



Code of Professional Practice

Introduction

Our first duty is to the people who commission work from us and to the people who make use of the information products we create. In considering our professional conduct, we should always be aware of the effects of our attitudes and actions on our employers, clients, colleagues, suppliers, users and fellow professionals. Not only should our conduct be exemplary but we should invest in our skills so that we are able to offer a high degree of competence exercised in a responsible manner.

We should aspire to the highest standards in honesty, legality, quality, teamwork, cultural sensitivity, social responsibility and professional growth. We should respect other people's privacy and intellectual property, being fair in all our dealings. We should contribute to the development of our professional association, the ISTC, and participate actively in its publications, forums and events.

Duties to the Institute

- Comply with the requirements of the Memorandum and Articles of Association
- Protect and promote the interests of the ISTC, acting in a way that will enhance its reputation and attract new members
- Keep member-only information, including the content of online forums, within the membership except when using it to promote the ISTC or with permission
- Communicate on the ISTC's behalf only when authorised by Council to do so, stating when opinions are personal and considering their consequences
- Respond fully and honestly to any requests from the Disciplinary Committee, attending meetings and disclosing unspent criminal offences if required, and accepting both its findings and any sanctions that it imposes

Duties to the profession

- Comply with all legal obligations, including those related to contracts, copyright, intellectual property, health & safety, advertising standards, trades descriptions and liability
- Protect and promote the interests of the profession, acting in a way that will enhance its reputation
- Make no misleading statements about personal qualifications, experience, competences or references
- Give honest and reliable professional opinions, maintaining objectivity in professional judgements
- Maintain and develop skills to facilitate a high degree of ethical competence (that is, the responsible application of skills augmented by the sourcing of professional advice or assistance when the limit of those skills is reached)
- Encourage other practitioners to maintain similar standards
- Conduct research and publish articles to build and share knowledge within the profession, mentoring entrants and supporting educators where possible
- Include protection of the environment and the preservation and improvement of quality of life as factors when making operating decisions

Duties to clients or employers

- Ensure terms of business or employment are clearly stated and honoured in full, unless modified or terminated by mutual consent
- Make clients fully aware of the services that a quoted fee is intended to cover, and accept no rewards that might cause conflicts of interest or be seen as bribes
- Disclose any relevant financial interest or potential conflict of interest
- Take on work only when it is within existing capabilities or when a programme to attain required skills has been put in place
- Ensure any employees, subordinates or sub-contractors are capable and diligent, accepting responsibility for circumstances within control and authority
- Keep sensitive information secure, including completed information products if required
- Use samples of work only with permission or taken from the public domain

Duties to peers and colleagues

- Charge fair fees without undercutting competitors to gain advantage, except when providing a free introductory sample service or when offering free or low-cost services to charitable or not-for-profit organisations
- Set reasonable market rates and participate fairly in tendering, without entering into covert price-fixing or market-sharing arrangements
- Show courtesy and consideration, never abusing authority over others, and provide objective comment on work without personal denigration
- Respect copyright and acknowledge sources
- Respect confidentiality, never disclosing information obtained privately to a wider circulation without permission

Duties to users

- Provide the best possible information products within the constraints imposed by client, employer, budget and circumstance
- Maintain a high standard of truthfulness and accuracy in all information products
- Address all relevant aspects of language, cultural background and accessibility to ensure that the intended audience can use and understand information
- Conduct the fullest practicable audience and task analysis before designing information products
- Provide avenues through which users can report issues with information products and ensure that such reports are considered fully and fairly
- Conduct the fullest practicable usability analysis once information products are completed

Duties to suppliers

- Use only properly licensed software on commercial projects
- Place work fairly without accepting inducements of any kind
- Offer fair trading arrangements
- Disclose any relevant financial interest or potential conflict of interest

Complaints procedure

If you feel you have reason to make a complaint under this code, send details to: The Disciplinary Committee, ISTC, PO Box 522, PETERBOROUGH, PE2 5WX.
Please include all relevant supporting evidence for a full and fair investigation.

Disciplinary procedure

A Disciplinary Committee appointed by Council will investigate the complaint in confidence and report its findings. Council will consider the action required, with sanctions to include expulsion, downgrading, reprimand, caution or reparation.