



Ethical Code

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Introduction

The purpose of the BAPO Ethical Code ('the Code') is to provide a set of standards that describe the ethical principles that underpin practice in the field of prosthetics and orthotics.

The Code reflects both public and professional expectations of our members' practice and behaviour. BAPO is strongly committed to patient-centred practice and the involvement of patients and carers as partners in all stages of the rehabilitation process.

This document is for **Full members, Associate members and Affiliate members of BAPO** (referred to collectively as 'members' elsewhere in this document):

- Full members are qualified prosthetists/orthotists.
- Associate members are technicians or support workers working within the prosthetic and orthotic sector.
- Affiliate members are other professionals working within the prosthetic and orthotic sector or individuals with an interest in prosthetics and orthotics.

By choosing to take-up membership of BAPO, members are agreeing to adhere to the Code, demonstrating their commitment to ethical practice and to maintaining and enhancing the standing and reputation of the prosthetic and orthotic profession.

This document was commissioned by BAPO, with funding from the Workforce, Training and Education Directorate, NHS England.

Structure and language of the Code

The Code is structured in four sections, with standards underneath each.

In recognition of the different roles and responsibilities of our members, some standards apply only to prosthetists and orthotists, or only to prosthetists and orthotists and associates. We have indicated this in the wording of each standard.

In the Code:

- We use 'must' for standards which members are expected to meet.
- We use 'should' where a standard may not always apply to every member or to every situation.

Meeting the Code

BAPO has published guidance and advice for members on a range of topics to support them in their practice which will also help them to meet the Code. These resources are available from the BAPO website.¹

The Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) also publishes guidance and advice on meeting its standards. This is available from the HCPC website.²

¹ <https://www.bapo.com/resources/professional-affairs-resources/>

² <https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/>

Levels of professional practice

We recognise that the career development journey of our members starts from qualification, as they progressively gain further education, training and experience which develops their knowledge, skills and practice.

Prosthetist and orthotist members may undertake further education and training which allows them to develop their practice into roles which are at the enhanced, advanced or consultant levels of professional practice.³ The level of complexity, uncertainty and risk managed by the prosthetist and orthotist increases at each level of professional practice.

This Code has been written to be applicable to and enabling of all levels of practice. All members are expected to adhere to the standards in this Code and to work within the professional, legal, ethical and governance frameworks which are relevant to their particular role and practice.

Members registered with the HCPC

Prosthetist and orthotist members are required to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) in order to practise in the UK. They are required to comply with the HCPC's standards, including its Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics.⁴

As the regulator of prosthetists and orthotists, the HCPC deals with concerns about the fitness to practise of its registrants and in doing so may take into account standards or guidance published by BAPO to provide a professional context to the case. However, any decision reached by the HCPC or sanction imposed will be based on their own standards. An adverse decision about a member by the HCPC could also affect their membership with BAPO (see below).

This Code builds on the HCPC's Standards and Conduct, Performance and Ethics to articulate our expectations for members, including those who are not registered by the HCPC. We have included a summary of the HCPC's Standards of Conduct and Performance and Ethics in this document and have provided cross-references to these standards.

³ BAPO (2024). Advanced practice in prosthetics and orthotists.

<https://www.bapo.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/BAPO-Advanced-Practice-in-Prosthetics-and-Orthotics-compressed.pdf>

⁴ HCPC (2024). Standards of conduct, performance and ethics.

<https://www.hcpc-uk.org/standards/standards-of-conduct-performance-and-ethics/>

Concerns about members

We are able to consider a concern that a member may be in breach of this Code, the BAPO Standards for Best Practice and/or any of the supplementary guidance associated with these documents.

The procedure for considering such concerns is set out in 'Section 9: Disciplinary procedures' of the BAPO Constitution. Where necessary, concerns are referred to the BAPO Ethics and Standards Committee (a Standing Committee formed by the Chair of the Association but not including the Chair) who will recommend a course of action to the Executive Committee.

If a concern about a prosthetist and orthotist member is considered to have a possible impact on the fitness to practise of the member, then the matter will be referred by the Secretary of BAPO to the HCPC for consideration under its fitness to practise process. Following the outcome of the HCPC's process, it may then be necessary to refer the concern for further consideration as outlined above.

Review of the Code

The content of this Code is the responsibility of the Professional Affairs Committee of BAPO.

If there is uncertainty or dispute as to the interpretation or application of the Code, then enquiries should be referred to the Executive Committee of BAPO who may then seek further advice from any other appropriate body.

We keep the Code under review and will update it when required to take account of changes within prosthetic and orthotic practice.



HCPC (2024) Standards of Conduct, Performance and Ethics

Registrants must:

1 Promote and protect the interests of service users and carers

- Treat service users and carers with respect
- Make sure you have consent
- Challenge discrimination
- Maintain appropriate boundaries

2 Communicate appropriately and effectively

- Communicate with service users and carers
- Work with colleagues
- Social media and networking sites

3 Work within the limits of their knowledge and skills

- Keep within your scope of practice
- Maintain and develop your knowledge and skills

4 Delegate appropriately

- Delegation, oversight and support

5 Respect confidentiality

- Using information
- Disclosing information

6 Manage risk

- Identify and minimise risk
- Manage your health

7 Report concerns about safety

- Report concerns
- Follow up concerns

8 Be open when things go wrong

- Openness with service users and carers
- Deal with concerns and complaints

9 Be honest and trustworthy

- Personal and professional behaviour
- Important information about your conduct and competence

10 Keep records of their work

- Keep accurate records
- Keep records secure

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1 PATIENT RIGHTS AND AUTONOMY HCPC standards: 1, 5

Autonomy and partnership

- 1.1 Prosthetists/Orthotists and Associates must at all times recognise, respect and uphold the autonomy of patients and their role in the rehabilitation process.
- 1.2 Prosthetists/Orthotists and Associates must work in partnership with patients and carers, supporting patient choice wherever possible.
- 1.3 Prosthetist/Orthotists and Associates must ensure the dignity, privacy and safety of all patients with whom they come into contact with.

Confidentiality

- 1.4 Prosthetists/Orthotists and Associates must respect and maintain the confidentiality of patient information.

Consent

- 1.5 Prosthetists/Orthotists and Associates must ensure that they have appropriate consent before providing patient treatment.

Non-discriminatory practice

- 1.6 Prosthetists/Orthotists and Associates must treat patients and carers fairly and take all reasonable steps to avoid and challenge discrimination.

Professional boundaries

- 1.7 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must maintain appropriate professional boundaries with patients. They must not exploit their professional position by entering into personal, sexual, emotional or financial relationships with patients.

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2 PATIENT SAFETY HCPC standards: 6, 7, 8

Report concerns about patient safety

- 2.1 Prosthetists /Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must report any concerns about patient safety, promptly and appropriately.
- 2.2 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must support and encourage their colleagues to report concerns and not stop someone from raising concerns.
- 2.3 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must ensure that patient safety is their primary concern and must always take priority over any personal or professional loyalties.
- 2.4 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must demonstrate openness and honesty by co-operating with formal inquires, patient safety investigations and complaints procedures.
- 2.5 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must take appropriate action if they have concerns about the safety or well-being of children or vulnerable adults.

Duty of candour

- 2.6 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must be open and honest with patients and carers and apologise when something has gone wrong with the prosthetic and/or orthotic treatment or care provided. This includes near misses as well as incidents that have led to harm.

Managing health

- 2.7 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must take responsibility for assessing whether changes to their physical and/or mental health will detrimentally impact their ability to practise safely and effectively, including by seeking advice as necessary from an appropriate health and care professional.
- 2.8 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must make changes to their practice, or stop practising, if their physical and/or mental health may affect their ability to practise safely and effectively.

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3 PROFESSIONALISM HCPC Standards: 1, 2, 9

Personal and professional conduct

- 3.1 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must demonstrate high levels of personal and professional honesty and integrity, avoiding behaviour which might undermine public trust and confidence in them and the prosthetic and orthotic profession.

Communication

- 3.2 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must communicate appropriately and effectively, treating patients, carers and colleagues with kindness, courtesy and respect.

Working with colleagues

- 3.3 Prosthetists /Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must work collaboratively and respectfully with other professions and members of the multi-disciplinary health and care team for the benefit of patients.

Social media

- 3.4 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must ensure their use of social media and social networking sites is responsible and appropriate and meets the other standards outlined in this Code.

Conflicts of interest

- 3.5 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must identify and declare matters which might give rise to a potential conflict of interest, making sure that they do not affect their professional judgement.
- 3.6 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must not ask for or accept any incentive, payments, gifts or hospitality that may affect, or be seen to affect, their professional judgement.

Advertising and promotion

- 3.7 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must ensure that any they represent their qualifications, education, experience, training and competence accurately in any advertising or promotional activities.

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4 PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE HCPC Standards: 3, 4, 10

Scope of practice

- 4.1 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must work within the professional, legal, ethical and governance frameworks which apply to their role and practice.
- 4.2 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must work within their scope of practice – the areas in which they have appropriate knowledge, skills and experience.

Maintaining and developing competence

- 4.3 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must keep their knowledge and skills up to date and relevant to their scope of practice by undertaking continuing professional development.

Record keeping

- 4.4 Prosthetists/Orthotists must keep full, clear, accurate and up-to-date records for all patients that they care for and treat.
- 4.5 Prosthetists/Orthotists must keep records secure by protecting them from loss, damage or inappropriate access.

Delegation, supervision and support

- 4.6 Prosthetists Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must only delegate treatment, care or other work to colleagues where they are satisfied that they are competent to carry them out.
- 4.7 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates must ensure they provide appropriate supervision and support to those they delegate work to.

Education and development

- 4.8 Prosthetists/Orthotists should be willing to support and contribute to the education of prosthetist/orthotist students.
- 4.9 Prosthetists/Orthotists, Associates and Affiliates should be willing to promote and contribute to the development of the prosthetic and orthotic profession.



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