

Contract of Professional Behaviour: Post-Qualified Students

For students on health or social care or therapy related awards, courses or modules who are already qualified practitioners in their field and are registered with a relevant Statutory Regulatory Body

As a registered practitioner you will be aware that the Statutory Regulatory Body relevant to your profession requires that you must, at all times, act in a manner that maintains and upholds public trust and confidence in you as a practitioner and the profession generally. Non-compliance with professional standards of conduct whilst a student could lead to:

- action under the Faculty of Health Sciences “Fitness to Practise” policy and/or,
- action under the University disciplinary procedures and/or,
- reporting of conduct to sponsoring employers and/or,
- reporting to the appropriate Statutory Regulatory Body,

any of which could lead to discontinuation of your studies and could adversely affect your status as a registered professional.

There is no definitive or exhaustive list of things that will or will not undermine public trust and confidence in you as a qualified professional. As a student 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 whilst a student.

Fitness to Practise issues at work

Many of our students attending post-qualified courses combine their studies with professional paid employment. Any issues that call into question your fitness to practise which arise within your professional employment must also be reported to the Faculty if your course or module with us has a practise element or leads to eligibility to gain further professional registration. Any such areas of concern must be reported as soon as is reasonably practical. The reverse is true in that if during

the course of study we become aware of issues related to your professionalism we will inform your employer and if appropriate Professional Regulatory Statutory body.

Dealings with the Criminal Justice System

The following applies to modules with a practise element. In addition to DBS checks (where required) if you have **any** dealings with the Police (or other law enforcement agencies), at any time during your time as a student with us, 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 deliberately 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 and only very serious offences would automatically result in a student being withdrawn from his or her course.

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 and as you describe to someone else, in private or in public, things that you have done and seen as part of your course/module placements you must maintain the strict confidentiality of 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 Facebook, MySpace and Bebo. This particularly relates to any of your course/module 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.

You must not post any photographs of other individuals for example, hospital or university staff, students, patients or clients on a social networking site without their knowledge and/or consent. The implications of doing so can be very serious. To do so would breach the student behaviour policy and your professional code of conduct, and very likely contravene the policies relating to partner organisations. Very importantly it could also break the law! You must always be mindful of the Human Rights Act 1998 (the right to privacy), the Data Protection Act 1998 and the law relating to confidentiality and defamation.

Mobile camera phones or other electronic devices must not be used for any improper purpose during tutorials, lectures or any areas of the University where they are banned such as the library, or when attending a hospital or placement area. Considerable problems have occurred where students have posted mobile phone images or comments which they considered to be funny, but were felt to be offensive by others. **Posting such material is therefore considered to be the same as broadcasting or publishing into the public domain.**

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 issues of concern may also be reported to your professional regulatory body.

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 practice 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.

Declaration

I have read and understood the contents of this document.

Signature _____ Date _____

To be retained in the Student's Personal File