

Fitness to Study Guidance for Colleges (undergraduates)

Plain Language Flowchart

The follow pages provide a useful summary of each of the three stages:

STAGE 1

Initial Action and Informal Meeting

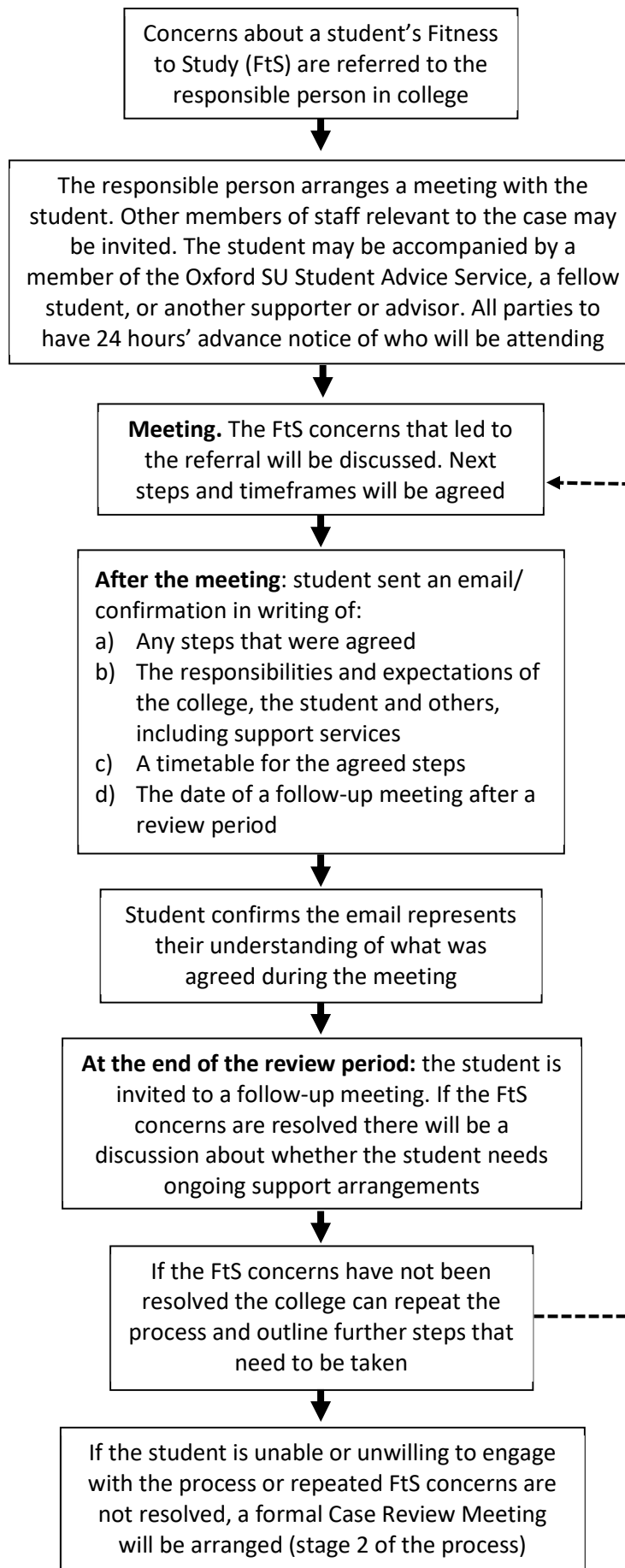
STAGE 2

Formal Case Review Meeting

STAGE 3

College Fitness to Study Decision Making Panel and the University Fitness to Study Panel

STAGE 1: Initial Action and Informal Meeting



STAGE 2: Formal Case Review Meeting

Before the meeting:

Concerns about a student's Fitness to Study are referred to the responsible person in college

The responsible person arranges the meeting. In attendance:

- The student;
- the Chair - a named person who has not had significant involvement with the student;
- members of staff with significant interest in the student's academic progress, health and welfare, including representatives of the University's Student Welfare and Support Services;
- the student can choose to be accompanied by a member of the Oxford SU Student Advice Service, a fellow student, or another supporter or advisor. The supporter should not be a member of the student's family unless agreed in advance. Legal advisors are not permitted.

All parties to have 24 hours' advance notice of attendees.

The student **receives** written notice of the Case Review Meeting, outlining the purpose of it and what referral/request has led to it; any documents that will be considered at the meeting.

The student **provides** any documents they wish to be considered at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

The student may be asked to undergo a specialist assessment from a qualified practitioner, such as a college doctor or student counsellor. Alternatively, the student may wish to provide the college with specialist advice from their own qualified practitioner, which may be relevant to help determine the matters outlined in section 7.3 of the full guidance.

Should the student choose not to undertake a specialist assessment or to disclose the contents of the same, the college may continue based on existing information that they hold.

During the meeting:

The Chair will seek information and opinions from those present to assist discussion.

- The nature and extent of the FtS concerns will be discussed;
- the student's views and wishes will be heard and taken into account;
- the best way to resolve the FtS concerns are identified and preferably agreed;
- the likely outcomes if the FtS concerns are not resolved are identified and made clear.

After discussion, the Case Review Meeting may, among other actions, make one of the decisions or recommendations outlined in section 7.10 of the full guidance:

- that no further action is required;
- to formally monitor the student's progress for a specified period of time with an action plan agreed with the student;
- to recommend that reasonable adjustments and/or support are put in place, specifying the nature of the same and the responsibility for their provision;
- to recommend that the student's status be suspended for a period of time;
- to recommend that consideration be given to the student withdrawing from their course of study.

An action plan should be agreed outlining:

- any steps which the student will need to take;
- any support to be provided to the student;
- responsibilities for the steps to be taken and timeframes;
- provision for regular review meetings with the student for the duration of the action plan including at the end of the period agreed;
- the identity of the college and/ or University staff who will undertake the reviews;
- likely consequences of the failure of the action plan to resolve the FtS concerns – this will normally involve a student's FtS being considered at a stage 3 panel.

After the meeting:

Within 7 working days from the date of the meeting: student to receive in writing the recommendations of the Case Review Meeting and a concise record of the meeting.

A copy of this documentation will be kept on the student's personal file, and consideration should be given regarding sending to the student's department/faculty.

If the student decides not to follow the agreed action plan, or where the student does not accept a recommendation from the Case Review Meeting: the college to inform the student that the responsible person will consider referring the matter to the college's fitness to study Decision Making Panel or University's Fitness to Study Panel (stage 3 of the guidance).

If the concerns remain unresolved, including because of a repeated failure in any support measures agreed or recommended, a referral to a stage 3 panel should be made by the responsible person.

STAGE 3 - College Fitness to Study Decision Making Panel and the University Fitness to Study Panel

If the FtS concerns are not resolved after stage 1 and 2 the case will be referred to a college Decision Making Panel. If the college considers that the seriousness of a case makes referral to a panel appropriate without going through the two earlier stages of the procedures, then a referral to stage 3 should be made, including where an immediate suspension is necessary and the student does not agree.

In circumstances where a college does not have a Decision Making Panel available to it, a referral may be made to the [University Fitness to Study Panel](#) by writing to fts@admin.ox.ac.uk and requesting a referral form. As part of the referral requirements, colleges will need to show that their fitness to study procedures have been followed, and that reasonable adjustments have been made in the case of disabled students.

The documentation relating to stages 1 and 2, where these have taken place, and any other relevant documentation will be required. Responsible persons, the chair of a formal Case Review Meeting and those who have advised orally or in writing at informal or formal meetings may be required to attend a meeting of the University Panel as witnesses.

The full procedures of the University Panel are set out in detail in Statute XIII, Part B and Council Regulations 1 of 2012, which are published on the University's web pages at: www.admin.ox.ac.uk/statutes/regulations/. College Decision Making Panels may choose to adopt the same procedures.

Powers of the panel:

- A Decision Making Panel is empowered to decide whether or not the student is fit to study; it may also make a decision or recommendation that the student's access to University and college facilities and premises should be subject to certain conditions, or that they should be suspended for a specific, or indefinite, period.
- In urgent cases a panel may recommend, after discussion with the college, that necessary and proportionate interim measures be adopted until the case may be further determined by the panel.
- In considering a case a Decision Making Panel is entitled to employ or to draw upon expert advice, including but not limited to qualified expert medical, psychiatric and legal advice. The Panel shall have due regard to the obligations of the University and the student's college under equality legislation and in particular the duty to make reasonable adjustments.
- The decision of a Panel is final and marks the completion of the procedure concerning fitness to study.