



School of Nursing, Midwifery and Physiotherapy

Division of Nursing Code of Conduct

Guidance for Students: expected attitudes and behaviour

As a student you are studying for both a university award and a professional qualification. Consequently you are expected to comply with both University and Nursing & Midwifery Council guidelines regarding conduct. This is particularly important for self regulation of the profession in protecting the public and society. Nursing, as a self –regulating profession, requires individuals seeking registration to meet certain requirements in relation to good health and good character, demonstrating through their conduct a ‘moral strength’ which enables them to distinguish between what is right and wrong (DH 2006). Therefore the Division must ensure you are fit to practice at point of registration.

The Division of Nursing selects students whom it believes will demonstrate appropriate attitudes and behaviour from the start. The Division’s curricula also have specific objectives for professional attitudes and behaviour, together with opportunities to facilitate their achievement. Students who fail to meet these standards will be offered advice and guidance. Students who persistently display inappropriate professional attitudes and behaviour will not be allowed to continue on their course. You should read the requirements laid down for Nursing Practitioners in the NMC Code of Conduct and the Good Character and Good Health Guidance (see www.nmc-uk.org). Conduct that is seen to contravene the Code or the Guidance may give rise to concerns regarding your fitness to practice and ultimately have implications for your NMC registration.

Where the Code refers to Patients this is inclusive of patients, service users, carers, family members, significant others and members of the Public whom students come into contact with as part of their course of education.

Student Responsibilities

A. General attitude and behaviour

You are expected to:

1. Ensure your views about a person’s lifestyle, culture, beliefs, race, colour, gender, sexuality, age or social status do not prejudice your interaction with patients, staff or colleagues.
2. Inform the Division if you have any disability or condition that might affect your studies or pose a risk to patients or colleagues and participate in risk assessments considered necessary to ensure appropriate support is available and reduce risks to yourself and others
3. Maintain appropriate standards of dress, appearance, personal hygiene and conduct so as not to cause offence to patients, staff or colleagues, impair your performance or jeopardise safety and comply with dress codes as appropriate. General appearance, facial expression and other non-verbal signals are important components of good communication in the

wider UK community. Any form of dress which interferes with this (such as covering the face or wearing excessive jewellery) should be avoided.

4. Demonstrate probity i.e. integrity, honesty and trustworthiness in personal, academic and practice settings. This includes both verbal interaction (such as interpersonal relationships) and written activities (including practice documentation and academic assignments).

B. Attitudes and behaviour towards patients

You are expected to:

1. Demonstrate respect for patients, carers, family and significant others that encompasses, without prejudice, diversity of background and opportunity, language, culture and way of life. This includes treating patients professionally, politely and considerately, respecting patients' privacy and dignity and respecting their right to refuse to take part in teaching.
2. To develop appropriate professional relationships with patients, maintaining clear boundaries at all times.
3. Always make clear to patients that you are a student and not a qualified nurse, and not give nursing advice or recommend treatment unless under supervision.
4. Make sure the patient has agreed to your presence and involvement.
5. Discontinue interaction if the patient indicates a wish to stop.
6. Treat information about patients as confidential and not divulge it to anyone not involved in the patient's care. This principle of confidentiality includes not discussing patients with other students or professionals outside the clinical or educational setting.
7. Not abuse a patient's trust.
8. Seek and follow advice from your named mentor/ personal tutor about modifying clinical contact with patients if you have any condition that can be passed on to patients, or if your judgement or performance could be significantly affected by your condition or illness or its treatment.
9. Act quickly to protect patients from risk if you have good reason to believe that you or a colleague may not be fit to practice, by reporting any concerns to a senior member of staff.
10. Recognise the limits of your professional competence and role boundaries.

C. Attitudes and behaviour towards staff

You are expected to:

1. Demonstrate respect for academic, clinical and support staff, and treat them with consideration whether in a taught class, administrative offices, the Library, Skills Lab, IT facilities, clinical or social settings.

2. Attend all classes and clinical skills sessions promptly and in appropriate dress; not leave early (except by arrangement with the staff concerned); observe safety rules and not behave disruptively.
3. Notify the relevant teacher, in advance if possible, of teaching sessions you are unable, for good reason, to attend.
4. Report absence from the course to the Division of Nursing student services department and clinical settings where appropriate with an explanation.
5. Follow rules and instructions about examinations, in particular by arriving promptly, bringing only permitted materials, and being silent on entering the exam room.
6. Submit coursework, assignments, practice assessment records and other documentation as required.
7. Maintain communication with staff by:
 - a. attending scheduled appointments with personal tutors and initiating additional contact where necessary;
 - b. responding promptly to requests for information and completing all appropriate forms, including those used to record extenuating circumstances which may affect performance or caused absence from examinations;
 - c. regularly reading your university e-mail and checking teaching notice boards;
 - d. participating responsibly in student feedback processes.
8. Actively engage in remedial work after poor academic or clinical performance.

d. Attitudes and behaviour towards students

You are expected to:

1. Demonstrate respect for other students that encompasses, without prejudice, diversity of background and opportunity, language, culture and way of life.
2. Take responsibility for supporting other students in academic, practical and clinical work.
3. Be prepared to inform an appropriate member of staff if you observe behaviour in colleagues which is at variance with the standards outlined in this document.

General Student Responsibilities

In addition to the responsibilities specific to your role as a student, the University has guidelines about student responsibilities which you are also expected to observe.

You are expected to:

1. Take significant responsibility for your own learning, personal development and well-being, including:
 - a. making yourself familiar with all dates relevant to the course and being available when required for, teaching and assessment
 - b. attending practice as required, complying with NHS Trust and Division policies and guidance in relation to working hours and shift patterns
 - c. raising any problems affecting your studies with your personal tutor, programme leader, course director or other appropriate member of staff (see extenuating circumstances procedure)
 - d. completing achievement of practice documentation and coursework on time
 - e. avoid all forms of cheating and plagiarism, academic honesty is considered an aspect of fitness to practice
2. Read and comply with the University's Regulations and Codes of Practice relating to students including safety guidelines and instructions
3. Take advantage of the support services provided for you if you need them
4. Satisfy all financial obligations to the University in a timely fashion
5. Keep the Division of Nursing informed via the Student Portal of any changes to your contact details
6. Assist in the continued development of the University by letting us know where improvements can be made and by participating in our decision making processes as appropriate
7. Acknowledge that you have responsibilities to members of the student and non-student communities in which you are resident
8. Respect the rights and property of all staff, fellow students, visitors and those living in the area whose day to day lives do not necessarily coincide with that of student life
9. Recognise that your conduct and behaviour on or off campus reflects on you and the University and undertake to act with consideration and respect for the welfare and interests of your fellow students and members of the wider community

10. Recognise that your conduct and behaviour on or off campus can have an effect on your professional standing and therefore your fitness to practice and ultimately registration with the NMC (see Fitness to practice policy www.nottingham.ac.uk/quality-manual/study-regulations/fitness-to-practise.htm). Areas and examples of misconduct are given in Appendix 1.
11. Comply with the Nursing and Midwifery Councils statutory requirements to achieve competence in practice. Part of this is the NMC [NMC Circular 33/2007] maintenance of an ongoing record of achievement. The Division of Nursing has formulated this as the Continuity of Practice Assessment Record that will be viewed by placement mentors and academic staff. The record may contain 'personal data' and 'sensitive personal data' [Sections 1 & 2 Data Protection Act 1988]. In relation to this the NMC has taken legal advice and it is confirmed that the NMC 'is perfectly competent to require the student nurse to consent to the process of confidential data about him or her in the process of assessing his/her fitness to be a nurse'. You are therefore required to consent to this sharing of confidential data, should you not consent then this would be incompatible with ensuring fitness to practice and therefore you would be unable to meet programme requirements.

References

Department of Health (2006) The regulation of the non-medical healthcare professions: a review by the Department of Health. London, Stationery Office

It is essential that you read the following, available on your course website or WebCT.

- a) Course Handbook
- b) Plagiarism: Division of Nursing Guidelines
- c) Code of Conduct for students in the classroom/lecture theatre
- d) Guidelines for Extenuating Circumstances

Nursing Student Statement

Having read the Division of Nursing Code of Conduct, please complete this form and return. If you have any concerns or questions, please discuss these with your personal tutor in the first instance.

1. I confirm that I have read and understood my responsibilities listed in this document.
2. [Delete one of the following statements]
 - a. I agree to comply with the requirements identified within this document.
 - b. I have difficulty in complying with the principles underpinning these Documents and wish to discuss this with someone from the Division of Nursing.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 1

Areas and examples of misconduct which may be considered Fitness to Practice issues

Areas of misconduct	Examples of misconduct
Criminal conviction / caution	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Theft• Financial fraud• Possession of illegal substances• Violent behaviour• Child / vulnerable adult abuse
Substance misuse	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Drunk driving• Substance use (drugs or alcohol) which impacts on behaviour in the Division and / or practice setting• Drug possession, use and / or dealing
Violent behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Bullying• Harassment• Verbal abuse• Physical violence
Persistent inappropriate attitude / behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lack of commitment• Non attendance• Poor/lack of appropriate communication• Rudeness to patients, colleagues, fellow students and others
Cheating / plagiarism	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Cheating in examinations• Passing off other's work as your own
Dishonesty / fraud	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Falsifying practice documentation• Financial fraud
Unprofessional behaviours / attitudes	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Breach of confidentiality• Misleading patients about their care• Harassment• Failure to maintain appropriate professional boundaries e.g. forming inappropriate relationships with patients• Discrimination

(Adapted from the General Medical Council's CHMS/GMC Guidance on Student Fitness to Practice ESC07-21d)