Speech and Language Therapy Fitness to Practise Statement

Fitness to practise means having the necessary skills, knowledge, health and character to undertake and complete, safely and effectively, a programme that includes elements of professional practice, experiential learning or clinical work. Applicants to or students on the following programmes of study are advised to read this statement in conjunction with the University of Limerick’s Fitness to Practise policy.

1. **Programme Name(s):** MSc Speech and Language Therapy (Professional Qualification)

2. **Course Director(s):** Prof. Sue Franklin

3. **Professional Fitness to Practise Requirements**
   The aim of the MSc Speech and Language Therapy (Professional Qualification) is to develop excellent graduates who enable the individual and the wider community to optimise their health and wellbeing and to prepare scientifically qualified practitioners who are ready to enter the challenging professional field of Speech & Language Therapy. Students are expected to act within and are assessed on their ability to meet the Standards of Proficiency identified by CORU.


   These consider the following domains, which are used to assess the students’ achievements of professional competency:
   - Domain 1: Professional autonomy and accountability
   - Domain 2: Interpersonal and professional relationships
   - Domain 3: Effective communication
   - Domain 4: Personal and professional development
   - Domain 5: Provision of quality services
   - Domain 6: Knowledge, understanding and skills

4. **Professional Competencies**

   The two codes below outline the standards of ethical behaviour and conduct that are expected of the students of the MSc Speech and Language Therapy (Professional Qualification).


These are the areas covered in the CORU Speech and Language Therapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics:

**Conduct**
Act in the best interests of service users.
Respect the confidentiality of service users.
Maintain high standards of personal conduct.
Provide information about conduct and competence.

**Performance**
Address health issues related to your fitness to practise.
Obey laws and regulations.
Act within the limits of your knowledge, skills, competence and experience.
Keep your professional knowledge, skills and competence up to date.
Maximise service users’ communicative abilities.
Maximise health, welfare, protection and safety of service users with regard to feeding, eating, drinking and swallowing.
Get informed consent from service users.
Communicate with service users, carers and other professionals.
Assist and advise colleagues, recently qualified registrants and students.
Teach, supervise and assess students and other professionals.
Supervise tasks that you give to others.
Keep accurate records.
Address health and safety risks.
Report any concerns about risks to service users.

**Ethics**
Demonstrate ethical awareness.
Respect the rights and dignity of people.
Carry out your duties in a professional and ethical way.
Undertake research in an ethical manner.
Make sure that advertising is truthful, accurate and lawful.

5. **Health Requirements**
Professional setting and practice will generally require the student to maintain a level of good physical and mental health as outlined by CORU (2014) Speech and Language Therapists Registration Board Code of Professional Conduct and Ethics. This is to ensure that the students and service users are not adversely affected by any health condition that may arise or be encountered.

Issues that might impair a student’s fitness to practise are wide-ranging and can arise at any time throughout the student’s programme of study. Specific issues may be temporary in nature and can be dealt with informally by advising the student on how best to address conduct, competence or health issues so that fitness to practise issues are managed in a professional manner.

As part of a general health protection, the University on its own or in cooperation with placement partners may require students to undergo health screening, vaccination, or other forms of health assessment if required.
As described in the Clinical Therapies Policy for Pre-Placement Health Screen and Vaccination Check (2016/17),

“All healthcare professionals, including Clinical Therapies students, have a duty to protect themselves and their patients/clients from disease and to be fit to attend the placement education components of their programme. As a consequence the Department of Clinical Therapies (CT) requires all students on its qualifying programmes to attend an Occupational Health provider for a pre-placement health screen and vaccination check in advance of their first placement. The Department strongly recommends that all students have up to date vaccinations. Failure to attend for this pre-placement health screen and vaccination check will result in students not being able to attend placement and thus delay or prevent completion of the programme.”

The Pre-Placement Health Screen and Vaccination Check policy is provided to students as part of the admission and induction process to the MSc Speech and Language Therapy (Professional Qualification).

Approved by Academic Council on 1 March 2017