

UNIVERSITY OF NOTTINGHAM

Protocol for addressing any restrictions on wearing the Niqab (or other face covering) for students on courses which have professional placements

Policy Statement

The University of Nottingham welcomes the diversity of appearance that people from different religious and belief backgrounds can bring.

However, there may be health and safety or professional considerations that would restrict certain modes of dress in particular contexts for example when working on placement.

In such cases, it will be necessary for the University to consult with staff/students and placement providers who may be affected by a restriction

Pre application

Ensure that the statement on dress codes is available to applicants and students by placing it on websites and within course literature as appropriate.

It is hoped this will present an opportunity to respond to enquiries about wearing the niqab prior to application. This gives the applicant the opportunity to consider how the course may affect her decision to wear the niqab.

Pre admissions information

As above to ensure that any information that is sent out to students also contains the statement.

During Induction

Draw attention to the statement in the context of professional placements and requirements of the course. Make an open invitation for students to discuss concerns with relevant staff members – identify these.

On course

Encourage any students who feel they may be affected by any dress codes imposed by professional bodies to discuss their concerns and make them aware of the University's position which is one of support. Actively approach those who are wearing the niqab (face covering) and ask to discuss implications with them.

When confirming placement

Where a student is insistent that her face and body must be covered, enter into dialogue directly with the student outlining the restrictions that apply in different placements.

For some courses it will not be possible to make any alternative arrangements and this must be made clear to the student. If adjustments can be made, enter into discussions with the placement providers on behalf of the student.

Outside advice

Encourage the student to discuss the issues with her faith advisor - at the University of Nottingham this is Othman Moqbel <http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/chaplains> othman.moqbel@nottingham.ac.uk 07786 265920

Health and Safety and Identify confirmation

In addition to professional boundaries there may be other good reasons for considering removal of the niqab. Where the garment would pose Health and Safety difficulties in labs and operating theatres or where confirmation of identity is required by sight of the individual with an identity card photo. In both cases the student should be allowed a private place in which to remove the niqab and readjust any other garments.