

## SPSO decision report

**Case:** 201102387, University of Stirling  
**Sector:** further and higher education  
**Subject:** complaints handling  
**Outcome:** not upheld, no recommendations

### Summary

Mr C complained on behalf of a student nurse (Miss A). During Miss A's working placements, a number of concerns were raised about her professional conduct, care skills and integrity. Miss A was asked to attend a Fitness to Practice panel hearing (a meeting used to reach a decision about a nurse's fitness to practice). The panel found that Miss A did not meet the required nursing industry standards. As a result of this, Miss A's studies were terminated. Mr C complained that the university denied Miss A the right to an appeal against the decision. He also complained that the university did not take into account relevant evidence submitted in support of her case and did not provide clear information about the format and potential consequences of the panel hearing.

Our investigation found that the university provided Miss A with a copy of their panel procedure before the date of her hearing. This included details of potential recommendations that the panel could make, including terminating a student's studies. We also found that students were told about fitness to practice issues and the panel's involvement through lectures and course documentation.

Although we found that Miss A was not told in advance that the hearing would be conducted via video link, we did not regard this to be unreasonable in the circumstances. Finally, we were satisfied that the university appropriately considered Miss A's further supporting evidence before deciding not to proceed with the appeal. We found that, while the new evidence supported Miss A's position on one of the issues initially presented to the Fitness to Practice panel, the number of remaining issues were still considered significant enough to terminate her studies.