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Dress Code for KMMS Students

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1. Introduction

- 1.1. The KMMS dress code outlines the minimum standards of dress and hygiene required at all times in the clinical environment. Guidance has been taken from the NHS England uniforms and workwear publication¹
- 1.2. It has been designed to ensure:
- Patients feel confident they are being seen by a team of professionals and trust in the profession is maintained.
 - Patients/carers and visitors feel their beliefs are respected. Many factors including age group, ethnic origin, and religion can influence views on dress, and it is important not to cause distress to anyone.
 - Infection and safety risks are minimised.
- 1.3. KMMS welcomes the diversity of appearance that students from different religious and cultural backgrounds bring, and we want all students to feel comfortable and safe. There may be health and safety or professional considerations that restrict certain modes of dress in the clinical environment. Any student with a cultural or religious requirement should discuss this with the KMMS Student Life and Guidance (SLG) team as soon as possible.
- 1.4. There may be occasion where students need exceptions to the dress code, for example with disability or after an injury. Students should discuss any requirements with the SLG team.

2. Policy Scope

- 2.1. This policy applies to all KMMS students from year one of the programme when they are within the clinical environment.
- 2.2. For the purpose of this policy the clinical environment is defined as any location where patients/carers/simulated patients may be present. This is not limited to NHS sites and can include campus facilities, for example during skills training. The clinical environment includes:
- All placement locations

¹ <https://www.england.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Uniforms-and-Workwear-Guidance-2-April-2020.pdf>

- Specialist teaching spaces
- Interactions with patients/patient educators/simulated patients
- Simulation suites (on or off campus)
- Clinical assessments (OSCEs).

This policy should be read in conjunction with the appropriate placement organisation dress code. Students are expected to adhere to local policies when on placement.

3. Presentation and appearance

- 3.1. Students are issued with a photo identification badge indicating they are a medical student, which must always be worn visibly within the clinical environment.
- 3.2. Dress must be smart when in a clinical environment. Dress should be professional in appearance, clean and tidy, and in a good state of repair.
- 3.3. High standards of cleanliness and personal hygiene must be maintained, offensive body odour avoided, and strong-smelling perfumes or aftershaves should not be worn.
- 3.4. Jewellery should be kept to a minimum (e.g., a single, plain, wedding band). Dangling earrings or dangling facial piercings should be removed. Neck, wrist and ankle chains should not be visible.
- 3.5. Standard clinical practice is to be “bare below the elbows”. Therefore, you should not wear a wristwatch, bracelets, or rings. Exceptions allowed include the Kara, a single, plain, wedding band, non-fabric medical alert bracelets that can be easily pushed up the arm to allow for proper handwashing, and in OSCEs when students may wear a non-smart watch.
- 3.6. Hair below the collar, or obscuring the face, should be tied and secured back.
- 3.7. Nails must be kept short and clean. False nails and nail varnish are not permitted.

4. Clothing

- 4.1. Students should ensure their clothes are suitable for work purposes, are clean, and in a good state of repair. Students should dress in a manner that is sensitive to the social and cultural needs of other staff, patients, and carers/visitors.
- 4.2. Acceptable clothing includes shirts/blouses, smart trousers or skirts/dresses (not mini).
- 4.3. Unacceptable clothing includes short skirts/dresses, shorts, jeans, vest-style or 'strappy' tops, low cut tops or cropped tops, t-shirts or polo shirts, clothing with text or large logos, and hats/beanies/caps.
- 4.4. All students should follow local policy with regard to infection control and working 'bare below the elbow'. During clinical work, short sleeves are preferred but, if necessary, long sleeves may be rolled up neatly. Students may wear disposable sleeve covers if desired, however these would normally need to be provided by the student.
- 4.5. Surgical scrubs or other provided attire must only be worn in the appropriate clinical environment and when authorised.
- 4.6. Headwear including turbans, kippot, and headscarves (such as hijabs) are supported on religious or cultural grounds. Scarves must not drape freely when providing direct clinical care and must be changed if they become contaminated.
 - 4.6.1. Headwear worn as part of religious observance must not cover the face when in the clinical environment. Verbal and non-verbal communication is important to ensure the comfort and safety of patients, staff and students. Your face must be fully visible for the purposes of recognition and clinical communication. For this reason face veils including the niqab and the burka are not permitted in the clinical environment².

5. Footwear

² For guidance on good examples see <https://www.nhsemployers.org/articles/religion-dress-codes-and-chaplaincy>

5.1. Shoes should be neat, clean, and practical. Shoes should enclose the whole foot and be plain to facilitate cleaning.

- Theatre-style clogs must not be worn outside of the critical care setting.
- Trainers, open toe shoes, and sandals are not permitted

6. Other Considerations

6.1. If the staff you are working with do not consider your appearance to be acceptable they will ask you to address this to ensure you are adhering to the dress code. If you are unable to do so for the current session you can be asked to leave, which will be recorded as an absence.

6.2. If students are deemed to be contravening the dress code on more than one occasion, a Notification Form will be completed and the student will be considered under the Low-Level Concerns, Fitness to Study, and Fitness to Practise policy.

6.3. Where sessions require clothing to facilitate the learning of content (e.g., living anatomy / clinical skills) then the expectations described in the pre-session materials should be followed. For example, when studying living anatomy and clinical examination skills, it would be common practice to wear shorts and t-shirts to enable peer-practice. The students will be notified of this before the session via pre-reading and/or newsletter. All other aspects of the dress-code remain applicable (i.e., around hair/nails etc).

6.4. If you are in any doubt what you should wear in a given clinical setting, it is best to ask the academic and/or doctor in charge for advice, prior to the session, giving time for you to adapt your attire.