



Appendix 2

Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics

The Society of Sports Therapists

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Introduction

These Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics set out the behaviour, values and principles expected of all members of The Society of Sports Therapists. They are designed to protect the public, uphold professional standards and maintain confidence in the profession. As a Graduate Sports Therapist, you must ensure that your conduct - both professional and personal - justifies the trust placed in you by patients, colleagues, employers and the wider public.

These standards apply at all times, including clinical practice, sport and exercise environments, digital settings and public or professional representation. They should be read alongside the Society's:

- Standards of Proficiency
- Educational Competencies
- Fitness to Practise and CPD requirements

Terminology

In these standards, we use the term "*patient*" to refer to any individual receiving care or services. This may include, depending on the context, a *client*, *athlete*, *player* or *service user*. All standards apply equally regardless of terminology or practice setting.

Standards

1. **Prioritising people**
2. **Practising safely and effectively**
3. **Equality, diversity and inclusion**
4. **Communication and consent**
5. **Confidentiality and data governance**
6. **Professional integrity and trust**
7. **Professional boundaries**
8. **Digital and public-facing professionalism**
9. **Working with others**
10. **Raising concerns and duty of candour**
11. **Maintaining professional responsibility**

1. **Prioritising people**

You must:

- 1.1 Make the care, safety and wellbeing of patients your primary concern.
Guidance: You should always prioritise long-term health over short-term performance goals.

- 1.2 Act in the best interests of patients at all times.
Example: Declining to clear an athlete for return to play if it presents unacceptable risk.
- 1.3 Recognise and manage situations where external pressures may conflict with patient welfare.
Example: Managing pressure from coaches or organisations to accelerate return timelines.
- 1.4 Take all reasonable steps to protect patients from harm, abuse or neglect.
Guidance: Follow safeguarding procedures where concerns arise.
- 1.5 Raise concerns where patient safety or wellbeing may be at risk.
Example: Reporting unsafe practice within a team or clinic setting.

2. Practising safely and effectively

You must:

- 2.1 Practise within your scope of knowledge, skills and experience.
Guidance: Do not provide interventions you are not trained or competent to deliver.
- 2.2 Maintain high standards of professional performance and judgement.
Example: Using evidence-informed clinical reasoning rather than habit or anecdote.
- 2.3 Refer patients appropriately where care required is beyond your scope.
Example: Referring to GP, emergency services or other healthcare provider when necessary.
- 2.4 Keep your professional knowledge and skills up to date.
Guidance: Engage regularly in CPD and reflective learning.
- 2.5 Recognise the impact of your health on your practice.
Example: Reducing caseload or seeking support if fatigue or stress affects judgement.

3. Equality, diversity and inclusion

You must:

- 3.1 Treat all individuals with dignity, respect and fairness.
Guidance: Respect individual preferences, beliefs and identities.
- 3.2 Practise in a non-discriminatory and inclusive manner.
Example: Providing equitable care regardless of background or ability.
- 3.3 Recognise and respond to diverse needs.
Example: Adapting rehabilitation plans for different cultural or socioeconomic contexts.
- 3.4 Challenge discrimination, bias and inequity.
Guidance: Speak up if you witness discriminatory behaviour.
- 3.5 Apply equality and safeguarding legislation.
Example: Making reasonable adjustments for disabled individuals.

4. Communication and consent

You must:

- 4.1 Communicate clearly, effectively and appropriately.
Guidance: Use language appropriate to the patient's level of understanding.
- 4.2 Adapt communication to individual needs.
Example: Using visual aids or simplified explanations where needed.
- 4.3 Obtain valid, informed consent.
Example: Explaining risks and alternatives before treatment.
- 4.4 Provide information to support decision-making.
Guidance: Ensure patients understand options, risks and expected outcomes.
- 4.5 Respect the right to decline or withdraw consent.
Example: Supporting a patient who chooses not to proceed with treatment.
- 4.6 Communicate effectively in dynamic environments.
Example: Providing concise, clear communication pitch-side during a match.

5. Confidentiality and data governance

You must:

- 5.1 Protect the confidentiality of patient information.
Guidance: Only share information with appropriate consent or legal justification.
- 5.2 Handle data in line with legal and professional standards.
Example: Following GDPR when storing or sharing records.
- 5.3 Maintain accurate and secure records.
Guidance: Keep clear, timely and factual documentation.
- 5.4 Share information appropriately when required.
Example: Sharing relevant details during a medical handover.
- 5.5 Use digital systems responsibly and securely.
Example: Avoiding use of unsecured messaging apps for sensitive information.

6. Professional integrity and trust

You must:

- 6.1 Act with honesty, integrity and transparency.
Guidance: Be open about risks, limitations and expected outcomes.
- 6.2 Maintain public trust in the profession.
Example: Behaving professionally in all public and private contexts.
- 6.3 Avoid and declare conflicts of interest.
Example: Declaring financial links to products you recommend.
- 6.4 Ensure decisions are not influenced by personal gain.
Guidance: Prioritise patient need over income or incentives.
- 6.5 Represent your qualifications accurately.
Example: Not claiming skills or titles you do not hold.

7. Professional boundaries

You must:

- 7.1 Maintain appropriate professional boundaries.
Guidance: Keep relationships professional at all times.
- 7.2 Not exploit your professional position.
Example: Not forming inappropriate relationships with patients.
- 7.3 Manage boundaries in sport environments.
Example: Maintaining professionalism in changing rooms or travel settings.
- 7.4 Manage dual roles appropriately.
Example: Separating decisions made as therapist vs strength and conditioning coach.
- 7.5 Avoid relationships that impair judgement.
Guidance: Step away from situations where objectivity is compromised.

8. Digital and public-facing professionalism

You must:

- 8.1 Maintain professional conduct online.
Guidance: Assume all online content is public and permanent.
- 8.2 Use social media responsibly.
Example: Not sharing identifiable patient information or images.
- 8.3 Ensure marketing is accurate and evidence-informed.
Example: Avoiding exaggerated claims about treatment effectiveness.
- 8.4 Avoid unjustifiable claims.
Guidance: Base all claims on credible evidence.
- 8.5 Consider the impact of your behaviour on the profession.
Example: Maintaining professionalism in online debates or commentary.

9. Working with others

You must:

- 9.1 Work collaboratively in the best interests of patients.
Guidance: Value input from other professionals.
- 9.2 Share information appropriately within teams.
Example: Providing relevant updates to coaches or medical staff.
- 9.3 Respect the roles of others.
Guidance: Recognise different expertise within teams.
- 9.4 Supervise delegated tasks effectively.
Example: Ensuring assistants are competent and supported.
- 9.5 Take responsibility for delegated decisions.
Guidance: You remain accountable when delegating.

10. Raising concerns and duty of candour

You must:

- 10.1 Act if patient safety is at risk.
Example: Escalating concerns about unsafe practice.
- 10.2 Raise concerns about conduct or performance.
Guidance: Report issues through appropriate channels.
- 10.3 Be open and honest when things go wrong.
Example: Explaining mistakes and next steps to patients.
- 10.4 Cooperate with investigations.
Guidance: Provide full and honest information when required.

11. Maintaining professional responsibility

You must:

- 11.1 Comply with legal and professional requirements.
Guidance: Stay informed about relevant policies and legislation.
- 11.2 Maintain appropriate indemnity cover.
Example: Ensuring valid insurance for your scope of practice.
- 11.3 Engage in CPD and reflective practice.
Guidance: Regularly review and improve your practice.
- 11.4 Maintain public confidence in the profession.
Example: Ensuring your conduct reflects positively on sports therapy.

Summary

The Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics set out the professional behaviours, values and responsibilities expected of all Graduate Sports Therapists to ensure safe, effective and person-centred practice. They define the principles that underpin trust in the profession, including prioritising patient welfare, practising with integrity, maintaining professional boundaries and working collaboratively with others.

Reflecting contemporary practice, these standards address the complexities of sport and exercise environments, digital and public-facing professionalism, equality and inclusion, safeguarding and data governance.

Together, they provide a clear framework for professional conduct, supporting accountability, guiding decision-making in complex situations, and ensuring that all members uphold the highest standards throughout their careers.