



Rankin SON Policy on Professional Appearance

Classification:	Student Policy
Responsible Authority:	Clinical Instructors
Executive Sponsor:	Associate Director
Approval Authority:	Rankin School of Nursing
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PURPOSE

Clinical practica are an essential component of baccalaureate education for nursing. Nursing students convey a professional identity in the way they present themselves while in clinical practica.

The purpose of this policy is to outline the expectations for professional appearance.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all nursing students.

DEFINITIONS

This includes an explanation of terms and abbreviations used within the policy and procedure.

Word/Term	Definition
SON	Rankin School of Nursing
Clinical instructors	Faculty, Nurse Educators, Preceptors
SLC	Simulation Learning Centre
StFX	St. Francis Xavier University

POLICY

Professional identity formation is part of the nursing students' baccalaureate education. Professional appearance is based on principles of professional identity, infection prevention and control, and personal safety. Presenting a professional image can enhance the development of a respectful relationship with patients. The SON believes that a professional appearance is required in all nursing situations.

PROCEDURE

<u>Action</u>	<u>Responsibility</u>
1. Attire for Acute Care Settings & SLC	Student
1.1 Uniforms	
1.1.1 Uniforms will consist of a solid white scrub top and navy scrub pants. Pants must be hemmed above the heel line. The StFX University crest must be placed on the left sleeve and the student's name bar on the left upper chest. A white lab jacket worn over the uniform or a solid white, non-patterned undershirt (either short or long sleeve) is acceptable. Uniforms are to be clean, wrinkle free, and fit appropriately.	
1.1.2 The School of Nursing recognizes and respects the right of students to dress in accordance with their religious beliefs and/or practices. Accomodation will be approved for particular dress related to such religious beliefs and/or practices where the three guiding principles of infection prevention and control, staff and patient safety and image are adhered to and clothing is deemed safe for the job activity.	
1.1.3 Students must change into and out of their uniform at the clinical site unless a mid-thigh length coat is worn to completely cover the uniform. Thus, short-length coats, jackets, or sweaters are not acceptable. Uncovered uniforms and nursing shoes are to be worn on the premises only.	
1.2 Footware	
1.2.1 Either "nurses" shoes or solid white/dark coloured sneakers are acceptable. Bright colors and open toe/heeled shoes are not acceptable. It is important that footwear provides adequate support. Shoes and laces must be kept clean.	
1.3 Equipment	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – watch that displays seconds – stethoscope – bandage scissors – black pen 	
2. Agenices where uniforms are not required (ie.community, day care, mental health units)	
2.1 Attire	
2.1.1 Semi-casual street or dress clothes that are clean, neat, and permit the student to fulfill the nursing process with ease (e.g., it is difficult to sit on the floor with a toddler for assessment or	

assist in tub bathing while wearing a skirt). Non-acceptable professional attire includes (but not limited to):

- plunging necklines/low cut tops
 - tank tops
 - strapless clothing
 - clothing exposing midriffs or undergarments (ie shirts or low rising pants)
 - miniskirts
 - shorts above the knee
 - jeans of any color
 - sweatshirts
 - graphic tees
 - ball caps/toques
 - sweatpants
 - Yoga Pants
- ** as per the agency policy

2.2 Footwear

2.2.1 Clean and supportive shoes with a closed toe and heel. If it is culturally unacceptable to wear shoes in a particular home, soled slippers may be worn.

3. Infection Prevention and Control

Student

3.1 Hygiene

Hair:

- Must be clean, neat and off the face
- Long hair must be secured, worn off the collar/shoulder, and professionally appropriate

Nails:

- must be appropriately trimmed and manicured so as not to injure clients
- Artificial nails (e.g., gel nails) pose a risk of infection for clients and therefore are not permitted
- Nail polish is not acceptable

Beards/Moustaches:

- Male students who are not full-bearded must be clean-shaven
- Full beards/moustaches must be neatly trimmed

3.2 Other

- Restrict the wearing of jewellery to small studs, plain flat smooth wedding bands, and medical alert bracelets
- Non-studded jewellery such as nose, eyebrow, and lip rings must be removed, unless worn for cultural/religious purposes.
- Students are not permitted to chew gum

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| <p>4. Name bars</p> <p>4.1 Name bars must be purchased through the SON. It must include the student's full name, student status, and the university's name.</p> <p>4.2 The name bar is part of the uniform and must be worn during all nurse-client encounters, including SLC.</p> <p>4.3 The StFX name bar is not to be worn when the student is caregiving in a capacity other than student nurse (e.g., CCA, PCW). This constitutes misrepresentation of self and it is considered unethical.</p> | <p>Student</p> |
| <p>5. Fragrance</p> <p>5.1 Personal scents are not to be worn. Students should use unscented or low scented personal hygiene products (i.e. deodorant, shampoo, and soap).</p> | <p>Student</p> |
| <p>6. Non-Adherence to Professional Appearance Policy</p> <p>6.1 If a student does not adhere to the policy, the student will be given the opportunity to fix the non-adherence in the clinical setting. If they are unable, they will be asked to leave the clinical setting and return within a reasonable amount of time. If they are unable to return to the clinical setting within a reasonable amount of time, missed time will be made up at an alternate time.</p> <p>6.2 If non-adherence with the policy is repeated, this will be documented in the students self-evaluation form as an area needing improvement.</p> | <p>Student, Clinical Instructor</p> |

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

RELATED POLICIES

[StFX University Academic Calendar](#)

RELATED MATERIALS

NSCN Professional Presence : A Guideline for Nurses (2018)

NSHA Infection Prevention and Control Manual (2016)

Giddens, J. F. (2021). Concepts for nursing practice (3rd ed.). Elsevier.

NSHA Dress Standards (2019)