

# Code of Conduct for PRCA Members

*Last reviewed Tuesday, 1 July, 2024*

## Preamble

This Code of Conduct applies to all Members of the PRCA. Where specified, certain provisions apply only to Company Members. Where the term 'Member' is used, it refers to Professional, Associate and Company Members collectively.

It is a condition of membership that Members will abide by the provisions of this Code of Conduct. Members are required to adopt and observe the standards and principles set out in it and must thereby endeavour to observe the highest professional standards in their practice of public relations and communications. Additionally, Members must uphold these standards in their non-professional lives wherever their conduct has a sufficient nexus to their professional practice or the profession.

The PRCA may impose sanctions against Professional and Associate Members where they are responsible for serious breaches of this Code of Conduct. Breaches of this Code of Conduct by Company Members may result in the PRCA imposing a sanction on the Company Member itself as an entity, or senior individuals within the organisation who have relevant responsibilities for the relevant conduct, but only where those individuals are also Professional Members. Relevant sanctions are provided for in the PRCA Complaints Procedure.

Members are also required to abide by the separate Public Affairs Code when engaging in Public Affairs activities (as defined in the Public Affairs Code).

## The Code

1. Members must not engage in any practice nor be seen to conduct themselves in any manner detrimental to the reputation of PRCA or the reputation of the public relations and communications profession or that would bring either into disrepute.
2. Additionally, Members must comply with any other relevant industry codes of professional conduct or regulations, and must operate within the law at all times. When working in association with other professionals, Members must identify and respect the codes of those professions.
3. Members must conduct their professional activities having proper regard to the public interest.
4. Members must not intentionally damage the reputation or practice of another Member.
5. Members must support PRCA's standards and principles by bringing to the attention of the PRCA, as soon as possible, any serious breaches of the Codes of Conduct or the Public Affairs Code of which Members become aware.

6. Members must deal fairly and honestly with others, including clients, employers, employees, fellow professionals, from this or other professions, the media and the public.
7. Professional and Associate Members must act with professionalism at all times and must maintain and demonstrate their competence to practise in the profession of public relations and communications.
8. Professional and Associate Members must be aware of the limits of their professional capacity and capability. Company Members should encourage professional training and development among members of the profession to raise and maintain professional standards generally.
9. Members must ensure the accuracy and truth of the information in their work and not disseminate false or misleading information, knowingly or recklessly. Members must act promptly to correct any factually incorrect information which they have disseminated, save where they are prevented from doing so by any third party or legal obligation.
10. Members must ensure that the source of information disseminated is either explicitly stated or could readily be identified to such a degree that a reasonable person should not be in doubt as to where it originated from. Members must give credit for ideas and words borrowed from others.
11. Members must declare any relevant interests to clients or others with whom they engage with as part of their practice as a public relations and communications professional, including employers and potential clients. Interests must be declared in good time as and when they arise, or in anticipation.
12. If a member of either House of Parliament, member of a local authority, or of any statutory organisation or body, Professional and Associate Members must record that material in the relevant section of the PRCA Public Affairs and Lobbying register.
13. Members must neither propose nor undertake any action which would constitute an improper influence on organs of government, or on legislation, or on the media of communication.
14. Members must neither offer nor give any inducement to persons holding public office or members of any statutory body or organisation, with intent to further the interests of the organisation if such action is inconsistent with the public interest.
15. Professional and Associate Members must honour confidences given and received during the course of their practice as a public relations and communications professional. Confidential information must not be disclosed unless specific permission has been granted, or the disclosure is required by law. Confidential

information must not be misused or used to the disadvantage or prejudice of others, or for a Member's own self-advantage.

- 16.** Members must take reasonable steps to ensure that they do not discriminate in their professional practice on the basis of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.
- 17.** Company Members must establish and maintain their own procedures to ensure that their employees or partners who are Professional Members adhere to the professional standards in this Code of Conduct, as well as the PRCA Articles and Bye-Laws.
- 18.** Company Members must comply with the requirement to file with the PRCA the annual declaration provided for in Article 6.4 of the PRCA Articles of Association.