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Code of professional conduct



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Introduction

The Code of Professional Conduct sets out the standards of professional and ethical behaviour that the BCI expects of all its members. All members commit to meeting the obligations of the Code when they join the BCI, regardless of membership grade, career stage or the countries in which they work.

BCI staff also commit to meeting standards of professional and ethical behaviour.

Meeting the obligations of the Code builds public confidence in the business continuity and resilience profession. This benefits everyone: societies, communities, organisations, individual members and their colleagues, and the BCI.

The standards of professional and ethical behaviour are written for BCI members. The purpose of the standards is to:

- guide and support individual BCI members in doing their work
- protect individual BCI members from ethical dilemmas and pressures
- help individual BCI members interact professionally and ethically with colleagues, clients and employers
- promote professional and ethical behaviour without stifling debate, improvement and innovation.

The standards can also be used by others to establish their expectations of BCI members' professional and ethical behaviour; as a basis for complaints about members' behaviour; and to guide the BCI when assessing complaints about members' behaviour.

Behaving professionally means individuals taking ownership of their own professional development and using their specialist knowledge and skills responsibly.

Behaving ethically means 'doing the right thing' and avoiding doing harm to anything or anyone. 'Doing the right thing' is not enough on its own, as what is 'right' can vary between cultures and situations – and there is often more than one solution to an ethical dilemma. Ethical behaviour includes thinking about the impact of actions and decisions.

Both professional and ethical behaviour involve acting in the interests of society and the environment, acting with respect for other people and cultures, and avoiding acting on pure self-interest.

The Code does not cover legal or regulatory requirements. All members are expected to meet the legal and regulatory obligations of the jurisdictions in which they practise. The Code is concerned with professional and ethical behaviour that goes beyond legal and regulatory requirements.

The Code does not cover every possible professional and ethical situation that members might encounter, so members should be guided by the spirit as well as the letter of the Code. As a general principle in situations where there is conflict between clauses of the Code, the clause that takes precedence is the one that best serves the interests of society in that situation.

Breaches of the Code will be considered under the BCI Complaints Procedure. Members are required to challenge others if they suspect a breach of the Code, and to inform the Institute.

In some situations, following the Code will not provide a clear way forward. Members facing a professional or ethical situation in which it is unclear what to do should seek advice and guidance before deciding how to proceed.

1. Competence and care

Members of the BCI shall:

- 1.1. Act with regard for the effect of their work on the health, safety and wellbeing of societies, communities and users.
- 1.2. Apply sustainable development principles and act with regard for the impact of their work on the environment.
- 1.3. Continue to develop and update their knowledge and skills, and maintain and improve their competence.

This obligation is a personal responsibility and is not limited to meeting any requirements set by the BCI for continuing professional development or for revalidating competence or membership.

- 1.4. Apply high standards of skill, knowledge, care and relevance in all their work.
- 1.5. Act only within the scope of their knowledge and ability.

If asked to carry out work beyond their level of knowledge and ability, members should inform their employer or client that they need support from someone with the necessary knowledge and ability.

- 1.6. Accept responsibility for their own professional actions and decisions, including declaring mistakes and correcting them as soon as possible.
- 1.7. Keep their employer or client informed of any risks, issues and threats that might affect the quality of their work or their ability to carry it out.



2. Integrity

Members of the BCI shall:

- 2.1. Act with personal and professional integrity and honesty at all times.
- 2.2. Act with impartiality, objectivity and fairness at all times.

Acting with impartiality includes ensuring their professional judgement is not improperly influenced by others – or by their own self-interest.

- 2.3. If a member's professional judgement is overruled, explain the likely risks and consequences to the employer, client or stakeholder and, if needed, seek advice on how to proceed.
- 2.4. Not offer or accept bribes or inducements.

Bribes are not always offers of money: they can include gifts and other incentives. This obligation does not include the exchange of small gifts with a low value that could not improperly influence the recipient.

This obligation applies in all jurisdictions, regardless of whether bribery is legal or normal practice.

- 2.5. Not encourage or assist others who may be engaged in unlawful or unethical behaviour.
- 2.6. Avoid conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest arises, members must declare it immediately to all who might be affected before deciding how to proceed.

Conflicts of interest can arise in many situations, including between members and their employers or between two or more clients who are in competition with each other. If a conflict of interest cannot be accepted, removed or resolved to the satisfaction of all those involved, members should withdraw from the situation.

- 2.7. Safeguard the privacy of everyone they come into contact with in the course of their work.

Safeguarding the privacy of clients, employers, colleagues and suppliers includes using social and other media responsibly.

- 2.8. Protect confidential and sensitive information they have access to in their work.

This obligation includes personal and commercial data and information.



3. Relationships

Members of the BCI shall:

- 3.1. Encourage and promote equality of opportunity, diversity and inclusion and support human rights and human dignity.
- 3.2. Establish and maintain business relationships based on trust, understanding and respect.

Business relationships means all interactions with others, including colleagues, peers, and BCI staff and officers.

- 3.3. Practise and promote cultural humility and act with respect for the customs, practices, culture and personal beliefs of others.

Cultural humility means being aware of one's own values and beliefs, understanding that these are a result of cultural influences from personal experience, and using this understanding to improve interactions with people who have different cultural experiences, identities, values and beliefs.

- 3.4. Develop and learn from colleagues and peers – including those in other professions.

Members should encourage and support others in their professional development and seek to improve their own and others' understanding and practice through mutual support, debate and discussion based on respect for each other's experience and opinions.

- 3.5. Collaborate with colleagues, including those in other professions, to meet the needs of societies and communities.
- 3.6. Seek to improve professional standards in business continuity management.

Members can improve standards through debate and discussion, and by supporting the use and development of the BCI's Good Practice and other Guidelines.

- 3.7. Treat differences of professional opinion with respect rather than with judgement.

Differences of professional opinion can arise in many situations, including in debate and discussion of new ideas that might lead to improvement and innovation in business continuity practices. Debate and discussion should never involve personal criticism of individuals.

- 3.8. Promote and uphold the reputation of the profession in all their business relationships.
- 3.9. Uphold the reputation and values of the BCI in all their business relationships. The BCI values are professionalism, reliability and inclusivity.

This obligation includes not claiming to represent the BCI, or making any public statement that implies a member is speaking on behalf of the BCI, unless the member has been authorised or invited to do so.

