



Fitness to Practise

All trainees on entrance to the Endeavour Learning SCITT programme must complete a health questionnaire. Teachers and those training to become teachers need a sufficient standard of health and physical fitness. Teaching is a demanding career and teachers have a duty of care for the pupils in their charge. The health, education, safety and welfare of pupils are an important factor in deciding on an individual's health and physical capacity to train and subsequently to teach. Sometimes health problems only emerge after a trainee has started their programme. If these could affect 'fitness to practise' then it is important that any concerns are raised with the Strategic Lead. This will enable the Strategic Lead to decide on the appropriate course of action. These procedures may additionally include the completion of a Risk Assessment.

Additionally, a trainee must not engage in any behaviour which renders them unfit to be admitted to the teaching profession.

The following circumstances are examples which could render a trainee unfit to practise:

- a) offences against or exploiting the vulnerable, including children, the elderly and the mentally incapacitated;
- b) chronic drug or alcohol abuse;
- c) acting in a violent manner on or away from the Endeavour Learning SCITT Partnership premises;
- d) conviction of a relevant criminal offence;
- e) intimidation of pupils, fellow trainees or staff within the Partnership;
- f) failure to rectify behaviour that has been subject to any disciplinary actions;
- g) repeated inappropriate behaviour towards others;
- h) falsification of records;



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- i) severe or relapsing mental illness;
- j) being a carrier of a serious communicable disease;
- k) any circumstances which may breach the professional code of practise applicable to the teaching profession.

Initiation of the Procedure

The Strategic Lead will refer cases to the Fitness to Practise Panel. The Strategic Lead will decide whether or not to suspend the trainee from attending part or all of the Endeavour Learning SCITT programme pending the outcome of the Fitness to Practise proceedings or investigation into the trainee's health.

The membership of the Fitness to Practise Panel will be:

- The chair of the panel- the Director of Standards;
- A representative from the Endeavour Learning SCITT Partnership, and;
- The SCITT Administrator, who will act as Secretary to the panel.

Procedure for the Calling of a Fitness to Practise Panel

The Secretary to the panel will be responsible for informing the trainee of the substance of the allegations against them and/or concerns about them, arranging the hearing and advising the trainee and any witnesses.

Any party proposing to call witnesses to give evidence at the panel must notify the Secretary of their details not less than 3 working days before the date of the panel. The calling of witnesses will be limited to those whose identities have been notified to the Secretary.

The trainee will have the opportunity to write to the Secretary of the panel prior to the panel admitting or disputing the grounds and enclosing any documents or making any representations they may wish to be considered by the panel. The trainee must also indicate whether or not they will be attending the hearing. The Chair of the Fitness to Practise Panel will have discretion to delay the date of the hearing at the request of the trainee for such period as the Chair considers reasonable in the circumstances.



If the trainee does not appear at the hearing without reasonable explanation the panel may proceed in the absence of the trainee.

The panel will be entitled to call witnesses to give evidence on any matter relevant to the enquiry; from anyone that the panel wishes to hear evidence.

The Panel

- The proceedings of the Fitness to Practise Panel will be held in private.
- The Secretary will prepare a record of the proceedings of the Fitness to Practise Panel.
- The trainee will be given the opportunity to present their case and to call on any witnesses.
- The panel will be entitled to question the trainee and any of their witnesses.
- The panel will conduct its deliberations in private and will be free to recall any witnesses.
- The panel will be informed of any previous penalties imposed on the trainee. The panel will be entitled to hear any relevant medical or character witnesses.
- Where any element of fact is in dispute within the hearing, the standard of proof applied by the panel will be that of the balance of probabilities.
- In the case of a split decision, the Chair will have the casting vote.
- Within 5 working days of the decision of the panel the Secretary will write informing the trainee of the decision made by the panel. The letter will notify the trainee of their right to appeal.
- In imposing a sanction on a trainee, the panel will, if appropriate, have regard to the relevance of the matter in relation to the trainee's fitness on completion of the Endeavour Learning SCITT programme to be registered as a teacher.

Possible Outcomes

The Panel may:

- a) permit the trainee to continue with the programme, with or without conditions;
- b) permit the trainee to continue with the programme under close supervision;
- c) recommend a specified period of deferral;

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- d) require the trainee to resit a specified part of the programme;
- e) require any other action considered appropriate by the panel to enable the trainee's successful completion of the remainder of the programme;
- f) recommend that the trainee's studies on the programme leading to QTS be terminated but allow them to continue with the academic qualification;
- g) recommend that the trainee's programme be terminated and that the trainee be required to withdraw from the Endeavour Learning SCITT programme.

Any penalty imposed on a trainee by the panel will not be implemented until such time as the appeal period has elapsed, or in the case of a trainee who has lodged an appeal, the appeals procedures have been completed. Where a trainee has been suspended, the suspension will remain in place until such time as the period of appeal has lapsed or until the appeals procedures have been completed.

The Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups Act 2006 places a legal duty on the Endeavour Learning SCITT Partnership to refer to the Disclosure and Barring Service any person who has;

- i. Harmed or poses a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult
- ii. Satisfied the harm test (i.e. there has been no action to harm but a risk of harm to a child or vulnerable adult still exists)
- iii. Received a caution or conviction for a relevant offence

In all cases the Endeavour Learning SCITT Partnership reserves the right to report the panel's decision to the appropriate professional and safe guarding authorities or the Disclosure and Barring Service.

Appeal against a decision of a Fitness to Practise Panel

A trainee will have the right to appeal against the decision of the Fitness to Practise Panel and such an appeal will be considered under the Endeavour Learning SCITT Appeals Procedures (see Complaints Policy for information on Making a request for an appeal).

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Any appeal must be made to the SCITT Administrator s.abram@tarletonacademy.org within 10 working days of the decision being notified to the trainee.

