Professionalism

Policy and Guidance

for

Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH)

Students

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1. Introduction and background

The way any current (or potential) health or social care professional should act and behave is governed by the professional standards set out by the various relevant regulatory professional bodies such as; Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC), General Medical Council (GMC), General Dental Council (GDC), General Pharmaceutical Council (GPhC), Health Care Professions Council (HCPC), Social Work England (SWE), General Optical Council (GOC) and the British Psychological Society (BPS), who set standards on what is appropriate or inappropriate behaviour. These in turn define the standards for health and social care education in the UK in settings in which a student is interacting with patients, clients, or service users.

It is vital that all learners studying on courses within The University of Manchester (UoM) Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health (FBMH) serve the best interests of the public and that the public have trust in them. Understanding the significance of professionalism and acting professionally is an essential component of being both a health and social care student and professional of the future. Acting professionally will help you to deliver high quality person-centred care of which you can be proud.

However, there is evidence to suggest that those preparing for a professional career, do not always have a good understanding of the concept of professionalism. This is perhaps due to the highly contextual nature of what we view professionalism to be within any given situation or setting (HCPC, 2011).

The aim of this document is to provide you with information and guidance that should assist you to know what you should do, how you should behave and identify the context in which that professional knowledge and behaviour should be applied.

2. Professional conduct

2.1 What does being professional mean and why is this relevant to you?

Keeping professionalism at the heart of your practice is essential to ensure the trust of individuals and the wider society. Professionalism is often defined as a set of values and behaviours that influence what you do and how you do it, and relates specifically to awareness, attitude, and behaviours. Irrespective of the specific profession to which you will or do belong, behaving in a professional way means demonstrating the following values:

- honesty and integrity (trustworthiness)
- a sense of decency
- a sense of duty
- transparency.

This concept of professionalism seeks to underpin the trust that the public have in all professionals.

As a student within the UoM (FBMH) it is highly likely that you will be aligned to (or already registered with) a professional regulatory body. Therefore, it is essential that you are able to develop a good understanding of what professionalism entails in order to ensure you are able to apply sufficient professional judgement, attitude and appropriate behaviour within a variety of contexts. You should be aware that professional regulators expect professional behaviour to be demonstrated from the beginning of your studies.

Throughout your studies here, you should acquire the necessary knowledge and understanding about what is considered acceptable professional behaviour (for example, related knowledge, attitude, and skills) to help you to develop your professional identity. You will be required to apply this knowledge and understanding in and around campus whilst at university, whilst on clinical placement and of course in your future professional careers. You must also be mindful of upholding the public trust beyond these environments including within various social settings.

Having an early and clear understanding of what professionalism entails and what may be considered as 'poor professional practice' can empower you to identify unprofessional behaviour and seek to address this before it becomes a cause for concern.

3. What is a Professional Code?

3.1 Professional Codes set out the standards for conduct and practice that health and social care professionals (and students) must uphold.

 3.1.1 British Psychological Society guidance can be found here

 3.1.2 General Dental Council guidance can be found here

 3.1.3 General Medical Council guidance can be found at www.GMC-UK.org

 3.1.4 General Optical Council (GOC) Guidance can be found here

 3.1.5 General Pharmaceutical Council guidance can be found here

 3.1.6 Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC) guidance can be found here

 3.1.7 Nursing and Midwifery Council guidance can be found here

 3.1.8 Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP) can be found here

 3.1.9 Social Work England guidance can be found here

It is your responsibility to seek out and comply with any relevant placement provider or professional standards guidance.

4. What is considered to be poor professional behaviour?

The following behaviours are examples of poor professional behaviour, likely to trigger professionalism concerns (GMC, 2016; GDC, 2020; GPhC, 2021; NMC, 2021; HCPC, 2021; SWE, 2021):

- lack of commitment (for example, uncommitted to work or engagement with training, programme of study or placement);
- lack of competence;
- neglect of administrative tasks;
- poor time management;
- non-attendance;
- poor communication skills;
- providing false or misleading information;
- dishonesty (for example, *lying, cheating or plagiarising in assessments)
- forgery (for example, signing peers into taught sessions from which they are absent);
- failure to accept and/or follow educational advice;
- unwillingness to learn from feedback given by others;
- being rude to patients, colleagues or others;
- unwillingness to learn from constructive feedback given by others;
- being disruptive in teaching sessions or other learning environments;
- challenging behaviour towards others or not accepting criticism;
- failing to answer or respond to communications;
- failing to demonstrate good health care practice;
- misuse of social media, such as criticising placement providers, sharing (without permission) photographs taken in placement areas, bullying others, or sharing abusive or offensive materials;
- breaching patient, colleague, or organisational confidentiality.

*NB academic malpractice is a specific type of misconduct which is subject to University disciplinary processes. For more information see:
http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/academic/academic-malpractice/

5. Dress codes

5.1 Why are dress codes important?

There are general dress code expectations for learners undertaking programmes leading to a professional qualification. In any situation where you interact with patients, clients, or staff, as a student at UoM (for example, face-to-face situations, telephone consultations or communication via electronic devices) you are representing the University and should take care to ensure that your attire projects a professional image and inspires confidence.

It has been shown that non-verbal communication is just as important as verbal communication, so how you appear to your patients, clients, service users, relatives or colleagues may communicate just as much as what is said or written. Extremes of dress can compromise communication channels with patients and healthcare colleagues, regardless of either party's gender, or cultural, or ethnic background.

Subject to the overriding requirements of safety and public confidence, you should feel comfortable in your work wear. However, styles of dress or articles of clothing that introduce barriers to communication, or that compromise, or could potentially compromise hygiene must be avoided.

The following additional guidance applies to all simulated clinical environments, laboratories and clinical placement areas since we consider this is one way to uphold professional and public confidence whilst also recognising and respecting inclusivity, equality and diversity. Individual Schools within the Faculty may also produce further guidance relating to specific programmes and settings.

The infection prevention and uniform/dress code policies of our relevant partner organisations and placement providers have to be strictly adhered to whilst attending your placement or wearing your professional uniform.

5.2 Infection prevention

Healthcare often involves delivering care to vulnerable individuals in an environment where infection prevention is required to prevent transmission of disease. Therefore,

you need to be aware of and comply with any infection prevention measures required.

5.3 Dress code requirements

5.3.1 Uniforms and provided work wear

If a uniform or other work wear is provided, then you must wear it. If you are working in a laboratory or in a clinical setting, there may be certain dress code and Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) requirements (for example, uniform, lab coats, protective goggles). Please follow any instructions provided for the specific session or placement you are attending. You should put on a clean uniform or work wear at the start of every shift and ensure it is washed appropriately.

5.3.2. Washing uniforms and work wear

Scientific observations and tests, literature reviews and expert opinion suggest that there is little effective difference between domestic and commercial laundering in terms of removing micro-organisms from uniforms and work wear (NHS England, 2020). Therefore, washing with detergents at 30ºC will remove most Gram-positive microorganisms, including methicillin-resistant Staphylococcus aureus (MRSA). A ten-minute wash at 60ºC is considered sufficient to remove almost all contaminating microorganisms

5.3.3 Other clothes

If uniform is not provided, you should not wear revealing clothing (for example exposing the midriff or underwear) or clothing that is at risk of becoming revealing when in certain positions such as bending over. Clothing should be clean, well maintained and practical. Very long, and/or floaty/dangling clothing should also be avoided for hygiene and safety issues. Items such as neck ties should be avoided due to infection control risk and safety risks to yourself of someone else potentially grabbing it. Clothes with offensive slogans, unprofessional images or logos are not considered acceptable in any setting.

5.3.4 Identification badges and lanyards

Where applicable, it is important that patients, relatives and colleagues can identify who you are therefore identification badges are important. However, you

must ensure that lanyards do not come in to contact with patients if they are allowed within an organisation.

5.3.5 Hair/facial hair

Hair should be fastened back or tied up above the collar so that it does not interfere with or add risk to a clinical interaction. Beards and moustaches should be neat and tidy and not come into contact with patients or clients.

5.3.6 Footwear

Well fitted, closed around and over the foot shoes or trainers which are non-porous, clean, and cleanable and in a good state of repair should be worn. Heels that would impede you getting to and assisting in an emergency should not be worn. A soft non-slip soled shoe will be safer and cause less disturbance whilst on placement.

5.3.7 Jewellery

Jewellery if worn, should be discreet. Stud piercing(s) in the nose and ears are acceptable but large jewellery can detract from effective communication or be considered an injury or infection control risk. In clinical or laboratory settings, all jewellery should be removed including wristwatches (exceptions are small studs, a single ring that is a smooth, plain metallic band and religious/cultural items as outlined below). Earrings are restricted to one pair of plain stud earrings (with no stones). If you have ear stretching or gauging (where someone may have a larger than average hole in the ear lobe), the tunnel or plug if worn must be as close to natural skin tone for the individual and will count as the equivalent of one pair of plain earrings. Recognised medi-alerts may be permitted providing staff have discussed this with their supervisor and occupational health.

5.3.8 Bare below the elbow policy

When attending laboratory, simulated clinical sessions or clinical placements you will be required in almost all circumstances to be bare below the elbow for handwashing and when providing direct care to patients and clients. Where, for religious reasons, you may wish to cover your forearms or wear a bracelet when not engaged in patient care, you will need to ensure that sleeves or bracelets can be pushed up the arm and secured in place for hand washing and direct

patient care activity. Any full/three-quarter length sleeves and/or ties etc must not be loose or dangling; they must be able to be rolled-up or pulled back and kept securely in place during hand-washing and direct patient care activity.

5.3.9 Tattoos

Visible tattoos should not be offensive or derogatory to patients, visitors, colleagues or members of staff. Where they are deemed to be offensive (for example, containing explicit, discriminatory, religious, sexual, political or football related images or slogans) they should be appropriately covered using a covering considered suitable and appropriate to the area of work. Local departmental managers can make a judgement as to what is acceptable. New tattoos should be covered until they are healed so you should always consider the bare below the elbow requirement when planning a new tattoo.

5.3.10 Fingernails

Nails should be kept short (for example, should not extend beyond the fingertip) to avoid scratching others, clean and free from nail varnish and artificial nails.

5.3.11 Strong odours

Strong odours including natural body odour, strong perfume/aftershave should be avoided.

5.4 Cultural and religious considerations

The wearing of items of cultural and religious significance may be permitted, provided the health, safety and security of others is not compromised. However, you must always adhere to placement provider policies when attending placement.

5.4.1 Headwear

Headwear (for example, turbans, kippots, Christian or niqab veils and headscarves) should be permitted on religious grounds. However, if religious headwear is worn, it should be secured in place so that it does not dangle. If you choose to wear a face covering, you may be expected to remove this whilst in clinical or educational environments. When required for identity or communication purposes (for example, related to security, assessment or enhanced communication requirements), the removal of the veil or face covering

can be requested in private. Following the removal of headwear, you should be given the opportunity to use a mirror, and to be allowed privacy and time to put it back on.

5.4.2 Disposable over-sleeves

Disposable over-sleeves may be made available to students who are required (due to their religious beliefs or other specific reasons) to cover their forearms. Disposable over-sleeves should be worn in the same way as disposable gloves (worn in the patient area and immediately disposed of after each patient interaction). The arm sleeves are elasticated at the elbow and wrist and are put on and discarded (donned and doffed) in exactly the same way as disposable gloves. Strict procedures for washing hands and wrists must still be observed. Please check with relevant placement provider in advance.

5.5 Wearing of work wear out of work

It is not good practice to remain in work wear on leaving clinical placements. Please refrain from going to the shops and engaging in other activities out of work or the wearing work wear in social settings, for example at parties or at the pub. Additionally, you should not appear in work wear on social media unless in official campaigns.

Should you have any concerns about any aspect of the dress code, you are advised to speak to your academic or clinical adviser/supervisor. If you have a disability which could impact upon your own ability to meet professional dress code standards you can also contact the following for further advice:

- University Disability Advisory Support (http://www.dso.manchester.ac.uk/contact-and-see-us/);
- Occupational Health services (http://www.occhealth.manchester.ac.uk/).

6. Use of social media

This section provides information about the benefits and potential dangers of social networking, suggesting ways in which your own personal and professional interests, and those of others, can be protected while in the online environment.

6.1 What do we mean by social media?

The term social media refers to computer-based technology and online platforms that encourage interaction and exchange of user-generated content; allowing people to share information, posts, opinions, knowledge and interests through the building of virtual networks and communities. Social media outlets differ from traditional media such as print, magazines and newspapers, TV and radio broadcasting in a variety of ways, including quality, reach, frequency, usability, usability, immediacy, and permanence.

6.2 Using social media safely and effectively

The use of social media will no doubt play a vital part of your time at UoM. Social networking is a popular online activity; millions of people of all ages and backgrounds use social networking sites every day.

If used effectively, the way you conduct yourself online can enhance your learning experiences and expand your professional networks and collaboration opportunities, potentially making you more employable when you graduate. Online social networking sites, such as Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, LinkedIn, TikTok, YouTube, Wikipedia, Instagram and Snapchat can be used to:

- keep in touch with friends, both in words and through sharing music, video and other types of files;
- forge new relationships based on common interests;
- make your views and opinions known by publicly commenting in blogs, posting in discussion forums blogs or instant messaging on virtually any subject.

There is also growing evidence that social media can be used effectively for educational and professional benefit, for example through sharing of information about the latest developments in treatments and practice, problem-solving, encouraging participation and community building (Irvine-Bell et al, 2020).

We want to ensure that all of our students can use this outlet, while also maintaining the standards set by relevant professional bodies and UoM. If you wish to engage with the faculty and our partners via social media, then you can find the relevant links here.

On the other hand, if you use social media poorly, it could have a negative impact on your own wellbeing. Some people often interact with social networking sites over long periods of time and occasionally, excessive activity of this nature may have detrimental effects on your work or study. Furthermore, you could damage your reputation and potentially harm others or the reputation of UoM as well as leaving yourself open to formal disciplinary and even legal proceedings. Therefore, it is important that you are aware of these risks and adhere to this guidance both on and off the University campus at all times. The aim of this guidance is not intended to limit freedom of speech within the law or academic freedom, but it is important to remember that online communications are often instantaneous and far-reaching.

Anyone can visit social networking sites and gain access to the information that is uploaded to them. These people include:
- your intended audience, such as your friends, colleagues and others, to share information and to keep in touch;
- potential employers, who are, increasingly using social networking sites to gather information about people who have applied for positions within their organisations;
- criminals, including sexual predators who could use information about you to compromise your safety or wellbeing, and fraudsters, who could steal information about you and impersonate you online, to your potential cost;
- the police, as part of investigations into illegal activities;
- professional healthcare bodies such as the General Dental Council, General Medical Council, General Pharmaceutical Council, General Social Care Council, Health Professions Council, and Nursing & Midwifery Council, who may access information directly or be asked to investigate material referred on to them by other people;
- patients, clients and other service users, who may be looking for healthcare information in general, or for your views and comments in particular. Your professional relationship with your patients, and your career, could be compromised at any time through one indiscriminate posting of details about patients or inappropriate information about yourself.

Social networking activities can promote a sense of anonymity because you do not always see, hear or know the person with whom you are communicating. Comments

posted, liked or re-tweeted online can also be misunderstood. Furthermore, you cannot expect that your posts will stay private (even when posted in closed groups) and may remain permanent. Once something is published online it is difficult to remove, delete or control how widely used your publication or material will be shared through other forms of social media (even without your knowledge or consent) and may have serious unexpected and long-term consequences.

As someone registered on a programme within FBMH at UoM, the behaviour expected from you applies both in and out of professional settings and this includes your activity online. Violations on social media are viewed as equal to anything published in print or said in person. In this respect, netiquette plays an important role. Netiquette is a term used to define the correct or acceptable way of using the internet and relates to a code of good, lawful behaviour which seeks to maintain a culture of mutual respect and consideration. This features in aspects such as email, social media platforms, online chat, web forums, website comments and other types of online communication. In summary, good netiquette benefits both you and others using online platforms and social media.

6.2.1 Communicating appropriately

Consider the language and terminology that you use whenever you are online and make sure that it is appropriate. It is important to remember that comments may both be taken out of context, or your post may be viewed by more people than anticipated. Do not post, like or endorse, re-post or retweet material or messages that could be considered offensive, defamatory or derogatory or cause anyone to feel harassed, bullied or discriminated against.

Furthermore, giving constructive feedback is an essential skill that will required during both your academic journey, and future employment. During your time at UoM providing feedback can take many forms. This might include unit evaluations, online feedback platforms, consultative committees, 360-degree evaluations, or face to face feedback to peers.

You will need to ensure that any feedback is delivered in a professional, courteous, and respectful manner. It is important that feedback is not personal

and adheres to our dignity policies. We have a zero-tolerance approach to abuse.

6.2.2 Reasonable precautions

You must take reasonable precautions to ensure that the information you upload cannot be used in a way which could place yourself or others, at a disadvantage (either personally or professionally) now or at any time in the future. It is imperative that if you post anything about somebody else, including any images of them, it is done with their knowledge and consent. It might seem inoffensive to post images of friends, relatives, staff or other colleagues, but it might easily cause offence that you had not intended or could not have foreseen. If you feel that a post, a picture, or a video that you are about to upload might have repercussions for you later or might not be in good taste, for example, it relates to sexual activity or inappropriate behaviour, or it expresses inappropriate views, then simply do not post it. Once it is online it is there for good. Make sure you are thinking clearly before you go online. If for any reason, for example, the effects of medication, stress or inebriation your judgement might temporarily be impaired, you may be tempted to post something that you otherwise would not. Also, try to make sure that the people to whom you give access to your information use it sensibly, and also that they themselves do not upload potentially incriminating material about you, which can be just as damaging.

6.2.3 Demonstrating professional integrity

Ensure that the public can maintain their trust in healthcare professionals by thinking before you post, like/endorse or re-tweet anything on social media. Even a personal account with private settings may be viewed by colleagues, patients and your future employer. Assume that every post you make can be viewed by everyone. Furthermore, the internet environment is not a suitable place to voice a concern or complaint related to your studies. In this instance you should follow the appropriate reporting processes within your School, FBMH or UoM. If you wouldn't walk down the street wearing a t-shirt stating what you've posted on social media, you probably shouldn't post it!

6.2.4 Respecting privacy and confidentiality

You must ensure that you respect all those you come in contact with, taking care not to share personal or confidential information about yourself or others, including your peer learners and University Staff or photos of healthcare areas, without prior consent. Become familiar with UoM [Data Protection Policy](#) and UK Data Protection law outlined in the [Data Protection Act 2018](#). Remember to maintain appropriate boundaries and be careful not to blur personal and professional boundaries including when issuing advice or accepting contact online.

6.2.5 Intellectual property

Always check with your academic advisor/supervisor and/or programme team if you need permission to reproduce, publish or share information including photographs, lecture notes, presentations, slides or your academic work. Remember to check the terms and conditions of the social media platform you are using to ensure sure you are clear how your information is going to be used once uploaded.

6.2.6 Your digital footprint

Even stringent privacy settings are subject to update and change, so it is important to remember posts may stay in the public domain for longer and spread more widely than anticipated. Do everything that you can to limit access to your posts to those for whom they are intended. Change security settings if possible, to restrict unwanted access. Your use of social media and browser trends can also be tracked by the different platforms, which could be used too in certain circumstances such as judicial or police matters. Understanding your digital footprint, meaning traceable digital activities that are left whenever you use networked technologies (such as a smartphone, computer or tablet), including your communications, personal and financial information and location is vital. It is a term used to describe the entirety of information that you post on digital services, including shopping networks, photos and status updates and can have a potential impact on your personal and professional reputation. Criminals can also use this publicly available information to use and steal your identity or use it to make phishing messages appear more convincing. Therefore, you should always:

- familiarise yourself with the platform and rules of engagement before joining;
- consider carefully who has access to the online information (for example, what is private and what is openly available? Who is your audience?) before you post online yourself or like or endorse and re-tweet the posts of others;
- consider what information is necessary and what detail is unnecessary but could be useful for criminals;
- maintain an idea about what your friends, colleagues or other contacts say about you online;
- consider the regularity of your activities, for example, how often are you sharing on social media? How is this affecting your wellbeing?

6.2.7 Acting responsibly on social media

Remember that the professional behaviour expected from you at UoM applies both online and offline and violations on social media or online environments are equal to anything published in print or said in person. Whilst social media is an excellent platform for you to network, communicate and share ideas with others, maintaining a respectful approach when using it is vital. As a student at UoM, it is important for you to recognise that you are personally responsible for what you publish. You have agreed to abide by our laws and act in accordance with our policies, which include treating all staff, fellow students and associated education providers with mutual dignity and respect. In addition, as you are undertaking a programme that leads to professional registration, the standards of behaviour set by your designated professional body expect you to uphold the reputation of that chosen profession. Any breach of these standards could negatively impact on your own future career progression. Therefore, you should avoid joining any groups that could be seen as discriminatory or judgemental in nature.

6.2.8 Maintain your cyber security

Cyber Aware is the UK Government's advice on how to stay secure online and improve your online security. It is important to protect your devices and accounts from cyber-attack on your IT devices, social media, bank accounts, financial details etc. Hackers often target their intended victims using email and website scams, malware – software that can damage your device or let a hacker in. If hackers get into your device or accounts, they could access your personal

information or your finances. Further Government information from the UK National Cyber Security Centre can be found here.

Our recommendations include:

- creating strong passwords using three random words;
- using a strong and separate password for your email;
- saving your passwords in your browser (only on private computers);
- turning on two-factor authentication (2FA);
- updating your devices;
- backing up your data;
- avoid posting personal information such as phone numbers or personal addresses, of you or anybody else, since these may fall into the hands of criminals. Ensure that you protect your personal information and that of others that could be misused (e.g., home address, telephone number, date of birth);
- click links with caution**.** Social media accounts are regularly hacked. Look out for language or content that does not sound like something your friend would post;
- be careful about what you share. Do not reveal sensitive personal information, for example, your home address, financial information, phone number. The more you post the easier it is to have your identity stolen. Check your online privacy settings using the UK Safer Internet Centre social media checklist;
- protect your computer by installing antivirus software to safeguard. Also ensure that your browser, operating system, and software are kept up to date;
- remember to log off when you are finished.

6.2.9 Fraud, copyright and libel issues.

What you share online can cause issues with copyright and fraud. These difficulties are more common when photographs of personal information, such as assignment or student ID are shared with third parties. Please make sure your personal details are not included and check the copyright guidance on the use of any materials before you use or reproduce them. On social platforms, including YouTube, please also remember that you must seek prior written permission from your programme director before publishing material that uses UoM logo and

branding. This includes imagery where students are shown wearing UoM issued uniforms (such as scrubs or I.D badges). To do so without this advance permission is in breach of the University's legal rights and, in addition to being unlawful, could also result in the potentially false impression of advocacy and endorsement of the content by the University.

Whilst social media has many benefits, it is an unregulated space where online harassment and abuse is widespread. To ensure you maintain a positive relationship with social media, it is best to regulate your use of it. Do not say or write anything that could have a negative impact on the reputation of anyone or any company. Any statement which could have a negative impact on a person (or business) reputation could lead to accusations of libel/defamation and lawsuits.

6.3 Professional body guidance for the use of social media

All regulatory bodies provide specific social media guidance and highlight the potential consequences of social networking activity for healthcare students. If your course leads to professional accreditation, make sure you are aware of the relevant standards for your programme of study and abide by these.

6.3.1 For those who are studying **Medicine:**

https://www.gmc-uk.org/ethical-guidance/ethical-guidance-for-doctors/doctors-use-of-social-media

6.3.2 For those who are studying **Dentistry:**

https://www.gdc-uk.org/docs/default-source/guidance-documents/guidance-on-using-social-media

6.3.3 For those who are studying **Nursing**:

https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/guidance/social-media-guidance/

6.3.4 For those who are studying **Pharmacy:**

https://www.pharmacyregulation.org/sites/default/files/document/demonstrating-professionalism-online-february-2020.pdf

6.3.5 For those who are studying **Social Work**:

https://www.basw.co.uk/system/files/resources/Social%20Media%20Policy.pdf

6.3.6 For those who are regulated by the **Health & Care Professions Council (HCPC)**

https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/meeting-our-standards/

6.3.7 For those who are regulated by the **British Psychological Society (BPS)**:

https://www.bps.org.uk/guideline/supplementary-guidance-use-social-media

6.3.8 For those who are studying **Optometry:**

https://www.college-optometrists.org/clinical-guidance/guidance/communication,-partnership-and-teamwork/social-media-and-online-behaviour

6.3.9 For those regulated by the **Registration Council for Clinical Physiologists (RCCP):**

https://rccp.co.uk/media/qyaf2r2c/rccp_standards-of-conduct-performance-and-ethics-1.pdf

6.3.10 For those regulated by the Academy for Healthcare Science (AHCS):

https://www.ahcs.ac.uk/registration-guidance/dsocial-media-guidance-for-registrants/

6.4 University of Manchester IT regulations and Acceptable use Policy

6.4.1. You can read more about our University guidance on social media here:
http://www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/non-academic/guidance-on-social-media-for-students/

6.4.2. Students accessing social media using the University of Manchester's IT facilities must also abide by IT Regulations and Acceptable Use Policy
Acceptable use of IT Facilities and Services

6.5 NHS Trust and partner organisation policies

Please also be aware that each of our NHS Trust or Partner Organisations may have their own specific guidance in relation to using social media – so take note of this important information and ensure that you abide by local policy and guidance during your clinical placements.

Should you have any concerns about any aspect of the social media guidance provided above you are advised to speak to your academic adviser/supervisor.

7. Misuse of non-prescription drugs and/or alcohol

7.1 Why would the use of non-prescriptions drugs or alcohol be a concern?

The misuse of alcohol and/or non–prescription drugs is inconsistent with the high standards of personal behaviour that society and the various professional bodies expect from health and social care practitioners.

The Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health believes that the safety of patients and other service users is of paramount importance, and therefore this policy sets out clear standards of behaviour for all those registered on programmes in the constituent Schools within the Faculty. The Faculty also has a duty of care to those staff, students, patients and members of the public and need to take timely and appropriate action to safeguard their wellbeing.

It is recognised that the misuse of alcohol and/or non-prescription drugs can be a medical condition and should be treated as such. However, the misuse of alcohol and other substances can also damage your health, and academic and/or clinical performance, together with creating potential risks to the health and safety of staff, other students, patients and members of the public. Therefore, this policy is aimed at ensuring that all students involved in alcohol or non-prescription drug/medicine misuse are offered specialist help in overcoming their condition, but also at ensuring that Schools have procedures in place to determine whether the student is fit to proceed on their programme of study, or to qualification, and potentially to registration.

7.2 Definition of misuse

Alcohol misuse is a regular excessive consumption and/or dependence on alcohol. It may cause an individual to experience social, psychological, physical or legal problems and may affect a student's work, whether on placement or during periods of study.

Drug/medicine misuse is defined as the use of a substance for a purpose not consistent with legal or medical guidelines. This would include the taking of prescribed and non-prescribed drugs in a manner not in accordance with the prescription guidance given by either a qualified practitioner or the manufacturer.

7.3 Prevention

Schools within FBMH will seek to prevent the development of alcohol and drug/medicine related problems through the promotion of substance misuse awareness for students. In many cases, this will be achieved by means of core sessions within the curriculum.

7.4 Performance

7.4.1 Academic settings

Whilst alcohol or drug/medicine abuse does not excuse poor academic or professional performance, it may, at least on a first occasion, be treated as a mitigating factor, and disciplinary, progress or fitness to practise procedures may be suspended whilst opportunity is taken to seek diagnosis and, if necessary, treatment.

7.4.2 Placement settings

You should not consume alcohol or other substances which might affect your performance at any time whilst on placement. It should be noted that the consumption of alcohol is prohibited in many hospitals and community healthcare settings, including the Trusts associated with the Faculty. Students who work or study on Trust premises are always required to comply with all the provisions of Trust policies.

Additionally, alcohol or other substances which might affect performance should not be consumed immediately prior to attending placement or teaching sessions.

Nor should you be affected by the consumption of alcohol or other substances which might affect performance. You must be mindful that the effects of excessive alcohol consumption or other substances can last for many hours and the effects of excessive alcohol consumption will be present the following morning.

7.4.3 Other settings

The Faculty considers the abuse of drugs/medicines at any time and in all places is unacceptable for students on programmes leading to a professional healthcare qualification. Furthermore, the use of any illicit drug may be a disciplinary as well as a criminal offence (ref. Regulation XVII – Conduct and Discipline of Students).

You are expected to maintain a satisfactory and acceptable standard of behaviour at all times; this includes weekends and vacation periods. If you are subject to a police caution or conviction relating to alcohol or drug misuse, then you must reveal this to your relevant school. Failure to do this will be considered as a serious fitness to practise issue. The regulatory authorities consider that this requirement to disclose applies throughout the whole of their undergraduate studies, not just at the point of admission.

7.5 Help and support

7.5.1 Your personal responsibility

You have a personal responsibility to check with your pharmacist or General Practitioner (GP) about performance affecting side effects resulting from taking prescription or over the counter medication. You should inform your tutor immediately about any possible side effects, if appropriate.

7.5.2 The responsibility of staff members

Schools will assist all staff and students to identify potential alcohol or drug/medicine related problems and will encourage students to seek help at an early stage. If you consider that you may have an alcohol or drug/medicine related problem, you will be encouraged to seek confidential help and treatment voluntarily. Appropriate help may be obtained from the Student Occupational Health Service, Student Counselling Service, or your own GP. Details will only

be discussed with your own doctor, or other medical specialist, with your prior agreement.

7.5.3 What happens if help is refused?

Where a student refuses to accept help, suffers a relapse, or fails to respond to treatment, difficulties relating to study or clinical performance will be dealt with under the normal University procedures without special consideration being given.

All members of staff have a responsibility to raise any concerns they may have about a student in relation to drugs/medicines or alcohol. Staff and students should not 'cover up' or collude with colleagues whose behaviour or performance is affected by alcohol or other substances and will be encouraged to seek help immediately. In addition, programme staff may be required to inform placement providers in the case of any caution, penalty notice or conviction relating to the misuse of alcohol or drugs/medicines, and this could have an impact on your ability to complete your placement.

Should you have any concerns about any aspect of the misuse of non-prescription drugs or alcohol guidance above, you are advised to speak to your academic adviser/supervisor.

8. Unsatisfactory professional conduct or behaviour

Unsatisfactory professional conduct is defined as 'conduct that is contrary to the accepted and agreed practice standards of the profession.'

8.1 What happens if someone calls into question your professional conduct or behaviour?

Everyone makes mistakes. That is part of being human. What we do when we recognise we have done something wrong is frequently the most important thing. Unfortunately, we sometimes see relatively trivial issues become serious problems because a student either attempted to conceal or lie about something. The first thing to do when you might be worried that you have done something wrong is to speak to an appropriate member of staff, which could be your academic adviser or someone

in student support. It is much better for you to inform the University rather than the University discover the concern.

Concerns are first considered at Programme level by a Concern Review Panel (CRP). The majority of concerns considered by the CRP go no further than this stage. The CRP will seek to understand the contributing factors and context in which the alleged conduct or behaviour took place. The CRP can dismiss the concerns or issue advice which can include education, training, monitoring, supervision and/or support to help you to continue on your programme.

In a very small number of cases the panel may wish to start a formal investigation. If a formal investigation is required, then the CRP will appoint an investigator to formally determine the circumstances. The Faculty has a procedure for undertaking this and students will have the opportunity to speak to the investigator as part of the investigation. **You are advised to seek additional help and support from your Academic Advisor, the Student's Union and/or a professional association at the earliest opportunity.**

A small number of concerns will be referred to a Fitness to Practise committee either directly or following a formal investigation. Less serious cases will be considered by a School level Fitness to Practise Committee whilst more serious cases will be considered by a Faculty level Fitness to Practise Committee. Concerns will be judged to be more serious if they; present an actual or potential risk to others; represent significant shortcomings in professional behaviour; have (or may) undermined public confidence in the profession; amount to an abuse of a position of trust; or were pursued for financial gain.

In very serious situations, programmes may consider issuing a partial or a full suspension. In these rare situations, there would be concern that a student presented a danger to patients, the public, other students or staff. If such a situation arose, programmes would aim to meet with the student to explain concerns and to hear the student's representations before the suspension was put in place unless there was an urgent threat.

The Faculty Fitness to Practise procedure can be found here.

8.2 Persistent non-adherence to dress code

As previously stated, standards of dress are linked to our desire to cultivate a positive image of our students, amongst patients and service users, colleagues and the wider public. It is hoped that the above guidance will help you to feel proud of your professional image. However, it is recognised that issues relating to clothing, personal hygiene and personal presentation may also be sensitive. In cases where there is persistent non-adherence to the dress code outlined in this guidance, where agreement has not been possible, this may be dealt with in accordance with local Trust or Organisational policy guidance, UoM Fitness to Practise or Conduct and Discipline of Students regulation.

8.3 Inappropriate use of social media

Inappropriate social media use may result in action being taken under the UoM Conduct and Discipline of Students regulation or the UoM Fitness to Practise procedure. Such action could, in serious cases, lead to suspension or expulsion. Beyond that, students and members of staff have the right to raise complaints with the University under University procedures. There is also the potential for complaints to be raised externally (and this might also include complaints raised by third parties who are not students or members of staff) - for example, with a professional body, partner or placement provider or even through legal action against you if they consider that what you have done entitles them to some form of redress, for example the payment of compensation.

The University of Manchester has zero tolerance of any forms of bullying, harassment and discrimination either in person or online. These terms are explained in the University's Dignity at Work and Study Policy. For example, harassment is defined as 'when someone intentionally or unintentionally violates a person's dignity or creates an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment, which interferes with an individual's learning, working or social environment.' To raise a concern about a posting on social media, you may contact the Social Media platform directly. Your reporting of bullying, harassment and discrimination in an online environment is important and will be taken seriously. This can also be done through the University Report and Support Service available here. If you are the victim of alleged inappropriate online behaviour, please discuss further with your School's respective student pastoral support team.

8.4 Misuse of non-prescription drugs and alcohol

Where a school becomes aware or has cause to suspect that a student has an alcohol or drug/medicine related problem, which in the opinion of the school renders them unfit to complete the programme of study, or which renders them as a possible danger to others with whom they come into contact with as part of that programme, their case will be reviewed in line with the School Concerns Review Policy (CRP).

8.5 Reporting the unprofessional conduct or behaviour of others

During your studies you will encounter many role models who will demonstrate good professional practice. Unfortunately, you may also witness some unprofessional behaviours. The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC, 2014) suggest that students are perceptive enough to adopt the positive elements of their role models and reject the negative. Speaking up immediately when things go wrong can help improve patient care and clinical environments, though we recognise that some may feel hesitant to voice concerns. However, if you do experience or witness poor professional conduct or behaviour, please do seek to discuss this further with a trusted person, for example your academic adviser or clinical supervisor. Whilst we recognise that students are often a close-knit group who will support one another with peer support evidenced as a valuable tool to help navigate complex learning environments, there may be times that you have concerns about your peers and feel worried about how to manage this. You must remember that getting support for a struggling peer is often a positive to help them get back on track.

The following options may help you:

- speak to your peers about your concerns;
- speak to family members whilst maintaining confidentiality;
- talk things through with a tutor such as your academic advisor/personal tutor or clinical supervisor;
- speak to student support.

Raising concerns is a vital process for identifying risks to people's safety. Sharing information or talking through a concern can be the first step to helping identify problems and improve practise.

Additionally, if you feel you have been harassed or discriminated against (or have witnessed this behaviour towards others) because of faith, gender, gender identity, sexuality, age or disability then you can seek help and support from:

- The University of Manchester Student Support Service who provide support for emergencies, specific student communities as well as harassment and discrimination guidance.
  https://www.studentsupport.manchester.ac.uk/
- For students of faith, there are the Multi-Faith Chaplaincies
  http://multifaithchaplaincy.org/
- The Student Union Health and Wellbeing advice service.
  https://manchesterstudentsunion.com/health-and-wellbeing-advice
- The University of Manchester Report and Support Scheme.
  www.reportandsupport.manchester.ac.uk/

9. Additional guidance

University of Manchester guidance is available below:

- www.regulations.manchester.ac.uk/non-academic/guidance-on-social-media-for-students/
- Conduct and Discipline of Students
- Data Protection Policy
- Dignity at Work and Study
- Student Charter
- Student Code of Conduct
- Fitness to Practise Procedure

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11. Useful resources

- **Alcohol Alcoholics Anonymous.** Provides free group support from recovering alcoholics for those who wish to remain teetotal.
Tel: +44 (0)161 236 6569.

- Campaign against Anti-Semitism

- **Drinkline.** A national alcohol helpline for confidential help and advice.
Tel: +44 (0)20 7332 0202 (6pm to 11pm every day)

- **Drugs National Drugs Helpline:** Provides free information and advice.
Tel: +44 (0)800 776600.

- Digital stalking: A guide to technology risks for victims

- Disability Rights UK

- Galop (Support for LGBT+ people)

- **North-West England Narcotics Anonymous:** Provides free group support from recovering addicts for people recovering from narcotics addiction.
Tel: +44 (0)800 1076299.

- **Occupational Health Services**: Waterloo Place, 182/184 Oxford Road, Manchester. Tel: +44 (0)161 275 2858.

- Online harassment field manual

- Prevent

- Revenge Porn Guide

- Speak Up & Stay Safe(r): A Guide to Protecting Yourself from Online Harassment

- [Stonewall (campaigning for lesbian, gay, bi and trans equality)](#)
- [Stop Hate UK](#)
- **Student Counselling Service**: 5th Floor, Crawford House, Precinct Centre, Booth Street East, Manchester, Tel: +44 (0)161 275 2864, email: counselling.service@manchester.ac.uk
  Website: www.manchester.ac.uk/counselling
- [Tell Mama: Measuring anti-Muslim attacks](#)
- The University of Manchester **Report and Support Scheme**. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team, G.035b John Owens Building, The University of Manchester, Oxford Rd, Manchester.
  Website: www.reportandsupport.manchester.ac.uk/
- The University of **Manchester Students Union**.
  Website: www.manchesterstudentsunion.com/
- [TrollBusters](#)
- University social media directory
  https://www.manchester.ac.uk/connect/social-media/#d.en.718984

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