

FITNESS TO STUDY POLICY

1. Purpose and Scope

The purpose of this policy is to outline the approach taken by Newbattle Abbey College ("the College") when a student's physical or mental health, wellbeing, or behaviour gives cause for concern about their ability to engage safely and/or effectively in their studies or college life.

The policy aims to:

- Support students to continue with their studies where possible.
- Identify when additional support or adjustments are needed.
- Outline procedures for situations where a student's fitness to study may be in question.

This policy applies to all students enrolled at the College.

2. Key Principles

- The College is committed to promoting student wellbeing and success.
- All concerns will be addressed sensitively and with respect for confidentiality.
- This policy is distinct from the College's disciplinary policy but may run in parallel where appropriate.
- Where applicable, reasonable adjustments will be implemented to ensure students can fully engage with this policy, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010

3. Fitness to Study Procedure

Stage 1: Informal Action

Concerns regarding a student's fitness to study may be raised by any member of College staff, by the student themselves, or by a fellow student. These concerns should be reported to the Curriculum Manager or the Student Wellbeing and Support Lead and may relate to changes in behaviour, attendance, engagement, or other signs that a student may be experiencing difficulties affecting their ability to fully engage with their studies.

At this stage:

- An appropriate member of the Student Wellbeing and Support Team or Learning and Teaching Team will meet informally with the student to discuss concerns.
- An action plan will be created collaboratively with the student, including support options and clear goals.
- Timescales for review will be agreed.

If concerns persist or escalate, the case may be referred to Stage 2.

Stage 2: Fitness to Study Panel

If no improvement is observed or concerns escalate and the student still wishes to continue with the course, a Fitness to Study Panel will be convened.

At this stage:

- The Fitness to Study Panel will be convened by the Depute Principal and will include an appropriate member of staff (Curriculum Manager, Student Wellbeing and Support Lead or Personal Academic Tutor).
- The student will be invited to attend and may bring a friend, relative, or other supportive adult.
- The panel will consider all evidence and student feedback.
- The outcome may include an updated support plan, temporary suspension of studies, or permanent withdrawal from the course.
- The panel may reconvene at any stage if concerns persist or new issues arise.

4. Appeals

Students may appeal a Fitness to Study decision by following the Student Appeals Policy for non-academic appeals. Appeals must be made by the student and cannot be made by a third party on a student's behalf.

5. Confidentiality and Record Keeping

All information will be handled in line with the College's Data Protection Policy. Records of meetings and decisions will be kept securely and confidentially.

6. Monitoring and Review

The Depute Principal will monitor the application of this policy and review its effectiveness. This policy will be reviewed every three years or sooner if legislation or good practice requires.

7. Related Documents

- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Student Attendance and Progress Policy
- Safeguarding Policy
- Student Disciplinary Policy

This Policy should be read in conjunction with other relevant College policies, procedures and guidance documents, whether specifically listed above or subsequently published or amended.

The College reserves the right to update, introduce, or revise policies and procedures from time to time.

Compliance with the most current versions of applicable policies and procedures, as published, is expected.

Title:	Fitness to Study Policy
Lead Officer:	Depute Principal
Date last reviewed	May 2025
Next Review date:	May 2028
Approved By:	Learning & Teaching Committee
Date first approved:	May 2025