

UCD BSc in HUMAN NUTRITION PROGRAMME FITNESS TO PRACTISE STATEMENT 2024-2025

UCD Definition of Student Fitness to Practise

The health and safety of the public, patients, animals, service users, staff and students are paramount. Student fitness to practise means having the skills, knowledge, health and character necessary to undertake and complete a programme with professional practice, experiential learning or clinical work safely or effectively, fulfilling their responsibilities within their scope of practice in their chosen field in a manner that meets professional and ethical standards. Examples of areas of concern or circumstances that might render a student unfit to practise include, but are not limited to: substance misuse; aggressive, violent or threatening behaviour; persistent inappropriate attitude or behaviour; failure to accept and follow educational advice; failure to follow health and safety requirements or the regulations; impaired judgement; lack of competence; having health concerns and lack of insight or management of these; failure to seek medical treatment or other support; refusal to follow medical advice or care plans including monitoring and reviews, in relation to maintaining fitness to practise; failure to recognise limits and abilities or lack of insight into health concerns.

Objectives of UCD Fitness to Practise

- Protect the public, patients, animals, student, faculty, staff placement providers and the University;
- Instil in students the qualities and competences required for professional practise and to support and guide students who experience issues that may affect their ability to practise;
- Identify and support students whose behaviour, capacity, welfare or wellbeing are of concern to themselves or others, or whose behaviour or actions are impacting adversely on, or pose a risk to, the learning, working, or living experiences of themselves or others;
- Provide a suitable framework for the effective, consistent and timely identification and management of student fitness to practise issues that may arise, either prior to or during a student's programme of study;
- Treat concerns regarding student fitness to practise seriously and as quickly as possible.

Fitness to Practise in Human Nutrition

The UCD Student Fitness to Practise Policy applies to all students on the BSc in Human Nutrition programme: [UCD Student Engagement, Conduct, Complaints and Appeals \(Student Fitness to Practise\)](#). The guide to Fitness to Practise on this programme has been developed with reference to the UCD Student Fitness to Practise Policy, the UCD Student Code and the Association of Nutrition Standards of Ethics, Conduct and Performance.

Aims of the BSc in Human Nutrition Fitness to Practise Statement

This Fitness to Practise statement aims to: Ensure students on the UCD BSc in Human Nutrition have a clear understanding of UCD Fitness to Practise Policy requirements and processes.

Fitness to Practise Standards

The following positive attitudes and behaviours are expected of students registered to the UCD BSc in Human Nutrition:

Personal Behaviour

Students must demonstrate their Fitness to Practise in all aspects of their personal behaviour throughout their period of registration by behaving in a manner appropriate to their position as a student of the University studying for a qualification, the successful completion of which leads to eligibility for entry to a voluntary registered profession. Students are required to keep high standards of personal conduct and to behave with integrity and honesty at all times. Students are required to follow and obey the laws of the land and to refrain from unlawful activity at all times.

As a condition of acceptance onto the BSc in Human Nutrition programme with a professional work experience (PWE) placement component, students must undergo and receive Garda Vetting. Garda vetting procedures must be completed by the student in advance of beginning PWE placement. During their studies where a BSc in Human Nutrition student is subject to a Garda caution, allegation of criminal activity, or criminal prosecution they are required to notify the Programme Director in writing as soon as possible and no later than seven days after they become aware of its occurrence. In the event of an alleged incident, the Programme Director, in correspondence with the BSc in Human Nutrition Programme Board may require the student to discontinue a PWE placement if applicable until such time as the issue is resolved. Failure to notify the Programme Director or to agree to temporarily discontinue a placement while an outstanding legal issue is being resolved will result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Appearance

BSc in Human Nutrition students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise during their course of studies by maintaining a standard of appearance that will be perceived by others as professional. Students are required to adopt the dress code of their host organisation while on PWE placement.

Behaviour Towards Others

BSc in Human Nutrition students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise continually during their course of studies in all aspects of their behaviour towards others: members of the public, patient/client/service user and their families, classmates and other students, research participants, university staff, tutors, other staff on placement, colleagues and employers. Students are required to treat others with due respect, courtesy, honesty, accountability, humility, fairness and impartiality and to recognise, respect and tolerate individual differences in others including gender, religious values, sexual preferences, age, disability, and cultural beliefs and values. This requires the BSc in Human Nutrition student to be open and positive towards new learning experiences and to demonstrate the ability to receive, and respond to, feedback in a constructive and non-defensive manner at all times. In instances where there is a concern that a BSc in Human Nutrition student is unreasonably defensive and unresponsive to constructive feedback offered to them in the University or on PWE placement, then the specific feedback given, and the response of the student should be clearly documented by the academic supervisor or PWE placement supervisor and returned to the module co-ordinator for action.

Learning

The majority of content of the BSc in Human Nutrition programme of study is designed to meet the requirements of Association for Nutrition standards. BSc in Human Nutrition students demonstrate their Fitness to Practise by pursuing their studies with due diligence, ensuring they avail of the range of educational opportunities made available in order to acquire the skills and knowledge identified in the relevant professional and statutory body guidance. Students are expected to adhere to the highest ethical and academic standards, through sound academic writing, avoiding plagiarism, and use of appropriate referencing and citation. Students are required to take responsibility for their own learning by fulfilling the attendance, learning and assessment requirements of the academic and PWE placement aspects of their education. Students are required to demonstrate good time management and regular attendance and to adhere to the guidelines for reporting non-attendance on both academic and practice placement elements of the programme as stated in the UCD BSc Human Nutrition Student Handbook. Failure to follow the procedure for reporting non-attendance may result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Health

BSc in Human Nutrition students must be able to perform their professional skills in a safe, competent and proficient manner in order to meet the needs of the workplace. UCD is committed to equal opportunities and the support of students with disabilities. Students with disabilities registered to the BSc in Human Nutrition programme are required to register with the UCD Access and Lifelong Learning Centre for a Needs Assessment to identify any appropriate supports required in the academic and/or practice placement settings. As a condition of acceptance onto the BSc in Human Nutrition programme, students are required to undergo health screening and immunisation as outlined on <http://www.ucd.ie/registry/prospectivestudents/admissions/policiesandgeneralregulations/healthscreening/>. Students will also be required to satisfy the Health Service Executive (HSE) public health guidelines (for vaccinations such as Influenza, Covid-19 and others) as they pertain at the time. Students are required to adhere to safety and infection control procedures. By signing this Fitness to Practise Statement, students declare themselves to be physically and psychologically well in order to competently execute the various academic coursework, practical classes, and PWE. In the event that a student experiences a change in their physical or psychological health affecting their ability to execute their academic and/or PWE responsibilities, they are required to notify the Programme Director in writing within seven days. In such circumstances, the Programme Director and programme team will work with the student to develop an appropriate plan to manage the student's changed circumstances in a supportive manner. Students who have had to withdraw from PWE for health reasons will need to be certified as fit to return to PWE by an impartial physician with relevant expertise before they will be permitted to return. Failure to follow any aspect of this procedure, which affects an individual's capacity to carry out their various academic and PWE requirements may result in the initiation of formal Fitness to Practise procedures.

Duty of Care

BSc in Human Nutrition students will demonstrate their Fitness to Practise at all times by conducting themselves in a professional manner while on PWE placement and when conducting supervised research as outlined in the BSc in Human Nutrition Programme curriculum. Students will at all times respect the rights and dignity of the members of the public, research participants, patients, maintain accurate research data, obtain appropriate informed consent and adhere to the relevant host guidelines for all aspects of the PWE placement. Students may have access to confidential personal information and are required to ensure confidentiality and comply with General Data Protection Regulations. Students are also required to follow the health and safety requirements of the School of Agriculture and Food Science, UCD and the PWE placement provider. In instances where there is a concern that a BSc in Human Nutrition student has breached their duty of care, the specific incident should be documented by the placement supervisor and the response of the student clearly documented. Both should be forwarded to the Programme Director as soon as possible but no more than seven days following the incident.

Reporting to Professional Work Experience Placement Providers

The Programme Director has a duty to inform current PWE supervisors of any Fitness to Practise hearings and their outcome on which a BSc in Human Nutrition student is being referred. In the event that the Programme Director is informing a supervisor of the outcome of a Fitness to Practise investigation which has resulted in the student's continuation on their programme of study, this information should be conveyed in a manner that supports the student in achieving and maintaining the appropriate standard of professional practice in a constructive manner.

Fitness to Practise Process

The student Fitness to Practise Process is described in detail at the following [link](#)

I agree to adhere to the BSc in Human Nutrition Fitness to Practise Statement:

Name: _____

Date: _____

References

UCD Student Fitness to Practise Policy: <http://www.ucd.ie/secca/studentfitnesstopractise/>

UCD Student Code of Conduct: Governance Document Details (ucd.ie)

<https://www.associationfornutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/2020-AfN-Standards-of-Ethics-Conduct-and-Performance.pdf>