

PROGRAMME FITNESS TO PRACTISE STATEMENT
Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems

UCD Policy Definition

Fitness to Practice means having the skills, knowledge, health and character necessary to undertake and complete a programme with professional practice, experiential learning or clinical work safely and effectively, fulfilling the responsibilities within the scope of practice in a chosen field.

Purpose of the UCD Fitness to Practice Policy

- To protect the public, students, placement providers and the University;
- Instil in students the qualities and competencies required for professional practice and to support and guide students who experience issues that may affect their ability to practice;
- Provide a suitable framework for the effective management of Fitness to Practice issues that may arise, either prior to or during a student's programme of study.

Fitness to Practice in Nursing and Midwifery

A student on a Nursing or Midwifery programme with a clinical component must be Fit to Practice. It is the position of the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems that its students conduct themselves professionally at all times in order to justify the trust the public places in them and in the professions of Nursing and Midwifery. A guide to Fitness to Practice in these programmes has been developed using the principles of the An Bord Altranais Fitness to Practice Guidelines as well as the central tenets of the clinical assessment documentation used in School programmes.

Aims of the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems Fitness to Practice Statement

The Fitness to Practice statement aims to:

1. Ensure students understand the level of professional attitudes and behaviour required of them throughout their programme of study.
2. Safeguard members of the public and patients with whom the School's students have contact during their programme.
3. Meet the requirements of the UCD Fitness to Practice Policy and School Fitness to Practice procedures.

Fitness to Practice Principles

Four core principles underpin the School's fitness to practice policy:

1. The primacy of the patient experience; making patient care and that of their significant others the primary concern, treating them as individuals and respecting their autonomy and dignity.
2. Work with others in a spirit of mutual respect, collegiality and partnership to protect and promote the health and wellbeing of those being cared for, their families, carers, and the wider community.
3. Provide a high standard of practice and care at all times.
4. Be open and honest, act with integrity and uphold the reputation of the professions.

Fitness to Practice Standards

The following standards of conduct and comporment provide the basis for determining Fitness to Practice when undertaking any programme in the UCD School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health Systems.

i. Competency

Students shall:

- Work within the limits of their competence with regard to their stage of education and training. This includes seeking and accepting supervision when unsure whether clinical tasks are within their scope of competence.
- Respect the rights of patients and their families, including respecting diversity and not discriminating against any patient or family member.
- Clearly identify themselves as students whilst on placement and ensure patients consent before providing care.
- Maintain the safety, autonomy and dignity of patients at all times.
- Respect persons' rights to confidentiality.

ii. Evidence-based practice

Students shall:

- Use an evidence-based approach to the care they provide.
- Provide care in accordance with agreed multidisciplinary team decisions.
- Familiarise themselves with local policies and procedures and practice accordingly.
- Maintain accurate records.
- Take responsibility for their own learning and attend all lectures, clinical skills laboratories and clinical placements.
- Submit coursework which they have completed, on time and not pass off others' work as their own.
- Avoid identifying patients or clinical colleagues in assessment tasks.
- Be open to new learning experiences and demonstrate the ability to receive and respond to feedback in a constructive and non-defensive manner.

iii. Teamwork

Students shall:

- Work in a collaborative manner with patients and their significant others.
- Work effectively and appropriately within a multidisciplinary team.
- Be aware and respectful of the work and contributions of others in the healthcare environment.
- Have a responsible attitude towards time keeping and respect for colleagues.
- Demonstrate positive team working skills whilst respecting personal, professional and sexual boundaries.
- Engage in open, positive and constructive interaction with members of the public, patients and their families, research participants, supervisors, other staff on placement, classmates, the course team, and other university staff.
- Adopt the dress code of their host organisation whilst on placement.

iv. Honesty and integrity

Students shall;

- Be honest and trustworthy in all recording care delivered and experience obtained.
- Be honest and trustworthy in all aspects of the academic work they undertake, for example, in submitting applications, CVs and programme coursework.
- Respect and uphold local healthcare policies.
- Respect and uphold the law, informing the School immediately if they accrue any caution or criminal conviction.
- Engage in appropriate conduct and behaviour outside of the workplace, for example on social network sites.

v. Personal well being

Students shall,

- Seek medical help if they have a concern about their personal health.
- Not place colleagues or patients at risk because of personal health problems.
- Undertake treatment regimens if diagnosed with a particular health problem.
- Not engage in the misuse of alcohol and/or drugs, placing others at risk.
- Be properly immunised.
- Demonstrate appropriate communication with peers, patients and families, clinical colleagues and staff of the University.