

Dress Code for Students in Clinical Placements

NHS Fife expects all staff and medical students to adopt the standards we set for conduct, dress and appearance. The way staff and students dress sends messages about their professionalism and standards of care to service users, carers, colleagues and members of the public.

The following guidance is not meant to be exhaustive but provides a quick framework for students to follow. It is in keeping with NHS Fife Dress Code and Uniform Policy (2024) which aims to ensure that all involved in care delivery maintain safety, convey a professional image and instill and maintain public confidence.

As students learning within a practice environment, you are expected to follow this guidance at all times during hospital or community based placements and also within a simulated clinical environment.

- Wear your identity badge that confirms you are a student.
- Dress in a discreet and professional manner to convey a professional image and create and maintain public confidence.
- Arms should be **'bare below the elbow'** when delivering clinical care/working in or visiting a clinical area. Where, for religious reasons, students wish to cover their forearms during patient care activity; it is acceptable to wear disposable over-sleeves where gloves are used, with strict adherence to hand and wrist washing before and after use. Over-sleeves must be disposed of as disposable gloves.
Students who wish to cover their upper forearms during patient care activity, it is acceptable, for religious reasons to wear three-quarter length sleeves. Three-quarter length sleeves 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.
- Wear appropriate footwear (clean, in a good state of repair, enclosed heels and toes). Excessively high heels should not be worn. Shoes should be black or navy however it is acknowledged that many staff/students, in particular those involved with moving and handling of patients, prefer to wear trainers. If trainers are worn they should be where possible black or navy, must be clean and made of a non-pervious material.
- Tattoos that could be considered offensive should be covered where this does not compromise good clinical practice.
- Keep hair tied back and off the collar. Hair accessories, when worn must be discreet.
- Jewellery is restricted to wearing one plain metal finger ring. Any visible body piercings should be plain studs whilst at work. Necklaces, wristwatches, fitness tracker wrist- straps and bracelets must not be worn when in clinical areas. Jewellery worn for religious reasons such as Kara bangles worn by initiated Sikhs do not require to be removed for hand decontamination, however, they should be pushed up the arm and secured in place to enable effective hand decontamination and during all direct patient activity.
- Keep fingernails short and clean. No nail varnish, false nails or nail extensions should not be worn.
- Cosmetics, perfume and aftershave should be discreet.
- Neck ties or lanyards should not be worn when in clinical areas.
- Pens or scissors should not be carried in outside shirt pockets.
- Store your stethoscope in a safe place such as your pocket or in your bag when moving between clinical areas or during breaks. Stethoscopes should not be worn around the neck.