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

Policy: To prescribe the required standard of appearance that students of pre-registration Nursing and Midwifery programmes at City University 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 who are undertaking pre-registration nursing or midwifery studies.

Developed by: Practice Advisory Board (PAB)

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines the minimum standards that must be adhered to in all practice areas. You 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 your programme of study. Immediately on completion or discontinuation from your programme of studies you must ensure that your uniforms are destroyed to prevent your misuse.

2.2 Replacement Uniforms
You will be responsible for paying for any replacement uniforms

2.3 Laundering of Uniforms
You are required to launder your 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 will be provided your 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 your placement, you must wear your own clothes (Mufti) and to change into your uniform at your placement site. Wearing uniform outside the placement site or skills laboratories places you at risk and could cause cross 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 you 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. You have the responsibility to ensure they are knowledgeable about these policies from your first day on the placement. You must wear and discard protective clothing, safely and in a timely manner.

2.7 Plastic aprons and gloves
You 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 you 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. False nails or extensions are not permitted.

2.11 Hair
There is a possibility of hair carrying bacterial or parasitic infection. To promote the health and safety of you 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 beards and moustaches which are kept clean and neatly trimmed.

2.12 Footwear
Shoes that provide good support to the foot and loco-motor system will contribute to protecting you 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 - Velcro fastened shoes must have three straps;
• Securely fitted and covers the whole of the foot and heel;
• Non slip soles;
• Low heeled – (no greater than 2.5cms)
• Clean;
• In a good state of repair;

The wearing of trainers or open sandals/shoes is potentially dangerous to you as they do not provide sufficient protection to the foot and back and may NOT be worn whilst wearing uniform. No boots or any footwear that covers the ankle should be worn.

2.13 Socks, stockings and tights
You will normally always wear suitable hosiery. Socks must be:

• Plain
• Black

Stockings and tights must be:

• Plain
• Black 15 -30 denier

In extremely hot weather you may seek the permission of your placement manager as to whether you 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** – only ONE small plain metal 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** – you are discouraged from being tattooed in areas of your 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
Your name and designation must always be visible as a matter of security and reassurance to patients. Whilst on placement experience you must wear your university identity card at all times, and will be refused admission to the placement area if you are unable to produce it on request. This will be considered an absence from duty.
Students must wear epaulettes (if supplied with your uniform) at all times whilst wearing your 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 - You 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 your cultural or religious needs will meet standards that reflect health and safety legislation and requirements. Any such adaptations will meet the following standards:

- **Headdress** – Needs to be plain white, black or navy with no adornment and must be secured safely and tucked into collar.
- **Trousers** – Trousers may be worn under a dress and will be the standard student uniform trousers.
- **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. Sleeve extensions are available where necessary and should only be worn when not directly providing patient care. Lower arms must be uncovered during periods of direct patient care.

2. NON-UNIFORM DRESS POLICY

When you are on placement you are ambassadors of City University London and the School of Health Sciences. In practice areas such as community areas and mental health, you are working in a context where they are more vulnerable. Prior to commencing your placement you must establish the dress code requirement for your placement. Depending upon the policies of the placement provider, you may wear your own clothes in preference to wearing your uniform. When doing so they must observe the following:

- You are expected to wear clothes that are clean, conventionally smart and informal. At no times should you wear clothes that are tightly fitting, revealing/transparent or low necked as this can cause offence to some clients and could place you at risk.
- Hair should be clean, tidy and tied off the face; it should be free of adornment other than a simple hair band or ring;
- Only a plain wedding ring may be worn
- Neckties may be clip-on only, to prevent strangulation by for example confused patients (scarves are prohibited for this reason)
- Shoes should be comfortable, support the feet and loco-motor system and enable you to walk easily and undertake the required duties safely;
- The following items may be worn at the discretion of the Practice Experience Facilitator/Manager:
  - Jeans cannot be worn in a clinical setting but can be worn if clean and smart in the community and mental health setting by agreement. Jeans if worn must not be faded, ripped and should cover your under garments;
Knee length skirts or shorts may be acceptable, but you should seek advice from your mentor as in some circumstances this dress may be offensive to the client group;

4. NON-COMPLIANCE WITH UNIFORM AND DRESS POLICY

If you 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 you return 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 you will normally face disciplinary action.

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