

FFURFLEN MANYLION POLISI
POLICY IDENTIFICATION FORM /FRONT SHEET

Policy Title:	<i>HE Fitness to Study Policy</i>	
Policy Owner:	Phil Jones, Head of Learner Services and Marketing	
Responsible Executive Director:	<i>James Nelson</i>	
Purpose:	The purpose of this policy is to provide a framework for staff to support applicants and learners who are causing significant concern and/or presenting a risk of harm to themselves and the impact that may have with regards to their capacity to study.	
Review Cycle:	<i>Bi-Annually</i>	
Approval Checklist (to be instigated by Owner):	Actioned by:	Date:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft uploaded to Grŵp Portal for initial consultation with staff (via ELD) 	Head of Learner Services	19/02/2024 - 01/03/2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First draft sent to JCC for initial 2 week consultation (via AAH) 	Head of Learner Services	19/02/2024 - 01/03/2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impact Assessments completed 	Equality Manager	13/02/2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final draft presented to TS 	Head of Learner Services	19/02/2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final draft presented to JCC (if applicable) 	Head of Learner Services	13/03/2024
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final draft presented to SHE (if applicable) 	N/A	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Union Approval at JCC / SHE 	YES -13/03/2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy presented to relevant Committee* 	CSSC – 12/03/2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy presented to Board 	25/04/2024	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy translated and uploaded to Grŵp Portal 	26/04/2024	



Grŵp
**Llandrillo
Menai**

GRŴP LLANDRILLO MENAI

HIGHER EDUCATION FITNESS TO STUDY POLICY

Date	Section	Description of Policy changes
11/10/2023	1.1 , 1.2 , 1.3 , 2.1 , 2.2 , 2.5	Minor change: Student to learner.
11/10/2023	1.2	Major change: Introduce new sentence Reason for change: Include a learners risk to others.
11/10/2023	1.3	Minor change: Include mental health. change the word guidance for procedures
11/10/2023	1.4	Minor change: include Higher Education Courses.
11/10/2023	1.3	Minor change: remove the sentence - or as a result of unreasonable demands being placed upon staff or students.
11/10/2023	5.1	Minor Change: Include full gllm website domain
11/10/2023	4.1	Major change: Review every 2 years and not every year
11/10/2023	6.2 6.3 6.5 6.6 7.1 7.2 8.1 8.2 8.3 8.4 8.5 10.1 10.2 10.3	Minor Change Change Student to learner
11/10/2023	7.1	Major Change include sentence; Expressing suicidal thoughts that does not need urgent referral to A&E.
11/10/2023	7.2	Minor change Include following sentence; learners referred to Learner Services for support.
11/10/2023	9.1	Major Change Remove Physical Restraint, Intervention and Searches Guidance (note refer to ALN Reform guidance due Dec 2018)
11/10/2023	12.2 12.3 12.11 13.4	Minor Change Update job titles to current roles Head of Learner Services, the Head of Additional Learning Needs or an

11/10/2023	12.4	Minor Change Include sentence the impact mental ill-health and/or behaviour are having upon them or/and
11/10/2023	12.8	Major Change The Grwp have now appointed a MH Practitioner and support from the MHP is highlighted here.
11/10/2023	12.10.3	Minor Change Include support from Welfare Teams at Learners Services which has significantly grown since last policy review.
11/10/2023	13.1	Major Change Include the following significant sentence serious or persistent concerns are raised about a learner's actions or behaviour that are putting their own or others within the GLLM community's health, safety, wellbeing at significant risk.
11/10/2023	13.10	Minor Change Include the following significant sentence
11/10/2023	13.18	Major Change Include new sentence The Learner Services Welfare team will support any learner who may be recommended for suspension or withdrawal from their programme of learning by agreeing on a referral to specialist external agencies that can further support the learner.
11/10/2023	12.9 12.11, 12.14.2 13.13, 13.14	Major change Include new sentence (or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate)
08/01/2024	14.2	Major Change New job role to support with learner assessment (or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate)
08/01/2024	14.4	Major Change Introducing a Risk Assessment and One Page Profile Fitness to Study and to create a one page profile or/and a Risk Assessment Support Plan.
08/01/2024	16.4	Major Change Updated to reflect new external guidance
22/02/2024	10.4	Minor Change



		word update from independent medical assessment to <i>Independent Medical Evaluation</i> following feedback from College Nurse.
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Fitness to Study Policy

1. Policy Statement

- 1.1 Grŵp Llandrillo Menai (GLLM) is committed to providing a safe learning environment and recognises the importance of health and wellbeing in relation to the learners' academic progress and their wider student experience.
- 1.2 Fitness to Study relates to an individual's capacity to participate fully and satisfactorily as a learner. The college is committed to supporting learner wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health is important to learning, academic achievement and progression.
- 1.3 The Fitness to Study policy and procedures describes the support available where a learner's mental health and/or wellbeing deteriorates to the point where they may not be able to engage with their studies, including where they may be at risk of harm to themselves and/or others.
- 1.4 The policy is designed to ensure a consistent and appropriately sensitive approach to managing fitness to study and is applicable to applicants and students in relation to all Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Higher Education programmes of study.

2. Purpose of the Policy

- 2.1 The Fitness to Study policy and procedure applies to applicants and learners who are causing significant concern and/or presenting a risk of harm to themselves. (See 13.1)
- 2.1 Grŵp Llandrillo Menai has a duty of care to all members of the GLLM community (learners and staff) and where a learner's behaviour threatens the welfare of any member of that community, GLLM will take action in accordance with this procedure to mitigate that threat. This action may involve the removal of a learner if their behaviour presents a personal risk or a risk to any member of the GLLM community.
- 2.2 The policy and procedures encourage early intervention and active collaboration between all staff managing situations where there are concerns regarding the wellbeing of a learner or applicant. It provides a co-ordinated response by academic and support staff in circumstances where it is not considered appropriate to apply other internal procedures such as the Learner Conduct Policy or the HE Extenuating Circumstances Policy.
- 2.3 In exercising its duty of care towards learners and staff, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai aims to provide a non-judgemental, consistent and sensitive approach to the management of situations which may require different levels of response according to the perceived level of concern.
- 2.4 This policy does not relate to fitness to practise as required and specified on certain professional programmes.
- 2.5 A learner's studies may be suspended by Grŵp Llandrillo Menai or a programme offer to an applicant may be postponed, if the college determines that it is appropriate to do so, having followed the Fitness to Study procedures.
- 2.6 If a concern regarding Fitness to Study arises whilst a learner is on placement, work experience, an educational visit or exchange programme, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai may consider alternative arrangements and make suitable adjustments and will liaise as appropriate with any third parties concerned.
- 2.7 A learner's fitness to study may be considered in addition to other GLLM college procedures or procedures of the HE validating university that may have been invoked, for example disciplinary procedures or extenuating circumstances.

3. Implementation

- 3.1 This policy will be implemented through the HE Fitness to Study Procedure.
- 3.2 The Fitness to Study procedure consists of three stages. However, depending on the individual circumstances the procedure may be invoked at any of the three stages with or without the engagement of the learner.

4. Monitoring and Impact Measurement

- 4.1 The Fitness to Study Policy will be monitored and reviewed every 2 years in accordance with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's HE Policies approval process and those of the awarding university.

5. Publication of Policy

- 5.1 This policy will be made publicly available bilingually on the Grŵp website (www.gllm.ac.uk), in programme handbooks/VLE and will be available to all members of staff via the Grŵp Portal.

HE Fitness to Study Procedure.

Fitness to Study Procedure

6. Context

- 6.1 Concerns about the Mental health or wellbeing of a learner can be raised by staff, other learners, Parents, external agencies and/or by a third party.
- 6.2 The Fitness to Study Policy and Procedure is intended for use in cases in which the behaviour, disruption or risk presented by a learner and the impact on other learners and or staff, is perceived to be of serious or potentially serious nature.
- 6.3 A learner raising a concern will not be expected to manage such situations arising, and should always approach a member of staff. Learner Services, HE Officer and or the Grŵp Quality Assurance Manager can also provide guidance.
- 6.4 If identified as Safeguarding or if staff feel unable to deal with a situation, need advice or guidance on how best to proceed with a learner, staff are expected to consult with the Learner Services welfare team or refer to a member of the safeguarding team or discuss with their line manager.
- 6.5 Learners enrolled on courses where a practical professional placement is required (including health, social work, education and police studies) and have additional responsibilities placed upon them regarding not only their conduct but also their professional suitability, as outlined in relevant regulatory and/or professional body codes of practice. These should be fully explored before using the Fitness to Study procedure.
- 6.6 This procedure should not be used in crisis or emergency situations, for example where a learner is threatening to harm themselves, or has harmed themselves, or has been injured. Most often in this case, the emergency services should be called in liaison with either the SHE Unit or Learner Services.

7. When to Use the Fitness to Study Procedure

- 7.1 A learners' fitness to study may be a cause of concern as a result of a wide range of circumstances affecting their health and wellbeing including, but not restricted, to the following:
 - significant non-attendance or engagement
 - a sudden deterioration in academic performance or motivation

- changes in appearance or obvious signs of ill health (e.g. dramatic weight loss or gain, ongoing lack of personal hygiene and care)
- Expressing suicidal thoughts that does not need urgent referral to A&E.
- mood swings or unusual behaviour (e.g. aggressive, withdrawn, obsessive, overly effusive or elated, distressed, irritable)
- inappropriate behaviour (e.g. inappropriate touching, invading personal space, excessive, unexpected and prolonged laughter or chattering, uncharacteristically bad language such as swearing, using racist language or discriminating against others)
- withdrawal from social, cultural or sporting activities once considered important
- lethargy or signs of lack of sleep, or unusual disorientation
- obvious signs of substance/ alcohol misuse
- information about specific episodes (e.g. self-harm/suicidal thoughts or attempts)
- changes in behaviour or health that make the learner's use of equipment etc., dangerous to themselves and/or to others.

7.2 The procedure must not be used to suspend the studies of learners under the following categories:

- Approved and reasonable short absences supported by medical evidence (e.g. short-term illness). Such cases should be treated as authorised absences on the assumption that learners can continue with background work, can access electronic resources and that appropriate extensions to coursework can be approved.
- Situations that can be addressed through Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's procedures for dealing with extenuating circumstances.
- Disciplinary cases.
- Unfair practice cases. Such cases should be considered under the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Unfair Practice Procedure.
- Voluntary interruption of study on health and other grounds. Such cases should be considered under the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Suspended Studies Process.
- Learners who are in debt. Such cases should be considered under the procedures for dealing with debtors and learners referred to Learner Services for support.
- Academic progress which is considered by Examination Boards.
- Learners whose studies may be suspended or terminated by specific procedures approved as part of the approval/validation process for their course, including conditions imposed by professional bodies or sponsors.

8. Structure of the Fitness to Study Procedure

8.1 The purpose of this procedure is to support learners and staff in managing situations and incidents that cause significant concern. The procedure has three stages, based on the perceived level of risk to the health, safety and mental wellbeing of the learner or others and on the response of a learner to any intervention. The cause for concern can result in:

- invoking the procedure at any of the 3 stages
- staying at a stage or
- progressing through the stages, should the cause for concern not be remedied by recommended and agreed actions.

8.2 When assessing the perceived level of risk to learners' health and wellbeing, communication is paramount. Early intervention in issues, and recommendations for support, can avoid crisis situations from occurring. Should staff feel that they are not confident about dealing with a situation or feel unsure about whether to invoke this procedure, they are encouraged to seek advice from Learner Services, Grŵp Quality Assurance Manager or HE Officer.

- 8.3 To ensure appropriate levels of confidentiality, this advice should initially be sought without disclosing details of the learner concerned, e.g. on an anonymous basis.
- 8.4 learner. Learners should be involved in the management of their own wellbeing wherever possible. However, there may be times where a learner is unwilling or unable to work within these procedures. In these cases, the process should continue, with concerns being raised, advice being sought, and action being taken, as appropriate.
- 8.5 If a learner elects to interrupt or suspend their study due to ill health, the Fitness to Study procedures will resume prior to the students' return to study.

9. Crisis Intervention

- 9.1 It is possible that a student may pose an immediate risk to themselves and / or others that they may require emergency assistance outside of these procedures. In all such cases staff should refer to the following:
 - Safety, Security & Emergency Guide
 - Safeguarding Policy
 - Health and Safety guidance
 - First Aid Protocol
- 9.2 Alternatively, advice should be sought from staff at either Learner Services or the SHE Unit.

10. Medical Evidence

- 10.1 If concerns are raised regarding the learner fitness to study, the learner is encouraged to cooperate with any reasonable request to provide medical or other evidence. A learner may however decline to co-operate with that request.
- 10.2 Grŵp Llandrillo Menai respects medical and other evidence provided by the learner. Should the behaviour of the learner as a result of that medical condition become a cause for concern then the behaviour of the learner would be addressed in accordance with the Learner Conduct Policy.
- 10.3 Ordinarily it is not expected that a cost will be incurred in providing evidence, however, if costs are incurred they will generally be borne by the learner.
- 10.4 If an Independent Medical Evaluation is required this will be arranged by the college and the college may request that specific questions are asked. In exceptional circumstances Grŵp Llandrillo Menai may fund the cost of obtaining additional evidence.

11. Process Stage 1 – Emerging or Initial Concerns Informal Intervention within Programme Area

- 11.1 Stage 1 is used if emerging or initial concerns about an individual learner's health, safety or mental wellbeing are raised.
- 11.2 If a learner has concerns about a fellow learner, they should discuss these with the member of staff with whom they feel most comfortable. This might be a tutor, the Programme Leader, their Personal Tutor or a member of the Learner Services team. The learner will not be expected to deal with the situation themselves and having discussed the issue with a staff member, this staff member will make an appropriate referral, or deal with the concern.
- 11.3 If concerns have been identified by a member of staff, then that member of staff, or another with primary responsibility and/or knowledge of the learner (either academic or learner support services) should talk to the learner in a sympathetic and understanding manner, and indicate that there are concerns about their fitness to study, registered by use of this procedure. Staff may contact Learner Services to discuss whether the use of this procedure is appropriate.
- 11.4 In initiating Stage 1 the nature of the concerns should be clearly identified, and the learner should be encouraged to discuss the issues, including the potential impact on themselves and others. It should be made clear to the learner that, whilst Grŵp Llandrillo Menai has a duty of care to support learners with

mental ill health, it is the learner's responsibility to be fit to study. As appropriate, information should be provided about sources of professional support within Grŵp Llandrillo Menai that the student can access (e.g. Student Support, Counselling Service, The Wellbeing Hub and the student's GP).

- 11.5 The Learner and Programme Leader should agree a date to meet within 1 month to review the situation, known as the Stage 1 Fitness to Study Review Meeting, to discuss the effectiveness of the support that the learner has been accessing. The key points and agreements, including action points arising from this discussion should be recorded on eDRAC and communicated to the learner. A copy of the notes must be sent to the student within 5 working days. A copy of this information should be kept on the learner's file for an agreed time period. The learner should be reassured that the purpose of keeping it on file is to ensure that Grŵp Llandrillo Menai is providing all necessary support to ensure that the learner continues to be fit to study.
- 11.6 All medical information is recorded on the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Learning Support Management (LSM) database and in accordance with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's GDPR statement, is retained for their period of study.
- 11.7 Learners should be informed that if the concerns continue, any additional causes for concern arise, or they refuse or are unable to engage in the process, this could result in their fitness to study being further considered by moving to Stage 2.
- 11.8 More than one contact may be required with the learner at Stage 1.
- 11.9 Where there is no response to contact or the level of concern is increased, the Programme Leader should escalate to stage 2.

12. Process Stage 2 – Continuing and/or Significant Concerns

Formal Intervention, Case Review Initiated by Programme Area

- 12.1 Stage 2, Case Review is used if continuing or significant concerns about a learner's health, safety or mental wellbeing are raised.
- 12.2 Stage 2, Case Review will be carried out by either the Head of Learner Services, the Head of Additional Learning Needs or an appointed nominee, who will work collaboratively with other Learner Services staff and staff within the Programme Area. The final decision on whether Stage 2 of the procedure is invoked will be taken by the Head of Learner Services and the Head of Additional Learning Needs after receiving information from staff and external agencies where applicable.
- 12.3 The learner will be invited to attend the Stage 2 Case Review chaired by the Head of Learner Services, the Head of Additional Learning Needs or an appointed nominee to discuss the concerns raised. The relevant Programme Area Manager and Programme Leader will also be in attendance as will the member of staff who has raised the issue, if appropriate.
- 12.4 The learner will be informed that engaging with Stage 2 Case Review of the procedure is mandatory and refusal to engage may result in further escalation to Stage 3. The purpose of the meeting will be to ascertain the learner's perception of the issues that have been identified, including the impact mental ill-health and/or behaviour are having upon them or/and Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's community.
- 12.5 The learner should be informed of the purpose of the meeting, and be advised of any documents that may be required, including medical evidence where appropriate. The learner may be accompanied by someone to this meeting – for example, this could be a member of the Students' Union, a member of Grŵp Llandrillo Menai staff acting in a supportive capacity, or a close family member. Disabled learners may also be accompanied by a support worker (e.g. sign language interpreter or mental health worker).
- 12.6 Should a learner be aged under 18 and studying a HE programme the parent or legal guardian should be informed that the HE Fitness Study process is being invoked.
- 12.7 The learner may request to attend all or part of the Stage 2 Case Review meeting.

- 12.8 The Head of Learner Services or the Head of Additional Learning Needs will chair the proceedings and may call witnesses if necessary. Input will also be sought from Grŵp Llandrillo Menai's Mental Health Practitioner.
- 12.9 During the meeting a mutually agreed action plan (or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate) will be devised to put in place support for the learner and formally agree expectations for the learner to observe. This Stage 2 Fitness to Study Action Plan will have a specific review date, and the consequences of not keeping to the agreed action plan must be made clear to the learner. This may involve moving to Stage 3 of the procedure, where a suspension of studies may be considered necessary.
- 12.10 If an action plan cannot be agreed at Stage 2, then the case must move to Stage 3.
- 12.11 A report of the meeting and its outcomes will be recorded by the Head of Learner Services, the Head of Additional Learning Needs or an appointed nominee. A copy of the agreed Stage 2 Fitness to Study Action Plan (or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate) will be submitted to the appropriate Programme Area Manager and the learner's Programme Leader.
- 12.12 The Programme Leader will disseminate this to relevant staff in the Programme Area as appropriate.
- 12.13 The learner should be informed that if the Stage 2 Fitness to Study Action Plan is not adhered to, or any additional causes for concern arise, this could result in their fitness to study being further considered by moving to Stage 3.
- 12.14 The outcomes available of the Stage 2 Case Review are:
 - 12.14.1 No further action required
 - 12.14.2 To monitor the learner formally for a specified period of time. A Fitness to Study Action Plan (or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate) will be agreed with the learner and regular review and monitoring meetings with an appointed member of staff agreed.
 - 12.10.3 To recommend specific academic arrangements to be put in place, this may include suspension of studies or a referral to the Grwp Llandrillo Menai Welfare Team or/and external support. Such recommendations should be agreed with the learner's Programme Area Manager, Programme Leader and Assistant Principal.
 - 12.10.4 To refer the case to the Fitness to Study Panel, under Stage 3 of the formal procedure. This will be appropriate for all serious cases where there is evidence of a serious risk to the health and safety of the learners or other members of the GLLM community. This course of action would be used when it is considered that suspension, temporary exclusion, permanent exclusion or withdrawal may be the appropriate course of action or if the learner has not agreed to a recommendation or action plan made under Stage 2.

13. Process Stage 3 – Serious or Persistent Concerns Formal Intervention by Fitness to Study Panel

- 13.1 Stage 3 is used if serious or persistent concerns are raised about a learner's actions or behaviour that are putting their own or others within the GLLM community's health, safety, wellbeing at significant risk.
- 13.2 The 'Fitness to Study Panel' will be convened following a referral from the Stage 2 Case Review panel or if the Programme Area Manager determines the concerns sufficiently serious to warrant the consideration of the learner's suspension.
- 13.3 Suspension may be implemented at any point should there be a significant risk of harm to the individual or another. Should suspension be implemented due to a high risk factor, the Fitness to Study Panel will be convened within 10 days of the date of suspension.
- 13.4 The Assistant Principal, Grŵp HE in consultation with the Head of Learner Services, the Head of Additional Learner Needs, Quality Assurance Manager and the relevant Programme Area Manager and will convene the Fitness to Study Panel meeting.
- 13.5 The Quality Assurance Coordinator will administer the scheduling, take notes and update all records relating to the Fitness to Study Panel meeting.
- 13.6 Wherever possible the learner will be given a minimum of 10 working days notice of the invitation to attend a Fitness to Study Panel meeting.

- 13.7 The learner may be accompanied at the meeting by a Student Union representative, a fellow learner or an advocate but not a legal representative. Disabled learners may be accompanied by a support worker where required.
- 13.8 Those present at the Fitness to Study Panel will normally include:
- Programme Area Manager
 - Programme Leader or Tutor
 - Assistant Principal, Grwp HE
 - Quality Assurance Manager
 - The Head of Learner Services or/and The Head of Additional Learning Needs
 - Appropriate representation from the college support teams
 - Medical Representation where appropriate
 - Other witnesses as deemed appropriate by the chairperson
- 13.9 The Fitness to Study Panel will be chaired by the Assistant Principal, Grŵp HE or appointed nominee.
- 13.10 The purpose of the meeting is to consider the evidence and information available, including the learner's perception of these concerns and to reach an appropriate decision, action plan or other outcome as outlined in 12.14 and 13.13.
- 13.11 The Panel may order the proceedings at its discretion depending on the context and may call witnesses if required.
- 13.12 The Panel may request further medical evidence where appropriate.
- 13.13 The Fitness to Study Panel will determine an outcome which will normally be one of the following:
- an enhanced Action Plan, or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate
 - suspension with conditions on health and wellbeing grounds
 - exclusion or requirement to withdraw
 - Delayed decision if further evidence is needed
- 13.14 If the Fitness to Study Panel recommends an enhanced Action Plan (or a Risk Assessment Support Plan where appropriate), the learner will be invited to meet with the Assistant Principal, Grŵp HE or nominee to receive and discuss the recommended actions. The learner will be invited to bring along a person to support them at the meeting. The plan will have a specified review date, and the consequences of not adhering to the action plan will be made clear. A copy of the agreed action plan will be submitted to the relevant Programme Area Manager and Programme Leader and stored on eDRAC.
- 13.15 If the agreed recommended action is a suspension of studies, the learner will be notified in writing within 7 working days of the terms of the suspension. The learner may be prohibited from participating in college activities and may be restricted from entering college premises or have restricted rights of entry. In certain cases it may be necessary to inform the learner verbally indicating that the suspension is immediate and that a formal letter will follow. The suspension is intended to give the learner time away from studies to address any health and wellbeing concerns, in order, wherever possible, to return to Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and resume study.
- 13.16 Exclusion or requirement to withdraw will only be recommended in the most serious of cases, for example when all avenues of support have been exhausted or, when the learner will not suspend their studies voluntarily, or when the learner has not engaged with agreed support.
- 13.17 The learner shall be notified of the decision in writing within 7 working days of the Fitness to Study Panel meeting.
- 13.18 The Learner Services Welfare team will support any learner who may be recommended for suspension or withdrawal from their programme of learning by agreeing on a referral to specialist external agencies that can further support the learner.
- 13.19 The outcome of the panel meeting shall be reported to the Principal and at the next meeting of HEQASG for monitoring purposes only. The details of the reason will not be disclosed.

14. Return to Study

- 14.1 The members of the Stage 3 Fitness to Study Panel, that made the recommendation regarding a suspension or temporary exclusion, will be reconvened to consider whether the learner is fit to return to study. If it is not possible for all members to attend the meeting, at least one Assistant Principal not involved in the original meeting should be invited to consider the grounds of the request to return to study.
- 14.2 Any suspension of studies will not be lifted until the learner has provided appropriate medical and/or other relevant evidence from their G.P. or other relevant professional that the learner is considered fit to return to study. The Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Mental Health Practitioner will assess the evidence and will conduct an assessment of the learners readiness to return to study.
- 14.3 Grŵp Llandrillo Menai may ask the medical professional to answer specific questions or consider specific issues, and will not make a decision to lift the suspension until satisfied that the learner is fit to return to the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai learning environment.
- 14.4 Where appropriate, the college in consultation with the validating university may also require the student to attend an interview with relevant staff to determine the learner's Fitness to Study and to create a one page profile or/and a Risk Assessment Support Plan.
- 14.5 Grŵp Llandrillo Menai will make every effort to allow the learner to continue with their studies. This may include repeating periods of study and a requirement to attend regular review meetings. The ability to repeat or return to study will depend upon the individual circumstance and will be decided on upon merit.

15. Appeal Procedure

- 15.1 A learner who wishes to appeal against the decision to suspend or exclude them, made by the Fitness to Study Panel may do so by submitting in writing their reasons of appeal to the appropriate college Principal.
- 15.2 Appeals should be submitted in writing within 10 working days of the date that the student received notification of the decision.
- 15.3 Appeals will only be considered on the following grounds:
 - Defects or irregularities in the conduct of the Case Review or Fitness to Study Panel meetings and where such defects, irregularities or advice could have affected the Panel's decision.
 - Exceptional personal circumstances that relate to the Panel's decision. The appellant must explain why such personal circumstances were not made known to the Panel before its meeting.
- 15.4 The Principal or appointed nominee will investigate the concerns in any manner that GLLM deems appropriate in order to gather full and relevant information before coming to a decision on the appeal. The Principal's decision will normally be issued within 20 working days of the date when an appeal is received.
- 15.5 Appeals against the decision of a reconvened Fitness to Study Panel will not normally be permitted nor will an appeal made by a learner that did not engage with the process.
- 15.6 In accordance with the Higher Education Act 2004 and the Higher Education and Research Act 2017, the Office of the Independent Adjudicator for Higher Education (the OIA) has been designated by the Welsh Government as the operator of an independent scheme for England and Wales for the review of student complaints. When the Fitness to Study Procedure has been completed, a student can submit a complaint to the OIA but this must follow a referral to the relevant institution's internal Complaints Procedure which will need to be exhausted prior to making contact with the OIA. Once this has happened, any such complaint must be submitted by sending a completed Scheme Application Form together with all relevant information to the OIA within three months of the date on the "Completion of Procedures Letter" which will have been issued by the university / college upon completion of its own internal procedures. A Scheme Application Form can be downloaded from the OIA website www.oiahe.org.uk. Further guidance can be sought from the Director, Governance and Information.

16. Disciplinary Action

- 16.1 If a learner who is experiencing physical or mental ill health breaches any of the validated programmes regulations, the breaches will be considered under the Grŵp Llandrillo Menai Learner Conduct Procedures.

Learners who are being considered in relation to fitness to study will not normally be exempt from a disciplinary investigation.

- 16.2 Each case will be considered on its own merits, with due regard given to issues relating to mental and or physical ill health.

17. Monitoring

- 17.1 Data will be collected on the use of this procedure as follows:
- numbers of cases at each stage of the procedure
 - numbers of suspensions of study
 - final outcomes e.g. return to study.
- 17.2 To ensure fair and consistent application of the procedure data will be collated, monitored and reported by gender, ethnicity, disability, age, religion/belief and sexual orientation where possible. In the preparation of lessons learned, the outcome of all Fitness to Study cases will be discussed with the staff from the relevant Programme Areas.
- 17.3 All of the above will be reported by the Learner Services team and monitored by the college via HEQASG in accordance with the Higher Education committee structure.
- 17.4 Where applicable, the HE Team will communicate all suspensions resulting from applying the Fitness to Study procedure to the relevant awarding university body.

18. General Administrative Matters

- 18.1 Any of the functions contained within this Policy may be delegated to a nominee.
- 18.2 In the application of the Fitness to Study policy and procedures, and where appropriate, Grŵp Llandrillo Menai will take account of relevant legislation; policies of the awarding university; and other college policies and procedures.
- 18.3 Grŵp Llandrillo Menai acknowledges that as a result of implementing this policy it will receive personal and sensitive information and data of a confidential nature pertaining to the student and other third parties, and shall ensure that all such data is handled, processed and stored accordingly.

Equality Impact Assessment

Assessment completed by:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	19/01/2024
Assessment approved by:	Gaz Williams	Dated:	19/01/2024

Consideration	Response	Special requirements / controls
Which protected groups might be disadvantaged by the policy/process?	This policy and procedure is for implementation with all learners and by all staff.	<p>Multi-disciplinary approaches should be implemented to ensure the health and wellbeing of all learners. Appropriate and prompt referrals should be made to appropriately named individuals/ teams and external agencies to ensure that no learners are disadvantaged by the implementation of this policy (e.g Learner Services, Counsellors, Safeguarding officers)</p> <p>Incidents of a discriminatory nature, including racism should be referred to and discussed with the Director of Bilingualism, Learning Resources and Skills.</p> <p>The policy and associated procedures must be implemented alongside other Grŵp policies including, but not limited to- Safeguarding Equality & Diversity Strategic Equality Plan Health & Wellbeing</p>
Which protected groups might benefit from the policy/process?	<p>When implemented in conjunction with other Grŵp policies and procedures, all protected groups may benefit from this policy and its associated procedures.</p> <p>The appeals process seeks to foster fairness in addition to referral to appropriate support services for all learners.</p>	
Does the policy advance equality and foster good relations?	The policy and its associated procedures does not seek to advance equality and foster good relations, rather the policy and its associated procedures is neutral	Learners should be supported during the implementation of this policy to ensure their understanding of the policy and its associated procedures.

	and seeks to provide equity and parity to all learners.	Particular consideration should be given to those with additional learning needs and medical needs, for whom communication formats may need to be adapted to ensure fairness and equality of access.
Could any part of the process discriminate unlawfully?	The policy does not make specific reference to any of the protected characteristic groups. As such, all learners should be treated equally and fairly in the implementation of this policy and its associated procedures.	Staff implementing this policy and its associated procedures should ensure that information that is provided to learners, their representatives and professional agencies is accurate and accessible. Information should be provided in Welsh, English or bilingually as per the individuals' recorded language preference. Simultaneous translation should be provided for meetings where an individual wishes to contribute in Welsh and there are non-Welsh speakers present.
Are there any other policies that need to change to support the effectiveness of this one?	No	
Conclusion	Amend the policy	

SIGNED:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	19/01/2024
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Welsh Language Impact Assessment

Assessment completed by:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	19/01/2024
Assessment approved by:	Gaz Williams	Dated:	19/01/2024

Consideration	Response	Special requirements / controls
What positive effects, if any, will the policy decision have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and not to treat the Welsh language less favorably than English?	<p>The policy and its associated procedures will be made available to staff and learners in both Welsh and English.</p> <p>Staff and learners will be supported to implement the policy and its associated procedures in Welsh, English or bilingually as is the individual's preference.</p>	<p>The individuals' language preference (Welsh, English or bilingual) should be recorded and stored securely and respected in line with the Welsh Language standards.</p>
What adverse effects, if any, will the policy decision have on opportunities for people to use the Welsh language, and not to treat the Welsh language less favorably than English?	<p>Staff and learners are supported to implement this policy in either Welsh, English or bilingually as is their language preference in line with the Welsh Language standards.</p> <p>There will be no adverse effects when individuals are supported to use this policy and its associated procedures in their language of choice.</p>	<p>Individuals should be informed that they have the right to implement this policy and its associated procedures through the medium of Welsh, English or bilingually as per their language preference.</p> <p>Individuals must be informed that requesting the implementation of this policy and its associated procedures through the medium of Welsh will not result in any delays to the process.</p> <p>This will ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>This should be added into the policy.</p>
Are there enough Welsh speaking staff available to implement the policy or procedure? If not, what steps will be taken to ensure that sufficient staff are available, and when?	<p>Yes, there are enough members of staff within learner services, wellbeing and management teams to enact this policy and its associated procedures through the medium of Welsh</p>	
Does the policy or procedure comply with the Llandrillo Menai Welsh Language Policy and Welsh Language Standards compliance notice?	<p>If implemented as directed, the policy and its associated procedure complies with the Grŵp's Welsh language policy and the Welsh Language Standards.</p>	<p>Individuals should be informed that they have the right to implement this policy and its associated procedures through the medium of Welsh, English or bilingually as per</p>



		<p>their language preference.</p> <p>Individuals must be informed that requesting the implementation of this policy and its associated procedures through the medium of Welsh will not result in any delays to the process.</p> <p>This will ensure that the Welsh language is not treated less favourably than the English language.</p> <p>This should be added into the policy.</p>
Conclusion	Continue with the policy	

SIGNED:	Siân Pritchard	Dated:	24/01/2024
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