

SECTION 6

PROBITY (GUIDANCE)

The extract below is taken from the GMC's guidance *Good Medical Practice*.

'Probity

Writing reports, giving evidence and signing documents

51. You must be honest and trustworthy when writing reports, completing or signing forms, or providing evidence in litigation or other formal inquiries. This means that you must take reasonable steps to verify any statement before you sign a document. You must not write or sign documents which are false or misleading because they omit relevant information. If you have agreed to prepare a report, complete or sign a document or provide evidence, you must do so without unreasonable delay.

Research

52. If you participate in research you must put the care and safety of patients first. You must ensure that approval has been obtained for research from an independent research ethics committee and that patients have given consent. You must conduct all research with honesty and integrity. More detailed advice on the ethical responsibilities of doctors working in research is published in our booklet *Good Practice in Medical Research - The Role of Doctors*

Financial and commercial dealings

53. You must be honest and open in any financial arrangements with patients. In particular:
- you must not exploit patients' vulnerability or lack of medical knowledge
 - you must not encourage your patients to give, lend or bequeath money or gifts, which will directly or indirectly benefit you. You must not put pressure on patients or their families to make donations to other people or organisations;
 - you must not put pressure on patients to accept private treatment;
54. You must be honest in financial and commercial dealings with employers, insurers and other organisations or individuals. In particular:
- if you manage finances, you must make sure that the funds are used for the purpose for which they were intended and are kept in a separate account from your personal finances;
 - before taking part in discussions about buying goods or services, you must declare any relevant financial or commercial interest, which you or your family might have in the purchase.

Conflicts of interest

55. You must act in your patients' best interests when making referrals and providing or arranging treatment or care. So you must not ask for or accept any inducement, gift or hospitality, which may affect or be seen to affect your judgement. You should not offer such inducements to colleagues.'

Procedure

1. The following pro-forma has been tested by the GMC as part of the work to develop revalidation. It may be freely reproduced. This proforma is a helpful tool for the collection of evidence for annual appraisal.
2. For revalidation purposes, it is sufficient to provide a self-declaration about how effectively you are meeting good practice standards of probity in matters which might affect your fitness to practice medicine. You must disclose information that relates to events within the whole of your current appraisal/revalidation cycle.
3. You are not obliged to use any of these pro-forma products as a revalidation self-declaration. You may, if you wish, present evidence of your probity in some other way. However, the GMC have tested the pro-formas and know that they are suitable tools to use. As the GMC have not been able to test or verify the other products or formats that may be used, using them could increase the chance that you will be asked for additional information and/or evidence and might mean that your revalidation may take more time.

Guidance

4. Paragraphs 51-55 of *Good Medical Practice* (above) provides a list of professional obligations that you should consider when signing a declaration on probity. There are, of course, other types of obligations/information that you should also consider, for example, any form of disciplinary, regulatory or criminal procedures which have been applied to you, or which you know are in progress or pending.

Probity declaration:

Professional obligations

I accept the professional obligations placed upon me in paragraphs 51 to 55 of *Good Medical Practice*.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name in capitals: _____

Convictions, findings against you and disciplinary action

Since my last appraisal/revalidation I **have not**, in the UK or outside:

- Been convicted of a criminal offence or have proceedings pending against me.
- Had any cases considered by the GMC, other professional regulatory body, or other licensing body or have any such cases pending against me.
- Had any disciplinary actions taken against me by an employer or contractor or have had any contract terminated or suspended on grounds relating to my fitness to practise.

Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Name in capitals: _____

(Notes: If you are able to sign both of the above declarations then you do not need to complete the rest of the pro-forma below. However, if you are unable to sign both of the declarations above then you will need to complete the full pro-forma below.)

Probity declaration pro-forma
(To be completed if you are unable to sign the Probity declaration)

Convictions, findings against you and disciplinary action

1 Since your last appraisal/revalidation¹, have you been convicted of a criminal offence either inside or outside the UK?

Yes No

If yes, please give details:

2 Do you have any criminal proceedings pending against you inside or outside the UK?

Yes No

If yes, please give details:

3 Since your last appraisal/revalidation, have you had any cases considered, heard and concluded against you by any of the following: -

- a. The General Medical Council.
- b. Any other professional regulatory or other professional licensing body within the UK.
- c. A professional regulatory or other professional licensing body outside the UK.

Yes No

If yes, please give details:

¹ If this is your first appraisal and you have not yet gone through the process of revalidation then please fill in the pro-forma answering the questions as they apply to you at the current time.

- 4 Are there any cases pending against you with any of the following organisations: -
- a. The General Medical Council.
 - b. Any other professional regulatory or other professional licensing body within the UK.
 - d. A professional regulatory or other professional licensing body outside the UK

Yes No

If yes, please give brief details:

- 5 Since your last appraisal/revalidation, have there been any disciplinary actions taken against you by your employer or your contractor - either in the UK or outside - that have been upheld:

Yes No

If yes, please give brief details:

- 6 Since your last appraisal/revalidation, has your employment or contract ever been terminated or suspended - in the UK or abroad - on grounds relating to your fitness to practise (conduct, performance or health):

Yes No

If yes, please give details:
