



# FITNESS TO STUDY POLICY AND PROCEDURE 2025-2026

## SECTION 1: CONTEXT

Green Labyrinth is committed to supporting learner wellbeing and recognises that a positive approach to the management of physical and mental health challenges is critical to wellbeing and progression. Green Labyrinth also has a duty of care to the college community and a responsibility to take action to support those in distress or causing significant concern and presenting a risk to self or others. This includes situations where learners show visible signs of illness, mental health difficulties or emotional challenges that may impact negatively on the health, safety, learning and wellbeing of the learner and/or others. Green Labyrinth recognises that these situations could impact on a learner's fitness to study.

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Uphold Green Labyrinth's mission statement "Empowering Learning, Transforming Lives" for all learners
- Provide clear guidelines to staff, learners, parents, carers and employers on Green Labyrinth's Fitness to Study process

## SECTION 2: STATUS

2.1 This policy was approved by the Senior Leadership Team on 28<sup>th</sup> August 2025.

2.2 The Fitness to Study Policy & Procedure links to the following:

- Learner Agreement
- Our Charter
- Learner Attendance Policy
- Learner Equality and Diversity Policy
- Learner Complaints Policy

## SECTION 3: DEFINITIONS

3.1 Fitness to study means a learner's ability to participate effectively and safely in their academic programme and college life, without negatively impacting themselves or others. This includes being able to engage with the curriculum, attend classes, and manage the demands of college life, while also respecting the well-being of the wider community.

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3.2 There is no universally agreed international definition of the youth age group. For statistical purposes, however, the United Nations – without prejudice to any other definitions made by Member States – defines ‘youth’ as those persons between the ages of 15 and 24 years.

## **SECTION 4: POLICY GUIDANCE**

4.1 All learners will have an equal entitlement to support under the policy. The instances in which the Fitness to Study Policy might be implemented include:

- Where there are a number of reports from external agencies, GL staff, learners, other learners or third parties expressing/highlighting concerns regarding a learner’s well-being
- Where there are attendance related causes for concern. This may be a referral from an internal member of staff
- A learner has not engaged in studies for a significant period without an apparent reason
- Where there is concern about how a learner might manage whilst on placement or a field trip
- Where a learner’s support needs fall outside the scope of the support and other services which the college can reasonably be expected or obliged to provide or have the resources and expertise to provide
- When a learner applies for a programme of study and declares/discloses a health condition that would warrant a meeting to discuss if the learner is ‘fit to study’ and to implement a support plan prior to the start of the programme if necessary
- Where there is a change in a learner’s circumstances that impacts on their learning

4.2 This policy applies only where there is a wellbeing issue, or potential wellbeing issue arising in relation to a learner that will impact on their fitness to study. It does not apply to learners facing investigations or disciplinary action in relation to their conduct.

4.3 Although Green Labyrinth seeks to engage with learners in a supportive and constructive way, it is possible that instances of an extreme nature may occur which, under this policy, decide that a learner is unfit to study, and that his/her enrolment should be suspended or terminated.

4.4 All cases dealt with under this policy will be managed appropriately according to the individual circumstances of the case. Although Green Labyrinth anticipates that such cases will be exceptional, it reserves the right at any stage of a case to modify the process. This may be due to fairness and health and safety concerns, for example.

4.5 This policy will be used where Green Labyrinth considers it inappropriate to implement other processes such as Conduct Review, suspension or escalating a place to serious review. If Green Labyrinth decides that it would be more appropriate to deal with a case under a policy other than this policy, the college reserves the right to do so, despite concerns regarding the learner’s health or wellbeing.

## **SECTION 5: PROCEDURE**

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The implementation of this policy is primarily with the safeguarding team, mentor team and Attitude to Learning Lead. Nominated managers may lead in the case of high workload or staff absence. Study Programme team members will be kept informed and provide evidence if required.

5.1 The procedure has three levels of concern – see these details in Section 6 below. A learner can enter the procedure at any level, although it is hoped that most situations can be remedied by action taken at an early stage. A support plan must be agreed that is supported by relevant evidence such as medical evidence.

5.2 Any concerns about a learner’s health, wellbeing, safety or behaviour should be acted upon promptly. Early action/intervention can often prevent a situation from developing into a crisis.

5.3 If there are confidential concerns about a learner, staff can consult with the Designated Safeguarding Lead/Deputy Designated Safeguarding Lead. If it is agreed that there exists a significant degree of concern, the welfare of the learner is paramount, and the Designated Safeguarding Lead will determine the appropriate course of action in accordance with safeguarding procedures.

5.4 If available and relevant, Green Labyrinth can consult with others, including third parties such as health professionals, in order to determine matters which are relevant to the learner’s case

5.5 Concerns may emerge regarding a learner’s health, safety and fitness to study based upon deterioration in health, appearance, attitude or behaviour and attendance. These are to be referred to the appropriate teams and parents, carers and keyworkers consulted and kept informed

5.6 Concerns about a learner’s fitness to study will be raised with the learner in a mentor meeting on their return to college, online or on the phone. Learners can be offered an appropriate adult to be present

### **5.7.1 STAGE 1**

5.7.2 The learner and mentor have a meeting to discuss concerns and agree on actions to be taken. Should the learner and mentor be unable to agree on the actions to be taken, the mentor can offer appropriate suggestions which meet learner’s current circumstance and make expectations clear.

5.7.3 Details of the Stage 1 concern will be noted on MIS/Arbor alongside the actions agreed. This is to be communicated to parents/carers and keyworkers in the best suited format – email or text. This will be reviewed after 2 weeks.

5.7.4 The learner should also be informed that continued concern could result in moving to Stages 2 and/or 3 of the fitness to study process.

### **5.8.1 STAGE 2**

5.8.2 Relates to continued concern about a learner’s fitness to study due to deterioration in appearance, attitude, health, behaviour and or attendance or failed action from Stage 1.

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5.8.3 A meeting with the Attitude to Learning Lead is arranged. The learner should be informed of the purpose of the meeting and advised of any documents they may need to bring. The learner may be accompanied by a family member or by a support worker if appropriate. The purpose of the meeting will be to explore the learner's perception of the issues identified and also to ensure the learner clearly understands the Green Labyrinth's position regarding fitness to study. The consequences of not adhering to the action plan should be clearly outlined to the learner.

5.8.4 It is important to identify and seek to agree an action plan following the meeting. Should the attendees be unable to agree on the actions to be taken, the Attitude to Learning Lead will determine appropriate actions and expectations.

5.8.5 The meeting lead may invite other relevant staff members to attend the meeting (for example a mentor and may consult with and/or seek information from other relevant persons (for example members of academic or support staff or health professionals) in order to deal with the matter and to provide support to the learner.

5.8.6 The action plan must be given to the learner and parent/carer within 5 working days of the meeting.

5.8.7 Regular review meetings must be set up with the learner. Every 2-weeks is recommended.

5.8.8 Notes on action plan and meeting are to be added to case on MIS/Arbor

### 5.9.1 STAGE 3

5.9.2 The most serious level of concern can be reached either through progression from Stages 1 and 2 or directly to Stage 3 if there are significant concerns about the health and safety of the learner or to others. A risk panel will be called to determine the facts of the case and to discuss an appropriate course of action. The learner and their parent/carer and keyworkers will be informed on this stage in writing.

5.9.3 The meeting will be chaired by the Attitude to Learning Lead and the panel will consist of the 1 other nominated manager and mentor. A notetaker will also be in attendance. Witnesses may be called to provide evidence/produce written statements. The learner will also be invited to attend at one point during proceedings and may have a family member or support worker accompany them. The learner should be provided with a copy of this policy.

5.9.4 The risk panel may consider various options including the support required, the possibility of part-time study, a period of suspension/interruption or recommendation for the withdrawal of the learner. Management leading the panel may consult with and/or seek information from other relevant persons. This may include members of academic or support staff or health professionals in order to deal with the matter and to provide support to the learner.

5.9.5 The actions arising out of the panel meetings will be agreed, documented and circulated to all in attendance including the learner. Should an action plan not be agreed between the panel and the learner, the panel will have final decision on the outcome.

5.9.6 All actions must have specific timeframes where appropriate and adherence to such timeframes will be a condition of any re-entry to programme of study. If the panel considers that withdrawal/exclusion is the best course of action, a letter must be sent to the learner indicating the

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decision made. Details on the Learner Complains Policy is to be shared if the learner wishes to appeal against any decision made.

## SECTION 6: MONITORING

6.1 This policy will be monitored by the Senior Leadership Team.

## SECTION 7: REVIEW

7.1 The policy will be reviewed annually.

7.2 The next date of review will be August 2026.

7.3 Subsequent Reviews:

Reviewer	Review Date	Amendments Yes/No	Amendments Approved & Date
R. Katatic	18/08/2025	Yes	Addition of role of Attitude to Learning Lead and how it links to this policy.  Clarity of Mentor role in this policy.  Addition of MIS/Arbor in Section 5 for procedure.

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