

Fitness to Train (pre-enrolment) Policy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Goldsmiths has a responsibility to operate a fair and transparent admission service and part of this is to ensure that all applicants who are admitted to our programmes meet the requirements to complete and succeed on the programme. Goldsmiths offers a number of programmes upon which there is an obligation to ensure that additional criteria above and beyond a standard programme is met before any applicant is enrolled. These programmes involve working with potentially vulnerable adults or children and therefore may have external requirements in addition to academic requirements.
- 1.2 This policy is intended to cover all applicants coming on to a programme that requires 'fitness to train' conditions including those coming on to programmes regulated by professional, statutory or regulatory bodies. Programmes with a fitness to train requirement will make this explicit on the Goldsmiths website: <https://www.gold.ac.uk/fitness-to-train/>
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2 Fitness to train requirements

- 2.1 Goldsmiths has a responsibility not to admit applicants who would be debarred from undertaking work-based placements. Therefore, where fitness to train is an entry requirement on to a Goldsmiths programme, the following checks must be made and passed prior to enrolment on the programme. Fulfilling the fitness to train requirements for a place on a programme will not in itself guarantee that a potential employer will take the same view as Goldsmiths subsequent to completion of the programme.
- 2.2 The costs associated with meeting the fitness to train requirements will be borne by the applicant.

2.3 Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS)

- 2.3.1 Applicants who have been offered a place on a fitness to train programme will be required to apply for an Enhanced Disclosure Certificate from the Government's Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). The Enhanced Disclosure Certificate provides details of any criminal offences, cautions, warnings and other issues which may have been recorded.
- 2.3.2 Applicants who are resident outside of the UK at the point of offer can complete the DBS application process only after arrival in the UK and obtaining a UK based address.

The process of disclosure and fitness to train is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act, and as such no convictions, cautions or other relevant information is ever considered spent. The exception to this is the 'filtering' process whereby some old or minor convictions and cautions may be exempt from disclosure under the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 (Exceptions) Order 1975 (as amended). Therefore, applicants will not be required to declare certain old and minor convictions or cautions when completing a DBS application form, as they will not appear on the DBS disclosure certificate where filtering has taken place.

- 2.3.3 Applications for an Enhanced DBS must be made no more than 6 months before start of the programme in order to be valid for enrolment onto a programme and must be either for a child or child and adult workforce as applicable for the programme applied for.
- 2.3.4 Where the DBS certificate details a previous conviction, caution, reprimand or warning, the applicant will be required to undergo the Goldsmiths Criminal Declaration by Applicant Policy procedure. For details of how to view this policy, see section 3 below.

2.4 DBS update service

- 2.4.1 For programmes other than teacher training, where an applicant has a subscription to the DBS update service Goldsmiths will, under strict criteria, accept this for meeting the Enhanced DBS requirement. Goldsmiths will not accept the DBS update service for PGCE applicants and a new enhanced DBS must be undertaken. Use of the update service is only suitable where it is for the same workforce and where the same type and level of criminal record check is required. The consent of the applicant will be sought prior to consulting the update service. It is the responsibility of the applicant to ensure they are correctly registered for the update service.
- 2.4.2 The outcome of a valid status check will be one of the following:
- [A] This Certificate did not reveal any information and remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue. This means that the individual's certificate contains no criminality or barring information and no new information is available.
 - [B] This Certificate remains current as no further information has been identified since its issue. This means that the individual's certificate did contain criminality or barring information and no new information is available.
 - [C] This Certificate is no longer current. Please apply for a new DBS check to get the most up to date information. This means that the individual's certificate should not be relied upon as new information is now available and a request for a new DBS check must be made.

- 2.4.3 In order to meet the programme requirements, the outcome of the check must be either A or B and a copy of the full certificate may have to be presented to the Admissions Office for verification. The certificate should state 'None Recorded' against the Children's and/or Adults' Barred List information.
- 2.4.4 Goldsmiths reserves the right to request an applicant undergo a new Enhanced DBS check where the results of the DBS update service are unsatisfactory.

2.5 Criminal records checks for overseas applicants and suitability to train declaration

- 2.5.1 Applicants who are not resident in the UK or who have resided outside of the UK for a period of 6 months or more in the last five years (excluding PGCE applicants) will be required to undergo a DBS check and to obtain criminal record check documentation from whichever country or countries outside of the UK which have been resided in. PGCE applicants who have resided outside of the UK for a period of six months or more will be required to provide documentation where this was past their eighteenth birthday.
- 2.5.2 This is normally called a letter of good conduct and must be submitted to the institution either in English or as a certified translation.
- 2.5.3 If the applicant was residing outside of the UK prior to receiving an offer of a place, the overseas checks must cover the entire time they were outside of the UK. This certificate must be dated after the date the applicant left the country and returned to the UK but there is no time limit on how old the certificate can be. If the applicant is still resident outside the UK before the start of the programme, the certificate must be dated no earlier than January on the year they intend to start their studies.
- 2.5.4 A suitability to train declaration is an additional requirement alongside the overseas check and other criminal records checks. All applicants must make a self-declaration regarding their suitability to work with children and/or vulnerable adults. Applicants will be required to include all countries lived in since birth. This declaration will also be an opportunity to declare any convictions, cautions or other information which may be relevant. Where a conviction or caution is declared, the Goldsmiths Criminal Declaration by Applicant Policy will then become applicable (see section 3 below for details of how to view this policy).

2.6 Disqualification and barring checks

- 2.6.1 Goldsmiths has a responsibility to ensure that applicants enrolling onto a programme working with children and/or vulnerable adults do not have any orders in place banning them from doing so. Some programmes will require applicants to pass checks in addition to the Enhanced DBS in order to enrol as a student.

- **DBS barred list**
Goldsmiths will check each applicant against the DBS barred list prior to enrolment. If at any point an individual is found to be barred, they will not be able to enrol on to a programme working with children or vulnerable adults.
- **Prohibition Order check**
Goldsmiths will check that applicants enrolling on a teaching programme are not subject to a prohibition order issued by the Secretary of State for Education who holds a list of teachers who have been prohibited from teaching. Any applicant found to be on this list will not be able to enrol on a teacher training programme. Goldsmiths will not consider any future applications for teacher training from an individual under a prohibition order unless the ban has been reviewed and lifted.

2.7 Health checks

- 2.7.1 As part of the fitness to train requirements, all applicants will be required to undergo a health assessment.
- 2.7.2 The decision Goldsmiths makes on an applicant's fitness will take into account all the duties that will need to be undertaken as part of the placements which forms part of their training.
- 2.7.3 This check will take the form of a questionnaire plus evidence from the applicant's Doctor and forms will be classified into one of three categories:

Category A: Those who are in good health or who have conditions which are not likely to interfere with efficiency on their placement

Category B: Those who are in good health but who suffer from conditions which may impede their ability on placement or exacerbate health concerns, though these conditions are not serious enough to make the candidate unfit for the placement.

Category C: Those whose condition is such as to make them unfit for their placement.

Those applicants who are in category A will normally be deemed to have satisfactorily met the health requirement element of the fitness to train requirements. If health conditions are recorded these may still need to be assessed in line with category B.

- 2.7.4 Those in category B will receive further assessment from the academic department responsible for the programme to ensure that any issues raised will not result in a potential inability to complete the training. This may include consultation with partner agencies and relevant internal colleagues. If the decision is to admit the applicant to the training course, this means that Goldsmiths believes the health issues raised will not significantly interfere with the completion of the required placements which are mandatory for the successful completion of the training. It does not guarantee that any other institution or employer will take the same decision based on the same information.
- 2.7.5 Those in category C will not be able to enrol on to the programme. Goldsmiths will discuss any possible alternatives including deferring entry to the next year after a reassessment can be made or an offer on an alternative programme with different requirements.
- 2.7.6 Where an offer of a place is unable to be confirmed due to information on the health form, the applicant shall have the right to appeal. Any appeal should be lodged in writing via email to Admissions within 10 days of notification. The appeal must present new or additional information than already submitted in order to be considered. This new information will be reviewed alongside the original documentation. The outcome may be to overturn the original decision or to confirm the previous decision.
- 2.7.7 All decisions on health forms will be based on the information as provided by the applicant and relevant health practitioners at the time. Where information on a form requires further assessment, information provided by the applicant will be anonymised prior to consultation unless the applicant agrees to disclose their identity. If subsequent to acceptance of a health form new information comes to light, the original decision will be reviewed. If there is a change of circumstances after commencement of the course, this will be reviewed under student regulations.

2.8 Completion of assessment of fitness to train checks

- 2.8.1 Applicants must pass each part of the fitness to train requirements relevant to their programme prior to an offer of a place at Goldsmiths being confirmed. Where a condition of the offer cannot be met, Goldsmiths will reject the application and the applicant will not be able to commence or complete the enrolment process for that particular programme. Goldsmiths will however discuss possible alternatives depending on which part of the requirements have not been passed.
- 2.8.2 Where an applicant disagrees with a decision taken by Goldsmiths, they may raise an appeal or complaint via the Feedback, Appeals and Complaints (pre-enrolment) procedure (see section 3 below).
- 2.8.3 Where any new or amended laws or policies are released subsequent to the publication of this policy, Goldsmiths will be obliged to ensure that these are adhered to and all necessary checks are carried out.

3 Programmes offered in conjunction with external partners

- 3.1 Some academic departments offer programmes in conjunction with external partners. Where these are professional programmes requiring fitness to train conditions, applicants must satisfy all requirements from Goldsmiths and the external partner.
- 3.2 Depending on the nature of the partnership, applicants and students will be subject to Goldsmiths, partner or Goldsmiths and the partner's regulations.

4 Related policies

4.1 Goldsmiths has a number of related policies and procedure documents:

- Admissions policy
- Fitness to study policy and procedure
- Criminal declaration by applicants policy
- Feedback, Appeals and Complaints (pre-enrolment) Policy
- Goldsmiths Academic Manual

All policies and regulations can be found on our website:

<https://www.gold.ac.uk/gam/prospective-students/>

In addition to this, further details on Goldsmiths fitness to train requirements can be found on the Goldsmiths website: www.gold.ac.uk/fitness-to-train