

Values, conduct and behaviours for Council members, associates and partners

GPHC0041 Version 1.3

This policy sets out the values, conduct and behaviours which Council members, associates and partners are expected to demonstrate



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1. Introduction

- 1.1 As an independent regulator, it is our role to protect, promote and maintain the health, safety and wellbeing of patients and of those who use or need pharmacy services. We also act to uphold public confidence in pharmacy. To do this, the GPhC needs to carry out its regulatory functions and statutory requirements in an open, honest and ethical way. As such, we have a code of conduct for Council members and others which sets standards of behaviour for them and for others, who carry out work in connection with the GPhC.
- 1.2 The Council has adopted the seven principles of public life (also known as the Nolan principles) as its values for Council members, associates and partners. These are set out in section 3 below. The code of conduct, set out in section 4, provides further detail of the behaviours expected.

2. Purpose

- 2.1 This policy sets out clearly the values, conduct and behaviours which Council members, associates and partners are expected to demonstrate.

3. Scope

- 3.1 As well as Council members, there are a number of non-employee groups who help the GPhC to fulfil its regulatory functions. We use the terms 'associate' and 'partner' to describe these groups. Associates and partners fill a variety of roles, providing a wider range of knowledge and skills to support the GPhC's work.
- 3.2 Council members, associates and partners must demonstrate high standards of corporate and personal behaviour and are required to observe the same code of conduct and standards of behaviour, although not all provisions may be equally relevant to all groups. Where appropriate, associates may also need to comply with legislative and other requirements and codes of conduct relevant to their specific functions.

4. Principles of public life

- 4.1 Council members, associates and partners must demonstrate the seven principles of public life, also known as 'The Nolan Principles'. These are:

Selflessness

Holders of public office should act solely in the public interest.

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.

Objectivity

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

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.

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

Honesty

Holders of public office should be truthful

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.

5. Code of conduct

5.1 Members, associates and partners must:

- a) be committed to fully upholding the principles of public life and, in addition, they are committed to ethical and lawful conduct;
- b) be professional and demonstrate good behaviours in their roles;
- c) not attempt to exercise individual authority within the organisation, unless expressly authorised by the Council;
- d) co-operate and work collaboratively with colleagues;
- e) use good judgement and communicate professionally in public, or online (please see paragraphs 5.2 to 5.5 below for more guidance on this);
- f) adhere to the principle of collective responsibility in decision making that they are involved in;
- g) maintain confidentiality at all times, working within the GPhC's information governance and security policies and the law;
- h) avoid any behaviour that may impair the ability of the GPhC, the Council or a committee to perform its functions or to enjoy the confidence of stakeholders;
- i) keep in mind the competencies required for their role and seek to demonstrate these throughout their tenure;
- j) be properly prepared for Council or committee deliberations or discussions;
- k) promote equality, diversity and inclusion, and treat others with respect;
- l) observe the all applicable GPhC standards and policies such as conflicts of interests; gifts and hospitality; education & training; attendance at meetings; and performance appraisal policies;

- m) disclose to the relevant person (for example, the Chair of Council, or the Associates and Partners Manager), as soon as a situation arises, any commitment or activity which may be perceived as a potential conflict of interest in respect of the role they undertake with the GPhC and do so in line with the relevant policy;
- n) challenge any action or behaviour by a fellow member or associate or partner which appears not to comply with this code;
- o) inform their Chair or relevant staff lead of any reason why they may be liable to be suspended or removed from the Council or a committee under the provisions of the Pharmacy Order, the GPhC's Constitution Order, the GPhC's Rules and/or Standing Orders. (Please note the Chair of Council must inform the Chief Executive & Registrar of any reason why he or she may be liable to be suspended or removed from the Council under the provisions of the GPhC (Constitution) Order and Standing Orders 3.3).

Communicating in public or online

- 5.2 In line with the above, Council members, associates and partners must use good judgement and communicate professionally when in public, or online. This includes maintaining confidentiality and privacy, when appropriate to do so.
- 5.3 When communicating in a public space such as at an event or on social media, members, associates and partners must understand and take into account that their opinions are likely to be interpreted as being representative of the GPhC, despite any efforts they make to point out that their views are their own. Those listening to you speak or reading your posts may identify you as being associated with the GPhC even if you do not identify yourself as such.
- 5.4 Similarly, members, associates and partners must understand and take into account that their behaviour is likely to be interpreted as being endorsed by the GPhC and reflective of its values.
- 5.5 It is therefore important that members, associates and partners think carefully about these risks before engaging in communications that may be associated with the GPhC or topics that could be related to the work of the GPhC and avoid being drawn into negative, unconstructive discussions or behaviours.
- 5.6 When using social media, remember that anything you say online can be copied or forwarded and taken out of context. Remember also that once something is posted, it can be very difficult to remove it – even if you delete a post, it may already have been copied or shared.

DO

- Act professionally online as well as in person;
- Think before you post: privacy settings do not mean that a post will remain private;
- Remember that your content is likely to be seen as reflective of or endorsed by the GPhC and statements that your views are your own mean little in practice

DON'T:

- Get drawn into negative discussions;
- Post anything which you would not be prepared to say in public;
- Risk undermining the principle of collective responsibility which applies to Council members;
- Post any content which could bring the GPhC into disrepute.

6. Behavioural standards

6.1 Members, associates and partners must be professional and display good standards of behaviour in their roles. The statements below, although not exhaustive, illustrate the types of behaviour the GPhC expects from members, associates and partners (please note not all may be equally relevant to all groups).

The Behavioural Statements

i. Good corporate behaviour

A. Acting in the public interest

Putting the interests of the public first, never forgetting the duty to use the position for public benefit not personal advantage.

B. Considering the impact of the Council's work

Analysing strategic direction to ensure it supports improvement of public safety and wellbeing and considering the impact on all communities.

C. Challenging the status quo

Constructively challenging the status quo and probing effectively to achieve the best outcomes for the public whom the GPhC exists to serve.

D. Building constructive relationships

Displaying empathy and respect for others and building constructive relationships across boundaries.

E. Holding others to account

Holding others to account for performance of delegated responsibilities, working within the distinction between the non-executive and executive role in line with the GPhC's governance policy.

F. Weighing up risk

Balancing the cost (whether financial or resource) against the benefit and considering the overall impact including the risks and opportunities of different strategic approaches.

ii. Good personal behaviour

This is characterised by members, associates and partners demonstrating courtesy, listening and respect in dealings with each other, with the organisation's staff and with stakeholders:

G. Modelling behaviours in line with the GPhC's commitment to equality, diversity and inclusion.

H. Displaying a high level of probity, integrity, objectivity and fairness in working with the GPhC and being accountable and responsible for behaviours and actions.

I. Supporting and hold themselves to account for a collective decision taken. Accepting personal responsibility for their part in whether the GPhC succeeds or fails.

- J. Accepting challenge on their own perspective.
- K. Embracing change when it is needed, remaining open to adapting their position in light of others' views or new information.
- L. Giving and accepting feedback positively and constructively.
- M. Listening to and actively seeking to understand issues from a range of different perspectives, including individual and minority views.
- N. Embracing change when it is needed, remaining open to adapting their position in light of others' views or new information.

7. Non-compliance

- 7.1 All Council members, associates and partners must read, understand and comply with this policy.
- 7.2 Any action, conduct or behaviour which may be a breach of this policy will be dealt with in line with the GPhC's governance framework and supporting policies and procedures relating to managing complaints about Council members, associates and partners, including (where appropriate) formal suspension and removal procedures.

