Faculty of Health & Life Sciences
The Leicester School of Allied Health
Paramedicine Division

Uniform and Dress Policy

Pre-registration Paramedics

1. **Introduction**

Student Paramedic dress standards exist to:

* + - Ensure compatibility with safe moving & handling principles.
		- Ensure compatibility with evidence-based infection prevention & control principles.
		- Ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of students during the course of their practice experience.
		- Ensure the health, safety, and wellbeing of peers, colleagues, and service users when delivering any aspect of health care.
		- Promote and maintain public confidence in the Paramedic profession.
		- Convey your role as a student paramedic.

For these reasons, DMU-issued uniform should be worn for the duration of **all clinical placements** and clinical activities on campus.

All students MUST adhere to the standards in Section 6.

**This policy should be read in conjunction with the uniform policies or guidance applicable to the clinical area or NHS Trust that you have been allocated to. It is each student’s responsibility to identify any additional requirements on first contact with each placement and to adhere to these requirements for the duration of the placement.**

1. **Collecting Your Uniform**

**2.1** Three sets of uniform will be provided by the University. Each set consists of Polo shirt, trousers, waterproof jacket, belt, name badge, and epaulettes. Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is supplied via East Midlands Ambulance Service NHS Trust to ensure compliance. This includes safety boots, helmet and hi-visibility garment. Polo shirts are non-gender specific. Male and female trousers are available – these differ primarily in the cut of the hip/waist proportion. In accordance with DMU policy, you may order whichever uniform is most congruent with your affirmed gender.

**2.2** The HLS Placement Team will contact all students within the first two weeks of the programme with full instructions for ordering uniforms, as well as the process for exchanging them. Uniforms may only be exchanged for alternate sizes in extreme circumstances. Uniform collection is a mandatory timetabled session, and exchanges are limited to a specific time period indicated by the placements team.

**2.3** Uniform allocations should last the duration of the course. In the event of size fluctuations or damage occurring, replacements can be purchased at your own cost.

**2.4** If you discontinue the programme before completion, you must destroy your uniforms by cutting through the logo before disposing of them.

2.5 If any student loses or misplaces an item of uniform or suspects they have left it at a scene or that it has been stolen they must inform the practice placement team immediately via email.

**3. Wearing Your Uniform**

**3.1** This policy does not apply to academic elements of the programme, such as lectures or seminars.

**3.2** DMU Uniform (Section 4) should be worn during all placements.

**3.3** Uniform may be required in certain practical learning environments on the DMU campus such as OSCEs, simulations, and clinical skills sessions. Where this is the case, it will be communicated to you in advance.

**3.4** DMU students in uniform are representatives of their profession and their university. It is therefore best practice to cover your uniform or travel to placement in your own clothes. Uniform should not be worn for any private or social activity outside of the practice learning environment.

**3.5** Smokers should ensure that their uniform is fully covered or removed when smoking, and take steps to ensure that their uniform does not smell of smoke on return to the clinical area.

**3.6** DMU-issued ID badges should be available at all times. You may be required to wear additional ID badges in certain placement environments. These should be worn on a double-sided ID card holder.

**3.7** You will be issued with a blue (triple release) HLS student lanyard and are advised to use this for the duration of the programme for ease of recognition both on- and off-campus. You may wear your own lanyard or ID clip at your discretion. These must not depict discriminatory words or imagery, represent a safety hazard, or be otherwise incompatible with upholding the professional image of a student paramedic.

**3.9** You will be issued with a DMU name badge at the start of your programme. This will include your role as a student paramedic. It is your choice whether you include your full preferred name or just your first name or your personal pronouns on this badge. The name badge does not replace your DMU photo ID.

**3.10** Fob watches may be worn as long as they adhere to the same standards as lanyards.

**4. Uniform Standards**

**4.1** Polo shirt sleeves should not fall below the elbow at their lowest extent. Polo shirt MUST be tucked into trousers.

**4.2** Trousers should be 2cm from the ground at their lowest extent and **not** tucked into boots. A plain black belt should be worn.

**4.3** Bare Below the Elbow (BBE):

* To avoid contamination risk and ensure the ability to wash or sanitise hands and wrists up to the elbow, you must be ‘bare below the elbow’ at all times in the clinical area.
* The ‘clinical area’ is any area in which direct patient care or medicine preparation takes place.
* Wristwatches, bangles, and bracelets **must not** be worn in the clinical area.
* A **plain white** short-sleeved shirt (base layer) may be worn under the uniform.
* Where disposable oversleeves are available, these may be worn in the clinical area but local guidance for disposal and usage must be followed.
* Where, for religious reasons, members of staff wish to cover their forearms or wear a bracelet **when not engaged in patient care**, ensure that sleeves or bracelets can be pushed up the arm and secured in place for hand washing and direct patient care activity. Placement areas may be able to provide disposable over-sleeves – elasticated at the wrist and elbow – to cover forearms during patient care activity. Disposable over-sleeves can be worn where gloves are used, but strict adherence to washing hands and wrists must be observed before and after use. Over sleeves must be discarded in exactly the same way as disposable gloves

**4.4** Epaulettes corresponding to the programme of study should be worn at all times. These will be issued at the start of your programme along with your other uniform items.

**4.5** Plain black protective boots (issued) and plain black socks should be worn. You may wish to purchase your own Insoles if you require additional support due to wearing your boots for twelve or more hours per day.

**4.7** Uniforms should be washed at the highest permissible temperature between each use. Three sets are provided to allow a continuous rotation of uniforms to be washed. Washing instructions for provided PPE and Uniform MUST be followed.

**4.8** Uniforms must be free from stains and creases. You will be expected to iron out any creases and may be turned away from any practice learning environment if your uniform is creased or soiled.

**4.9** Headwear, (for example: turbans and kippot, veils and headscarves) for religious or cultural reasons should be maintained as an item of uniform in line with the principles of this policy. They must be changed and laundered in accordance with the laundering of uniforms. Students should ensure that they keep a spare in case the headwear becomes contaminated during the course of their work. All headwear must be secured neatly and be unadorned. The use of headwear does not remove the need for maintaining standards of personal hygiene

4.10 A plain black/ambulance green hat/scarf may be worn during inclement weather, but MUST be removed prior to patient contact. During episodes of prolonged exposure to direct sunlight a plain black/ambulance green cap may be worn, this should be removed once risk of sun exposure has subsided.

**5. Non-Uniform Dress Standards**

**5.1** In some environments, primarily those with vulnerable or distressed service users, the healthcare professionals you work with may wear plain clothes. In this instance, you should not wear your uniform and adhere to the following standards instead:

**5.2** You must be clearly identifiable as a student paramedic. DMU and any required local ID should be visible at all times, except in placement areas where this is identified as a potential wellbeing or safety hazard for students or service users. In this scenario, students should have ID on their person and must be able to produce it at any time. If a lanyard is worn, it should be a DMU-issued lanyard that clearly shows that you are a student paramedic.

**5.4** Shorts, skirts, and dresses should fall between the level of the knee and 2cm from the ground at their minimum and maximum extents.

**5.5** Clothing must convey a smart, professional image and be fit for purpose. Vests or cropped tops exposing the abdomen or low-waisted trousers must not be worn. You should ensure that your clothing ensures modesty.

**5.6** Clothing depicting discriminatory language or imagery, or referencing any subject incompatible with the standards set out by the HCPC standards, must not be worn.

**5.7** Jewellery, wristwatches, fitness bands, tops, blazers, and jackets must have the ability to be removed or securely rolled up above the elbow in situations such as providing direct patient care, hand washing, and medicine preparation & administration (4.3).

**6. Standards for All Students**

**6.1** You will be required to wear various forms of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) including masks, gloves, and aprons. Local policy and procedures should be followed for all usage of PPE. If you have a latex allergy or any other barrier to the safe usage of standard PPE, you must make your personal tutor aware of this at the first opportunity.

**6.2** Visible tattoos and body art must not depict any discriminatory language or imagery, or otherwise reference any subject incompatible with the HCPC standards. Temporary body art (including henna) may be worn but will be degraded by hand hygiene procedure. You must always follow hand hygiene policy.

**6.3** Plain metal rings with no engraving or inset jewellery may be worn and are compatible with BBE principles.

* Placement environments may stipulate the allowed location, type, or number of rings. You must remove rings when required by local policy.

**6.4** Necklaces should not be worn as these present a contamination and ligature hazard.

**6.5** Piercing jewellery must be robust and without small components such as inset jewels which may become detached and contaminate the clinical area. Piercing jewellery should be chosen to minimize the risk of being caught on masks, lanyards, patients, or objects.

* DMU recognizes that there is no conclusively proven objective infection control or safety reason to limit the location or number of visible body piercings, including facial piercings.
* Placement environments may stipulate the allowed location, type, or number of visible piercings. You must be able to replace, cover, or remove such piercings when required by local policy. East Midlands Ambulance Service specifically request that the following should not to be worn by student paramedics, as it may be hazardous to the wearer as these could be inadvertently pulled or grabbed by confused patients which may result in an injury to the wearer or the patient: Hoop earrings, Necklaces, Eyebrow studs or rings, Lip studs or rings, Cheek studs or ring, Nose studs or rings.
* During practical sessions at DMU you must comply with the East Midlands Ambulance Service statute on piercings. You will be turned away from the practice learning environment unless you comply.

**6.6** Hair, hair extensions, and wigs must be tied up and back to ensure that it does not touch the collar (or the skin of the neck, back, or shoulders if no collar is worn).

* DMU recognizes that there is no conclusively proven objective impact on an individuals’ ability to provide professional, safe, and competent care based on their hair style or colour.
* Placement environments may stipulate that ‘extreme’ colours and styles are covered up. You must be prepared to cover your hair with a suitable covering when required by local policy.

**6.7** False nails may not be worn and should be removed before each placement. Nails must not protrude from fingertips when looking at the palm of your hand. You should be aware than nail varnish/polish is not permitted in many placement environments, and you must follow local policy in this instance. You are responsible for the cost of removing any nail products and will be turned away from the practice learning environment until all nail products are removed.

**6.8** False eyelashes or eyelash extensions may not be worn, as these can become detached and contaminate the clinical area. You will be turned away from the practice learning environment until these are removed.

**6.9** Makeup may be worn by any student, ensuring it is professional and moderate.

**6.10** You are expected to maintain an appropriate level of personal hygiene. The use of simple or lightly fragranced deodorant is appropriate and encouraged, but you should not use strongly scented perfumes or aftershave as staff or service users may be sensitive to such products.

**6.11** All lanyards worn around the neck should have at least three breakaway fasteners. Lanyards should be tucked in a pocket and must not swing freely when providing direct patient care.

**6.12** You may not wear badges and pins whilst in uniform. If you are in your own clothing, you may wear badges and pins, and these may be fixed to lanyards or clothing. Badges should be relevant and not feature discriminatory language or imagery, or reference any subject incompatible with the standards set out by the HCPC.

**6.13** Students with religious considerations should follow the additional information in Appendix 1.

**7. Equality Considerations & Penalties**

This policy has been reviewed by:

* Faith Team
* Programme Lead
* School Leadership Team
* HLS Placements Team

What about Practice partners and our Fac Health & Safety Coordinator Paul Ainsworth Will it need Risk assessing?

Individual alterations and exemptions to this policy must be discussed with and approved by relevant stakeholders such as the Programme Lead(s), Placements Team, School leadership team and Faith team.

Students found in breach of this policy will face the relevant penalty to their circumstance. This may include awarding a failure/not achieved for the relevant practice assessment criteria (*i.e.* *Professional Values*).

**8. Supporting Documents**

[Bearman, G., Bryant, K., Leekha, S., Mayer, J., Munoz-Price, L. S., Murthy, R., Palmore, T., Rupp, M. E., & White, J. (2014). Healthcare personnel attire in non-operating-room settings. *Infection control and hospital epidemiology* 35(2) pp.107–121](https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4820072/)

[British Islamic Medical Association – Bare Below the Elbows Toolkit](https://britishima.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/toolkit_bbe_web_6June17.pdf)

[British Islamic Medical Association – Theatre Hijab Toolkit](https://britishima.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/toolkit_hijab_web_6June17.pdf)

[Cox, G., Sobrany, S., Jenkins, E., Musipa, C., & Darbyshire, P. (2021) Time for nursing to eradicate hair discrimination. *Journal of Clinical Nursing* 30(9-10): e45-e47](https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/jocn.15708)

[De Montfort University - Policy on protecting and supporting trans, gender fluid and nonbinary staff and students](https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/edi-strategy/trans-policy-2022-v4.pdf)

[De Montfort University - Religion or Belief Policy Statements and Guidance for Staff and Students](https://www.dmu.ac.uk/documents/edi-strategy/religion-or-belief-policy.pdf)

[Dorwart, S., Kuntz, S. & Armstrong, M. (2010) Developing a Nursing Personnel Policy to Address Body Art Using an Evidence-Based Model. *The Journal of continuing Education in Nursing* 41(12) pp.540-546](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/44665867_Developing_a_Nursing_Personnel_Policy_to_Address_Body_Art_Using_an_Evidence-Based_Model)

[Equality and Human Rights Commission – Guidance on the wearing of Sikh articles of faith in the workplace and public spaces](https://dera.ioe.ac.uk/id/eprint/1986/1/sikh_articles_of_faith_guidance_final.pdf)

HCPC (2016). *Guidance on conduct and ethics for students*. Publication code 20091211gPOLPUB

[Leicestershire Partnership Trust – Work Wear and Uniform Policy](https://www.leicspart.nhs.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/Work-Wear-and-Uniform-Policy-exp-Jul-24.pdf)

NHS England (2020). *Uniforms and workwear: guidance for NHS employers*. Publications approval reference: 001559. NHSE

[Nursing & Midwifery Council – *The Code (2018)*](https://www.nmc.org.uk/standards/code/)

[St Andrew’s Healthcare – Code of Conduct](https://www.stah.org/assets/Code-of-Conduct-Brochure-2020-final-final.pdf)

[University Hospitals of Leicester – Uniform and Dress Code Policy](https://secure.library.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/PAGL/Shared%20Documents/Uniform%20and%20Dress%20Code%20UHL%20Policy.pdf)

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**Appendix 1: Religious Considerations**

Students with religious dress considerations may modify their uniform in the following ways:

* The Kara (plain metal bangle) and Kirpan (ceremonial dagger) may be worn by Sikhs but the Kirpan must not be visible and must be secured under clothing at all times.
* The Kara must be washed during hand hygiene procedures. Students should be aware that they may be asked to remove the Kara in certain environments, such as around strong magnetic fields and in operating theatres. While on ambulance practice/Simulation it should be pushed up to the elbow and taped.
* Some placement environments may require that the Kirpan is removed and stored safely until you leave the clinical area when valid staff or service user safety risks are assessed to be present.
* Religious head and neck coverings including the hijab and turban may be worn, as long as they adhere to the head covering standards below.
* Forearms may be covered at the times set out in Sections 3 and 4. There is no outright religious exemption to the BBE principle in the clinical area – all students must abide by this principle. Depending on local availability, disposable oversleeves or alternative PPE may be worn as a sterile cover whilst maintaining compatibility with hygiene protocols (Section **4.4**).
* You can approach your Personal Tutor or the DMU Faith Advice Team directly with any questions or concerns: <https://www.dmu.ac.uk/current-students/student-support/wellbeing-disability/chaplaincy-spiritual-support/faith-advice.aspx>

Head and neck coverings may only be worn for the purposes of religious observance:

* All head coverings must either be ‘off the collar’ or securely tucked underneath the uniform at all times.
* Head coverings must not obscure the eyebrows, eyes, cheeks, nose, or mouth. Full-face veils must not be worn in any placement environment.
* The Kanga (wooden comb for Sikhs) may be worn, as long as it is securely fixed under the turban.
* Plain, dark-coloured material that can be washed at a high temperature with uniforms should be used for all head coverings.
* You should be aware that some placement environments (primarily operating theatres) may provide disposable hijabs, hair coverings, or orthopaedic hoods. These must be used and disposed of according to local policy. You are entitled to secure and private changing facilities where these garments are required.