

# Contract of Professional Behaviour

For students on health/social care/therapy related awards or courses/ modules that lead to eligibility for professional registration with a Statutory Regulatory Body e.g. the NMC, HCPC).

I concerned with health, social care or therapy based professions (

Please ensure that you read and understand this document fully because complying with the standards described below could make the difference between being able to apply for professional registration with the appropriate Statutory Regulatory Body

## General standards of behaviour for all students

**All** students are expected to behave properly whilst on University premises or attendance elsewhere as a University student. All students are also expected to uphold the good reputation of the University. Appendix 3 of the University's "General Regulations" gives examples of things that are likely to be considered a "breach of discipline" and which could lead to disciplinary action. . You should refer to that document via the University website for more information. It is not the purpose of this document to restate the general standards of behaviour expected of all students as described in the University's "General Regulations", but you do need to be aware of them since, in common with all other students, they also apply to you.

## Additional standards of conduct required of you

As you are a student on a professional award you are subject to additional duties and obligations in respect of your personal behaviour. These higher standards of behaviour:

- apply at **all** times and
- in **all** environments of your life
- and **not** just when you are "in Uni" or on placements or visits.

The Statutory Regulatory Body relevant to the profession you are aspiring to join requires that you must, at all times act in a manner that maintains and upholds public trust and confidence in you as an aspiring practitioner and also the profession generally. As a student you are required to fully comply with the standards of personal and professional behaviour demanded by the relevant Statutory Professional Body. If you do not maintain these standards then your fitness to become a member of your chosen profession may be called into question.

If you do not meet the standards of behaviour required by the relevant Statutory Professional Regulatory Body this may prevent you from being able to complete your studies and may affect your ability to apply for professional registration. Non-compliance could lead to action under the Faculty of Health Sciences “Fitness to Practise” and University disciplinary procedures, either of which could result in you being discontinued from your studies.

The key to complying with the required standards of behaviour is to do nothing which would cause a reasonable person (or legitimate section of society) to lose trust and confidence in you as a professional (or which would bring your chosen profession into general disrepute).

There is no definitive or exhaustive list of things that will or will not undermine public trust and confidence in you as an aspiring professional. There are however a number of areas which need particular consideration by you. Some of these are described below. The following is intended to help you avoid a situation where your fitness to practise could be called in question and should not be taken as a definitive list.

### **Dealings with the Criminal Justice System**

To be unconditionally admitted to your course of studies you will have had a Disclosure and Barring Service check. Any issues which came to light through this process will have been considered prior to you being allowed into placement areas with potentially vulnerable clients. As a student you will also be required to periodically complete a self-declaration of “Fitness to Practise” which includes disclosure of criminal convictions and related issues. However – if you have **any** dealings with the Police (or other law enforcement agencies), at **any** time, where you are a potential suspect (whether or not you are innocent) then you must inform a senior member of the Faculty staff as soon as is reasonably practical.

Failure to report promptly, as described above, may cause Faculty staff considering your case to suspect that you were deceitfully trying to hide the issue. The best policy is – if in doubt report it and report it as soon as you reasonably can. Do not try and hide issues since all cases are considered on their individual merits

*Please note – you do not need to declare minor traffic offences such as speeding offences or parking fines. All other traffic offences (including drink-driving and dangerous driving) need to be reported.*

### **Sharing your personal experiences with others**

#### *Confidentiality*

If you describe to someone else, in private or in public, things that you have done or seen as part of your placements you must maintain the strict confidentiality of all the people and specific organisations concerned.

### *Broadcasting/Publication*

You must not publish or place into the public domain, any materials or media produced as part of your own or other students' University studies that are identifiable as originating from this University, without the written permission of a senior Faculty member of staff.

### *Social Networking*

You need to be very cautious of what kind of information you put onto social networking sites such as for example Facebook, MySpace and Bebo. This particularly relates to any of your course experiences and the people with whom you come into contact during your studies, as well as images or comments relating to activities in your private life. This is because the security of posted information cannot be guaranteed. Furthermore, it is often the case that most information on social networking sites is left accessible to anyone who wishes to look. You must safeguard your own reputation and that of your chosen profession.

### **Conscientious Objections**

If you have specific personal conscientious objections to any aspect of professional practise then you must declare them in case they are not compatible with meeting the required competencies of your course/module.

### **Making up time**

Courses leading to professional registration usually require that you have completed a specified minimum number of hours in theory and practise. If you miss taught sessions or placement experiences you may fall short of the number of required hours to complete your course. Therefore, no matter what the reasons for the absences, you may be required to make-up the missed time in order to complete your course.

### **Cheating and plagiarism**

Any form of academic misconduct is a breach of University discipline and will most likely result in disciplinary action under the general regulations of the University. Such conduct can however also call into question your fitness to practise and may consequently adversely affect your ability to complete your studies and your eligibility to register with the appropriate professional body.

### **Falsification of Records**

Making false records, altering records or falsification of signatures on official patient or student documentation would call into question the honesty and integrity of you as a student and may adversely affect your ability to complete your course and meet Professional Statutory Body standards.

### **Fitness to be in placement areas**

Sometimes students may feel unwell or be unfit to be in practise. If you have any doubts about your fitness to be in practise due to health issues or any other reason it is essential that you do not attend placement and that you report the issue to placement and/or Faculty staff. It is the welfare and safety of the clients that are paramount here and not the student's desire not to miss practise hours.

### **Sexual relationships**

You are considered to be in a *position of trust* in relation to clients you meet in placement, Trust staff and your fellow students that you work with. As such you are subject to the Sexual Offences Act 2000. This Act makes it a criminal offence, when in a position of trust with a person less than 18 years of age, to engage in sexual relations with that individual.

In addition, developing a sexual relationship with any client may very well call into question your fitness to practise and can in many specific service settings be a criminal offence under statute law other than that referred to above, for example the Mental Health Act 1983 .

### **Duty to report**

Should you become aware of any situation where others may be breaching their professional duty then you have a duty to report such concerns to an appropriate senior member of staff. Failure to do so could bring into question your suitability to become a professional registrant.

### **Declaration**

I have read and understood the contents of this document. In accordance with the Professional Code of Conduct of the profession that I am aspiring to join, I hereby undertake to behave, at all times, in a manner that will justify public trust and confidence in me and to comply with each clause of this contract as listed above.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

To be retained in the student portfolio with a copy in the Student's Personal File