

# CODE OF PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

Membership of the Institute is a privilege and the disciplines and standards of behaviour expected of Members must uphold the reputation of the profession and the Institute. This reputation could easily be marred by the shortcomings of a few Members. The interests of employers and customers of those Members whose business is that of offering advice or providing services must also be protected. The Board therefore believes that Members will welcome guidance upon matters of a professional nature and issues this Code of Professional Conduct which represents those standards which can be expected to be the minimum necessary to uphold the professional integrity of Members.

To a certain extent, professional conduct depends on basic attitudes and morality. No code can cover every set of facts and circumstances. Moreover, one danger of attempting to set a code is that anything that is not specifically forbidden may come to be regarded as permissible - this is not the case. One of the fundamental principles applying to a Member is that s/he observes the spirit as much as the letter of the Code of Professional Conduct. The hallmark of a true professional is his/her honesty, integrity, independence and impartiality.

Without prejudice to these general requirements, the following standards shall apply to all Members.

1. Members must at all times conduct themselves in a manner consistent with the good reputation of the profession and of the Institute. This includes:
  - a. Observing the Governing Instruments of the Institute as set out in its Governance document;
  - b. Acting in compliance with all relevant statutory, regulatory and other legal requirements;
  - c. Recognising any other professional customs or practices, whether or not constituting legal requirements, including the guidelines or codes of conduct of other professional or regulatory bodies, which affect them or those with whom they have contact during the course of their work;
  - d. Acting objectively in all work they undertake, observing high standards of integrity and fair dealing;
  - e. Conducting their professional work with proper regard to the technical and professional standards expected of them;
  - f. Not accepting or offering gifts, hospitality or services which could, or may appear to, imply an improper obligation.
2. Members must:
  - a. Not misrepresent their membership of the Institute or claim that they have qualifications which they do not hold
  - b. Ensure that any advertisement or other public announcements with which their names or qualifications are associated will not bring the Institute into disrepute
  - c. Ensure that it is clear that they are professionally responsible for any advice which they give or services which they provide and that they can be identified as the source of the advice or services

- d. Not act in situations where they have insufficient relevant experience except in co-operation or with the guidance of a suitably qualified and competent person.
- 3.** Members who, in particular situations, describe the advice or services they offer as independent, where the use of the word independent is not defined by regulation or law, must be free and seen to be free of any influence which might limit or affect the content or scope of their advice or services.
- 4.** When dealing with a customer or client, Members must:
- a. Take all reasonable steps to obtain all the information necessary to form a judgement;
  - b. Take into account the best interests of the customer or client before making any recommendations;
  - c. Behave in a manner consistent with the obligation to act impartially; and
  - d. Disclose any constraints that could affect or appear to affect the nature or scope of their advice.
  - e. Respect confidential information from any source and not use such information for personal or professional advantage and
  - f. Treat people fairly which means observing equality and diversity laws, challenging and reporting unlawful or unfair discrimination and, where possible, adapting facilities to accommodate customers with disabilities or specific requirements.
- 5.** Members must co-operate with the Disciplinary Panel if called upon to do so in an open, clear and co-operative manner.
- 6.** Members are expected to:
- a. Take every appropriate opportunity to improve their professional knowledge and comply with the annual continuing professional development regulations
  - b. Conduct themselves with courtesy and consideration towards all persons with whom they come into contact in the course of their professional work
  - c. Encourage awareness amongst all of those with whom they are involved in the course of their work that Members of the Institute are bound by this Code of Professional Conduct
  - d. Support and encourage the work of the Institute in developing and maintaining both this Code in particular and the highest professional standards in general.
  - e. Encourage others to attain their professional qualification and support their development
  - f. Where appropriate demonstrate a willingness to work as part of a team and not in isolation

Any complaint of misconduct by a Member made to or raised by the Institute will be processed in accordance with Appendix H of the Governance document. Any Member who is in doubt as to the steps which should be taken in a particular case where professional conduct is in question, or any Member who would like the advice of a senior Member of the Institute on professional conduct, should communicate with the Head of Professional Standards.

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