

Nursing Code of Conduct 2024-25

The University of Birmingham College of Medical and Dental Sciences Code of Conduct and Fitness to Practise for Nursing students.

The following codes identify the behaviour required of a student within the University of Birmingham and the relevant professional code with respect to Nursing. As a Nursing student you will be studying to obtain a University degree that allows you to work as a Registered Nurse. During your studies you will be working within a professional environment. The following requirements are based on the Nursing and Midwifery Council's statements concerning the principles of good nursing practice and the standards of competence, care and conduct expected of the nursing profession (available on <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/>).

At each section in this document, you will be asked to register that you accept these codes, or are undecided. Answer 'True' to accept or 'False' if you are undecided. By registering your acceptance, you are stating that you understand that breaches to these codes or to the University regulations may either lead to disciplinary action, to your exclusion from the University or your course of study, or to the inability of the University to supply you with a supportive professional reference or to recommend your entry to the NMC register. In the event of a breach of these codes you may be treated differently from students on other courses in the University of Birmingham who are not subject to such codes. These codes form part of a set of Fitness to Practise procedures that cover all aspects of health and behaviour with respect to students on professional programmes leading to a healthcare qualification.

If you are undecided about a section, you should contact your Personal Tutor to discuss how to reconcile any difficulty you have with these codes. The University of Birmingham College of Medical and Dental Sciences will work with you to see how best to resolve your difficulty.

This declaration will be confirmed annually.

Text in italics clarifies and contextualises the University/College specific codes.

The University introduced 'cohort legislation' in 2017-18 means the Regulations that apply to you, as a student, will depend upon the year in which you started your studies: for example, if you entered the first year of your Programme in the 2022-23 academic session you will be subject to the 2022-23 legislation. You can view the regulations that are specific to your cohort on the [University of Birmingham website](#).

Please note that students, who are in the UK or wish to remain in the UK as a Student under Tier 4 of the Points-Based System, will also be subject to University requirements regarding attendance under the points based system, above and beyond the professional requirements in this code.

1. INTRODUCTION

- I understand that successful completion of the academic and professional nursing qualification I am seeking leads to eligibility for admission to the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) and that I am required, during my studies, to adhere to the requirements of that professional regulatory body. I recognise that this Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practise identifies the behaviour required of me, and that it is supplemented by the Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses, midwives and nursing associates or guidance (NMC 2018).

NMC Code (2018): <https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/Links to an external site.>

NMC Health and Character as a student: <https://www.nmc.org.uk/education/becoming-a-nurse-midwife-nursing-associate/guidance-for-students/Links to an external site.>

I understand that should my health, conduct or professionalism become a concern, the School may contact me to offer support and guidance to continue in my studies and that if concerns cannot be remedied the School may pursue an investigation as to whether my fitness to practise is impaired.

I understand that breaches of this Code may lead to disciplinary action including my withdrawal from the University or the inability of the University to provide me with a supportive professional reference or to recommend entry to the NMC register at the completion of my programme. In the event of any breach of this Code, I understand that I may be treated differently to other students of the University of Birmingham who are not subject to this Code.

2. PERSONAL BEHAVIOUR

2.1. I will always behave in a manner appropriate to my position as a student of the University studying for a qualification, the successful completion of which leads to eligibility for entry to the NMC as a registered nurse.

2.2. I understand that behaviour including, but not limited to, dishonesty, indecency, harassment, bullying, violence, abuse of drugs or alcohol, will lead to disciplinary action under this Code and may also lead to my withdrawal from the programme of study. I recognise that such disciplinary action may include consideration of any criminal convictions, which could include those for offences that are not connected with my studies and for offences committed prior to my registration as a student of the University. I understand that, where relevant, if matters become known regarding any disciplinary action taken by a previous employer, the University will consider whether I made a false statement during the admission or registration process that means my registration to the University may be declared void.

2.3. I undertake to notify the appropriate person in the College if I receive a criminal conviction, caution and/or Community Resolution Order after my application to the University. I understand that I must notify the University of this because the University requires this information to ensure the safety of members of the public, and to safeguard

public confidence in the profession. I understand that a criminal conviction or caution may lead to my suspension from certain aspects of my study until the relevant provider's duty of care can be assured. I understand that this may lead to the need for me to extend my studies where it has not been possible to arrange replacement activities. I understand that I may have to disclose "spent" convictions (as defined in the Rehabilitation of Offenders Act (1975)) to the professional body to which I am seeking membership and that, if I receive a criminal conviction or caution, that this may never be treated as "spent" by the University, or the NMC to which I am seeking eligibility for registration or any placement provider.

2.4. I understand that in accordance with the University's Student Privacy Notice (<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/privacy/students.aspx>) the University may share with relevant partnership placement providers (i.e., the placement provider where it is intended that I undertake the placement):

2.4.1: relevant information contained in the Disclosure and Barring Service (formerly CRB) disclosure made against me, when it is requested by the placement provider, as a pre-condition of that placement, and

2.4.2: relevant information in connection with or arising from misconduct and fitness to practise proceedings taken by the University against me.

2.4.3: relevant information in relation to any allegation or concern relating to my fitness to practise.

2.5 I understand that if information contained in a Disclosure and Barring Service disclosure and/or information in connection with or arising from misconduct and fitness to practise proceedings taken by the University against me, is not shared with the placement provider, I may be unable to complete the necessary placements which may impact my ability to complete my studies.

2.6 I understand that the University may share with the professional body to which I am seeking membership, relevant information in connection with or arising from misconduct and fitness to practise proceedings taken by the University against me.

2.7 I understand that if information in connection or arising from misconduct and fitness to practise proceedings taken by the University against me is shared with the NMC, it may impact my ability to register successfully with that professional body.

2.8 I understand that the outcome of any fitness to practise proceedings may remain on my student record and relevant information arising from these proceedings may be disclosed in response to a reference request made by a prospective employer or educational establishment. I understand that this may result in the inability of the College to supply a positive character reference.

3. BEHAVIOUR TOWARDS OTHERS

3.1. I will always treat my patients / service users, colleagues, staff and other members of the University or partner institutions with due respect and conduct myself in a professional, honest, decent, and courteous manner, including in electronic communications and on social media platforms.

3.2. I understand the importance of valuing diversity and respecting different perspectives. I will acquire an understanding of working with diversity, including but not limited to, gender, race, and culture, in order to work with patients/clients/students/service users/people with lived experience appropriately.

4. APPEARANCE

4.1. I will ensure that I maintain a standard of personal presentation that will be perceived as professional by such persons as I may encounter in the pursuit of my studies.

4.2. I will follow any guidelines or requirements regarding dress or personal presentation of the programme or any placement provider and I will familiarise myself with any such guidelines or requirements before commencing the programme and/or any placement.

5. LEARNING

5.1. The content of my programme of study is designed to meet the requirements of the NMC (2018) Standards for pre-registration nursing programmes and NMC (2018) Future Nurse: Standards of proficiency for registered nurses. I will pursue my studies with reasonable diligence (in accordance with University Regulation Section 5) ensuring that I avail myself of the educational opportunities made available and I will seek to acquire the range of skills and knowledge laid out in the NMC (2018) Future Nurse: Standards of proficiency for registered nurses.

5.2. On each placement, and at intervals throughout the year, judgements will be made about my progress. I understand that I cannot progress on my programme of study without meeting all elements of the professional capabilities and competencies framework (ePAD) at the appropriate level.

5.3. I understand that should I fail a placement, or a placement be withdrawn by a placement provider as a result of my behaviour, and the University is unable to find a suitable placement (as required to complete my programme of study), this may impact on my ability to complete my programme of study and may lead to my transfer from the programme of study or withdrawal from the University.

5.4. I agree to be open to learning from different viewpoints and to engage in open and constructive discussion that facilitates the learning of others.

5.5. I understand that I must take responsibility for my own learning through meeting the programme's attendance requirements at lectures, tutorials, seminars, and practicals/clinics and through being suitably prepared for them.

5.6. I will not disrupt the delivery of teaching or the learning experience of fellow students and will not jeopardise the health and safety of those involved, during attendance at lectures, tutorials, seminars, and practicals/clinics.

5.7. I understand that if I behave dishonestly during the assessment process (including academic misconduct) I will be subject to disciplinary action in accordance with University Regulation 8 – Student Conduct and may be excluded from my programme of study.

5.8. I understand that if I behave dishonestly in relation to my attendance by falsifying signatures, using attendance codes provided by other students, or by other means I will be subject to disciplinary action under this Code.

5.9 I understand that if I behave dishonestly in relation to the attendance of others by falsifying signatures, providing attendance codes to students not in attendance, or by other means I will be subject to disciplinary action under this Code.

6. INSIGHT (SELF-AWARENESS AND REFLECTION)

6.1 I understand that I should recognise my own personal and professional abilities and limits, be self-aware and reflective. When appropriate I should seek support and follow advice and guidance.

6.2 I understand that I should demonstrate consistently appropriate standards of personal and professional conduct, act with honesty and integrity, and maintain acceptable standards of ethics and behaviour in keeping with my profession.

6.3 I understand that a lack of insight into health or professional concerns may bring my fitness to practise into question, and may lead to referral to a College Fitness to Practice Committee.

7. OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO LEARNING OR PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE

7.1. I have read the guidance that is available on the [Nursing & Midwifery Council](#) website which outlines the conditions which may affect my ability to follow my programme of study or take up the profession to which the qualification I am seeking leads and which should be reported.

7.2. I understand that I must declare to the appropriate authority within the College anything that might affect my ability to fulfil my role competently or may affect my fitness to practise, or if I am subject to a police investigation or criminal proceedings or a regulatory finding is made against me, anywhere in the world.

7.3. I undertake to cooperate with any investigations by the College or any placement provider into my fitness to practise or the fitness to practise of others.

7.4 I have reported to the appropriate authority within the College any specific requirements I may have to enable me to follow my programme of study (including any physical, health or learning requirements) and I undertake to work with the College or support services provided to address these requirements.

7.5. I undertake to report to the appropriate authority within the College any pre-existing or new condition, which may affect my ability to follow my programme of study or take up the profession to which the qualification I am seeking leads, as soon as I become aware of it. In the event of any pre-existing or new condition arising I undertake to work with the College or support services provided. I understand that failure to work with the College or support services provided may lead to referral to a College Fitness to Practice Committee.

7.6. I understand that failure to report any condition, which may affect my ability to follow my programme of study or take up the profession to which the qualification I am seeking leads, may lead to my withdrawal or transfer from my programme of study.

7.7. I understand that my programme of study requires me to reach a standard of health clearance and will endeavour to achieve this by participating in a vaccination and blood screening schedule, within the timescale(s) specified by the University. If I choose to opt out of this schedule, I will inform the Programme Lead and Occupational Health Provider and will follow any advice given by them.

7.8. I understand that failure to make and attend Occupational Health appointments without good reason may result in my diligence being called into question and may also result in me being unable to attend placements, which may impact on my ability to complete my programme of study.

8. DUTY OF CARE

8.1. I will at all times act in the best interests of my patients and conduct myself in a professional manner in all aspects related to patient care.

8.2. I will undertake to familiarise myself with all College and partner institution guidelines, including health and safety guidelines, codes of conduct and, where relevant, employment contracts, in advance of and during patient / service user contact and will apply these guidelines in all dealings with them. I understand that breaching these guidelines and codes of practice, will lead to disciplinary action under this Code, and may include withdrawal from my programme of study.

8.3. I understand that dishonesty, involving the falsification of patient / service user records, may lead to withdrawal from my programme of study.

8.4I recognise that during my studies I may be placed in a position of trust and as such, sections of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (as amended) apply in relation to that position of trust.

9. DUTY TO REPORT

9.1. I undertake to report to the appropriate authority and to the College any action by others which may put patients or service users at risk, or any safeguarding concerns about children or vulnerable adults that come to my attention and where action may be needed to prevent or address risk of harm. I understand that failure to do so may lead to disciplinary action being taken against me.

9.2 I understand that if I have concerns about other students, staff, placement environments, the programme of study, and/or the University, I should use the appropriate procedures to raise these concerns. I understand that where I am unsure of the appropriate procedures, I can seek free, confidential, and impartial information and support from Guild Advice at the Guild of Students.

10. CONFIDENTIALITY

10.1. I understand that I may have access to confidential personal information and that I am required to comply with the data protection legislation and, where appropriate, profession-specific duties of confidentiality. I understand that I may not disclose this information to any third party, other than in accordance with the relevant professional code or in accordance with the law.

10.2 I understand that I should not use my position to access the notes of anyone other than the patients/service users that I am directly treating/working with unless I have been given express permission from a relevant and appropriate member of staff to do so.

10.3 I understand that I should always ensure the confidentiality and security of personal information that I may handle. I understand that I should not disclose information that could identify patients//service users to those not involved in my learning (with the exception of safeguarding concerns outlined in section 9), whether that be in person, electronically or on social media. I understand that if I am concerned there has been a breach of security or confidentiality (either by myself or a third party), I should inform my Personal Academic Tutor.

10.4 I understand that failure to comply with these requirements may lead to disciplinary action being taken against me.

11. COMMUNICATION

11.1 I confirm that I will engage with communications sent to me by my Programme and the University (emails, Canvas notifications, phone calls, letters) and respond in a timely manner.

11.2 I understand that I am responsible for the management and maintenance of my University email inbox. This includes checking both my inbox and junk mail folders on a regular basis and deleting emails once finished with.

12. EXCLUDED STUDENTS DATABASE

12.1 I agree that, should I be excluded from the course on FTP grounds, the fitness to practice outcome letter, may be shared with other schools, with courses leading to entry to a registered profession in the UK, via the Excluded Students Database.

<https://www.birmingham.ac.uk/schools/medical-school/dbs-esd/esd.aspx>

Agreement to abide with the Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practise

I understand that the contents of this document do not absolve me from complying with other University regulations currently in force. The requirements of the professional body or University Regulations may be revised from time to time, and I will comply with any revision.

I have read, understood and agreed to abide by the above Code of Professional Conduct and Fitness to Practise. I understand the School or the University will make my personal data available, on a confidential basis, to members of a Fitness to Practise Committee convened to consider my Fitness to Practise.

I understand that if I am referred to a Misconduct and Fitness to Practise Committee, details may be disclosed to any other professional/regulatory body of which I am a member.

I am currently a member of the following professional/regulatory body (tick box/boxes)