Code of Conduct for members of the Council
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1 In order for the Nursing and Midwifery Council (NMC) to command the confidence of interested parties, it is necessary for members of the Council to observe appropriate standards of conduct. The required standards are articulated in this Code of Conduct, which applies to all members of the Council upon appointment.

Principles

2 In performing their duties, members of the Council should observe the Seven Principles of Public Life (the ‘Nolan principles’), namely:

2.1 **Selflessness**: Holders of public office should act solely in terms of the public interest.

2.2 **Integrity**: Holders of public office must avoid placing themselves under any obligation to people or organisations that might try inappropriately to influence them in their work. They should not act or take decisions in order to gain financial or other material benefits for themselves, their family, or their friends. They must declare and resolve any interests and relationships.

2.3 **Objectivity**: Holders of public office must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.

2.4 **Accountability**: Holders of public office are accountable to the public for their decisions and actions and must submit themselves to the scrutiny necessary to ensure this.

2.5 **Openness**: Holders of public office should act and take decisions in an open and transparent manner. Information should not be withheld from the public unless there are clear and lawful reasons for so doing.

2.6 **Honesty**: Holders of public office should be truthful.

2.7 **Leadership**: Holders of public office should exhibit these principles in their own behaviour. They should actively promote and robustly support the principles and be willing to challenge poor behaviour wherever it occurs.

Values and behaviours

3 In order to enable robust and effective decisions to be made, members should:

3.1 participate in discussion in an open, non-judgmental, and reasoned way;

3.2 show respect for others and value diversity and inclusion;

3.3 foster trust and demonstrate confidence in colleagues;

3.4 welcome and provide constructive challenge;
3.5 listen to and value the views of others;

3.6 address matters succinctly and without undue repetition so that others have sufficient opportunity to contribute.

4 Members should lead by example, demonstrating the NMC behaviours, namely:

4.1 accountability for results;

4.2 leadership;

4.3 shaping the future;

4.4 working together;

4.5 serving others;

4.6 impact and influencing.

Corporate responsibilities

5 The NMC is the independent regulator for nurses and midwives in the UK, established and governed by the Nursing and Midwifery Order 2001 (as amended) (the Order). Our main objective is to protect the public. Our principal functions are to establish and maintain standards of education and practice, to maintain a register of those who meet the standards, and to take action when a nurse’s or a midwife’s fitness to practise is called into question. Members have corporate responsibility for the achievement of our main objective and the exercise of our principal functions.

6 As trustees of a charity registered in England and Wales and in Scotland, members of the Council have corporate responsibility for ensuring that the NMC complies with charity legislation and the requirements of the Charity Commission and the Office of the Scottish Charity Regulator.

7 As trustees of a body corporate employing staff, members have corporate responsibility for ensuring that the NMC complies with relevant employment, equality, human rights, health and safety, data protection, and freedom of information legislation.

8 Members have corporate responsibility for ensuring that the NMC complies with any statutory or administrative requirements governing the use of its funds.

Individual responsibilities

9 Members have a responsibility to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the objectives, functions, and powers of the NMC as a set out in the Order and associated legislation.
10 Members have a responsibility to ensure that they have a clear understanding of their role as trustees of a charity and that they meet the legal requirements for eligibility to serve as a charity trustee as specified in section 178 ("Persons disqualified from being charity trustees or trustees of a charity") of the Charities Act 2011.

11 Members have a responsibility to ensure that they have a clear understanding of the scope of authority delegated to the Chief Executive and Registrar and to hold the Chief Executive and Registrar to account for the exercise of delegated authority.

12 Members have a responsibility to make themselves available for meetings of the Council and any committees or working groups to which they have been appointed.

13 Members have a responsibility to make decisions that:
   13.1 are in the public interest and the interests of the NMC;
   13.2 are consistent with the NMC’s UK-wide remit;
   13.3 contribute to the NMC’s main objective to protect the public;
   13.4 are within the NMC’s obligations under the Order and associated legislation;
   13.5 take into account the needs and views of interested parties;
   13.6 are not influenced by personal or professional interests.

14 Members have a duty to accept collective responsibility for the Council’s decisions and to support their communication and implementation.

15 Members have a responsibility to be as open as possible with interested parties about the Council’s decisions and the work of the NMC, restricting information only when the principles of confidentiality or the law require it.

16 Members have a responsibility not to disclose confidential information obtained in the course of their duties as members of the Council, unless it is in the public interest to do so, and in the event of any such disclosure must notify the Chief Executive and Registrar.

17 Members have a responsibility to avoid placing themselves under an obligation to any individual or organisation which might affect, or be perceived to affect, their ability to act impartially and objectively as members of the Council.

18 Members have a responsibility to complete and maintain their entry in the Council register of interests, declaring any professional or personal interests which may conflict with, or be perceived to conflict with, their responsibilities as members of the Council.
19 Members have a responsibility to distinguish clearly, when speaking or writing in any public forum, between the views of the NMC, their personal views, and the views of any other organisation to which they may be affiliated. Any public engagement or communication with the media on behalf of the NMC must be discussed with the Chief Executive and Registrar in advance.

20 Members have a responsibility to participate in induction, development, and appraisal processes and to commit to their personal development.

21 Members have a responsibility to inform the Privy Council, the Council, and the Chief Executive and Registrar if they become, or may be about to become, liable to be removed from office under paragraph 6 of the Nursing and Midwifery Council (Constitution) Order 2008 (as amended).

**Raising concerns**

22 Members have a responsibility to raise concerns about possible wrongdoing:

22.1 with the Chief Executive and Registrar, if they relate to a member of staff;

22.2 with the Chair of the Council, if they relate to another Council member or the Chief Executive and Registrar;

22.3 with the Chair of the Audit Committee, if they relate to the Chair of the Council.

23 Members have a responsibility to raise concerns about compliance with charity law or other legislation with the Chair of the Council and the Chief Executive and Registrar at the earliest opportunity.

**Breaches of the Code of Conduct**

24 Any minor breach of the Code will normally be dealt with informally, for example by the Chair of the Council or another Council member drawing the breach to the Council member’s attention during a meeting or similar.

25 Where a complaint is received about the conduct of a member, or where there appears to be a deliberate, serious, or continued breach of the Code, the matter will be referred to the Chair of the Council.

Approved by the Council on 29 January 2014.