

Declaration of Good Health and Good Character of Students on the Bachelor of Nursing with Honours Programme

Introduction

This document provides essential information about the declaration of good health and good character. A **self declaration** of good health and good character is required annually. The certificate to be completed by individual students is attached. This document is available from Personal Tutors or the General Office of the School of Health in Social Science. Once completed it is returned to Personal Tutors in Freshers' week, at the start of each session. Thereafter, the completed forms are held in the students' personal files. Any subsequent investigation that may result from the information provided remains confidential to the investigating personnel, initiated by the Personal Tutor.

The Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) keeps a register of the nurses, midwives and specialist community public health nurses with the main aim of protecting the public. Registrants must be *capable of safe and effective practice*. They have met the requirements for entry and for maintenance on the register and are entitled to use the title according to part or parts of the register on which their name appears. The NMC sets standards for the education, training, conduct, performance and ethics of nurses and midwives. The NMC has produced a code setting the standards of conduct, performance and ethics for nurses and midwives. All students are required to practise by this code and must declare their awareness and understanding of such on an annual basis.

Record keeping and Disclosure

When information for a fitness to practise case is collected from staff, students or other parties, all involved should be aware that the information can be shown to the other parties in the case and may be passed to third parties, such as regulatory bodies or the Police, if necessary. Where the concern is dealt with formally, all parties will be asked for written permission for the disclosure of concerns and evidence in student fitness to practise cases.

I give permission for disclosure of relevant information about me in relation to any fitness to practice issues that might arise during the period of the programme

Name

Group.....

Signature

Date.....

The consequences of making a false declaration

It is a criminal offence for anyone to make a false declaration of good health or good character.

Good Health

The NMC prescribes the requirements to be met regarding good health and good character in order to satisfy the Registrar that an applicant is capable of safe and effective practice as nurse or midwife. The 'requirements' need to be satisfied for admission to, and for continuation with education and training towards registration.

As a nursing education provider, the University of Edinburgh must ensure that the general entry requirements of the NMC (literacy, numeracy, good health and good character) are met by students entering the BN with Honours programme. As part of the requirements for continuing with the undergraduate programme at the University of Edinburgh, students are required to self declare their 'fitness to practise' annually. Pre-registration students are expected to work towards being able to apply the *NMC Code of professional conduct: standards for conduct, performance and ethics* at the point of registration.

Health conditions, disabilities, convictions and cautions are not automatically incompatible with registration and the NMC recommends that each person be assessed on an individual basis.

Determination of Good Health

Students in good health are capable of providing safe and effective care. The NMC does not have a list of acceptable or unacceptable health conditions. Individual assessment of health conditions and disabilities is carried out as required to make decisions on whether a student is fit to practise. Expert advice is sought when necessary for example from:

- occupational health
- the person's GP
- a medical consultant helping the individual with their condition or disability
- a specialist practitioner providing care to the person
- an expert in the specific medical condition or disability.

In complex cases where there is lack of agreement locally on a person's fitness to practice, advice from NMC should be sought.

The NMC considers disability as an aspect of good health. The Disability Discrimination Act identifies persons as disabled if they have "a physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities". The Disability Discrimination Act 2005 (DDA) protects disabled people. NMC Registration processes are deemed to be fair and do not discriminate against disabled people.

Temporary episodes of ill health which result in a person being unable to work for a period of time (e.g. a broken leg) do not mean that they are not 'fit to practise'. Enduring health conditions, such as epilepsy, diabetes or depression should be assessed in relation to the degree to which the person is affected. Normally where such a condition is well managed it would not be incompatible with fitness to practise and registration. Disabled students should be assessed individually and consideration be given as to what reasonable adjustments can be made to support the person to achieve safe and effective practice.

Good Character

Good character is important as nurses and midwives must be honest and trustworthy and abide by the requirements of the NMC Code of Professional Conduct. An assessment of good character includes any conduct, behaviour or attitudes that are not compatible with professional registration as well as convictions and cautions.

Confirmation of good character is verified through references from people who know the person well and are in a position of responsibility. In addition to references, it is required to check with the Criminal Records Bureau (or Disclosure Scotland) to determine whether the person has any convictions or cautions. Furthermore applicants' identity can be verified by checking passports or other relevant formal documents that include photographic identity.

The NMC does not have a list of acceptable and unacceptable convictions or cautions. All convictions or cautions require to be declared and no student is exempt from the Rehabilitation of Offenders' Act.

Determination of good character

An essential determinant of good character is the individual's commitment to and compliance with the *NMC Code of professional conduct: standards for conduct, performance and ethics*.

The University considers all students as individuals and an assessment is made to decide what effect their conviction or caution has on their ability to meet the NMC requirements for safe and effective practice. Relevant criminal convictions are defined as those for offences against the person, whether of a violent or sexual nature, convictions for offences involving unlawfully supplying controlled drugs or substances where the conviction concerns commercial drug dealing or trafficking. If a conviction or caution is noted, the relevance, seriousness and circumstances in which the offence was committed must be taken into account. Should subsequent enquiries be necessary following the completion of the declaration certificate these remain confidential to the investigating personnel.

Students are reminded that they MUST inform the Personal Tutor immediately if they have any adverse changes in their health or charges, convictions or cautions during the BN Hons programme.

The University of Edinburgh
 Nursing Studies
 School of Health in Social Science

Fitness to Practise Self-Declaration Certificate

This certificate must be completed annually by students on the Bachelor of Nursing with Honours programme. Students are reminded that they **MUST** inform the Personal Tutor immediately if they have any adverse changes in their health or charges, convictions or cautions during the BN Hons programme.

Personal details

Surname.....

Forenames

Matriculation number

Degree programme and year of entry

Index number with NMC.....

Self declaration of good health and good character

Please read the following statements carefully and tick the statement that applies to you, ensuring that you sign the declaration at the bottom of the page.

| Correct | Incorrect |
|---------|-----------|
|---------|-----------|

I, the above named, have read and understood the nature of good health and good character as interpreted by the NMC and declare that:

- I am in sufficiently good health & of good character – capable of safe & effective practice.
- I have no known ill health condition
- I do not have a serious mental illness, alcohol problem or drug problem
- I intend to comply with the *NMC Code of professional conduct: standards for conduct, performance and ethics*
- I have no convictions or police cautions
- I have not been found guilty of misconduct or lack of fitness to practise by another regulatory body and am not subject to a determination by a licensing body elsewhere to the same effect
- I am not currently suspended by another regulatory body or licensing body

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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NMC has produced a code setting the standards of conduct performance and ethics for nurses and midwives (available on the NMC web site and on all course information on WebCT). All students are required to practise by this code and must declare their awareness and understanding of such on an annual basis.

I declare that I have read the NMC Code, standards of conduct performance and ethics for nurses and midwives and have understood it.

| | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|

Signature Date.....

I give permission for disclosure of relevant information about me in relation to any fitness to practice issues that might arise during the period of the programme

Signature Date.....