



Standards of Dress, Uniform and Personal Appearance Policy

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Equality and Diversity Statement

Brunel University values inclusiveness and confirms its continuing commitment to the principles of equality and diversity in employment, admissions, and in its teaching, learning and research activities.

The University endeavours to ensure that all members of staff, students, visitors and applicants for employment or study are treated on the basis of their merits and abilities and that no one suffers discrimination or disadvantage regardless of their race, age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, religion or belief (including lack of belief), sex and sexual orientation. In order to achieve an environment that is free from unlawful discrimination and which encourages everyone to contribute fully to its work the University will endeavour to ensure that it:

- Eliminates discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Equality Act 2010.
- Advances equality of opportunity and fosters good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it by:
- Removing or minimising disadvantages suffered by staff and students and taking steps to meet their needs.
- Encouraging staff and students to participate in public life or in any other activity in which participation is disproportionately low.
- Tackling prejudice and promoting understanding within the University.

Scope

This policy applies to student enrolled on pre-registration programmes that require a period of experience in a clinical practice placement setting leading to a professional registration. It specifies the roles, responsibilities and expectations on uniform, dress and appearance whilst on a placement setting.

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1.0 Uniform and dress

You have the responsibility as a student at Brunel University London while undertaking a programme leading to a professional qualification, to dress in a manner that maintains the good name of the profession and the College of Health and Life Sciences. By wearing either the College of Health and Life Sciences uniform or your own clothes when on practice placement this exposes you to the public gaze and should inspire confidence and respect from your patients/clients and carers. Consequently it is essential that you always dress and act in a way that promotes public confidence in your personal and professional integrity. You have a duty of care to act strictly in accordance with the guidelines provided by the professional regulatory and statutory body (the Nursing and Midwifery Council, 2018), the College and the University. In practice placement areas, a smart and professional appearance has a direct effect on practitioner/patient relationships and subsequent care. A professional approach to appearance and dress can also reduce the risk of cross infection and maintain not only your own safety, but also the safety of your patients and your colleagues.

The wearing of your uniform whilst on duty or in a campus learning environment (in simulated practice) helps to ensure that you are not exposed to being called upon to assist in a manner that exceeds your capability as a healthcare student. In this policy you will find detailed guidance on meeting the minimum standards required by the Dress, Uniform and Appearance Policy of the College and it is essential that you follow the Policy carefully.

1.1 Your College of Health Sciences Uniform consists of:

- White tunic with short sleeves, epaulettes and University Logo
- Navy blue trousers
- Additional clothing: you are only permitted to wear a clean navy blue lightweight and easily washable cardigan. Wearing of cardigans is not permitted when undertaking direct patient care.

You must also make sure that your uniform is clean and freshly pressed for each shift.

1.2 Respect for diversity

Students can contact the programme team to discuss cultural or religious requirements. Adjustments to the uniform for cultural/ethnic reasons will be considered where possible but must be in line with national and local policies, ensuring that the health and safety and security of patients or staff is not compromised.

- Sleeves - must finish above the elbow in order to comply with health and safety and infection control policies. The wearing of long sleeved garments under the dress or tunic is not permitted.
- Headscarves – a plain white, black or navy blue headdress can be worn with no adornment and must be safely tucked into your collar. There may be specific placements where headscarves are not to be worn around the neck. Please refer to the Trust's/ placement provider's policy. Students will be

informed by the placements team if they have been allocated to such a placement and offered an alternative if uncovering the neck is not acceptable for religious or cultural reasons.

- Facial covering for religious reasons is not permitted whilst on duty. This is to ensure that you are identifiable, and to enhance engagement and communication with patients, staff, visitors and colleagues.
- A plain white, short sleeved t-shirt may be worn under the dress or tunic to cover the neck area if required
- A black turban or skull cap may be worn.
- Other Uniform Adjustments: If you require gender neutral or alternative uniform for health reasons please contact your programme team to discuss your requirements. Alternative uniforms will only be provided based on a clear rationale.

1.3 Issuing of Uniforms

At the beginning of your healthcare programme you will be measured for a set of uniforms and it is a good idea to make sure that you get a size which will allow you to look and work professionally whilst undertaking any care delivery activities including moving and handling. This set of uniforms is provided free of charge and is intended to last you for the duration of your programme.

When you have completed your programme you will be expected to dispose of your uniform so that it cannot be used by anyone else. This also applies if you withdraw from the programme. This is to protect the name of the College of Clinical Sciences, and thus your reputation as a graduate of the College.

1.4 Replacement Uniforms

If you need to replace your uniform because it has become damaged or because it is no longer the correct size, you will be expected to pay for any replacement uniforms.

1.5 Laundering Uniforms

To promote a professional image and to reduce the risk of cross infection you are expected to wear a clean and neatly pressed uniform every shift. The care and cleanliness of uniforms is your responsibility.

All elements of the washing process contribute to the removal of micro-organisms on fabric. There is little effective difference between domestic and commercial laundering in terms of removing micro-organisms from uniforms and work wear. Washing with detergents at 30°C will remove most gram positive micro-organisms, including all methicillin-resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA)

A 10-minute wash at 60°C is sufficient to remove almost all micro-organisms. In tests, only 0.1% of any *Clostridium difficile* spores remained. Microbiologists carrying out the research advise that this level of contamination on uniforms and work wear is not a cause for concern (Laundry Guidance taken from DH Guidance 2010)

In some specialist placement areas such as in the intensive care unit or operating department, special uniforms are provided by the placement provider. These are replaced daily and are laundered as part of the normal dirty linen procedure. You must make sure that you place such clothes in the designated dirty linen bin/store when you complete your shift and they will be collected by the linen team.

1.6 Travelling to and from Placement

When travelling to and from your placement, you must wear your own clothes (mufti) and change into your uniform at your placement site. Wearing uniform outside the placement site or skills laboratories could place you at risk and incurs infection.

1.7 Dress Code when on Community and non-uniform Placements

When you are on a community placement you are not normally required to wear your uniform, but you are still required to be smart and presentable and wear appropriate clothing. Please check with the practice area prior to commencing on placement there may be additional inform regulations you need to adhere to.

The following provided some examples of inappropriate clothing:

- Jeans, leggings and patterned/military style combat trousers.
- Clothing bearing offensive logos or wording (e.g. alcohol related, sexual, etc.)
Skirt length shorter than just above the knees
- Bare midriff
- Tops that are low cut or leave significant bare skin (e.g., halter tops, strappy vest tops etc.)
- Training shoes/plimsolls/deck shoes (unless required by the role)
- Flip flops
- Casual printed t-shirts (other than those printed only with small motifs) and sweat shirts/rugby shirts
- Tracksuits
- Clothing that has holes, patches or is in a dirty or untidy condition
- If shorts are worn they must be knee length and of a tailored quality
- High heeled shoes/ open toes shoes when providing clinical or social care

1.8 Protective Clothing

There will be times during your practice experience when you may be required to wear protective clothing. This may be to protect either your patient or to protect you as the health care provider from unnecessary health and safety risks and serious accidents. In these situations it is essential to make sure that you understand and abide by the related policies and procedures for wearing the protective clothing. You have the responsibility to ensure you are knowledgeable about these policies from your first day on each placement. Make sure that you always wear and discard any protective clothing

1.9 Plastic Aprons and Gloves

- When you wear either plastic aprons or gloves you must always 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 caring for a different patient
- Barrier between the patient and the area of the uniform which has the most patient contact, which aids the prevention of cross infection.
- Gloves should only be worn according to the local policies of the placement provider

2.0 Personal Appearance

When people are sick or pregnant they often find strong or unfamiliar smells, (such as cosmetics, aftershave or perfume, strong food smells or cigarette smoke) nauseating. As a health care student you will be engaged in providing care that includes close physical contact with your patients and clients. It is essential that you make sure your personal hygiene and any perfume or other odours do not cause patients discomfort. If you wish to wear perfume, after-shave or make up whilst on duty this should be discreet.

2.1 Fingernails

Fingernails must be kept short and clean at all times to protect the patient from any scratching and any infection. No nail extensions, overlays or varnish of any description. This is to prevent harm to patients through infection transfer or inadvertent scratching.

2.2 Hair

If hair is longer than shoulder length it should be tied back sufficiently to ensure that it does not fall over the face whilst in the clinical area. Hair must be tied back with simple, matching hair bands that reflect the uniform or the colour of the hair. You must make sure that your hair is always kept clean and tidy. If you are a male student you must either be clean shaven or have your beard and moustache kept clean and neatly trimmed.

2.3 The wearing of 'temporary' or false eyelashes is not permitted.

2.4 Footwear

Your shoes must be designed to provide good support to your feet and loco-motor system so that you are protected from harm. Unless alternative footwear is provided by the placement provider for specialist areas of practice (such as labour ward, operating department), your shoes must be:

- Plain

- Black leather or waterproof material (not suede)
- Black training shoes with no logos may be permitted in some placement areas please check prior to commencing your placement.
- If lace-ups, laces should be the same colour as the shoe
- Non-slip soles Low heeled (no greater than 2.5 cm)
- Clean
- In a good state of repair

Open sandals/shoes is potentially dangerous as they do not provide sufficient protection to your feet and back and you must NOT wear them whilst wearing uniform. No boots or any footwear that covers the ankles should be worn.

2.5 Socks, Stockings and Tights

You should always wear suitable hosiery.

If you wear socks they must be:

- Plain
- Black

If you wear stockings or tights they must be:

- Plain
- Black

In extremely hot weather you may seek the permission of your placement manager to dispense with wearing socks, stockings or tights.

2.6 Body Piercings, Tattoos and Jewellery

Any potentially offensive and or intimidating tattoos should be covered as long as this complies with the placement areas Hand Hygiene Procedure. As wearing long sleeves prevents thorough hand hygiene procedures and are more likely to become contaminated during work activities.

Rings: one plain metal band only may be worn. No rings with stones should be worn when dealing directly with patient care as scratches and abrasions to the skin could occur.

Wristwatches, bracelets and other hand adornments: these may not be worn when providing direct patient care or in the clinical environment. Wristwatches and other jewellery worn on the hands and wrists become contaminated during work activities. In addition they prevent thorough hand hygiene

Necklaces: these must not be worn for direct patient care.

Piercings: are only an infection risk when new and not healed when they should be covered. Piercings are allowed when worn to portray a professional image to patients and carers and do not present a risk-to safety in the particular work area. One pair of studded earrings are permitted. In clinical areas facial piercings are not permitted.

2.7 Name Badges and Identification must be worn at all time.

Your name and designation must always be visible as a matter of security and reassurance to your patients and fellow healthcare professionals.

3.0 Compliance with the policy

If you are considered to be inappropriately dressed or you have not observed the requirements of the Uniform and Dress Policy, you will be given a verbal warning and will be sent home from placement. 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 and Dress Policy will be considered unprofessional conduct and as a result you will normally face disciplinary action undertaken through the Cause for Concern or Professional suitability.

All placement areas will have organisational uniform policies. These are to be observed in addition to Brunel University London College of Health Sciences Policy. The placement area will always have the final say where there are differences in dress code.

For further information about the uniform as applied to your programme of study, or to discuss cultural or religious options, please contact your Programme Lead, your personal tutor or Course Administrator.

References

Department of Health (2010) "Uniforms and Work wear: an evidence-based document on the wearing and laundering of uniforms"