Good Health, Good Character & Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedures

Malta Leadership Institute

Version 1

2026

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Applicable to:	Prospective and enrolled students; relevant MLI academic, administrative, placement and support staff
Author:	Malta Leadership Institute
Location:	MLI, Birkirkara

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1. Introduction

The Malta Leadership Institute (MLI) recognises that students may enrol on programmes leading to regulated, registered, warranted, licensed or otherwise professionally accountable roles in which the safety and welfare of service users, clients, patients, children, learners, colleagues or the public, public confidence, professional behaviour and safe practice may be central requirements. This policy establishes how MLI will assess and monitor good health, good character and Fitness to Practise or professional suitability for applicants and students where such requirements apply.

The policy is designed to provide a transparent, fair and documented process from admission through completion of the programme. It addresses character checks where required, health or Occupational Health screening where relevant, continuing disclosure obligations, placement and practice-based monitoring, referral and investigation of concerns, proportionate outcomes and appeal arrangements.

This is an institutional policy and shall be read together with the programme-specific requirements of the applicable statutory, regulatory, warranting, registration, licensing, professional or placement body. Requirements may therefore differ between programmes. Where an applicable law, professional standard, regulatory requirement or placement condition conflicts with this policy, that external requirement shall prevail.

2. Document Control

Version	Section Responsibility	Authorisation	Date
1	Programme Coordinators	MLI Council	31st August 2026
—	Programme Coordinators	MLI designated approving body	—

3. The Fundamental Principle of the Policy

The fundamental principle is that every student to whom this policy applies must be able to participate in education, training, placement and professional or practice-based activity in a manner that protects the student and other persons who may be affected, while maintaining public confidence and the standards of the relevant profession or sector. Fitness to Practise is therefore an ongoing professional requirement and not a one-time admission check.

A health condition, disability or need for reasonable adjustment does not, by itself, mean that an applicant or student is unfit to practise. Decisions shall focus on functional ability, risk, insight, management of the condition, reasonable adjustments and the ability to meet the essential academic, practical, placement and professional outcomes of the programme safely. Health information will be handled confidentially and, wherever practicable and relevant, by an Occupational Health or other appropriately qualified health service rather than academic admissions staff.

Good character likewise requires more than the absence of a criminal conviction. It includes honesty, integrity, respect, appropriate boundaries, reliability, professional communication, compliance with lawful instructions and willingness to disclose relevant matters promptly. Decisions shall be evidence-based, proportionate and made through a fair process.

4. Policy Overview

4.1. Policy Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to establish a consistent institutional framework to:

- verify good character at admission and identify matters requiring a suitability assessment before enrolment;
- ensure that Occupational Health or other appropriate health screening is completed before placement or practice-based activity where this is required by the programme, regulator, professional body or placement provider, and that appropriate review is available during the programme when health concerns arise;
- define the continuing responsibilities of students to disclose relevant changes in conduct, legal status, professional status or health that may affect safe practice;
- provide clear routes for academic staff, placement/practice educators, supervisors, partners and students to raise Fitness to Practise concerns;
- ensure concerns are assessed fairly, promptly, confidentially and proportionately;
- protect the safety and welfare of students, service users, clients, patients, children, learners, colleagues and the public, as relevant, while maintaining public and professional confidence and supporting students to remediate concerns where this can be achieved safely; and
- provide documented outcomes, review arrangements and an appeal mechanism.

4.2. Policy Scope

This policy applies to applicants and enrolled students on MLI programmes where good health, good character, Fitness to Practise, professional suitability, registration, warranting, licensing or placement-safety requirements apply. The relevant programme documentation shall identify the applicable requirements. The policy applies from admission or initial registration until completion, withdrawal or termination and may cover conduct or health matters arising in classrooms, simulation, online

learning, laboratories, workshops, placements, work-based learning, employment, voluntary activity or outside MLI where the matter may reasonably affect safe participation, professional suitability or public confidence.

The policy also applies to relevant MLI staff, tutors/lecturers, placement or practice educators, mentors, supervisors and partner organisations insofar as they have responsibilities for identifying, reporting, assessing or managing Fitness to Practise concerns. Academic failure alone will normally be managed under academic regulations unless it also gives rise to a professional, safeguarding or safety concern.

4.3. Definitions

Term	Definition
Good health	A level of health and functional capacity compatible with safe participation in the relevant programme, practical activities, placement and professional or practice-based requirements, with reasonable adjustments where appropriate. It does not mean absence of illness or disability.
Good character	Conduct and personal integrity consistent with the trust placed in a student entering a regulated, warranted, licensed or professionally accountable role, including honesty, respect, reliability, appropriate boundaries and compliance with applicable professional and legal requirements.
Fitness to Practise	The continuing suitability and ability of a student to meet the academic, practical, placement, behavioural, health and professional requirements applicable to the programme safely and appropriately.
Occupational Health (OH)	An appropriately qualified and independent service that assesses health in relation to study, placement and professional/practice-based activity and advises on fitness, restrictions, follow-up and reasonable adjustments where relevant.
Fitness to Practise concern	Information suggesting that a student's health, conduct, behaviour, competence, honesty or professional judgement may create a serious or persistent risk to the student, service users, clients, patients, children, learners, colleagues or the public, or may undermine confidence in the relevant profession or sector.
Placement / practice partner	An external organisation or service that provides approved placement, work-based, practical or professional learning experiences for MLI students under formal or agreed arrangements.

4.4. Policy Key Principles

- The safety and welfare of the student, service users, clients, patients, children, learners, colleagues and the public, as applicable to the programme, are primary considerations in Fitness to Practise decisions.
- Applicants and students must be treated fairly, consistently, respectfully and without unlawful discrimination.
- Students have a continuing duty of honesty and disclosure; failure to disclose relevant information may itself constitute a Fitness to Practise concern.
- Health conditions and disabilities are assessed in terms of functional impact and manageable risk, with reasonable adjustments considered wherever appropriate.

- Information will be shared only on a need-to-know basis and in accordance with applicable data-protection requirements.
- Early support, remediation and proportionate conditions are preferred where risk can be safely managed.
- Serious, repeated or unresolved concerns may result in restriction from placement or practice-based activity, interruption of studies or exit from the programme.
- Students must be informed of concerns, given a meaningful opportunity to respond, and have access to an appeal process.

4.5. Policy Review and Updates

This policy shall be reviewed at least every two years, and earlier where required by changes in applicable professional or regulatory standards, MFHEA requirements, legislation, placement requirements, institutional risk findings or significant Fitness to Practise cases. The review shall be led by the relevant MLI quality-assurance function in consultation with appropriate programme leadership and placement/practice partners where relevant. Any approved amendment shall be recorded in the Document Control table and communicated to affected students and staff.

5. Procedures

5.1. Admission: Good Character Checks

Where good character is an admission, professional or placement requirement, MLI will verify it before admission is confirmed or before the relevant activity begins, as applicable. The following requirements may apply according to the programme, regulator, professional body, placement provider and law:

- Applicants may be required to submit a recent Police Certificate of Conduct issued by the competent authority in Malta or, for applicants residing outside Malta, an equivalent official criminal-record/good-conduct certificate from the relevant competent authority. Unless a different period is specified by the applicable authority, the certificate should normally have been issued within the previous three months.
- Where an applicant has recently lived in more than one jurisdiction, MLI may request an additional certificate where this is reasonably necessary to assess suitability for admission, placement or professional practice.
- Documents not in English or Maltese shall be accompanied by an official or certified English translation. MLI may request verification/authentication where the validity of an overseas document cannot otherwise be established.
- Where required, applicants shall complete a Good Character and Fitness to Practise Declaration covering criminal convictions or cautions, pending criminal charges, adverse determinations by regulators, professional bodies or educational establishments, previous exclusion from a regulated or professional programme or placement, and other material matters relevant to professional suitability.
- Where appropriate or required, a structured professional-suitability or values-based component may form part of the admissions process. It may assess understanding of professional responsibility, honesty, respect, communication, empathy, boundaries, reflection and safeguarding or protection responsibilities relevant to the profession; it shall not be used to make discriminatory assumptions about health or disability.

- Where a conduct certificate contains an entry, or a declaration identifies a relevant matter, admission shall not be automatically refused solely because an entry exists. The case shall be referred for a documented suitability assessment considering the nature, seriousness, recency, pattern, relevance to the intended programme or profession, evidence of insight or remediation, legal restrictions and potential risk. Admission may be refused where professional suitability or safe programme/placement requirements cannot be met.

5.2. Admission: Good Health and Occupational Health

Where good health or functional fitness is a programme, professional, regulatory or placement requirement, it should normally be assessed through Occupational Health or another appropriately qualified health service rather than by requiring applicants to demonstrate perfect health. The following procedure shall apply where relevant:

- Following conditional admission and before the commencement of any placement, practical or practice-based activity for which health clearance is required, the student shall complete the health-screening process specified by MLI, the relevant professional/regulatory body or the approved placement provider.
- The health-screening process may include a confidential health questionnaire, review of relevant medical information, assessment of functional capacity, and any further examination or specialist evidence reasonably required. Infection-prevention, vaccination or immunity requirements shall apply only where relevant to the programme or placement setting.
- The Occupational Health or other qualified health service shall normally communicate to MLI only the student's fitness status, any necessary restrictions, review date and recommended reasonable adjustments. Detailed health or clinical information shall remain confidential unless disclosure is authorised by the student or otherwise lawfully required.
- Possible outcomes may include: (a) fit for the relevant programme, placement or practice-based activity; (b) fit subject to specified adjustments, restrictions or monitoring; or (c) temporarily not fit pending further assessment, treatment or evidence. Permanent exclusion on health grounds shall be considered only where essential programme, practical or placement outcomes cannot be achieved safely even with reasonable adjustments.
- A student who does not complete a required health-screening process or does not obtain required clearance shall not be permitted to start or continue the affected placement, practical or practice-based activity. Where this prevents completion of mandatory programme requirements, progression or completion may be affected.

5.3. Ongoing Monitoring and Duty to Disclose

Fitness to Practise will be monitored throughout the programme, where applicable, through a proportionate combination of student self-declaration, Occupational Health or other specialist review, academic, practical and placement observations, assessment documentation and incident-reporting arrangements. Monitoring may include the following:

- Where required by the programme or applicable professional/regulatory framework, students shall complete a Fitness to Practise self-declaration at initial registration and at specified progression or re-registration points confirming whether relevant conduct, regulatory, legal or health circumstances have changed.
- Students must immediately inform MLI of any new criminal caution or conviction, pending criminal charge, or adverse determination by another regulator, professional body or educational

establishment. This obligation applies throughout the programme and is not satisfied merely by waiting for the annual declaration.

- Students must promptly seek advice from the appropriate MLI contact and, where relevant, Occupational Health or another qualified health service where a significant change in health, treatment, functional capacity or other circumstance may affect safe participation in placement or professional/practice-based activity. MLI may also make a referral where a legitimate concern arises.
- MLI may require an updated Police Certificate of Conduct where reasonably required by a placement partner, following a relevant declaration, or as part of a proportionate review of suitability.
- Placement/practice mentors, supervisors or educators shall record professional behaviour, attendance, safe practice, communication, compliance with instructions and achievement of relevant practical or professional outcomes using the programme's approved assessment documentation.
- Patterns such as repeated unsafe practice, repeated unexplained absence, persistent disregard of professional instructions, significant boundary concerns or repeated professionalism concerns shall be escalated even where individual incidents appear minor.

5.4. Categories of Fitness to Practise Concern

Consistent with applicable professional and regulatory standards, concerns may include, but are not limited to:

- criminal convictions in Malta or another country, including relevant matters not disclosed at admission;
- drug, alcohol or substance misuse or abuse, including where no criminal proceedings arise;
- aggressive, violent, threatening, bullying or abusive behaviour;
- persistent inappropriate attitude or behaviour, including disregard of course, placement, statutory or regulatory requirements;
- cheating, collusion, plagiarism, self-plagiarism or other serious academic-integrity concerns where they call honesty or professional reliability into question;
- dishonesty, fraud, forgery, falsification, misrepresentation of qualifications/experience or false claims;
- unprofessional behaviour, including confidentiality breaches, harassment, inappropriate boundaries, persistent rudeness or unlawful discrimination;
- poor professional communication, including inappropriate use of electronic communication or social media; and
- health, mental-health, emotional or interpersonal difficulties where there is inadequate insight or management and this gives rise to a material risk to the student or others.

5.5. Raising and Receiving a Concern

A Fitness to Practise concern may be raised by a student, tutor/lecturer, placement or practice mentor, supervisor or educator, partner organisation, member of MLI staff or another person with relevant information. Concerns should normally be submitted in writing to the relevant Programme Coordinator or another designated senior MLI officer and should describe the facts, dates, persons involved, immediate safety or safeguarding issues and supporting evidence where available.

Where there is an immediate or credible risk to the student, a service user, client, patient, child, learner, colleague or the public, MLI may take interim protective action before the full process is completed. This may include temporary removal from a placement or practice-based activity, restriction from specified activities, increased supervision or urgent Occupational Health/specialist assessment where relevant. Interim measures are precautionary and do not constitute a final finding.

Concern raised	Preliminary review	Formal review / specialist advice	Decision & action plan	Review / appeal

5.6. Preliminary Assessment and Support

The Programme Coordinator or delegated senior officer shall undertake an initial review to determine whether the matter is: (a) suitable for informal support/remediation; (b) primarily an academic, disciplinary or health-support matter to be managed under another procedure; or (c) sufficiently serious, repeated or safety-critical to require formal Fitness to Practise consideration. The student shall be informed of the concern unless temporary non-disclosure is necessary to protect an investigation or immediate safety.

At the preliminary stage MLI may seek factual information from the placement/practice partner, request an Occupational Health or other specialist opinion where relevant, agree a short-term support plan, or obtain further evidence. Where the concern is resolved safely through support or remediation, the decision and any monitoring requirements shall be documented.

5.7. Formal Fitness to Practise Panel

Where a formal review is required, a Fitness to Practise Panel shall be convened. It should normally comprise three members: the relevant Programme Coordinator or another appropriately senior MLI officer as Chair; a second academic, professional, sector or placement representative with appropriate experience; and an MLI academic or quality-assurance representative who is not materially conflicted in the matter. Where the programme is regulated or leads to professional registration or a warrant, at least one member should normally hold relevant professional expertise or status where required. Occupational Health or another specialist may provide advice but shall not disclose unnecessary clinical or personal detail. Members with a conflict of interest shall not participate in the decision.

The student shall receive written notice of the concern, the evidence to be considered and the date of the meeting with reasonable time to prepare. The student may submit written evidence, identify relevant witnesses or supporting information and attend the meeting to respond. The student may be accompanied by a support person or representative in accordance with MLI procedures. The Panel may seek further evidence where necessary and shall keep a written record of its decision and reasons.

The Panel shall consider the seriousness and relevance of the concern, current and future risk, whether there is a pattern, the student's insight and honesty, any remediation already undertaken, Occupational Health advice where relevant, the feasibility of reasonable adjustments or conditions, and the need to maintain public confidence and professional standards. Decisions shall be proportionate to the identified risk.

5.8. Outcomes and Interim Measures

Possible outcome	Application
No further action	Concern is not substantiated, is outside the scope of Fitness to Practise, or has been adequately resolved.
Advice / support	Guidance, pastoral support, Occupational Health or other specialist follow-up, or a professional development plan where risk is low and manageable.
Warning / remediation	Formal warning, reflective work, training, supervision, repeat competence assessment, or other time-limited remedial action.

Possible outcome	Application
Conditions	Specified conditions on study, placement or practice-based activity, increased supervision, restricted activities, or monitoring for a defined period.
Temporary interruption / suspension	Temporary removal from placement or interruption of studies where safety, health or professional concerns require time for assessment or remediation.
Exit from programme	Termination of enrolment where the student cannot safely or professionally meet programme requirements, or where serious conduct concerns make continuation incompatible with professional expectations.

Any condition, warning or remedial plan shall specify what the student must do, the timeframe, who will monitor compliance, the review date and the consequences of non-compliance. Where the outcome affects placement or practice-based activity, relevant personnel shall receive only the information necessary to implement safety, safeguarding, supervision or access requirements.

Where a student is deemed not fit to continue the programme because essential academic, practical, placement or professional outcomes cannot be achieved safely or appropriately, MLI shall apply its formal exit/termination procedure and provide the student with written reasons and appeal information. Any external notification shall be made only where required by law, MFHEA requirements, the applicable regulatory/professional body, contractual placement obligations or a demonstrable safety, safeguarding or public-protection necessity.

5.9. Appeals

A student may appeal a formal Fitness to Practise decision within 10 working days of receiving the written outcome. The appeal must identify one or more grounds, such as a material procedural irregularity, significant new evidence that could not reasonably have been presented earlier, or a decision/outcome that is disproportionate to the evidence and risk.

The appeal shall be considered by persons who were not members of the original decision-making Panel and who have appropriate seniority and relevant expertise. The appeal may confirm, vary or set aside the original outcome, or remit the matter for reconsideration. The appeal decision shall be communicated in writing and shall constitute the final internal decision unless another MLI regulation expressly provides otherwise.

5.10. Return to Study or Placement / Practice-Based Activity

Where a student has been temporarily restricted, suspended or interrupted because of health or conduct concerns, return to study, placement or practice-based activity shall be subject to the conditions specified in the decision. This may include new Occupational Health or specialist clearance where relevant, evidence of treatment or remediation, a return-to-practice/study plan, competence reassessment, enhanced supervision or a staged return. The decision to return shall be documented before the student resumes the affected activity.

5.11. Confidentiality, Data Protection and Records

Fitness to Practise information is confidential and shall be processed in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation (EU) 2016/679, the Data Protection Act (Cap. 586 of the Laws of Malta), MLI data-protection arrangements and applicable professional confidentiality requirements. Access shall be limited to persons who require the information for admission, student support, risk

management, placement/practice safety or safeguarding, decision-making, appeal or regulatory compliance.

Health records should remain with Occupational Health or the relevant external health professional/service wherever possible. MLI should retain only the minimum information required to document fitness status, restrictions, reasonable adjustments, decisions and review dates. Fitness to Practise case records shall be retained and disposed of in accordance with the MLI records-retention schedule and applicable law. Information shall not be disclosed to a placement/practice partner, regulator or third party unless there is an appropriate lawful basis and the disclosure is necessary and proportionate.

6. Procedures for Students

Students are responsible for maintaining and demonstrating Fitness to Practise throughout the programme. Each student shall:

1. Before enrolment, where required: submit the specified conduct certificate and complete all admissions and Fitness to Practise declarations honestly and fully.

2. Before placement or practice-based activity, where required: complete the specified Occupational Health or other health-screening process and provide any evidence requested through that process.

3. At annual progression/registration, where required by the programme or applicable professional/regulatory framework: complete the continuing Fitness to Practise declaration by the required deadline.

4. At all times: immediately disclose relevant criminal charges, cautions, convictions or adverse regulatory/professional/educational determinations to the designated MLI contact.

5. Where health may affect safe participation or practice: contact the designated MLI support contact and, where relevant, Occupational Health or another qualified health service promptly and comply with agreed review, adjustment or restriction arrangements.

6. During study and placement/practice activity: comply with the applicable professional code(s) of ethics and conduct, MLI conduct requirements, confidentiality rules, placement requirements, health and safety measures, infection-prevention requirements where relevant, safe-practice instructions and professional boundaries.

7. If a concern is raised: cooperate with reasonable information requests, attend required meetings/assessments, comply with interim safety measures and complete agreed remediation or monitoring actions.

8. Seek support early. Requesting appropriate health, academic or pastoral support will not in itself be treated as evidence of unfitness; concern arises where risk cannot be managed safely, professional obligations are not met or relevant information is withheld.

7. Procedures for Tutors/Lecturers and Placement/Practice Educators

Tutors, lecturers, placement/practice educators, mentors and supervisors have a responsibility to promote professional development and to escalate genuine safety, safeguarding or professionalism concerns. They shall:

- make students aware that professional behaviour and Fitness to Practise standards apply in academic, simulation, online, practical, placement and work-based settings;

- give timely, specific and documented feedback on conduct, communication, attendance, safe practice and professional behaviour;
- distinguish ordinary learning needs from Fitness to Practise concerns, using supportive educational remediation where this is safe and appropriate;
- report serious, repeated or escalating concerns promptly to the Programme Coordinator, especially where safety or welfare, dishonesty, substance misuse, violence, confidentiality, boundaries, safeguarding or significant impairment may be involved;
- record relevant facts objectively and avoid diagnostic speculation about a student's health; health questions should be referred to Occupational Health where appropriate;
- respect confidentiality and share information only with staff who need it to manage learning, safety or the formal process; and
- implement any approved conditions, supervision arrangements or placement/practice restrictions communicated by MLI.

8. Procedures for MLI Staff

Relevant MLI staff shall ensure that the policy is implemented consistently across admission, registration, teaching, practical or work-based learning, placement and student-support processes. In particular:

- Admissions/administrative staff shall verify receipt and validity of required conduct documentation and declarations, refer disclosures rather than making informal suitability judgements, and store records securely.
- The relevant Programme Coordinator or designated senior MLI officer shall oversee professional-suitability decisions, ongoing monitoring, referrals and the Fitness to Practise process, and ensure that decisions are documented and communicated to the appropriate persons.
- Where required by a programme, regulator, professional body or placement provider, MLI shall maintain access to an appropriate Occupational Health Unit/service or other qualified health service capable of screening students before the relevant activity and during the programme and of advising on health challenges affecting study, placement or assessment.
- Placement/practice coordination staff shall ensure that relevant clearance or conditions are confirmed before the affected activity begins and that partner organisations know how to raise concerns and receive necessary safety or safeguarding information.
- MLI shall maintain a record of active Fitness to Practise conditions and review dates, while limiting access to those with a legitimate operational need.
- Quality-assurance staff shall periodically review anonymised themes, timeliness, consistency and outcomes arising from Fitness to Practise cases to identify system improvements without unnecessarily disclosing personal information.
- Where a student exits because they are not fit to practise, the exit decision, reasons, appeal status and any required regulatory reporting shall be completed in accordance with this policy and applicable MLI regulations.

9. References and Related Documents

1. Applicable legislation, regulations, standards, codes and guidance issued by the competent statutory, warranting, registration, licensing or professional body for the programme concerned, together with relevant placement-provider requirements.

2. For nursing programmes, where applicable: Council for Nurses and Midwives Malta (CNM), Standards for Educational Institutions Offering Programmes of Studies in Nursing Leading to Professional Registration as a Nurse, including relevant requirements on conduct, student selection and progression, Occupational Health and Fitness/Suitability to Practise.

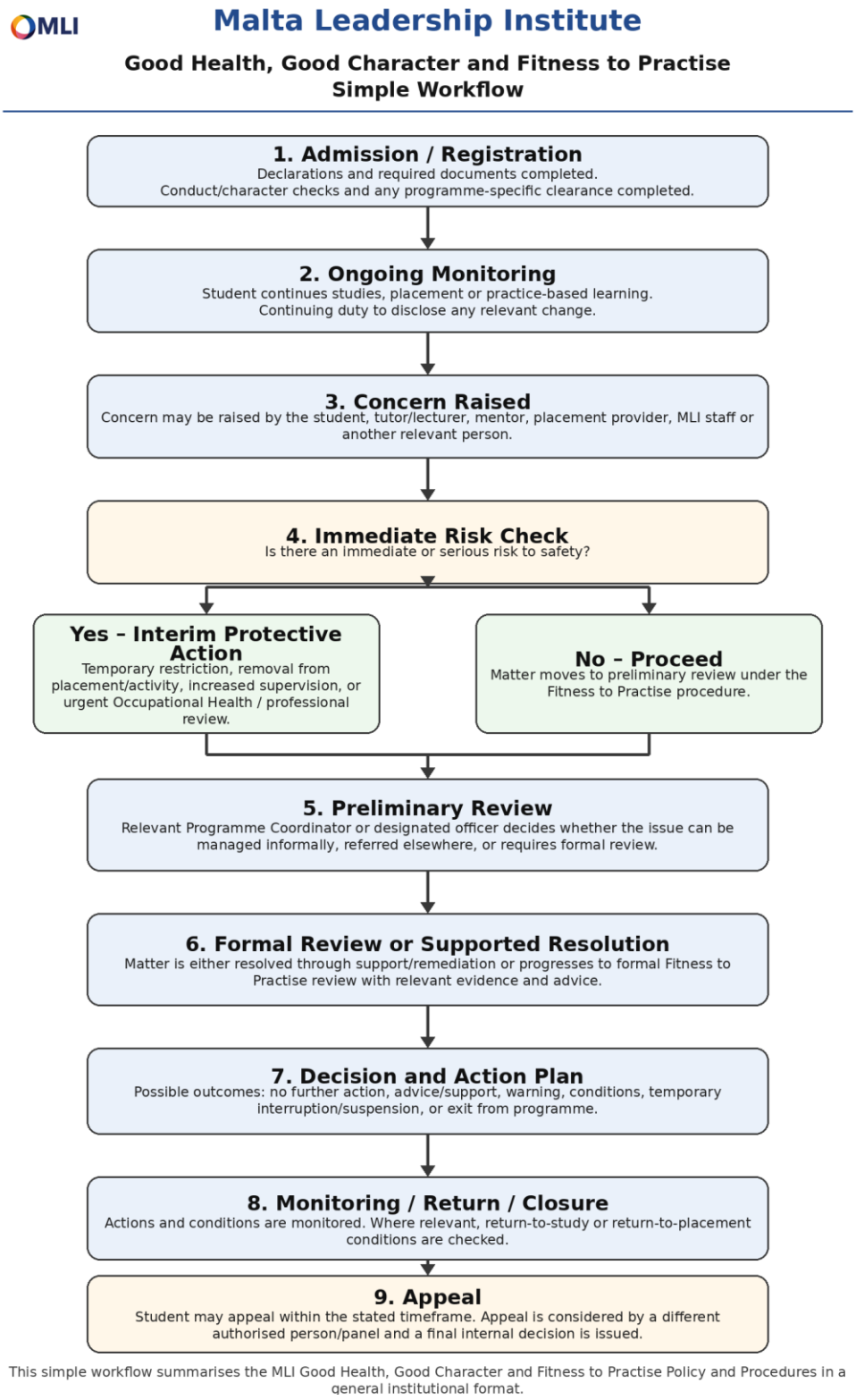
3. For nursing programmes, where applicable: Council for Nurses and Midwives Malta, Code of Ethics and Standards of Professional Conduct for Nurses and Midwives, January 2020 (and any subsequent revision).

4. Programme-specific admission, health, character, professional-suitability and placement requirements, together with any sector benchmarking formally adopted by MLI for the programme concerned.

5. Regulation (EU) 2016/679 (General Data Protection Regulation) and the Data Protection Act (Cap. 586 of the Laws of Malta).

6. Relevant current MLI policies and procedures, including student conduct, academic integrity, complaints/appeals, data protection, equality and reasonable adjustment, placement/practice learning and student support arrangements, as applicable.

Appendix 1: Simplified process for Staff of the procedure



This simple workflow summarises the MLI Good Health, Good Character and Fitness to Practise Policy and Procedures in a general institutional format.