



Students' Responsibilities & Rights

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1. Students' Responsibilities and Rights

This guidance describes the various mechanisms designed to safeguard your rights and to outline your responsibilities in relation to patient care, confidentiality and relationships with clients and staff. All students have the right to be treated in accordance with applicable legislation and in accordance with the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives.

2. Health and Safety

All students have the right to be placed in a safe learning environment in accordance with Health and Safety requirements. In the event of you having concerns regarding your safety you should immediately discuss your concerns with your Placement Mentor/Sign Off Mentor or placement manager, the Placement Experience Facilitator/Manager (PEF/PEM), Educator or the Clinical Practice Facilitator (CPF) in Midwifery. At the same time you must inform the Link Lecturer for that specific placement area.

In the event of you being involved in an incident or sustaining an injury whilst on placement, you must immediately report the incident to the Placement Manager (person in charge of the placement at the time of the incident). You will follow the Trust/Placement procedure in such an event. The Trust/Placement must ensure that a copy of the incident report is sent to the Programme Officer, Undergraduate Studies, School of Health Sciences, City University, London who will inform your Programme Director.

3. Confidentiality

Confidentiality is a requirement of all health care practitioners and you are expected to observe this requirement at all times. The Nursing and Midwifery Council, Code of Professional Conduct provides some guidelines (see www.nmc-uk.org for more information). You need to be clear as to what information should be given to whom e.g. what information should be given to other professionals, patients/clients and relatives.

- i) If you have any concerns about confidentiality you should seek advice from your mentor/sign off mentor or link lecturer.
- ii) You should never disclose the identity of patients/clients to unauthorised people outside of the placement area or the School of Health Sciences.
- iii) If you have concerns about the care delivery or care management in a practice setting you should discuss your concerns with your placement mentor/sign off mentor, placement manager or link lecturer immediately.
- iv) If after consultation you wish to make a formal complaint you must seek advice and support from your Programme Director. (See guidance relating to students – 'Raising Concerns: Reporting Unprofessional & Unsafe Practice when in Placements').
- v) If you are writing about a patient in any of your assignments you must make sure that both the identity of the patient/client and or the placement is made anonymous to maintain confidentiality of staff, patients/clients and placement areas.
- vi) You may wish to use documentation from your placement area for assignments. If you wish to use documents such as care plans, policies and procedures you must always obtain the permission from the relevant placement manager. Your placement manager must countersign a written record of this permission and you must keep the record. In the case of patient care plans, you must always gain permission directly from the patient or from their legal guardian. For further guidance see Nursing and Midwifery Council: An NMC guide for students of Nursing and Midwifery (www.nmc-uk.org).
- vii) You must never remove any form of documentation from the practice placement area and you may only photocopy with permission from the clinical manager of the practice setting.
- viii) In the interests of your own protection you should carefully consider the nature of personal information you disclose to patients/clients i.e. where you live, who you live with etc.

4. Escorting and Accompanying Patients and to 'Special' Patients

In the interests of your own education and your safety and the safety of your patient/client, as a student, you may only escort, accompany a patient as part of a planned educational experience and with the direct supervision of a qualified member of staff. A student cannot 'Special' a patient. To special a patient is defined as intensive observation or care of a patient using one member of staff.

4.1 Accompanying Patients for Social or Educational Purposes

You may accompany patients under the following circumstances: i) when you have been assessed to be capable of doing so ii) when you feel confident in terms of both your own ability and the patient's mental/

physical state and with the permission of the Placement Manager iii) where you know the patient/client well and you feel confident to accompany him/her iv) you must not accompany the patient outside the hospital grounds v) in residential homes, if the nature of the placement and patient group means that you accompany residents in the community you should only do this when there is a qualified member of staff present. vi) Day trips and outings occur in some placement areas. You may join these if you feel the experience would be helpful to your learning and you have the direct guidance of your mentor/sign off mentor or another qualified member of staff. vii) You may only accompany or escort a patient/s as an additional member of the team to the normal complement of staff. At no time should you be considered as part of the staffing numbers and at no time should you be left in a position of responsibility for these patients.

5. Responsibility for Patients

At no time must students be left alone with patients in a placement area without supervision.

i) An accountable member of staff who is both qualified and has managerial responsibility must always be present in the placement setting.

ii) Students must never be asked to be responsible in those situations where there is no staff member present and they cannot be held accountable should a problem arise.

iii) You must never be asked to undertake first level observations i.e. in mental health settings. This is not appropriate in terms of risk accountability (to staff or to patients), or your learning. However, you may find it helpful to accompany a qualified member of staff carrying out these duties.

iv) You are not allowed to be directly involved in Control and Restraint (C&R) activity.

6. Administration of Medicines

i) You must always follow guidance and policies provided by the professional statutory body (NMC) and the local NHS Trust/organisation on the administration of medicines.

ii) You must never check or administer medicines on your own or without supervision of a Registered Nurse, Midwife or Health Visitor.

iii) IV Medications

You may assist in the preparation of intravenous (IV) medications under the direct supervision of a Registered Nurse (RN/RM) but **must not administer IV medications** (this includes normal saline flush, changing or restarting IV pumps, syringe drivers or infusions containing drugs) **neither can you act as the second checking nurse where two registered Nurses (RN/RM) are required to sign the drugs sheet.**

7. Student Relationships with Patients and Healthcare Staff

You have a responsibility to work collaboratively and in a professional manner with your practice placement provider and its employees, in accordance with local policies and procedures (including the School of Health Sciences Student Learning Agreement and the Nursing and Midwifery Council Code).

7a. Your Relationship with Patients

The relationship between you and patients although friendly must always remain professional.

- i) You should never arrange to meet patients socially, either whilst still in placement or whilst the patient is receiving health care.
- ii) Sometimes patients may wish to express their appreciation of your work by leaving a gift for you. If a patient wishes to give you a gift you must always act in accordance of with the Nursing and Midwifery Council Guidelines, NMC Code: Professional standards of practice and behaviour for nurses and midwives and the policies of the placement provider.
- iii. You should never conduct any form of sexual relationship with patients.
- iv. Sometimes patients, clients and visitors may appear to behave inappropriately through e.g.
 - verbal comments/abuse
 - sexual harassment
 - lack of inhibitions
 - physical aggression.

All placement providers have a policy of zero tolerance towards this kind of behaviour and it must be immediately reported to the placement mentor/sign off mentor or the practitioner in charge.

v) If you are personally attacked either verbally or physically the policy of your placement provider must be followed.

vi) You must complete an incident form immediately and send a copy to your Programme Director or Personal Tutor for action.

vii) The person in charge of your placement or your Mentor/Sign Off Mentor will be available to offer you support and direct you to an appropriate centre including counselling at the Student Services Department of the University

viii) You may find it helpful to discuss your experience with the practice experience facilitator/manager/clinical practice facilitator (CPF), or your placement Link Lecturer and your Personal Tutor.

ix) In situations where it is thought that you may be at risk, the placement staff or Link Lecturer will discuss this with you and will negotiate an alternative placement experience for you with the Programme Director.

7b. Students Whose Conduct is Unprofessional

x) Where the practice mentor/clinical team believe that your conduct is inappropriate, your placement mentor/sign off mentor will discuss this with you. Your mentor/sign off mentor may want to complete a 'Cause for Concern' form which will be sent to your Programme Director. This could lead to a 'Fitness to Practice' (FtP) hearing and disciplinary action may be taken including being discontinued from the programme.

xi) Your placement mentor may wish to discuss your conduct with your Programme Director or Personal Tutor and will notify the Link Lecturer or your Personal Tutor of their concerns.

xii) If necessary the Link Lecturer will organise a meeting including all the relevant people to address the issue.

xiii) If your conduct has breached the 'Student Learning Agreement' or the NMC Code, you will fail your placement and you will be removed from the placement. Your conduct will be reviewed by members of a FtP panel who will consider your future and appropriateness for future registration with the NMC.

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