

A Doula who is a member of Doula UK

- Offers **practical** and **emotional** support but **not** advice, to the mother and/or parents, empowering them in their own choices. DUK members recognise that women's choices are valid and that a woman assumes responsibility for the birth, parenting style or feeding method that she feels is right for her and her baby.
- Is **accountable** for herself, must work within the law and the framework of DUK Guidelines. ^(see appendix 1)
- Works to maintain the **highest level of care** and **support** possible, all the time striving to be sensitive, nurturing, empathic, non-judgmental, knowledge-based, flexible, reliable, well-organised, practical and protective of the mother's/family's environment.
- **Does not perform clinical, midwifery or medical tasks**, diagnose medical conditions or give medical advice, whilst working as a doula, even if trained as a health professional. ^(see appendix 1)
- Will **signpost clients** to other appropriate resources/professionals should the client have needs beyond the scope of their doula role. Each doula is free to offer other services or therapies, however it must be made clear that these are **separate roles** and information on how these are regulated and insured should be supplied if appropriate. ^(see appendix 2)
- Will **accurately represent** their **doula education** and **experience** and will not mislead other doulas, clients or other birth professionals at any time.
- Will be **honest** and show **integrity** and **respect** at all times towards their clients, doula colleagues and the other professionals.
- Will not discuss **personal** and **confidential** information which has been disclosed to them by their clients in the course of their doula work, without the express permission of those clients, except in situations as outlined in Doula UK's 'Aims, Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities Statement' policy. ^(see appendix 3)
- Is *recommended* to keep **records** of all antenatal, birth and/or postnatal support roles with clients.
- Is *recommended* to have a **contract/letter of agreement** with their clients.
- Will strive to develop and maintain **positive work relationships** within the doula and birthing community and will observe Doula UK's **Social Media** and **Forum Guidelines** at all times. ^(appendix 4)
- Is responsible for **maintaining** and **enhancing** their **skills** and **education**, including attending courses, workshops and lectures made available by Doula UK and other relevant organisations. ^(appendix 5)
- Will strive to **attend Doula UK national** and **regional meetings** and contribute whenever possible to the running of the organisation as schedules and other commitments allow.
- Is aware that whilst Doula UK is able to give emotional support to members, it is unable to provide legal protection.

(appendices overleaf)

Doula UK Code of Conduct appendices

1.
 - i. <http://www.nmc-uk.org/Nurses-and-midwives/Regulation-in-practice/Regulation-in-Practice-Topics/Free-birthing1/>
 - ii. http://www.lsamoforumuk.scot.nhs.uk/media/19782/unassisted_or_free_birthing_guideline_apr13_.pdf
 - iii. <http://www.doula.org.uk/documentdownloads> - and go to 'DUK Policies and procedures' and read them all
2.

For example: a Breastfeeding Counsellor working with a charitable breastfeeding support and training organisation. All breastfeeding support provided by that organisation is free at the point of contact. Therefore, if the doula is working for the client as a doula, she is unable to act as her breastfeeding counsellor as part of her contracted hours. Whilst she will be able and willing to use her knowledge and skills to support the client's breastfeeding, if the client requires a Breastfeeding Counsellor, the doula will have to refer her to local support.
3.

Doula UK '**Aims Confidentiality and Equal Opportunities Statement**' can be found here under <http://www.doula.org.uk/documentdownloads> – and go to 'DUK Policies and procedures'.
4.

Doula UK '**Social Media and Forum Guidelines**' can be found here – <http://www.doula.org.uk/documentdownloads> and go to 'DUK Policies and procedures'.
5.

<http://www.doula.org.uk/content/requirements-regarding-continuing-professional-development>
6.

Useful information – LSA 'Guidelines for the statutory supervision of Midwives' **Working with Doulas** leaflet http://www.lsamoforumuk.scot.nhs.uk/media/17010/working_with_doulas_guideline.pdf