



Uniform and Dress Policy for Pre-Registration Midwifery and Nursing Students

- Policy:** To prescribe the required standard of appearance that students of the School of Community and Health Sciences, City University London, are expected to present when representing the University in a practice placement or whilst travelling to and from placements.
- Purpose:**
- To ensure students maintain a professional appearance at all times
 - To ensure the protection of students and the public
 - To ensure a consistent standard of dress whilst respecting, current practices and cultural beliefs, where possible
 - To minimise the risk of cross infection and to facilitate good and effective hand decontamination
 - To ensure uniforms are compatible with safe moving and handling
- Scope:** This policy applies to all students of City University London, School of Community and Health Sciences who are undertaking pre-registration nursing or midwifery studies.
- Developed by:** Placement Working Group (PWG) and Ratified by the Programme Management Team
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1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the minimum standards that *must* be adhered to in all practice areas. Students must wear the approved uniform unless a specific placement area instructs otherwise and this must always be clean and pressed for each shift.

2. UNIFORM POLICY

2.1 Issuing Of Uniforms

Uniforms will be provided at the beginning of the student's programme of study. Immediately on completion or discontinuation from their programme of studies students must ensure that their uniforms are destroyed to prevent their misuse.

2.2 Replacement Uniforms

Students will pay for any replacement uniforms

2.3 Laundering of Uniforms

Students are required to launder their own uniforms and they must be changed daily to reduce the risk of cross infection. Uniforms must be washed at 60 degrees centigrade.

In some specialist placement areas such as in the labour ward, intensive care unit or operating department, special uniforms are provided by students' placement provider. These are replaced daily and are laundered as part of the normal dirty linen procedure. Such clothes should be placed in the designated dirty linen bin/store to be collected by the linen team.



2.4 Travelling to and from placement

When travelling to and from their placement, students must wear their own clothes (Mufti) and to change into their uniform at their placement site. Wearing uniform outside the placement site or skills laboratories places the student at risk and incurs infection.

2.5 Dress code when on community placement

Wearing uniform whilst on community placement is not normally required, but in situations where it is necessary the student must always be accompanied by a registered practitioner to provide supervision and protection.

2.6 Protective clothing

If protective clothing is provided it must always be worn according to the policies and procedures of the placement provider. This is to prevent unnecessary health and safety risks and serious accidents.

Students have the responsibility to ensure they are knowledgeable about these policies from their first day on the placement. Students must wear and discard protective clothing, safely and in a timely manner.

2.7 Plastic aprons and gloves

Students must adhere to local policies and practices.

Plastic aprons must be worn in areas of direct patient care and a different apron must be worn when nursing a different patient. The apron creates an impermeable barrier between the patient and that area of the uniform, which has the most patient contact. This aids the prevention of cross infection.

Gloves should only be worn according to the local policies of the placement provider.

2.8 Personal Hygiene

As nursing and midwifery practice involves close personal contact with patients and clients it is essential that personal hygiene and fragrances do not cause patients discomfort, such as nausea. Personal attire and uniforms must be clean for each shift and pressed prior to going on duty.

2.9 Perfume, Aftershave and Make-up:

If students wish to wear perfume, after-shave or make up whilst on duty this should be discrete.

2.10 Fingernails

Fingernails must at all times be short and clean to prevent harm to patients through infection transfer or inadvertent scratching. They must at all times be:

- Clean to avoid transferring bacteria on or under the nail;
- Short to prevent patients and staff being scratched;
- Free from nail varnish, nail decoration or any form of nail covering to prevent flakes of contamination. False nails or extensions are not permitted.



2.11 Hair

There is a possibility of hair carrying bacterial or parasitic infection such as staphylococcus aureus or head lice and these may be transmitted to patients. To promote the health and safety of the student and the patient, hair must be clean and tidy at all times. To achieve this it must be:

- Clean, tidy and tied away from the face;
- It should be off the face and shoulder and above the level of the uniform collar;
- Hair should be tied back with a simple dark hair band or ring, clips or hair pins
- Free from any form of decoration or adornment such as: fastenings that have sharp points, beads, slides, decorated or plain bands, ribbons, scarves and hats, all of which are an infection risk
- Male students must either be clean-shaven or have their beards and moustaches kept clean and neatly trimmed.

2.12 Footwear

Shoes that provide good support to the foot and loco motor system will contribute to protecting the student from harm. Unless alternative footwear is provided by the placement provider for specialist areas of practice (such as labour ward, operating department) shoes must be:

- Plain;
- Black, leather (not suede);
- If lace up with laces of the same colour as the shoe;
- Non slip soles;
- Low heeled;
- Firm fitting;
- Clean;
- In a good state of repair;

The wearing of trainers or open sandals/shoes are potentially dangerous to the student as they do not provide sufficient protection to the foot and back and may **NOT** be worn whilst wearing uniform.

2.13 Socks, stockings and tights

Students will normally always wear suitable hosiery.

Socks worn by students must be:

- Plain
- Black

Stockings and tights must be:

- Plain
- Black 15 -30 denier

In extremely hot weather students may seek the permission of their placement manager as to whether they can dispense with wearing socks, stockings or tights *and must receive this in writing*.



2.14 Jewellery

Wearing jewellery of any kind whilst working in a health care setting introduces a health and safety risk. Jewellery can potentially injure patients or be dangerous for a student who may be caring for a confused or aggressive patient. Stones in jewellery often harbour microorganisms, may become dislodged and can cause damage to patients. The following principles must be adhered to:

- **Rings** – only a single plain band may be worn e.g. a wedding ring;
- **Earrings** – must not be worn (Students may wear one plain ear stud in each ear);
- **Bracelets** – must not be worn;
- **Necklaces** – hanging jewellery must not be worn;
- **Wrist watches** – must not to be worn – fob watches are favoured and must be pinned to fall inside a pocket. Wrist watches have been found to be a source of infection and prevent adequate hand washing and drying. A wrist watch may also injure a patient;
- **Tattoos** – students are discouraged from being tattooed in areas of their body that are visible to patients;
- **Body piercing** – visible body piercing e.g. on the face must be removed whilst on duty. New piercings (**including ear studs**) will be treated as a new wound and must be covered with a surgical dressing and a blue plaster until the site has healed.

2.15 Badges/Identification

The student's name and designation must always be visible as a matter of security and reassurance to patients. Whilst on placement experience students must wear their university identity card at all times, and *will be refused admission to the placement area* if they are unable to produce it on request. This will be considered an absence from duty.

Male students must wear their epaulettes at all times whilst wearing their uniform (as these are a means of identification as a student)

2.16 Additional Clothing

a) Polo shirts/sweat shirts – that are part of the uniform are worn with trousers.

b) Cardigans - Students are only permitted to wear a clean and tidy navy blue lightweight and easily washable cardigan. Wearing of cardigans is not permitted whilst undertaking direct patient care.

c) Uniforms for Students with cultural/religious considerations

Uniforms will be in the same colour and material as the standard student Nursing and Midwifery uniform. Uniforms adapted to meet students' cultural or religious needs will meet standards that reflect health and safety legislation and requirements. Any such adaptations will meet the following standards:

- i) **Headdress** – Will be provided as part of the standard uniform and must be secured safely and tucked into collar.
- ii) **Trousers** – Trousers may be worn under a dress and will be the standard student uniform trousers.



- iii) **Tunic/Dress** – This will be, modified from the standard model, loose and shapeless. The tunic/dress will be no longer than mid calf length, with a split seam either side two inches below the knee. The tunic/dress will have slightly longer sleeves, the fore-arms must be bare. This is essential to prevent soiling and thus transmission of infection.

2. NON-UNIFORM DRESS POLICY

- a) Students on practice placement are ambassadors of City University London and the School of Community and Health Sciences. In practice areas such as community areas and mental health, students are working in a context where they are more vulnerable. Prior to commencing their placement students must establish the dress code requirement for their placement. Depending upon the policies of the placement provider, students may wear their own clothes in preference to wearing their uniform. When doing so they must observe the following:
 - b) Students are expected to wear clothes that are clean, conventionally smart and informal. At no times should students wear clothes that are tightly fitting, revealing/transparent or low necked as this can cause offence to some clients and could place the student at risk.
 - c) Hair should be clean, tidy and tied off the face; it should be free of adornment other than a simple hair band or ring;
 - d) Only a plain wedding ring may be worn
 - e) Neckties may be clip-on only, to prevent strangulation by for example confused patients (scarves are prohibited for this reason)
 - f) Shoes should be comfortable, support the feet and locomotor system and enable the student to walk easily and undertake the required duties safely;
 - g) The following items may be worn at the discretion of the Practice Experience Facilitator/Manager:
 - h) Jeans if clean and smart. There must be no fading or tears;
 - i) Knee length skirts or shorts may be acceptable, but students should seek advice from their mentor as in some circumstances this dress may be offensive to the client group;

4. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH UNIFORM AND DRESS POLICY

If students are considered inappropriately dressed they will be given a verbal warning and will be sent off duty. This will be reported as an absence until the student returns dressed appropriately. The time associated with these absences will need to be made up. Following this first verbal warning any second incident of breach in following the Uniform Policy will be considered unprofessional conduct and as a result the student will normally face disciplinary action.