising from the Fitness to Study process must align with the University's Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies policy currently in force.

A Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies will usually be for one full academic year and may not usually exceed two academic years.

Where a Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies is agreed or required, the University should identify:

- the reason for the Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies;
- any support available during the period away from study;
- any conditions that should be met before return;
- who will coordinate the return process;
- any appropriate evidence concerning the student's circumstances;
- reasonable adjustments;
- academic arrangements; and
- a review or monitoring period following return.

6.1 Return to Study arrangements

The purpose of the Return to Study arrangements is to support safe and sustainable re-engagement and should not create unnecessary barriers to a student's return.

Before return, the University should normally:

- review the circumstances that led to the Break in Studies / Suspension of Studies;
- consider appropriate evidence relevant to the student's return;
- hold a Return to Study meeting with the student;
- consider and agree any reasonable adjustments or support;
- confirm any conditions associated with the return;
- agree a monitoring and review period; and
- confirm the return arrangements and responsibilities in writing.

The Return to Study meeting should focus on establishing a realistic and sustainable plan for re-engagement. The University should not impose evidential requirements that are unnecessary or disproportionate to the circumstances.

7. Appeals

Students should be informed of any applicable appeal or review rights when a formal Fitness to Study decision is issued.

An appeal should normally identify the grounds on which the decision is being challenged, such as:

- procedural irregularity;
- relevant evidence not being considered;
- significant new evidence;
- disproportionate outcome; or
- other grounds specified within the University's appeal arrangements.

Appeals should be considered by an appropriately authorised person or body independent of the original decision where reasonably practicable.

8. Confidentiality and Records

Fitness to Study records should be maintained securely and accessed only by staff with a legitimate requirement to do so.

Wellbeing and counselling records remain subject to the professional and confidentiality requirements applicable to the Student Support and Wellbeing Team.

Academic and administrative records should contain sufficient information to demonstrate the University's actions and decisions without unnecessarily recording sensitive personal information.

9. Responsibilities

The **Provost** owns the Policy and provides academic and governance oversight.

The Deputy Vice Chancellor for the Student Journey has responsibility for the Student Support and Wellbeing function.

The Student Support and Wellbeing Team provides counselling, wellbeing support, student meetings concerning wellbeing and appropriate professional referrals.

Academic Services coordinates procedural administration, maintains relevant records, supports formal Fitness to Study meetings and panels, and ensures decisions and actions are appropriately documented and communicated.

Faculties and academic staff identify concerns, provide academic support, implement agreed arrangements and participate in formal processes where required.

Students are expected to engage constructively with reasonable support arrangements and to provide relevant information where appropriate.