

Managing fitness to practise concerns in education and training: Overview and guide to the case studies

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Overview

1. This short guide covers the key elements of managing concerns in education and training i.e. fitness to practise procedures. It includes information on when and how to make decisions about and how these can affect registration with the GPhC. It is a short 'how to' guide that is not designed to replace the main guidance document but to help organisations understand how the guidance applies to them.
2. This guidance aims to give schools and education establishments a consistent framework for assessing and addressing concerns in students and trainees.
3. Although this guidance is mainly aimed at educators, students and trainees may also find it useful. It can help them to understand how educators deal with professionalism concerns and fitness to practise issues. Students and trainees should also look at their own education or training provider's processes for guidance on local procedures and practices.
4. This guidance can also be used by educators to demonstrate the importance of professionalism. We want it to ensure confidence in students and trainees, fair processes, a preventative and supportive approach and ultimately better future professionals that understand the value and benefit of fitness to practise as a tool to support learning and reflection.

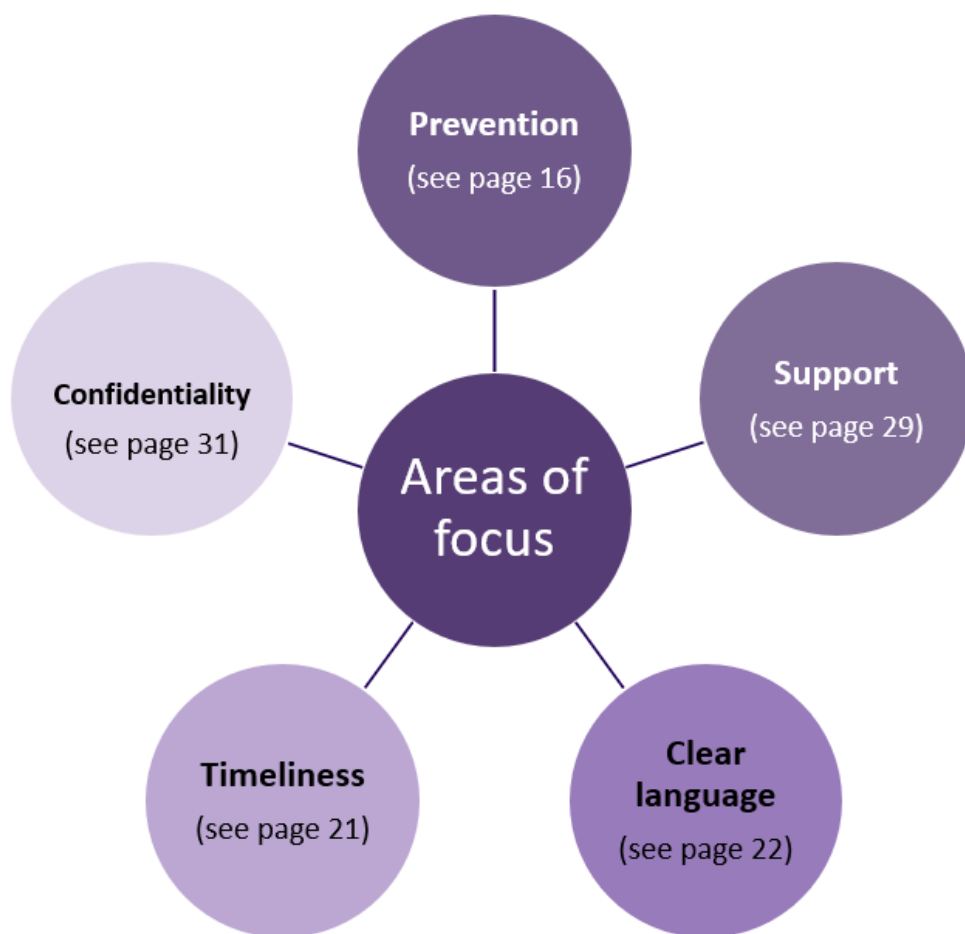
Key principles

5. Each school or training provider will have different resources at their disposal. There is no expectation that everyone should have a fully serviced process. For example, a training provider wouldn't necessarily have the same processes in place as a school of pharmacy. We do expect everyone to adapt the key principles and have a process that is fair to all involved. The key principles are as follows:
 - Fairness and proportionality ([see page 19 of the guidance](#)).
 - Efficiency and robustness ([see page 21 of the guidance](#)).
 - Consistency and transparency ([see page 21 of the guidance](#)).

Areas of focus

6. As well as the key principles there are a number of key elements that can help manage and prevent concerns as well as support individuals within the process. See figure 1 overleaf.

Figure 1: Key themes and their location in the areas of focus



Outline process and decision-making

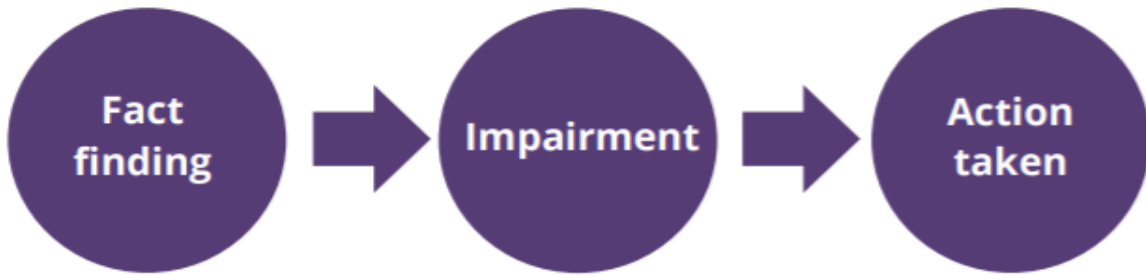
7. Any fitness to practise process need not be complex. There are a number of tools within the full guidance to help you identify potential issues and how to progress these through the process and establish whether an investigation or hearing is required.

Figure 2: Process



8. The approach to decision making at a hearing also does not need to be complex as this three-stage approach indicate. Further detail is included in the guidance about the role of mitigating and aggravating factors, including insight and remediation, which are important when making a decision. See figure 3 overleaf.

Figure 3: Key stages of decision making at hearings



Categorisation and guide to the case studies

9. The advice in the case studies below is only illustrative of the sorts of concerns which could call a student's fitness to practise into question and is not exhaustive. The outcome of each case will depend on its particular facts.

Case study one

Theme: Serious misconduct

Student or trainee role: Pharmacy student

Setting: Pharmacy school

Case study two

Theme: Drug misuse

Student or trainee role: Pre-registration pharmacist trainee

Setting: Small community pharmacy

Case study three

Theme: Academic malpractice and plagiarism

Student or trainee role: Pharmacist

Setting: Independent prescribing programme (university)

Case study four

Theme: Inappropriate use of social media

Student or trainee role: Pharmacy student

Setting: Hospital pharmacy

Case study five

Theme: Managing health issues

Student or trainee role: Pre-registration pharmacist trainee

Setting: Large multiple pharmacy group

Case study six

Theme: Dishonesty

Student or trainee role: Pre-registration pharmacy technician trainee

Setting: Large pharmacy

Case study seven

Theme: Reasonable adjustments

Student or trainee role: Pre-registration pharmacy technician trainee

Setting: Hospital pharmacy

Case study eight

Theme: Resolving issues locally

Student or trainee role: Pre-registration pharmacy technician trainee

Setting: Small chain of community pharmacies