

Professional Dress Policy

Policy Area: BScN Program	Category: Nursing Practice
Title of Policy: Professional Dress Policy	Policy #: 1
Effective Date: June 2018	Policy Sponsor: School of Nursing Governance Council
Responsible Unit: School of Nursing	
Approved Date: June 2018	Revision Date: July 13, 2026

Policy Statement

Undergraduate nursing students are required to dress in a professional and well-groomed manner and wear the required uniforms in specific nursing practice settings. Students are required to adhere to the policy during all nursing practice experiences. Students who do not adhere to this policy may be asked to leave the nursing practice area as determined by the Nursing Practice Supervisor (NPS). This will be noted in the student's evaluation.

Purpose and Application

The purpose of this policy is to outline professional presence expectations when interacting with the public and other healthcare professionals. This policy applies to all students and SON employees in the Bachelor of Science, Nursing (BScN) program.

Introduction and Guiding Principles

The School of Nursing (SON) at Cape Breton University (CBU) requires students and their NPS to adhere to the SON professional dress policy while in nursing practice. This policy is supported by the Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses (NSNMR, 2017) and the Code of Ethics (CNA, 2025). The Professional Dress Policy is based on three guiding principles:

1. Infection control
2. Safety
3. Professionalism

Students are required to adhere to the policy during all on- and off- campus professional nursing practice experiences. Specific consideration of individual student needs must be discussed with the NPS.

Policy

CBU BScN Uniform

The CBU BScN uniform must be purchased through Keltic Clothing and includes:

1. Hunter green scrub top and pants.
2. A white lab coat.
3. Dedicated white or black shoes with non-skid soles and fully enclosed toes and heels.
4. Student name bar worn on the left front of the uniform or lab coat.
5. Watch with a second hand, a stethoscope, bandage scissors, and a pen.

Students who choose to wear an undershirt beneath their scrub top must wear a plain white undershirt.

Practice Areas Requiring Scrubs and Simulation Settings

Students must wear:

- Hunter green scrub top with the CBU crest on the upper left sleeve.
- Hunter green scrub pants.
- Approved clinical footwear as described above.
- Required identification and equipment.

Exception: Professional attire is required for mental health simulation experiences.

Practice Areas Requiring Professional Dress

Students must wear:

- Professional attire
- White lab coat with the CBU crest on the upper left sleeve.
- Required identification and equipment.

Laboratory Settings

Students must wear:

- White lab coat with the CBU crest on the upper left sleeve.
- Required identification and equipment

Procedures

Professional Appearance

1. Students must present a professional, neat, and well-groomed appearance at all times in practice settings. Uniforms and clothing must be clean, wrinkle-free, properly fitted, and in good repair.
2. Students must comply with the dress requirements of the practice setting, including the use of scrubs, professional attire, or business casual attire, as applicable. Only approved CBU uniform components may be worn.
3. Dress requirements for community placements may vary by organization. Students are responsible for consulting with the NPS and placement agency before the placement begins to confirm the attire expectations.

Wearing and Transporting Uniforms

1. Students may wear their clean uniform to nursing practice, but must change out of uniform before leaving the practice site. Uniforms and clinical footwear are to be worn only within the practice setting. Short jackets, sweaters, or other garments that do not fully cover the uniform are not permitted.

Professional Attire

1. When professional attire is required, clothing must be clean, professional, and appropriate for a health care environment. Clothing that is excessively casual, revealing, tight-fitting, sheer, or damaged is not permitted. Examples include, but are not limited to, clothing with logos or slogans, jeans, shorts, athletic wear, tank tops, open-toed shoes, short skirts, and clothing featuring sequins or glitter.

Grooming and Personal Hygiene

1. Students must comply with applicable agency requirements related to facial hair. Facial hair must be clean, neatly groomed, and maintained to support safe nursing practice.
2. Students must adhere to the No Scent Policy.
3. Hair must be clean, secured away from the face, and maintained so that it does not interfere with patient care or safety. Hair extending below shoulder length must be tied back and remain off the collar.
4. Religious head coverings are permitted and must be securely fastened in a manner that does not

compromise safety or infection prevention practices.

Nails, Jewelry, and Body Adornments

1. Fingernails must be clean, short, and natural. Nail polish, gel polish, acrylic nails, and artificial nails are not permitted.
2. Permitted jewelry is limited to:
 - a. Stud earrings;
 - b. Plain band rings;
 - c. A watch; and
 - d. Medical alert identification
3. Tattoos and body piercings must comply with agency policies and the SON's professional standards. Students may be required to cover tattoos or remove/cover piercings in practice settings.

Review

The Responsible Unit will, in relation to University Policies, within their area of operational or academic responsibility:

1. Review those School policies every 5 years, or earlier as required, and recommend amendments to or revocation of such policies.
2. Ensure those School policies are communicated appropriately.
3. Monitor compliance and assess outcomes.

References and Policies

Canadian Nursing Association Code of Ethics for Registered Nurses. (2017). Retrieved from: <https://www.cna-aic.ca/en/nursing/regulated-nursing-in-canada/nursing-ethics>

Cape Breton University No Perfume/Scent-Reduced Policy. (2019). Retrieved from: <https://www.cbu.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/scent-reduced-policy.pdf>

Canadian Patient Safety Institute. (2015). Hand Hygiene. Retrieved from: www.patientsafetyinstitute.ca/en/topic/pages/hand-hygiene.aspx

Infection Prevention and Control Canada. (2015). Hand Hygiene. Retrieved from: http://www.ipac-canada.org/links_handhygiene.php

Legislation Occupational Health and Safety Act, Statutes of Nova Scotia (1996, c. 7). Retrieved from the NS Legislature website <https://nslegislature.ca/sites/default/files/legc/statutes/occupational%20health%20and%20safety.pdf>

Nova Scotia College of Registered Nurses Standards of Practice for Registered Nurses. (2017). Retrieved from: <https://cdn1.nscn.ca/sites/default/files/documents/resources/RN%20Standards%20of%20Practice.pdf>

Nova Scotia Health Hand Hygiene Policy. (2021). Retrieved from: https://policy.nshealth.ca/Site_Published/NSHA/document_render.aspx?documentRender.IdType=6&documentRender.GenericField=&documentRender.Id=66945

Nova Scotia Health Standardized Nursing Uniform Policy. (2017). Retrieved from: http://policy.nshealth.ca/Site_Published/NSHA/document_render.aspx?documentRender.IdType=6&documentRender.GenericField=&documentRender.Id=68747

Occupational Health and Safety Act, Regulations under Section 82 in the Statutes of Nova Scotia (1996, c. 7). Retrieved from the Registry of Regulations website <https://novascotia.ca/just/regulations/regs/ohsworkplace.htm>