

Student Fitness to Practise - Approved Standard Forms and Correspondence

UPR SA15, Appendix VI version 07.0

Policies superseded by this document

This document replaces version 06.0 of Appendix VI, UPR SA15, with effect from 1 September 2022.

Summary of significant changes to the previous version

None.

Glossary

A glossary of approved University terminology can be found in [UPR GV08](#).

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Section	Letter/scenario	To be used in relation to
2.1	Student fitness to practise – initial consideration	See section 9 UPR SA15 ¹
2.1.1	Letter – interim suspension from practice placement	See section 9.4.5 UPR SA15 ¹
2.1.2- 2.1.5	Letter – outcome of initial consideration <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developmental issue • Refer to student disciplinary process (non fitness to Practise) • Refer to Stage 1 • Refer to Stage 2 	See section 9.5/9.6 UPR SA15 ¹
Section	Letter/scenario	To be used in relation to
2.2	Student fitness to practise – Stage 1 – preliminary process – consideration of the matter by the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance)	See section 10, UPR SA15 ¹
2.2.1	Letter – Stage 1 – letter of outcome <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No case to answer/no further action • Issue is minor – first/final warning • Warrants investigation • Refer to Stage 2 	See section 10.3, UPR SA15 ¹
Section	Letter/scenario	To be used in relation to
2.3	Student Fitness to practise – Stage 2 – formal process	See section 11, UPR SA15 ¹
2.3.1	Stage 2 – Letter of notification – referral to a Student Fitness to Practise Panel	See section 11.5, UPR SA15 ¹
2.3.2	Stage 2 – Letter of Decision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Impose a penalty where academic/non-academic misconduct is proven, as specified in Appendix I, SA15¹; • Dismiss the academic/non-academic misconduct allegation; • Impose an alternative reasonable penalty; • Recommend to the Vice-Chancellor that student is suspended; Recommend to the Vice-Chancellor that student is excluded;	See section 11.6.5, UPR SA15 ¹

¹ Appendix I, UPR SA15 'University Schedule of Sanctions and Penalties for Academic and Non-Academic Disciplinary Offences'

2.3.3	Letter of Suspension	See section 1.4, Appendix IV, UPR SA15 ²
2.3.4	Letter of Exclusion	See section 1.5, Appendix IV, UPR SA15 ³
2.3.5	Letter of Acknowledgement – of a request for a review by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor	As appropriate, see section 5, Appendix II, UPR SA15 ³ ; section 5, Appendix III, UPR SA15 ⁴
2.3.6	Letter of Acknowledgement – of a request for a review by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors	See section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15 ³
2.3.7	Letter of Decision – Deputy Vice-Chancellor	See section 12.3.1, UPR SA15 ¹
2.3.8	Review Hearing Letter – arrangements for a Review Hearing by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors	See section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15 ³
2.3.9	Completion of Procedures Letter	As appropriate, see section 5, Appendix II, UPR SA15 ⁴ section 5, Appendix III, UPR SA15 ⁵ section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15 ³

1 General

- 1.1 The term '**Letter**' means the **Letter** approved by the Secretary and Registrar for use at a specific point in the process described in UPR SA15¹.
- 1.2 **Letters** must be sent to the email address that the student has provided to the University for all correspondence and by Recorded Mail where possible.
- 1.3 The standard letters and forms approved from time-to-time by the Secretary and Registrar are to be used at the relevant stage of the student fitness to practise process in order to communicate with students and other individuals involved in matters being considered under these procedures.
- 1.4 This document (Appendix VI, UPR SA15) lists the standard forms and letters approved by the Secretary and Registrar for use in conjunction with UPR SA15¹.

² Appendix IV, UPR SA15 'Suspension or Exclusion from the University by the Vice-Chancellor'

³ Appendix II, UPR SA15 'Student Disciplinary Panel and Review of a Student Disciplinary Panel Decision'

⁴ Appendix III, UPR SA15 'Student Academic Misconduct Panel and Review of a Student Academic Misconduct Panel Decision'

- 1.5 Members of staff are required to use the current versions of the approved standard forms and letters published within the University's Document Management System at the following location:

<https://www.docs.herts.ac.uk/livelink/livelink.exe?func=ll&objId=1355845&objAction=browse&viewType=1>;

- 1.6 Associate Deans of School (Academic Quality Assurance) and/or the Dean of Students will ensure that only the current version of the relevant standard **Letter** or form is used (see section 15.2, UPR SA15¹).
- 1.7 Schools are not permitted to use forms and letters created locally. Where a change to an existing form or letter, or an additional form or letter is thought necessary, a request should be made in the first instance to the Student Procedures Co-ordinator.

2 Approved standard letters

2.1 Student fitness to practise – initial consideration

See section 9, UPR SA15¹.

2.1.1 Letter – interim suspension from practice/ placement

(See section 9.4.5, UPR SA15¹.)

The Letter will:

- a explain that an interim suspension from practice and/or placement has been decided in response to an issue, complaint or allegation relating to the student;
- b explain that the initial issue, complaint or allegation relating to the student has been raised informally and has been given initial consideration as set out by UPR SA15¹;
- c give details of the issue, complaint or allegation including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- d give the decision and the reasons why the decision was taken;
- e advise the student that a copy of the Letter will be placed on the student's file;
- f include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.1.2 Letter – outcome of initial consideration – where the matter will be treated as an issue for concern that is handled as a developmental issue in which support will be given to the student to help them improve their practice or approach

(See section 9.5, UPR SA15¹.)

The **Letter** will:

- a explain that an issue, complaint or allegation relating to the student has been raised informally and has been given initial consideration as set out by UPR SA15¹;
- b give details of the issue, complaint or allegation including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- c give the decision and the reasons why the decision was taken;
- d explain how the matter is to be dealt with;
- e advise the student that a copy of the **Letter** will be placed on the student's file;
- f include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.1.3 Letter – outcome of initial consideration – the issue will be referred to student disciplinary procedures (academic or non-academic), occupational health, fitness to study or via another route

(See section 9.5, UPR SA15¹.)

The **Letter** will:

- a explain that an issue, complaint or allegation relating to the student has been raised informally and has been given initial consideration as set out by UPR SA15¹;
- b give details of the issue, complaint or allegation including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- c inform the student that the matter is being referred to student disciplinary procedures (academic or non-academic), occupational health, fitness to study or via another route;
- d advise the student that a copy of the **Letter** will be placed on the student's file;
- e include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.1.4 Letter – outcome of initial consideration – the issue will be referred to the preliminary stage (Stage 1)

(See section 9.5, UPR SA15¹.)

The **Letter** will:

- a explain that an issue, complaint or allegation relating to the student has been raised informally and has been given initial consideration as set out by UPR SA15¹;
- b give details of the issue, complaint or allegation including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- c inform the student that the matter will be dealt with under the preliminary process (Stage 1);
- d advise the student that a copy of the **Letter** will be placed on the student's file;
- e include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.1.5 **Letter – outcome of initial consideration – the issue will be referred to the formal stage (Stage 2)**

(See section 9.5, UPR SA15¹.)

The **Letter** will:

- a explain that an issue, complaint or allegation relating to the student has been raised informally and has been given initial consideration as set out by UPR SA15¹;
- b give details of the issue, complaint or allegation including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- c inform the student that the matter will be dealt with under the formal process (Stage 2);
- d advise the student that a copy of the **Letter** will be placed on the student's file;
- e include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.2 **Student fitness to practise – Stage 1 – consideration of the matter by the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance)**

See section 10, UPR SA15¹.

2.2.1 **Letter of outcome – Stage 1 – No case to answer**

(See section 10.3, UPR SA15¹.)

Where it is considered that a student has no case to answer and/or no further action is required. The **Letter** will:

- a give details of the issue, complaint or allegation including any underlying information provided to support of it;
- b advise the student of the decision that there is no case to answer;
- c advise the student that a copy of the **Letter** will be placed on the student's file.

2.2.2 **Letter of outcome – Stage 1 – Minor concern, complaint or allegation**

(See section 10.3, UPR SA15¹.)

Where it is considered that the concern, complaint or allegation is minor, the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance)/Associate Dean of School (Research) or nominee(s) may decide to give a First Warning, or a Final Warning and/or manage the matter informally with the programme team and/or the practice placement /learning provider or no further action is required. The **Letter** will:

- a give details of the issue, complaint or allegation;
- b explain that the preliminary investigation has revealed evidence of a fitness to practise issue;
- c explain how the matter would be dealt with informally or First warning would be issued or Final warning will be issued or no further action is required;
- d advise the student that a copy of the Letter will be placed on the student's file;
- e include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.2.3 **Letter of outcome – Stage 1 – The matter will be investigated by an independent investigator**

(See section 10.3, UPR SA15¹.)

Where the concern, complaint or allegation is found to be serious and /or is otherwise considered to warrant further investigation and /or has been raised previously and/or another fitness to practise, student discipline or academic misconduct has been raised previously. The **Letter** will:

- a give details of the issue, complaint or allegation, including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- b confirm that the matter has been referred for investigation;
- c advise the student that the investigation will contribute to the investigation stage required by any other University procedures;
- d advise the student that a copy of the **Letter** will be placed on the student's file;
- e include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.2.4 **Letter of outcome – Stage 1 – The matter will be progressed to Stage 2**

(See section 10.3, UPR SA15¹.)

Where the concern, complaint or allegation is found to be serious and/or has been raised previously and/or another fitness to practise, student discipline or academic misconduct has been raised previously. The **Letter** will:

- a give details of the issue, complaint or allegation, including any underlying facts provided to support it;
- b confirm that the case be referred for consideration by a Student Fitness to Practise Panel;
- c advise the student that a copy of the Letter will be placed on the student's file;
- d include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.3 **Student Fitness to practise – Stage 2 – formal process**

2.3.1 **Hearing Letter – referral to a Student Fitness to Practise Panel**

(See section 11, UPR SA15¹.)

there is a fitness to practise issue and the matter is referred for consideration by a Fitness to Practise Panel

or

the student has chosen not to accept the decision of the Associate Dean of School (Academic Quality Assurance) and the matter has been referred to a Student Fitness to Practise Panel

The **Letter** will:

- a give a full explanation of the issue, complaint or allegation;
- b give the day, date, time and venue for the Hearing;
- c give the name and contact details of the Panel Clerk;
- d give an explanation of the student's right to be accompanied by a Student's Adviser;
- e invite the student to submit any witness statements to the Panel Clerk, not less than five (5) working days before the Hearing, where they have not already done so;
- f advise the student that the University expects that they will bring forward to the Panel all relevant evidence that is available at the time of the Hearing;
- g advise the student of their entitlement to bring to the Hearing any witness and of the requirement that they must inform the Panel Clerk not less than five (5) working days beforehand of their intention to do so and of the name of any witness who is to attend;
- h advise the student that should they fail to give notice that, for good reason, he or she is unable to attend the Hearing, the matter may be heard in their absence;
- i advise the student that failure to attend a Hearing is in itself a disciplinary offence, the penalties and fines for which are listed in Appendix I, UPR SA15²;
- j include:
 - 1 copies of all the documents to be relied upon at the Hearing, including the Case Officer's report;
 - 2 a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.3.2 Letter of Decision

A Letter of Decision will be issued following a Hearing by:

- i a Student Disciplinary Panel (see section 3, Appendix II, UPR SA15⁴) or an Academic Misconduct Panel (see section 3, Appendix III, UPR SA15⁵) or a Student Fitness to Practise Panel (see section 11, UPR SA15¹);
- ii following consideration by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (or nominee) of a request for a review of a decision of:
 - a Student Disciplinary Panel (see section 5, Appendix II, UPR SA15⁴), or
 - an Academic Misconduct Panel (see section 5, Appendix III, UPR SA15⁵), or
 - a Student Fitness to Practise Panel (see section 11, UPR SA15¹);
- iii following consideration by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors of a request for a review of the Vice-Chancellor's decision to Suspend or Exclude a student from the University (see section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³).
- iv **Letters of Decision** will:
 - a give the decision and the reasons why the decision was taken; (see section 11.6.3, UPR SA15¹);
 - b explain any further rights of review that the student might have;

c **SUSPENSION OR EXCLUSION FROM THE UNIVERSITY BY THE VICE-CHANCELLOR**

Where a Panel has recommended that the student should be suspended or excluded from the University by the Vice-Chancellor, the Letter of Decision will, in addition to 2.2.5, iv, a and b, make clear that the matter has been referred for final decision by the Vice-Chancellor.

d **DECISION OF A REVIEW COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

Where the decision of the Review Committee is to refer a matter for further consideration by the Vice-Chancellor, the Letter of Decision will include the following statements:

“No further review by the Board will be allowed in the case and the student will not, therefore, be permitted a further review by the Board against any final decision taken by the Vice-Chancellor as a result of any re-consideration of the matter.

The suspension or exclusion remains in place unless the Vice-Chancellor decides to rescind it or to vary the sanction”.

A copy of the **Letter of Decision** will be provided to the Dean of Students who will be responsible for instigating any consequent action, including, as appropriate, providing copies of the **Letter of Decision** to other relevant members of staff.

2.3.3 **Letter of Suspension**

(See section 1.4, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

Letters of Suspension will:

- a state that the student has been suspended from the University by or on the authority of the Vice-Chancellor;
- b give the reasons why the decision was taken;
- c stipulate the period of the suspension;
- d notify the student concerned that they must make a written request to the Vice-Chancellor, via the Dean of Students, to have the suspension lifted temporarily so that the student may take any assessment;
- e confirm the intervals at which the suspension will be reviewed by the Vice-Chancellor;
- f inform the student that the President of the Students' Union, and the Chair of the relevant Programme Board of Examiners will be informed and will be advised that it is the student's responsibility to request the Vice-Chancellor to lift the suspension temporarily so that the student may take any assessment;
- g explain any further rights of review that the student might have;
- h be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or their deputy designated under the provisions of section 11.6, UPR SA15¹.

2.3.4 Letter of Exclusion

(See section 1.5, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

Letters of Exclusion will:

- a state that the student has been excluded from the University by or on the authority of the Vice-Chancellor;
- b give the reasons why the decision was taken;
- c advise the student that the University considers that fourteen (**14**) calendar days' notice has been given of the termination of any agreement/licence for the provision by the University to the student of residential accommodation;
- d inform the student that the President of the Students' Union, and the Chair of the relevant Programme Board of Examiners will be informed;
- e explain any further rights of review that the student might have;
- f be signed by the Vice-Chancellor or their deputy designated under the provisions of section 11.6, UPR SA15¹.

2.3.5 Letter of Acknowledgement – of a request for a review by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor

(As appropriate, see section 5, Appendix II, UPR SA15⁴; section 5, Appendix III, UPR SA15⁵.)

Letters of Acknowledgement will:

- a acknowledge receipt of the Request for a Review by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor made in the form referred to in section 3.1;
- b for the avoidance of doubt, stipulate the version of UPR SA15¹ under the provisions of which the matter is being dealt with;
- c be signed by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or their nominee;
- d include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.3.6 Letter of Acknowledgement – of a request for a review by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors

(See section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

Letters of Acknowledgement will be issued by the Head of Governance Services (or nominee) and will:

- a on behalf of the Board, acknowledge receipt of the **Request for a Review by the Board of Governors** made in the form referred to in section 3.1;
- b for the avoidance of doubt, stipulate the version of UPR SA15¹ under the provisions of which the matter is being dealt with;
- c be signed by the Head of Governance Services (or nominee).
- d Include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.3.7 **Letter of Decision – following the request for a review by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor**

(See section 12.3.1, UPR SA151)

The **Letter** will:

- a give the decision and the reasons why the decision was taken;
- b Include a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its appendices.

2.3.8 **Review Hearing Letter – arrangements for a Review Hearing by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors**

(See section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

The Head of Governance Services will write to the student concerning the arrangements for the review by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors.

The **Review Hearing Letter** will give:

- a the names of any individuals who are to appear at the Review Hearing;
- b the day, date, time and venue for the Hearing;
- c advise the student of their entitlement to bring to the Hearing any witness and of the requirement that they must inform the Secretary and Registrar (or nominee) not less than five (**5**) working days beforehand of their intention to do so and of the name of any witness who is to attend;
- d invite the student to submit any witness statements to the Secretary and Registrar (or nominee), not less than three (**3**) working days before the Review Hearing, where they have not already done so;
- e advise the student that any documents to be considered at the Hearing that are not available at the time that the **Review Hearing Letter** is issued will be provided to them before the Review Hearing;
- f advise the student that should they fail to give notice that, for good reason, he or she is unable to attend the Hearing, the matter may be heard in their absence;
- g advise the student that failure to attend a Hearing is in itself a disciplinary offence, the penalties and fines for which are listed in Appendix I, SA15⁶.
- h for the avoidance of doubt, stipulate the version of UPR SA15¹ under the provisions of which the matter is being dealt with;
- i include copies of all of the documents to be considered by the Review Committee and a copy of the relevant version of UPR SA15¹ and all of its Appendices.

2.3.9 **Completion of Procedures Letter**

(As appropriate, see section 5, Appendix II, UPR SA15⁴; Section 5, Appendix III, UPR SA15⁵; section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

Having exhausted the University internal procedures and subject to the provisions of legislation, the student has the right to request the Office of the Independent Adjudicator to review their case. Completion of Procedures Letters are issued by the Office of the Dean of Students.

3 Approved standard forms

3.1 Initial Referral Form

Where a concern, complaint or allegation is received by a programme leader/professional doctorate director or other member of staff at the University they must report the concern, complaint or allegation (See section 9.1.1/9.1.2, UPR SA15¹).

The form will include the following:

- a the student details;
- b the details of the Fitness-to-practise issue raised;
- c supporting evidence.

3.2 Investigation report

(See section 9.1.1/9.1.2, UPR SA15)

The form will include the following:

- a guidance to complete the allegation;
- b the details of the allegation(s);
- c the record of meetings and summary of the investigation;
- d a recommendation following the investigation.

3.3 Request for a Review by the Deputy Vice-Chancellor or by a Review Committee of the Board of Governors – form

(As appropriate, see section 4, Appendix II, UPR SA15⁴; section 4, Appendix III, UPR SA15⁵; section 2, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

3.3.1 The form will include the following advice

‘The student must complete all of the fields within the form. Incomplete forms and forms submitted without the required supporting documents/material, as set out in this section, will not be considered and will be returned, un-processed, to the student.’

3.3.2 The form will require that the student provides the following information:

- a the grounds for review;
- b the new documents/material that support the grounds being cited for a review,
- c identifying clearly how they support the grounds being cited;
- d all of the documents/material provided by the student at previous stages of the process;
- e the postal address to which all correspondence is to be sent;
- f the e-mail to which all communications are to be sent;
- g the telephone numbers on which the student can be contacted (mobile and where applicable, landline).

3.4 Request for a suspension from the University to be lifted temporarily for the purposes of assessment – form

(See section 1.4, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³.)

3.4.1 The form will include the following advice:

‘The student must complete all of the fields within the form. Incomplete forms and forms submitted without the required supporting documents/material, as set out in this section, will not be considered and will be returned, un-processed, to the student.’

3.4.2 The form will include the following advice:

‘Where a student submits an assessment or attends an examination (or similar) without first having their suspension lifted temporarily by the Vice-Chancellor, the student will be considered not to have submitted or attended and the work will not be considered (see section 1.4.5, Appendix IV, UPR SA15³).’

3.4.3 The form will require that the student provides the following information:

- a the grounds for review;
- b the new documents/material that support the grounds being cited for a review,
- c identifying clearly how they support the grounds being cited;
- d all of the documents/material provided by the student at previous stages of the process;
- e details of the assessment for which a temporary lifting of a suspension is being sought including the module title, module code, type of assessment, dates and times relevant to the assessment;
- f the postal address to which all correspondence is to be sent;
- g the e-mail to which all communications are to be sent;
- h the telephone numbers on which the student can be contacted (mobile and where applicable, landline).

Sharon Harrison-Barker
Secretary and Registrar
Signed: **1 August 2022**

Alternative format

If you need this document in an alternative format, please email us at governanceservices@herts.ac.uk or telephone us on +44 (0)1707 28 6006.