

Aims and Objectives

- 1) To develop an understanding of what honesty and integrity means to us as medical students
- 2) To identify the importance of honesty and integrity within your interactions with patients, peers and professionals
- 3) To be able to critically analyse common scenarios with regards to honesty and integrity
- 4) To find out more about the GMC guidance on *Achieving good medical practice: a medical students guide*
- 5) To give you a few tools to take into your professional work, to help you in difficult situations where honesty and integrity are of great importance

Be honest when writing in medical notes
Respect
Be open about mistakes

Be honest about your competence
Informed consent
Be honest if things go wrong
Do not abuse your position
Reflective practice

Be dependable
Be professional when accepting criticism
Offer an apology

Task 1: In pairs, try to explain to your partner **what honesty and integrity means to you**. Try to **give an example** upon when you feel you acted with integrity or honesty within the professional environment?

Often subtle things, with potentially significant repercussions

Would you correct a ward cleaner if they call you doctor?

Is intertwined within policy and legislation

Are you aware that forging a signature is classified as fraud?

Is it dishonest to reassure a patient who is facing imminent death?

If you were a patient, would you prefer the upsetting truth, or a false comfort?

Would you lie to prevent yourself getting in trouble if you were 100% certain you would not get caught?

Is this an acceptable way to approach being a medical professional?



Would you apologise to a patient if you made a minor prescribing mistake, with no subsequent sequelae?

How many times have you raised / reported patient safety concerns whilst on placement?

Would you declare a recent criminal conviction to your medical school?

Have you ever made up or claimed to find a positive examination finding?

If your medical school examination questions were being sent around the year before the test, would you have a look?

Have you ever discussed examination / OSCE questions before your student colleagues sit the exam themselves?

Would you do anything if you heard a fellow colleague make a derogatory comment about a recently qualified nurse?

How would you feel if you heard someone making a derogatory comment about your performance in your first week of foundation training?

Be impartial
Treat all patients equally
Explain treatments fully
Do not copy the work of others
Do not forge a supervisor's name

Lesson 1: understand and accept your level of knowledge, skill and competence

Task 2: A medical student is on his first week of placement in A&E. He has just looked at an x-ray, and thinks he can see a transverse fracture of the left radius. He has not discussed his thoughts with his supervising consultant. *Listen to the following conversation.* **Give 3 examples in this scenario of behaviour not demonstrating honesty and integrity.**



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Task 2: A medical student is on his first week of placement in A&E. He has just looked at the x-ray, and thinks he can see a transverse fracture of the left radius. He has not discussed his thoughts with his supervising consultant. **Give 3 examples of behaviour in this scenario not demonstrating honesty and integrity.**

Failed to correct the history giver when 'incorrectly' called doctor

Incorrectly gave a diagnosis of a left radial fracture without the underpinning knowledge to make the diagnosis

Gave management advice without the underpinning knowledge to make the informed decision

Task 3: How would you demonstrate honesty and integrity in this scenario?

Explain your destination (job role – e.g. 2nd year medical student), and explain why you are speaking with the patient

Explain that you cannot give a confirmed diagnosis based on your level of training and lack of knowledge

Explain that you are unable to offer a management plan, and signpost the question to your senior doctor

Lesson 1: understand and accept your level of knowledge, skill and competence

Task 4: Listen to the following version of the same scenario. This student understands and accepts his level of knowledge, skill and competence. **What are the possible consequences of the behaviours demonstrated by the medical student in the first scenario?**

Experience of emergency medicine
ONE OF THE SECOND YEAR MEDICAL STUDENTS IS GETTING SOME EXPERIENCE OF EMERGENCY MEDICINE
COULD I ASK YOUR NAME, AND ALSO THE NAME AND DOB OF YOUR SON?

OF COURSE, MY NAME IS RACHEAL PATTERSON, AND THIS IS MY SON JAMES
HIS DATE OF BIRTH IS 27TH MARCH 2012

THANK YOU. WOULD IT BE OKAY IF WE HAD A CHAT ABOUT WHY YOU HAVE BOUGHT JAMES IN TODAY?

OF COURSE, MY SON WAS PLAYING FOOTBALL
HE TRIPPED AND FELL FORWARD ONTO HIS WRIST
STRAIGHT AFTER THIS, HE STARTED CRYING AND COMPLAINING OF PAIN
HAVE YOU SEEN HIS X-RAY?

THE A&E CONSULTANT DID SHOW IT TO ME BEFORE I CAME IN
UNFORTUNATELY I CANNOT REALLY COMMENT ON WHAT IT SHOWS
AS I HAVE VERY LITTLE EXPERIENCE IN READING WRIST X-RAYS
THE CONSULTANT WILL COME AND TALK TO YOU SOON, AND EXPLAIN WHAT IT SHOWS, IF ANYTHING
IS THAT OK WITH YOU?

OK, WILL HE NEED SURGERY??

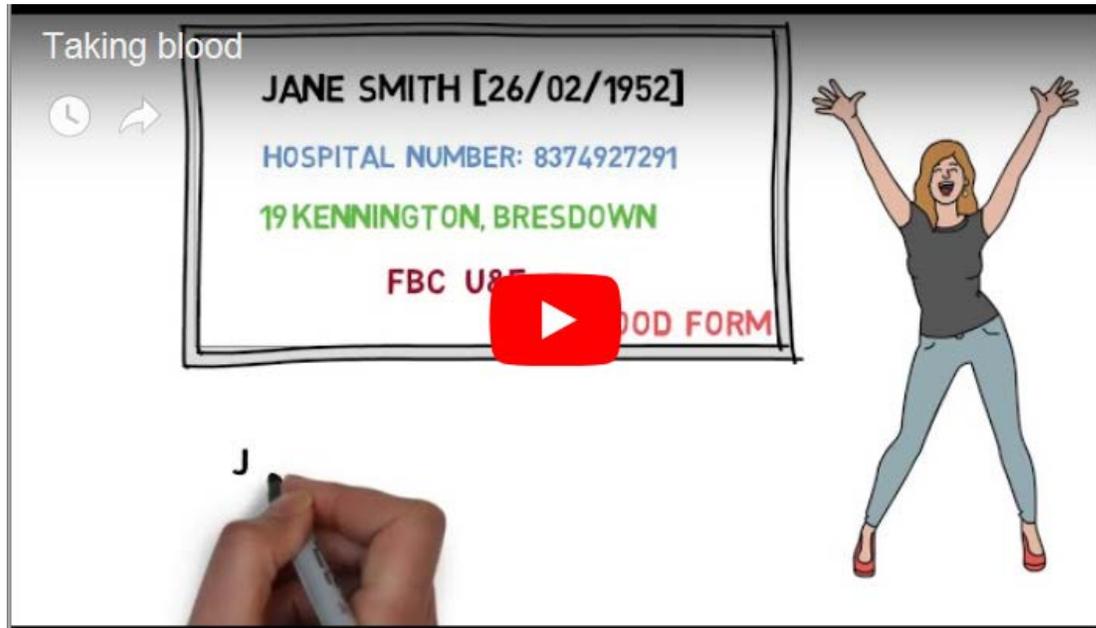
Lesson 1: understand and accept your level of knowledge, skill and competence

Task 4: This student understands and accepts his level of knowledge, skill and competence. **What are the possible consequences of the behaviours demonstrated by the medical student in the first video scenario? (the**



Lesson 2: be honest when you make mistakes, and apologise for your errors

Task 5: Listen to the following scenario. What would you do if you made a similar mistake?



Lesson 2: be honest when you make mistakes, and apologise for your errors

Task 5: What would you do if you made a similar mistake?

Be open and honest when something goes wrong

You should tell your supervisor as soon as possible, as they can support you, and if necessary will help you put things right, which may include explaining to the patient what has happened and offering an apology

Remain calm, professional, kind and understanding to your patient, their family and friends, and also to your colleagues

Task 6: In pairs roleplay a conversation between yourself (the medical student), and the patient you have wrongly taken blood from.

Task 7: *Listen to an example response* from the medical student demonstrating honesty towards the error he has made.



Lesson 3: be a professional, and treat your colleagues with respect

Task 8: Listen *to the following audio clip between a consultant doctor and a medical student*. In your groups, discuss the following: **Why should you not act in this way?**



Professional performance involves participating fully in the learning process

Trust is expected in doctors and students

It is important to engage fully with your medical course by attending educational activities, including lectures, seminars and placements

Doctors and students are trusted with the most personal information regarding a patient's health – it is important not to abuse this trust

Doctors hold a trusted position in society and must make sure their conduct – both professionally and personally – justifies their patient's trust in them and the public trust in the profession

In order to perform your job fully, you require the full trust of your colleagues

Honesty and trust are the cornerstone of our profession

Dishonesty in medical practice can have legal and financial implications

Lesson 4: support your colleagues kindly, and treat them with respect

Task 9: Listen *to the following audio clip between a medical student and a student nurse.* **Has the medical student responded appropriately in this situation?**



Has stopped the student nurse placing the patient in danger

Showed his colleague little respect, and his behaviour could be considered rude and unjustified

No acknowledgement of the patient and their feelings

Not supportive of the student nurse – who is also on placement trying to learn

Task 10: In pairs roleplay a conversation between yourself (the medical student), and the student nurse, upon how you would approach this situation differently

Task 11: Listen to an example response from the medical student demonstrating a more respectful approach to the patient safety error the student nurse is about to commit



Take Home Messages

- 1) You are a representative for the medical profession – ensure your professional behaviour matches the expectations the public hold of you
- 2) Start as you mean to go on. Developing an honest attitude to your work, and demonstrating integrity as a medical student; will translate to good medical practice as a qualified doctor
- 3) Even though there may be an easier option, it is always best to offer an apology, explain the situation, and work with your colleagues in managing complex situations involving errors



Achieving good medical practice:
guidance for medical students



General Medical Council

[Link](#) to the guidance