



ADVANCING BUILT ENVIRONMENT
COST PROFESSIONALS

AIQS CODE OF CONDUCT

JANUARY 2022

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1. GENERALLY

- 1.1 Every member of The Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors shall comply with the Constitution, By Laws, Regulations, Practice Standards, Guidance Notes, and Code of Conduct from time to time established by the Institute.
- 1.2 The Code of Conduct (“the Code”) is a public statement of the principles, values and behaviour expected of members of the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors (“the Institute”), as determined by the Board, and is freely available on the Institute’s website.
- 1.3 The purpose of the Code is to ensure that high standards of corporate and individual behaviour are observed by all members. The Code represents a framework for professional conduct and aims to provide assistance and clarification.
- 1.4 A breach of this Code may constitute Professional Misconduct which may be investigated by the Institute in accordance with the Institute’s Complaints Policy.

2. DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Code, the following definitions shall apply:

- 2.1 **Client** - means an individual who or an organisation which enters into an agreement with a member, partnership, or corporation for the provision of professional services on a specific project or projects.
- 2.2 **Employer** - means an individual who or a partnership or corporation which engages a member as a salaried employee.
- 2.3 **Member** – means all Voting members and Non-Voting members as defined in the Institute’s Constitution and By-Laws.
- 2.4 **Partnership or Corporation** - means partnerships or corporations offering quantity surveying services either solely or in combination with other professional services, and having partners or directors who are members of the Australian Institute of Quantity Surveyors.
- 2.5 **Professional Conduct** - means the adherence to a standard of behaviour befitting a professional quantity surveyor and Institute member at all times while engaged in a professional capacity.
- 2.6 **Professional Misconduct** - means behaviour which in the opinion of the Institute falls short of or directly contravenes professional conduct.
- 2.7 **Secretary** - means the person appointed from time to time as the company secretary under the Australian Securities Commission regulations.

3. ETHICAL PRINCIPLES

This statement of principles relates to fundamental tenets that form the basis for ethically robust professional behaviour. It shall be applied in all the professional relationships in which practitioners are involved. It reflects the varied contexts in which they work and the challenges they face locally, nationally, and globally.

The ethical principles below are listed in alphabetical order and are considered to be of equal importance. If two or more principles come into conflict during an assignment, the practitioner should give precedence to the principle that best serves the public interest in the context of the particular circumstances. The public interest embraces but is not limited to:

- the maintenance of reliable services for clients,
- sustaining proper standards of conduct and behaviour, and
- upholding the reputation of the profession.

- 3.1 **Accountability:** Members shall take full responsibility for the services they provide; shall maintain knowledge of current professional technologies, models, and data relevant to their practice; shall recognise and respect client, third party and stakeholder rights and interests; and shall give due attention to social and environmental considerations throughout.

- 3.2 **Confidentiality:** Members shall not disclose any confidential or proprietary information without prior permission unless such disclosure is required by applicable laws or regulations.
- 3.3 **Conflict of Interest:** Members shall make any and all appropriate disclosures in a timely manner before and during the performance of a service. If, after disclosure, a conflict cannot be removed or mitigated, the practitioner shall withdraw from the matter unless the parties affected mutually agree that the practitioner should properly continue.
- 3.4 **Diversity:** Members shall promote an environment that is inclusive and open to enable people of varied abilities and identities to enter and thrive in their workplaces and respective professions.
- 3.5 **Financial Responsibility:** Members shall be truthful, transparent, and trustworthy in all their dealings.
- 3.6 **Integrity:** Members shall act with honesty, propriety, and fairness. They shall base their professional advice on relevant, reliable, and supportable evidence.
- 3.7 **Lawfulness:** Members shall observe the legal requirements applicable to their discipline for the jurisdictions in which they practice and any extra-territorial or international laws relevant to an assignment.
- 3.8 **Reflection:** Members shall regularly reflect on the standards and best practice for their discipline and shall take steps to ensure that their behaviour is consistent with evolving ethical principles and professional standards.
- 3.9 **Respect:** Members shall treat others with consideration; shall avoid diminishing any person's capacity for freedom, privacy, and independence; and shall recognise the importance of both engaging with others without discrimination or prejudice and sustaining their wellbeing and personal safety.
- 3.10 **Standard of Service:** Members shall provide services for which they are competent and qualified; shall ensure that any employees or associates assisting in the provision of services have the necessary competence to do so; and shall encourage employees and associates to maintain and advance their professional skills through continuing professional development and other resources.
- 3.11 **Transparency:** Members shall be open and accessible; shall provide relevant documentary or other material including terms of engagement in plain and intelligible language; and shall present the results of data and analysis clearly and without improper manipulation.
- 3.12 **Trust:** Members shall uphold their responsibility to promote the reputation of their profession and shall recognise that their practice and conduct bears upon the maintenance of public trust and confidence in the AIQS and the profession they represent.

4. RELATIONS WITH CLIENTS

- 4.1 Members must carry out their professional duties ethically, with honesty, competence, and in good faith, without personal bias, and in a manner which upholds the values and reputation of the quantity surveying profession.
- 4.2 In the areas of documentation, accuracy, timeliness, and fees, it is incumbent upon the member to provide their client with the information and professional guidance necessary for the client to make an accurate and informed decision about what performance standards, outcomes and risks can be expected in relation to the services they are engaging.
- 4.3 A member must act promptly and efficiently in the servicing of the client's instructions.
- 4.4 A member must, in the case of unavoidable delay, communicate to the client the progress being made in respect of the instructions issued to the member.

- 4.5 Members must not falsify or misrepresent their professional qualifications, grades of membership, experience or prior responsibilities.
- 4.6 A member must operate within the limits of their qualifications and experience and must not accept instructions in a field of practice in which they possess insufficient knowledge and skill to provide competent services to the client, unless the member obtains fully informed consent from the client to undertake the services in conjunction with a person having the required competence.
- 4.7 A member must obtain or confirm in writing all instructions and variations of instructions of the client or the client's representatives.
- 4.8 A member should properly supervise all services carried out for and on the member's behalf.
- 4.9 A member must not provide any advice or make any statement without reasonable foundation unless it is appropriately qualified or limited.
- 4.10 A member must complete the work or services required by the member's client, unless:
- the member and the member's client have otherwise agreed,
 - the member is discharged by the client, or
 - the member terminates the agreement with the client for just cause, and on reasonable notice to the client.
- 4.11 A member must not, during, or after termination of a retainer, disclose to any other person, who is not a partner or employee of the member's firm, any confidential information provided directly or indirectly by a client or to a client, unless:
- the client authorises the disclosure,
 - the member is permitted or compelled by law to disclose,
 - the member discloses information for the sole purpose of avoiding the probable commission or concealment of a felony, or
 - necessary for replying to or defending any charge or complaint as to conduct or professional behaviour brought against the member or his or her partners, associates, or employees.
- 4.12 Where information critical to the assignment being undertaken is relied upon by a member, the source of that information must either be disclosed in the relevant report or contained in the working papers supporting the relevant report and be appropriately attributed in either case, unless the information is protected by confidentiality, or the member is prevented by privacy or other like laws from disclosing or referring to the source.
- 4.13 A member must not directly or indirectly exert undue pressure or influence on any persons, whether by the offer or provision of any payment, gift, or favour or otherwise, for the purpose of securing instructions for work, or accept instructions from any person where there is reason to believe that undue pressure or influence may have been exerted by a third party in expectation of receiving a reward for the introduction.
- 4.14 In advertising or promoting their business, a member must do so in a manner which is not misleading and/or deceptive and is in accordance with this Code of Conduct.
- 4.15 Where holding themselves out to the public as practicing quantity surveyors, members must have and maintain appropriate professional liability and indemnity insurance. Where the member is a Registered Tax Agent, the level of professional liability and indemnity insurance must be in accordance with the Tax Practitioners Board Explanatory Note TPB (EP) 03/2010.
- 4.16 A member must retain all records in accordance with the relevant government record keeping requirements.

- 4.17 A member must act in the public interest above all other interests when undertaking the role as a quantity surveyor.
- 4.18 A member must comply with all relevant standards related to performing functions as a quantity surveyor.
- 4.19 A member must disclose to their clients and prospective clients, any compensation, consideration, or benefit received from or paid to others for the recommendation of the member's, or the member's company's, services

5. CONFLICT OF INTEREST

- 5.1 A member must take reasonable steps to identify circumstances that could be construed as an actual, potential, or perceived conflict of interest.
- 5.2 A member must not, in any dealings with a client allow the interests of the member or an associate of the member to conflict with those of the client.
- 5.3 Subject to Rule 5.4, a member must not accept instructions from a client or continue to provide services to a client where accepting the instructions or continuing to provide the services is likely to create either a real or perceived conflict of interest.
- 5.4 Where a conflict of interest arises, or where a member identifies circumstances that could be construed as a conflict of interest, the member must:
- inform the client, and any other interested party, of the actual or potential conflict of interest,
 - encourage the client to obtain independent professional advice,
 - inform the client that neither the member or the member's firm can act or continue to act for the client unless the instructions are confirmed in writing with an acknowledgement of the actual or potential conflict of interest, AND
 - only accept the instructions or continue to provide the services if:
 - the client provides a written confirmation of their instructions with an acknowledgement of the actual or potential conflict of interest,
 - any other interested party provides confirmation that the member and the member's firm may accept the instructions or continue to provide the services to the client, and
 - the member discloses the conflict of interest in any relevant document or report prepared for the client relating to that matter.
- 5.5 A member must not accept a payment or favour from a third party which may affect their relationship with a client, unless the circumstances are fully disclosed to, and agreed by all interested parties.

6. IMPARTIALITY

- 6.1 A member must maintain the strictest independence and impartiality where the exercise of objective judgement is required. In such circumstances, a member must not:
- adopt the role of advocate in a case where their duty is to exercise independence and impartiality,
 - act as an advocate and as an expert in the same matter,
 - act as an advocate in a matter where another member of the same firm as the member has acted as an expert in that matter,
 - act as an expert in a matter where another member of the same firm has acted as an advocate in that matter,
 - allow the performance of their professional duties to be improperly influenced by the needs or preferences of a client or other party,
 - rely upon critical information supplied by a client without appropriate qualification or confirmation from other sources, or
 - act in any way inconsistent with the duties of independence and impartiality.

7. MEMBERS AND THE INSTITUTE

- 7.1 A member must not:
- purport to represent the views of the Institute unless expressly authorised to do so, or
 - reflect adversely on the professional integrity of the Institute, or its staff.
- 7.2 A member must conduct themselves in a manner which is not derogatory to their professional character nor likely to lessen the confidence of the public in the Institute or the profession nor bring them into disrepute.
- 7.3 A member must take such steps as are reasonably necessary to maintain and improve their knowledge and skill in the fields in which they practice.
- 7.4 A member must not maliciously or carelessly do anything to injure, directly or indirectly, the reputation, or prospects of Institute staff.
- 7.5 When dealing with the Institute a member must be frank and honest and subject to any express requirement set out in the Constitution, By-Laws, and Regulations, a member must fully cooperate with any request for information or directive from the Institute where a complaint has been lodged or where there is deemed to be a prima facie breach of the Professional Regulations.
- 7.6 A member must notify the Institute of any complaint upheld against the member by any other Association or Regulatory authority of which they are a member within 30 days of being notified of the outcome of the complaint.
- 7.7 A member must not profit from their position as an Institute Officer (Board member, Chapter Councillor, Region Councillor, Branch Committee member, Committee member, etc).
- 7.8 When undertaking duties or functions on behalf of the Institute in an appointed role, a member must not promote the services of the company they work for.

8. RELATIONS WITH OTHER MEMBERS

- 8.1 A member must not reflect adversely on the professional integrity of other members.
- 8.2 In submitting fee proposals for the provision of professional services, a member shall ensure that any such proposal forms part of a submission including (but not limited to) details outlining the members (and/or their companies), technical skills, experience, resources, P.I. Insurance, potential conflicts of interest, etc.

Note A: *It shall not be a breach of this Code of Conduct for a member, firm, or corporation to submit, in response to an enquiry by a Client or prospective Client, a fee proposal for the provision of professional services, provided always that such a fee proposal forms part of a submission outlining technical skills, experience, resources, etc. Nor shall it be a breach of this Code where such a proposal is knowingly submitted in competition with the submissions of other Quantity Surveyors.*

- 8.3 A member must not maliciously or carelessly do anything to injure, directly or indirectly, the reputation, prospects, or business of other members.
- 8.4 A member must not raise an allegation(s) of improper conduct against another member without evidence to support the allegation(s).
- 8.5 All allegations of improper conduct against other members must be lodged in accordance with the Institute's Complaints Policy.

9. REGULATORY REGISTRATIONS

- 9.1 A member who is required to be registered under any regulation must advise the Institute of that registration.
- 9.2 A member who is involved in undertaking Tax Depreciation Reports must be registered with the Tax Practitioners Board.

10. COPYRIGHT

- 10.1 A member must not, without appropriate acknowledgement, reproduce, paraphrase, or summarise any work, words, ideas, or intellectual property of another person which creates the impression that it is their own, and all reports prepared by members must give appropriate acknowledgement of the ideas, scholarship, and intellectual property of others insofar as these have been used.

11. NON-COMPLIANCE

- 11.1 Where a member considers circumstances exist that warrant departure from or non-compliance with any rule herein, the member's report must include a statement that outlines the reasons for the departure or non-compliance and any impact on the content of the report.

12. REVIEW

- 12.1 This Code of Conduct will be reviewed biennially at a minimum, or as a consequence of any legislative or regulatory instruments which would require a change to the Code to ensure compliance.

13. EFFECTIVE DATE

- 13.1 This Code of Conduct is effective from 1 January 2022.