Teacher Education 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.*

The University of Limerick (UL) [Student Vetting Policy](#) seeks to adopt best practice and ensure public confidence by requiring that students who are placed in positions of trust or responsibility with members of the public (including children and vulnerable adults as defined under section 2 of the [National Vetting Bureau (Children and Vulnerable Persons) Act 2012](#)) always act in a manner that meets professional and ethical standards.

The University will seek to provide students with the advice and support necessary to help them meet the fitness to practise requirements of their programme of study. The University’s expectations of a student on placement will be commensurate with the stage of the student’s academic programme and the professional practices and competencies associated with the placement. The [Fitness to Practise policy](#) operates in conjunction with Garda vetting requirements, UL’s Student Code of Conduct (as specified in chapter 6 of the [Handbook of Academic Regulations and Procedures](#)) and general health screening procedures.

1. **Programme Name**
   - Bachelor of Science in Physical Education
   - Bachelor of Science with concurrent Teacher Education (Biology and Chemistry OR Physics OR Agricultural Science)
   - Bachelor of Technology (Education) in Materials & Architectural Technology
   - Bachelor of Technology (Education) in Materials & Engineering Technology
   - Bachelor of Science with concurrent Teacher Education (Physical Sciences with Chemistry AND Physics)
   - Professional Master of Education (Business)
   - Professional Master of Education (Languages)
   - Professional Master of Education (Mathematics)
   - Professional Master of Education (Music)
   - Professional Master of Education (Physical Education)
   - Professional Master of Education (Technological Education)

2. **Professional Fitness to Practise Requirements**
   School Placement is a core part of all teacher education programmes at the University of Limerick. It involves a collaborative partnership between the University and the participating schools. Student teachers should be aware of the Codes of Professional Conduct for Teachers, published by the Teaching Council (2012) and are expected to act at all times in accordance with these Codes which make explicit the core values underpinning the profession of teaching in Ireland.

Student teachers must be competent in their abilities to effectively plan and prepare lessons, implement lessons, reflect on and assess their own teaching and the learning profile of each of the learners in classroom settings. They should also display the ability to involve themselves in the wider school community through participating in extra-
curricular activities, working within subject departments or supporting particular school initiatives.

3. Professional Competencies
   a) Protection of the service user
      – The student teacher must be aware of and act at all times in accordance with the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council 2012).
      – The student teacher must recognise the rights of learners with whom they are working. At all times they will show a high regard for the personal safety, the moral welfare and the intellectual progress of learners.

   b) Communication skills
      – The Student teacher must be able to communicate appropriately and effectively at all times with pupils, school management, cooperating/mentor teacher, other school staff and university personnel;
      – The student teacher should seek advice from the principal and his/her staff, calling on their experience, in order to make the school placement as useful and productive as possible.

   c) Working within the scope of practice
      The student teacher will uphold the school policies and procedures in working with learners, striving to maintain a positive learning environment.

   d) Confidentiality
      – The student teacher should treat any personal student data and issues with confidentiality where required.
      – The student teacher should contact the Designated Liaison Person, should any incident arise regarding child protection in the school.

   e) Managing risks and reporting concerns
      The student teacher must pay attention to safety regulations governing the use of school equipment, swimming pools, gymnasiums, workshops and laboratories. The safety of learners must be ensured at all times – for example, the working area, group work, equipment, activities, progression, individual differences. The student teacher should report any concerns they have to the relevant person in charge and follow school policy in relation to Health and Safety matters.

   f) Honesty and trustworthiness
      The student teacher must embody the ethical values of respect, care, integrity and trust in their work practices, as outlined in the Code of Professional Conduct for Teachers (Teaching Council 2012).

   g) Behaviour on and off campus
      The student teacher is required to behave in a professional manner both on and off school campus throughout their school placement, this includes adhering to appropriate standards of dress and appearance.
h) Keeping appropriate records
   − The student teacher is expected to teach/observe every class that is noted on his/her timetable.
   − The student teacher must have a scheme of work and lesson plan in advance of each class to be taught.
   − The student teacher is expected to keep appropriate records where required, as well as follow school procedure in terms of completing incident reports.

The professional competencies and justification (including any placement provider or professional regulatory requirements) for each of the items above that the student is expected to meet should be listed below:
   − The student teacher needs to be in possession of sound professional judgement and be aware of and responsive to the impact of one's actions on self and on others.
   − The student teacher should engage professionally with all stakeholders in schools and with all aspects of school life.

4. Health Requirements
   Professional setting and practice will generally require the student to maintain a level of good health to ensure that the students and service users are not adversely affected by any health condition which may arise or be encountered. As part of a general health protection the University or in cooperation with placement partners may require students to undergo health screening, vaccination, or other forms of health assessment if required.

Approved by Academic Council on 7 December 2016