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School of Medicine: Medical Student Contract

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Part 1 – Responsibilities of the Medical Student: Expected attitudes and behaviour

Guidance is given in the joint General Medical Council (GMC) and Medical Schools Council publication [Professional behaviour and fitness to practise](#) about how the School of Medicine will handle concerns about a medical student's performance, health or conduct. The School of Medicine has established [fitness to practice procedures](#) specified in the University of Nottingham (UoN) Quality Manual to deal with any such concerns.

As a medical student you are studying for both a university degree and a professional qualification. Consequently, you are expected to comply with University, GMC, and other national guidelines regarding conduct.

You should read the following key background documents which form the basis of this document:

- The GMC's Guidance in '[Achieving Good Medical Practice \(2016\)](#)'
- The GMC's guidance in '[Promoting excellence: standards for medical education and training](#)'
- The Medical Schools Council's guidance on [health clearance for medical students](#)
- University of Nottingham [code of discipline](#)
- UoN Medical School document on '[Professional values, behaviour, health and entry into Medicine](#)'
- UoN Medical School's '[Social Media Policy](#)'
- UoN Medical School document '[Medical Student Dress Code](#)'

The School of Medicine selects students whom it believes will demonstrate appropriate attitudes and behaviour from the start of the course. We expect our medical students to demonstrate professional behaviour and attitudes consistent with the values of the NHS Constitution and which underpin our courses.

The curriculum has specific objectives for professional attitudes and behaviour and provides opportunities to achieve them. 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 the medical course.

We ask that you agree to the following code of practice derived from the above key documents so that you can learn effectively and become a competent practitioner. If you

have difficulty with any element of this document, you must discuss this with the Medical School or your personal tutor.

a. General attitude and behaviour

- I will not allow views about a person's lifestyle, culture, beliefs, race, colour, gender, sexuality, age or social status to prejudice my interaction with patients, staff or colleagues.
- I will inform the School of Medicine if I have any disability or condition that might affect my studies, my fitness to be a clinical medical student or to practice as a doctor or that might pose a risk to patients or colleagues. I will maintain registration with a General Practitioner and take relevant medical advice.
- I will attend all Occupational Health meetings when required. I understand that failure to do so could result in suspension from the course.
- I will not be involved in any Exposure Prone Procedures (EPP as detailed in the School of Medicine EPP policy and the Medical School's Council guidance) without having first gained the appropriate health clearance from the University of Nottingham Occupational Health. I understand that not following this guidance has potential patient safety implications and will constitute as a serious breach of professionalism, which may lead to the initiation of Fitness to Practise procedures.
- I will not wear clothing obscuring my face in clinical and academic areas, except when required for health and safety reasons, because it interferes with effective communication. I acknowledge that health and safety requirements may mean that I must wear specific items of clothing such as overalls, face masks, face visors, proactive clothing, etc.
- I will adopt a 'bare below the elbow' approach in clinical areas and areas used for clinical skills training due to infection control procedures. This includes avoidance of jewellery.
- When attending clinical visits, I will dress smartly and not wear clothing that is likely to cause offense to the patients that I will encounter by being inappropriate or revealing. My clothing will also be visibly clean, and I will ensure that my own clothing is regularly cleaned or laundered.
- During my training I will spend a significant amount of time working within different NHS Trusts and general practices and I will comply fully with the dress codes of the Trusts or general practices in which I am based.
- I will be honest and not abuse the trust of a patient or other vulnerable person, I will not enter into an improper relationship with a patient or staff colleague.
- I will make the School aware if I have any close family members (parents, grandparents, or siblings) working in the School or in any of the partner local education providers.

b. Attitudes and behaviour towards Patients, their Relatives and Carers

- I will adhere to all directives issued by those supervising me in NHS premises and in relation to contact with patients. The four UK Health departments are responsible for deciding how I may have access to patients on NHS premises. I am responsible for following guidance issued by the UK health departments and other organisations about access to patients in NHS hospitals and community settings.
- I will demonstrate respect for patients and those close to them that encompasses, without prejudice, diversity of background and opportunity, language, culture and way of life. I will treat patients professionally, politely, and considerately, respecting their privacy and dignity.
- I will respect their right to refuse to take part in teaching. Specifically, I will make sure the patient has agreed to my presence and involvement and will not continue if the patient indicates a wish to stop.
- I will not abuse a patient's trust.
- I will make it clear to patients that I am a student and not a qualified doctor. Until I am a doctor, I will not recommend treatment or suggest patients take any action that might be interpreted as medical advice. I understand that under Section 49 of the Medical Act 1983 it is a criminal offence for a person to pretend to hold registration as a medical practitioner when they do not. It is also an offence under Section 49A of the Act for a person to pretend to hold a licence to practice when they do not.
- I will treat information about patients as confidential and not divulge it to anyone not involved in the patient's care. I will not discuss patients with other students or professionals outside the clinical or educational setting. I will respect all patient records and maintain their confidentiality.
- I am prepared to perform physical examinations on patients (which can include touching and intimate examinations) to establish a clinical diagnosis, irrespective of the gender, culture, beliefs, disability, or disease of the patient. I understand that to qualify as a doctor in the UK, I must be willing to examine any patient as fully and as intimately as is clinically necessary.
- As a future doctor, I have a duty to follow the guidance in [Good Medical Practice](#) from my first day of study and must understand the consequences if I fail to do so. In particular, I must appreciate the importance of protecting patients, even if this conflicts with my own interests or those of friends and colleagues. I will act quickly to protect patients from risk if I have good reason to believe that I or a colleague may not be fit to practise, by reporting any concerns to a senior member of staff. I will familiarize myself with the Support/ Intervention Request Form procedure in operation in the School of Medicine.
- I will recognize the limits of my professional competence.

c. Attitudes and behaviour towards Staff

- I will 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. This includes not being abusive to staff in any medium.
- I will work diligently to complete my degree. I will attend all classes and clinical teaching sessions promptly as required by the Course Regulations. I will not leave early (except by arrangement with the staff concerned) and will not be disruptive. I will observe safety rules. I understand that on clinical placements I may be required to work outside normal working hours including evenings and weekends.
- I will notify the relevant teacher, in advance if possible, of teaching sessions I am not able to attend with a valid explanation.
- I will report absence from the course to the School and cite a valid explanation.
- I will follow rules and instructions about examinations, by arriving promptly, bringing only permitted materials, and being silent on entering the exam room.
- I will submit coursework, logbooks, and other documentation as required. When submitting course work, I will not pass off the work of another as my own. I understand that plagiarism is an offence which the University may punish by termination of my course.
- I will only obtain signoffs for activities which I have completed and sessions which I have attended. I will not sign for another person in a register or attendance list.
- I will maintain communication with staff by:
 - attending scheduled appointments with tutors/mentors and initiating additional contact where necessary
 - responding promptly to requests for information and completing all appropriate forms, including those used to record extenuating circumstances which may have affected performance at examinations
 - regularly reading my university e-mail ('Outlook'), maintaining my email inbox and checking teaching notice boards and Moodle
 - contributing responsibly to student feedback.
- I will engage in remedial work after poor academic or clinical performance.

d. Attitudes and behaviour towards students

- I will demonstrate respect for other students that encompasses, without prejudice, diversity of background and opportunity, language, culture, and way of life.

- I understand what harassment is and will not demonstrate any behaviours that could be classified as harassment. Harassment is any type of unwanted behaviour that others may find offensive, feel intimidated or humiliated. This can take the form of spoken or written words or abuse; offensive emails, tweets, or comments on social networking sites; images and graffiti; physical gestures; facial expressions; or comments attempted to be passed off as jokes.
- I will support other medical students in academic, practical, and clinical work and will do nothing to disrupt the learning of others.
- I will participate in practicing clinical examination on other students of the same sex and will be willing to allow other students of the same sex to examine me for the purpose of learning clinical examination skills. I will be prepared to remove clothing as needed for this purpose, subject to privacy and gender segregation if appropriate.
- I am prepared to inform an appropriate member of staff if I observe behaviour in colleagues which is at variance with the standards outlined in this document.

Part 2 – Responsibilities of the School of Medicine

The responsibilities of the School of Medicine are to provide you with education, training and facilities through which you can achieve an undergraduate medical qualification.

Education

The School of Medicine shall:

- Provide high quality teaching and training in clinical and non-clinical settings.
- Ensure assessment and examinations are based upon outcomes for graduates as specified by the GMC.
- Provide learning experiences that are relevant, challenging and stimulating.
- Provide a level of training whereby, upon an individual's satisfactory completion of the course, the minimum standards attained comply with the professional expectations of the GMC.
- Make clear the responsibilities and expectations of the GMC and how they relate to the curriculum.
- Ensure that the course is relevant and led by individuals qualified to teach and train undergraduate medical students.

- Give appropriate feedback on student progress and performance, including individual feedback where failure occurs.
- Where necessary provide access to extra support and advice from teachers and tutors.
- Inform, regularly update, and provide access to full information about the course, module contents and course objectives.
- Give clear and timely information about assessment/submission dates and the preferred or required format of assessments/submissions.
- Provide timetabled information about the academic year at least one month before commencement of the year. Details about external placements should be provided at least one month before commencement of the placement.
- Provide a variety of learning opportunities and environments throughout the course. This will include clinical placements in both primary and secondary care and at a variety of teaching hospitals and district general hospitals.
- Ensure that students have access to formative assessments and other relevant examination resources.
- Give due consideration to extenuating circumstances which may affect performance in any aspect of the medical course.
- Give students the opportunity to provide the School of Medicine or University with feedback on the usefulness, significance and effectiveness of all aspects of the course, including teaching, and inform the students of any action that is taken with respect to the feedback.
- Ensure that all staff with responsibilities to medical students are made aware of the Medical Student Contract.
- Ensure responsible allocation of available resources to facilitate delivery of the provisions of this Contract.

Privacy and Equal Opportunity

The School of Medicine is obliged to:

- Respect the fundamental Human Rights of students as set out by the Human Rights Act 1998 as far as they do not impact on the rights and freedoms of others for whom the School of Medicine has an equal duty of care, including patients and the general public.
- Ensure that learning, both at the School of Medicine and on clinical placements, is undertaken in a safe and secure physical environment.
- Take positive action to protect students from bullying, discrimination, victimisation, intimidation, or harassment, and promote equality and value diversity.
- Provide students with information and advice on how to make a complaint.

- Provide students with information and advice on whistle-blowing procedures and ensure that they will be protected from victimization if they raise a legitimate concern.
- Those making complaints or disclosures that are proven to be malicious and/or untruthful will be subject to the School's disciplinary procedures.

Administration and Support

The School of Medicine shall:

- Ensure that medical students have access to adequate educational resources and equipment.
- Endeavour to facilitate a high standard of teaching facilities whilst on placement.
- Ensure that the student has access to both identifiable academic tutors responsible for overseeing education, and identifiable pastoral tutors, to oversee general welfare and assist with personal problems.
- Ensure that issues disclosed to the personal tutor remain confidential. The tutor must advise the student that in some circumstances he/she will be required to disclose information which affects the student's fitness to practice.
- Make students aware of internal and external support services should these be necessary.
- Ensure that the university provides advice about internal and external sources of funding including access to hardship funds.
- Ensure that all students have easy access to School of Medicine regulations and policy including internal appeals mechanism.
- Ensure that appropriate careers advice is given to students throughout their course.
- Ensure in conjunction with the postgraduate dean, that the transition between School of Medicine and Foundation Year One (FY1) year is as smooth as possible. This includes providing information about the process for applying to FY1, suitable levels of careers advice and relevant and timely information as required by any application process.
- The School of Medicine may pass personal information to other organisations, including the National Health Service (NHS), Local Education Providers, the Medical Schools Council (MSC), the General Medical Council (GMC), other medical schools or postgraduate deaneries/local education and training boards. For example, if a student receives a warning or a sanction. This is in line with the Data Protection Act 2018 which allows disclosure where there is a real issue about

a student's fitness to practise and where this represents a risk to patients or members of the public.

- I understand that the Data Protection Act 2018 allows disclosure where there is a real issue about a student's fitness to practise. I understand that where this represents a risk to patients or members of the public, then disclosure would seem to be justified.
- The School of Medicine will share information about my academic and student record with the General Medical Council and the United Kingdom Foundation Programme Office (UKFPO) prior to graduation to facilitate the application process to GMC and UKFPO pre-registration.
- The School of Medicine will share information with Local Education Providers to ensure appropriate support is in place for students on placement. Consent for this transfer of data will be obtained through the Transfer of Information process.
- The School of Medicine will share information about my academic and student record with the General Medical Council if requested or if the School of Medicine believes that the information may have a bearing on my Fitness to Practise.

Student Representation

The School of Medicine shall:

- Ensure that fair student representation exists on all decision-making bodies, which directly affect medical students.
- Respect a student's right to sit on external bodies in a national or local representative role.