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|  | 1.0  |
|  | Annually by LWB and updated at CEC/EDC as necessary          |
|  | Deputy Director of Learning and Wellbeing/Disability Adviser |
|  | Equity Diversity and Inclusion Committee<br>CEC              |
|  | June 2024  |

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students (e.g. local authority support)ocal au

Nursing) may be referred to the Fitness to Practise procedure if they:

- fail to disclose information on application or enrolment which would have an adverse impact on their medical fitness to study and on their ability to practise safely and/or competently;
- have an undeclared physical or mental health condition which affects their performance and may, therefore, put themselves or others at risk;
- do not declare any subsequent issues which may have a negative impact on their medical fitness to study and/or ability to practise safely and/or competently.
- do not engage with Occupational Health as part of the pre-entry process or if referred by the RVC where there are concerns for their physical and/or mental wellbeing or where additional expertise is required to identify reasonable adjustments in a professional environment.

Students on non-professional courses may be referred to the Student Performance and Development procedure for consideration of their fitness to study in the same circumstances.

The RVC seeks advice from its contracted Occupational Health services regarding students' medical fitness to study. All RVC students undertake an OH screening as part of the pre-entry process. Any students declaring a disability during the OH screening process are automatically referred to the Advice Centre who can follow up to discuss and arrange support.

Students applying for courses leading to professional registration should be medically fit to enrol on the course and to be able continue with their studies if there is a change in their health during the course. RVC students are, therefore, required to disclose health conditions for Occupational Health screening, and have a continuous duty to disclose any health conditions which emerge subsequently for medical fitness purposes.

The purpose of this service is to ensure that our students are able to meet the physical and mental demands of their particular course of study, which can include time spent off-campus on teaching placements. The use of an external OH provider also serves to fulfil the RVC's moral and legal obligation to ensure the safety, security and well-being of our students that constitutes our duty of care and highlight the need for any reasonable adjustments.

Medical fitness is determined by the physical and psychological functioning of the student balanced with the functional requirements and competences of the course, taking into account potential risks to the student, patients under their care and others. In the determination of medical fitness, reasonable adjustments may be recommended by Occupational Health to support the student to meet medical fitness in practise. Students have a duty to allow information on such reasonable adjustments to be shared with the RVC where without the implementation of those adjustments, the student would not be medically fit to engage in the practice placement activities.

Medical fitness encompasses a wide range of criteria including evidence of immunity, mobility, upper limb function, vision, hearing, speech, literacy and numeracy, skin function, interruption of consciousness, concentration, awareness, memory and the ability to learn

and understand.

Enrolled students may be referred to Occupational Health where there are concerns for their physical and/or mental wellbeing or where additional expertise is required to identify reasonable adjustments in a professional environment. The RVC will endeavour to implement any subsequent recommended reasonable adjustments. Where the recommended adjustments are not considered reasonable (e.g. if they would compromise academic or professional







welfare of others or their ability to manage the demands of the course they may be referred to the Student Performance and Development Procedure and/or the Fitness to Practise process depending on the nature of the concerns and the current requirements of their programme of study.

Reasonable adjustments will be made to these processes as needed to enable students to fully engage with them.

Students experiencing temporary physical difficulty(s) will be referred to the Student Performance and Development Procedure and/or the Fitness to Practise process depending on the nature of the concerns and the current requirements of their programme of study.

Full details on the Disabled Students Allowance can be found at:

<https://www.gov.uk/disabled-students-allowances-dsas/overview> for students applying to Student Finance England

The Advice Centre will provide the following support to students/applicants:

- At each available opportunity the Disability Adviser will advise students on the

EU students, overseas students and other students who do not meet the general eligibility criteria for student finance will not be able to apply for DSA. Students who are not eligible for DSA cannot expect the same level of support as that provided through the DSA.

The RVC will offer a package of support for those not eligible for DSA which may include specialist software, specialist mentoring and/or specialist study skills support.

The RVC will comply with the “reasonable adjustments” provisions of The Equality Act 2010 which require us to consider whether we can pay from our own resources, those support costs of any enrolled student which cannot be met from DSAs or some other external funding source. Any DSA-eligible student will be required to submit to a completed application for maximum available DSAs, or evidence of having directly submitted such an application to the funding body; we will then be able to consider how much the RVC can pay for any predicted costs gap between their assessed DSA qualifying costs and maximum funding available from DSAs/other external sources.

In accordance with budget constraints, it may be necessary for us to set an indicative upper limit on the total amount which the RVC would be able to pay from its own resources for a given student in a given academic year, for support costs which cannot be met from DSAs or some other external funding source. This would include giving appropriate consideration to the ‘reasonableness’ of the costs and will be considered on a case by case basis.

We recognise that some students will have undiagnosed specific learning differences. We offer free dyslexia screening to help students who suspect they may have a learning difference. Students can contact the Advice Centre, [disability@rvc.ac.uk](mailto:disability@rvc.ac.uk), to request a screening and will be sent joining instructions for our online screening software and directed to make a follow up appointment with the Disability Adviser once they have completed the screening.

Depending on the screening outcome we can advise students on obtaining a full diagnostic assessment. Those subsequently assessed as having dyslexia/specific learning difference will be eligible for support as outlined in this document.

The Advice Centre keep detailed records on our interactions with students to maintain a clear audit trail and ensure that support is provided as effectively and efficiently as possible. This will include details of communications and any relevant documents e.g. evidence of disability/learning difference/mental health, DSA documentation.

Records are kept in accordance with the RVC Data Protection Policy.

## Reasonable adjustment process for disabled students



