

**PROGRAMME FITNESS TO PRACTISE STATEMENT  
MVB and BSc (Veterinary Nursing)**

**UCD Policy Definition**

Fitness to Practice means having the skills, knowledge, health and character necessary to undertake and complete a programme with professional practice, experiential learning or clinical work safely and effectively, fulfilling the responsibilities within the scope of practice in a chosen field.

**Purpose of the UCD Fitness to Practise Policy**

- To protect animals, the public, students, placement providers and the University;
- Instil in students the qualities and competencies required for professional practice and to support and guide students who experience issues that may affect their ability to practise;
- Provide a suitable framework for the effective management of Fitness to Practise issues that may arise, either prior to or during a student's programme of study.

**Fitness to Practise in Veterinary Medicine and Veterinary Nursing Programmes**

A registered student on a Veterinary Medicine or Veterinary Nursing programme must be Fit to Practise within their future profession. Students are expected to partake in practical and clinical placements from the first year of their degree, and therefore will be interacting with members of the profession and the public as veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing professionals-in-training. The School expects each student to act in a manner that does not bring their profession into disrepute.

In considering any case regarding a student's Fitness to Practise, the School of Veterinary Medicine will be guided by the Veterinary Practice Act 2005, and the Veterinary Council of Ireland Codes of Professional Conduct for Veterinary Practitioners and Veterinary Nurses.

The primary concern for every student of veterinary medicine or veterinary nursing must be for the welfare of animals, and the student should be cognisant of the need to act to protect animal health and relieve animal suffering.

When animal patients, or patient records, are entrusted to the care of a veterinary student, either on a farm or other establishment, or within a veterinary practice, students must adhere to the Veterinary Council of Ireland codes regarding client confidentiality. Students are expected to treat members of the public, clients, placement providers, placement staff, supervisors, classmates, and other university staff with respect and courtesy.

In the course of their studies, veterinary medicine and veterinary nursing students shall maintain high standards of biosecurity. They will also recognise their own responsibility, and the responsibility of the School, in ensuring that their health, and that of colleagues, owners and patients, is not compromised.

In cases where there is a reasonable belief that a student's fitness to practise has been called into question, the School of Veterinary Medicine will follow UCD Fitness to Practise protocols, which may include discussion of the matter with other relevant parties. This will not be considered a breach of confidentiality but will be taken as in the public interest.