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| **QU Health guidance | Fitness for Duty** |

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| **Contents:*** [Source](#Source)
* [Purpose](#Purpose)
* [Who Should Know This Guidance](#Who_should_know_this_guidance)
* [Guidance Statements](#Statements)
* [Technical Standards](#Technical_Standards)
* [Procedures](#Procedures)
* [Fitness For Duty Evaluation Flowchart](#Fitness_for_Duty_Evaluation_Chart)
* [Appendix](#appendix_1)
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| **Approved by:** Click or tap here to enter text. |

**Sour****ce**

This guidance was developed by the Academic Quality Department (AQD) at QU Health. The guidance statements, standards and procedures are enforced by College Deans and Heads of Departments. The AQD is responsible for overseeing and monitoring the implementation of this guidance.

**Purpose**

The purpose of this guidance is to set technical standard requirements to assess QU Health students’ Fitness for Duty. It is also to establish and implement processes involving Fitness for Duty evaluations to determine the student’s ability to conduct their academic and clinical duties safely and responsibly. The overarching aim is to ensure that QU Health student does not jeopardize the safety and well-being of self, patients, fellow students, health professionals or other personnel in their learning environment within QU Health premises and clinical training sites.

**W****ho should know this guidance.**

[x]  Vice President of Health & Medical Sciences

[x]  Dean

[x]  Director / Head of Department

[x]  Faculty

[x]  Student

[x]  All employees

**Definitions & Glossary**

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| **VPHMS** | Vice President of Health & Medical Sciences Office |
| **ADSA** | Assistant Dean for Student Affairs |
| **Fitness for Duty evaluation** | An evaluation exercise to determine the student’s ability to conduct academic and non-academic (clinical/technical) duties responsibly and safely. The evaluation is conducted when the need arises (concern raised by faculty/ preceptor). The evaluation is performed by a qualified, independent specialist in occupational medicine who is elected by a panel of QU Health members and stakeholders from the health system.The evaluator must be a non-QU affiliated practitioner who is neither involved in teaching or assessing students nor provide medical care to them.**Note:** this is not a confidential clinical consultation between the student and the evaluator. |
| **Fitness for Duty evaluation Report** | A written report by the elected evaluator specialist who conducted the fitness for duty evaluation. The report is addressed to the Student Fitness for Duty Committee (SFDC) chair and HoD/ADSA.  |
| **HoD** | Head of Department |
| **Impairment** | A medical or behavioral issue causing disability /ill-health status/other welfare issues which may impact a student’s academic, or non-academic (clinical/technical) performance. |
| **SFDC** | Student Fitness for Duty Committee which oversees the academic and professional development of students and ascertains their continuing Fitness for Duty.The committee members are appointed by the Dean and include senior faculty members with extensive professional practice experience in addition to representatives of key stakeholders from the health system. |
| **Technical standards** | These are a set of criteria established by faculty, in consultation with relevant stakeholders, to ensure that all students meet the ethical responsibility of program, College and QU Health to society by providing competent and compassionate health professionals who conduct their duties safely and responsibly. |

**Guida****nce statements**

| **Item** | **Statement** |
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| **1** | All QU Health students enrolled into academic programs which involve direct patient care as part of their future health profession must meet the *technical standards* of Fitness for Duty. |
| **2** | All students in these programs must sign and endorse acknowledgement of such technical standards and complete the Fitness for Duty Questionnaire [[**appendix**](#appendix_1)] during the orientation week as a contingency of their continued enrollment in their academic program. This becomes a permanent part of their academic record. |
| **3** | Compliance with *technical standards* is assessed via Fitness for Duty evaluations which are conducted by an elected specialist(s) in occupational medicine when concerns are reported, and the need arises to determine if an enrolled student’s academic or technical performance is/may be impacted by a medical impairment. |
| **4** | QU Health students may require a Fitness for Duty evaluation if:1. There is a report from faculty/adjunct clinical faculty, or a preceptor to the HoD or ADSA regarding a concern about a student that may risk the safety and well-being of self, fellow students, patients, faculty, health professionals, or any other personnel involved in their learning environment at a QU Health site/clinical setting.
2. There is a report from faculty/adjunct clinical faculty, or a preceptor to the HoD or ADSA regarding a concern about a student that is struggling to meet the *technical standards* for continuation, progression, and graduation.
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| **5** | During the Fitness for Duty evaluation process, students may be removed from the learning environment by the HoD if there is a legitimate safety/wellbeing concern (subject to approval from the Dean). Depending on the level of concern, they are placed on ‘*leave of absence*’ pending completion and communication of the evaluation outcome. |
| **6** | The SFDC determines whether the student meets the *technical standards* (with or without reasonable accommodation which may be granted so long as the student is able to perform in an independent manner). |
| **7** | Depending on the level of safety/wellbeing concern and the evaluation outcome, QU Health reserves the right not to permit the student to continue in the program (as per the official consent signed by the student during orientation). QU Health will support the student in exploring a transfer to other suitable programs. |
| **8** | The cost for Fitness for Duty evaluations is the responsibility of the College. Any cost associated with any management or treatment required to either support, inform or maintain compliance with Fitness for Duty technical standards is the sole responsibility of the student. |

**Technical St****andards**

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| **Observational Skills** | * Students must be able to observe, acquire, interpret, and apply professional knowledge and skills in different formats within the classroom, laboratories, and clinical and non-clinical settings.
* Students must possess and combine the functional use of observational skills to observe and assess patients accurately at a distance and close at hand. These skills include visual, auditory, somatic, and other sensory modalities necessary to assimilate and discriminate types of information.
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| **Communication Skills** | * Students must possess interpersonal skills and be able to communicate effectively and efficiently with faculty, students, patients, their families/caregivers, and with all members of the health multidisciplinary team using both oral and written communication skills.
* Students must be able to comprehend, extract, and create verbal and non-verbal information including written material (e.g., medical records, laboratory reports, patient charts, and prescriptions).
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| **Motor Skills** | * Students must possess sufficient motor function to execute required procedural movements to provide general and/or emergency care to patients in healthcare settings (e.g., physical examinations, surgical or other technical procedures including diagnostic or therapeutic maneuvers requiring physical mobility, posture control, and coordination of both fine and gross neuromuscular movements).
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| **Intellectual/ Conceptual/ Integrative & Quantitative Abilities** | * Students must have sufficient cognitive abilities to assimilate detailed and complex information in a multi-task setting. These include capabilities to retain, recall, measure/calculate, interpret, analyze, synthesize, and transmit technical information.
* Students must also possess problem-solving skills to formulate and test hypotheses, discern complex relationships, and make informed decisions in a timely manner.
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| **Behavioral/ Societal & Ethical Attributes** | * Students must understand and accept their roles and responsibilities as health care providers within their communities.
* Students must consistently demonstrate empathy, integrity, honesty and respect for self and others.
* Students must always demonstrate professionalism. They must comply with policies, ethical, legal, and professional standards, and codes of conduct applicable to the Program, College, and nature of the Profession. Failure to always demonstrate appropriate behavior may result in dismissal.
* Students must possess the physical and emotional health required to function effectively in demanding and uncertain environments inherent to clinical practice. They must possess the demeanor, maturity, and adaptability to use their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgement and cope with stressful/dynamic situations.
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**Proc****edures**

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| **SFDC role and membership** | * The student fitness for duty committee (SFDC) is established at QU Health level to determine whether a student meets the technical standards [with(out) reasonable adjustments].
* Roles and responsibilities of the SFDC include:
1. Preliminary assessment of the reported fitness for duty cases escalated by the ADSA/HoD following a raised concern/reported incident by faculty, adjunct faculty, preceptor in clinical setting.
2. Determine whether there is a need for fitness for duty *evaluation*.
3. Elect an independent specialist (evaluator) in occupational medicine to conduct the evaluation and adjudicate whether the student meets technical standards.
4. Make a final determination on the escalated fitness for duty case after discussing the final report submitted by the evaluator.
5. Reassess students appeals upon president requests and communicate final outcomes to the president, VPMH and the Dean.
* The SFDC members include:
1. Assistant Deans for Student Affairs from all college members at QU Health.
2. Senior representative from Vice President of Student Affairs office.
3. Senior representative from Hamad Medical Corporation and other key stakeholders from the Health Sector.
4. Senior representative from the General Legal Counsel office.
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| **Initial report regarding concern on Fitness for Duty** | * A faculty, adjunct faculty, preceptor in clinical/non-clinical training setting who is involved in the student’s learning environment raises concerns about the student’s impairment to the HoD or ADSA.
* The HoD or ADSA review the raised concerns and report to the SFDC to review, action and notify the Dean.
* The SFDC reviews the case and meet the student to assess the reported concern and determine if a Fitness for Duty *evaluation* is required.
* If the student refuses the SFDC determination of Fitness for Duty Evaluation, the case is referred to the Dean to assess the level of concern, its implication and the student’s ability to continue in the curriculum.
* The Dean makes a final determination on the need for evaluation in consultation with the VPHMS.
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| **Fitness for Duty Evaluation** | * The SFDC elects a specialist in occupational medicine (non-QU affiliated) after consultation with the Dean to conduct the Fitness for Duty evaluation.
* The HoD /ADSA sends the completed form along with any other pertinent information to the evaluator regarding the case.
* Once the evaluation is complete, the evaluator drafts a determination report addressed to the HoD or ADSA with supporting information to adjudicate whether the student meets the *technical standards*.
* The HoD or ADSA share the report with the student and Chair of SFDC. The committee considers the report and makes final determinations about the student’s Fitness for Duty and seeks approval from the Dean.
* The SFDC may consider requesting a meeting with the student in the process.
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| **Fitness for Duty outcomes**  | If the SFDC determines that the student is not fit for duty, options for action include (but not limited to):1. Consider reasonable adjustments for the student and they continue in the semester (so long as such adjustments do not involve significant budgetary/staffing investments beyond the college capacity or cause significant disruption impacting other students’ learning experience).
2. Advise the student to take medical/personal leave of absence (in accordance with QU guidance on student withdrawal from the University and subject to progression timeline); or,
3. Advise the student to transfer to another academic offering (subject to transfer policy of the host program).
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| **Student appeal & re-evaluation** | * The student may appeal the SFDC determination and submit it to Qatar University (QU) President within five (5) business days of being officially notified of the decision.
* The appeal letter must include the reasons for appeal and the student must present compelling evidence to demonstrate their fitness for duty.
* The president considers the student’s grounds of appeal, and renders a decision to:
1. Accept the student appeal and request reevaluation by the SFDC.
2. Reject the student appeal (and support the SFDC original determination).
* The president decision is final, and the student shall not pursue further appeals.
* During the appeal process, the student is not be permitted to continue in the curriculum until the appeal outcome is determined.
* In case the appeal is accepted by the president, the SFDC reconvenes to re-evaluate the case and communicates the outcome to the president, VPMH and the dean within five (5) business days of the appeal deadline.
* The dean communicates the outcome on appeal to the student within three (3) business days of the SDFC decision.
* The Fitness for Duty Evaluation Report and all relevant records regarding the SFDC decisions and determinations are kept in the student’s academic record.
* A Fitness for Duty Evaluation Report is valid for up to *six months*. A new evaluation may be required after (for SFDC determinations recommending medical/personal leave of absence).
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**Fitness for Duty eva****luation Flowchart**



**Appe****ndix – Fitness for Duty Questionnaire**

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| **QU Health | Fitness for Duty Questionnaire** |

Dear Student,

Congratulations on joining QU Health. Now that you are enrolled in your program, we need to ascertain that you are able to conduct your academic and non-academic (clinical/technical) duties responsibly and safely. To that end, we ask you to complete this questionnaire during your orientation week and acknowledge the technical standards demonstrating your fitness for duty.

In the case that it is decided that you are not fit for duty, the department/college will provide you with advice on measures to undertake and will make every endeavor to support you in considering the next appropriate step (continuing your enrollment, taking leave of absence, or finding a place in an alternative program).

You have a duty to provide all the relevant, truthful, and accurate information to the department/college and no information should be withheld. Any failure to do so may result in reconsideration of your fitness to continue with the program.

You can be assured that the information will remain confidential. Please start by completing Section 1 and go on to each of the following questions in Section 2 and in the case of positive answers provide additional information in the space provided (or attach details if space is insufficient).

Finally, please read the information provided in Section 3 carefully and complete the declaration that you comply with the technical standards of Fitness for Duty.

**SECTION 1 | Personal Details**

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| **Title** | Choose an item. |
| **Full Name**  | Full name. |
| **Nationality** | Choose an item. |
| **Date of Birth** | DD/MM/YYYY. |
| **QU Student ID**  | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Telephone number** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **E-mail address** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **College** | Click or tap here to enter text. |
| **Program applied for** | Click or tap here to enter text. |

**SECTION 2 | Health and Functional Capabilities**

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| 1. **Do you have problems with any of the following?**
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| 1. **Mobility[[1]](#footnote-1)** e.g., walking, using stairs
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Agility1** e.g., bending, reaching up, kneeling, maintaining balance
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Dexterity1** e.g., writing, using tools
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Physical exertion1** e.g., lifting, carrying
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Communication[[2]](#footnote-2)** e.g., speech
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Hearing[[3]](#footnote-3)** e.g., deaf, hard of hearing, tinnitus.
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **YES,** do you use a hearing aid? | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Vision[[4]](#footnote-4)** e.g., blind, visual impairment, color blindness, tunnel vision, nystagmus, squint
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **YES,** please enclose the most recent visual test results as an attachment to this form |  |
| 1. **Learning** e.g., dyslexia, dyspraxia, dyscalculia, impaired concentration
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **YES** to any of the above, please give details e.g., extent of impairment, any support needs or course adjustments required |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| 1. **Have you ever required special arrangements at school to overcome any learning barriers e.g., equipment, extra time in exams**
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If yes, please give details |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 1. **Do you have, or have you had, any of the following?**
 |
| 1. **Chronic Skin Condition** e.g., eczema, psoriasis
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Neurological disorder** e.g., epilepsy, multiple sclerosis
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Allergies** e.g., latex, medicines, foods
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Endocrine disease** e.g., autoimmune diseases, Cushing syndrome
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Hep B/Hep C/HIV**
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **yes** to any of the above, please give details (e.g., when condition developed, effects and treatment) |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 1. **Have you ever been affected by:**
 |
| 1. **Sudden loss of consciousness** e.g., a fit or seizure
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Chronic fatigue syndrome** (or similar condition)
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **An illness requiring more than two week’s absence from school or work**
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **Mental health issues** e.g., Depression, phobias, nervous breakdown, personality disorder, over-dose, self-harm, drug, or alcohol dependency
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| 1. **An eating disorder** e.g., bulimia, anorexia nervosa, compulsive eating
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **yes** to any of the above, please give details (e.g., when condition developed, effects and treatment) |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |

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| 1. **Are you currently taking any medication or treatment?**
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **yes,** please give details below |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 1. **Do you have any impairment or health condition not already mentioned?**
 | [ ]  Yes [ ]  No |
| If **yes,** please give details below |
| Click or tap here to enter text. |
| 1. **What is your height?**
 | in cm. | **What is your weight?** | in kg. |

# **Declaration**

[ ]  I certify that my answers to the questions are complete, accurate and no information has been withheld.

[ ]  I understand that if this is later shown not to be the case it may result in the offer of a place being withdrawn or reconsideration of my suitability to continue with my Major.

[ ]  The information supplied by you on this questionnaire will be used as evidence of your fitness to study and train.

[ ]  I give my consent to provide the admission team/Assistant Dean for Student Affairs at QU Health with any medical information relevant to my application/evaluation.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Signature**  |  | **Date**  | Click or tap to enter a date. |

**Section 3: Technical standards of Fitness for Duty**

Meeting the technical standards of Fitness of Duty is a requirement for admission and continuation in your program of study. These technical standards ascertain that you possess specific characteristics and abilities to complete the rigorous academic program and demonstrate fitness to conduct your responsibilities and meet expectations as a future practicing health professional.

It is important that you familiarise yourself with these technical standards so that you are aware of your responsibilities and expectations to demonstrate Fitness for Duty. Any breach of these standards could undermine patient and public trust in the College and the health profession. So, full compliance with these standards is paramount.

We ask that you read through the standards and sign the form below to acknowledge your commitment to comply with the technical standards. This form must be signed before you can begin learning to become a health professional.

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| --- | --- |
| **Observational Skills** | * Students must be able to observe, acquire, interpret, and apply professional knowledge and skills in different formats within the classroom, laboratories, and clinical and non-clinical settings.
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* Students must possess the physical and emotional health required to function effectively in demanding and uncertain environments inherent to clinical practice. They must possess the demeanor, maturity, and adaptability to use their intellectual abilities, exercise good judgement and cope with stressful/dynamic situations.
 |

# **Declaration**

[ ]  I have read the technical standards above.

[ ]  I undertake to comply with them and seek clarification on any areas of uncertainty.

[ ]  I agree to familiarize myself with any subsequent revisions.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Signature**  |  | **Date**  | Click or tap to enter a date. |

1. Must also comply with **motor function** requirements as part of **technical standards** for Fitness for Practice (section 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Must also comply with **communication skill** requirements as part of **technical standards** for Fitness for Practice (section 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Must also comply with **observation skill** requirements as part of **technical standards** for Fitness for Practice (section 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Must also comply with **observation skill** requirements as part of **technical standards** for Fitness for Practice (section 3). [↑](#footnote-ref-4)