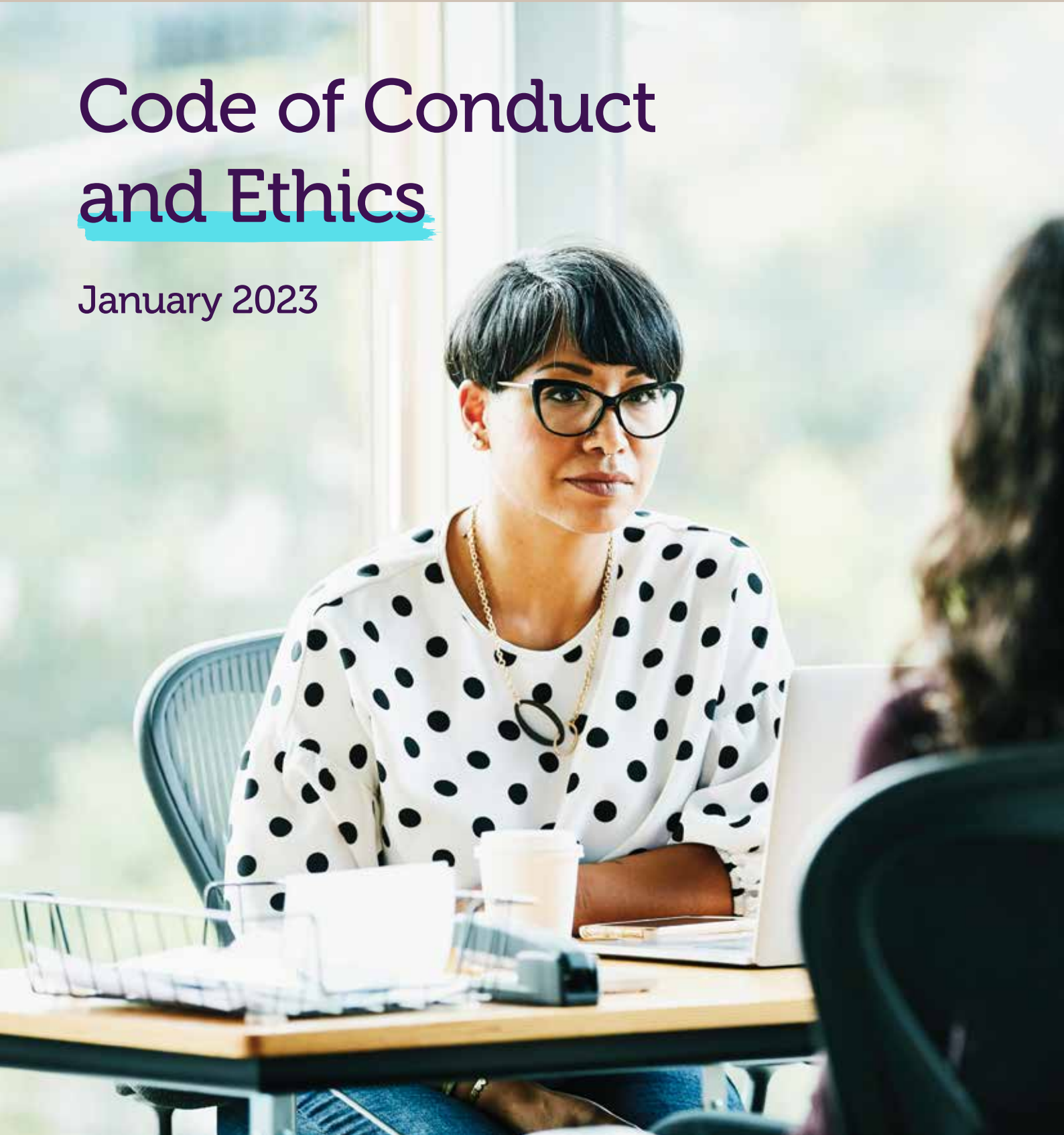


CIPD

# Code of Conduct and Ethics

January 2023



The Code of Conduct and Ethics superseded the previous Code of Professional Conduct on 1 January 2023. Any alleged breach that occurred before this will be evaluated against the previous Code.

We've been championing better work and working lives for over 100 years. We help organisations thrive by focusing on their people, supporting our economies and societies. We're the professional body for HR, L&D, OD and all people professionals – experts in people, work and change. With almost 160,000 members globally - and a growing community using our research, insights and learning – we give trusted advice and offer independent thought leadership. And we are a leading voice in the call for good work that creates value for everyone.

# Contents

**Introduction** 4

**The Code of Conduct  
and Ethics** 6

Positive and active impact on working lives 6

Civic virtue and stewardship 7

Good character 8

Professional service and competence 9

Personal responsibility 10

# Introduction

At the CIPD we champion better work and working lives. As the professional body for HR, L&D, OD and all people professionals, we want to see good work within inclusive and responsible business, making the economy stronger and society better. Protecting the interests of the public is a fundamental objective of the CIPD, by setting standards of professional and ethical practice. Our Royal Charter demands that we require all of our Members, regardless of grade, to uphold obligations set out in this Code of Conduct and Ethics. Universally, regardless of size, sector, specialism, whether working as employees, consultants or independent practitioners – the duties are owed to the public, the CIPD, our Members, the profession, clients, employers and employees, and the wider community.

The Code applies irrespective of whether a Member owes duties under other codes and competence frameworks. Where Members identify a difference, they are required to apply the higher principle to their practice and always to comply with prevailing laws as a priority. Ensuring our Members are competent, we also want to promote a culture where ethical values and behaviours are embedded. Members are often called upon to make difficult decisions and must think very carefully of the implication and potential consequences of decisions and actions taken.

The Code is not exhaustive, it's impossible to address every circumstance. Members should regulate their practice and be mindful of the Code when using their own judgement and common sense, within a professional context. Some of the behaviours or actions described in this Code will be unthinkable to Members, it is our duty as the CIPD to identify them – so that the boundaries of professional behaviour and conduct are clear and we maintain public trust.

We take concerns regarding alleged breaches of the Code very seriously. If Members have wilfully, carelessly or negligently breached the Code, we will have a robust response. Members must be aware that a breach of the Code could lead to disciplinary proceedings. We do require all Members to be familiar with the Code and supporting materials, the law and regulations governing their work, and to be able to explain and justify their decisions and actions.

In order to consider alleged breaches of the Code, Investigation and Conduct procedures apply and as an independent professional body, these are set out in our Regulations available on the website. They require that evidence of the specific action(s) or behaviour(s) of the Member is provided by the Complainant, including when we as the CIPD itself raise alleged breaches of the Code by a Member. We will enforce these standards evenly, on the facts of each case and supported by a group of trained members and non-members, who are responsible for determining if a breach of the Code has occurred.

The profession is changing at pace, it is our intention to update the Code periodically, ensuring that the Code is fit for purpose and gives the public reassurance and clarity about what an ethical profession looks like.

# The Code of Conduct and Ethics

## 1 Positive and active impact on working lives

By: fulfilling the purpose of championing better work and working lives for current and future generations. By promoting people centred practice, developing people, being the employee experience champion, supporting the health, education and welfare of those in the work environment.

- i Develop and champion policies and procedures that foster fair, consistent and equitable treatment for all.
- ii Champion and demonstrate employment and business practices that promote sensitivity for the customs, practices, culture and personal beliefs and rights of others. Whilst upholding and promoting equal opportunity, diversity, inclusion and dignity.
- iii Do not bully, harass, abuse, discriminate, victimise, or conduct offensive behaviour in the work environment.
- iv Ensure those working for you, have the appropriate level of competence, supervision and support and have the opportunity to develop their skills and knowledge.
- v Encourage and facilitate a range of speak-up options beyond whistleblowing, across your organisation. To understand the views, concerns and needs of those speaking up; supporting them and protecting them from reprisals or adverse treatment.
- vi Speak up about issues and concerns in the workplace.

## 2 Civic virtue and stewardship

By: being socially responsible; supporting future organisational needs; helping to improve the communities in which you live and work.

- i Evidence that stakeholders, including the wider community have been considered and (where relevant) consulted in your practice, decisions and actions.
- ii Uphold all compliance, regulatory and legal obligations in the country(ies) in which you practice. Role-model more advanced developments where possible, including acting beyond the minimum legal requirements.
- iii Act in accordance with the interests of the employer/client except where professional, ethical or legal duties require otherwise.
- iv Develop policies and practices under which people are treated with courtesy, dignity and respect. Where possible go beyond the minimum standards of treatment required under employment laws/regulation.
- v Comply with prevailing requirements of copyright, intellectual property, patents, licensing, piracy, plagiarism, trade secrets, privacy rights and appropriation. Respect the rights of others and prevent misuse of the CIPD logo.

### 3 Good character

By: applying sound judgement; being honest; not allowing personal interest to undermine your objectivity and protecting the reputation of the profession.

- i Role-model high standards of ethical conduct, honesty, professional and personal integrity.
- ii Always act in a way which supports and upholds the standards, reputation, values and virtues of the profession. Do not act in a way which might discredit the profession, the CIPD or other members.
- iii Establish, maintain and develop professional relationships based on mutual confidence, trust and respect.
- iv Do not misuse your professional position for personal, material or financial gain or the appearance of such.
- v Ensure that your professional judgement is not compromised nor could be perceived as being compromised because of bias, or the undue influence of others.
- vi Identify potential, apparent and actual conflicts of interest and disclose these to the appropriate person/stakeholder. If an action or transaction could be perceived as creating a conflict of interest, carefully consider whether it is proper to act in all the circumstances. Demonstrate and evidence independence and distinction between personal and professional capacity.



## 4 Professional service and competence

By: providing high standards of competence and service; committing to the continuing development of your skills, knowledge and experience.

- i Develop your professional knowledge, skills and competence through curiosity, seeking feedback, reflection, continuing professional development, mentorship and exposure to growth opportunities. Identify and address any gaps; demonstrate your adherence to the CIPD's continuing professional development policy.
- ii Provide an insightful, up-to-date and evidence-based service. Manage commitments effectively and take action where deadlines and obligations are at risk of not being met, particularly where external or personal factors may disrupt service delivery.
- iii Where you are operating outside of your expertise, scope of knowledge or ability – seek advice and support, or refer work in areas outside of your (personal) competence to a trusted third party.
- iv Safeguard all restricted, confidential, commercially sensitive and personal data. Do not use it for personal advantage or to the benefit or detriment of third parties.

## 5 Personal responsibility

By: taking responsibility for your actions; considering your impact on others, showing courage in your approach to difficult decisions and ethical dilemmas.

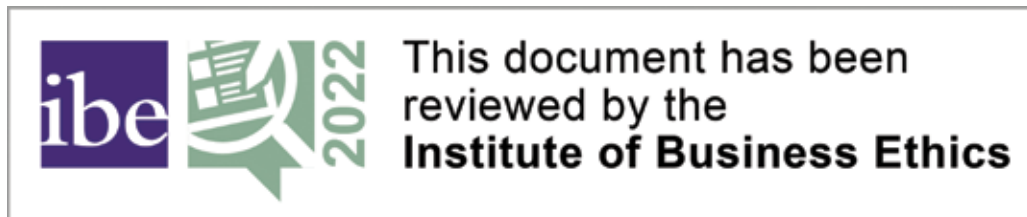
- i Take action to ensure that other Members do not breach or cause a breach of this Code. If you become aware of a potential breach, you must report this to the CIPD.
- ii Take all reasonable steps to resolve disputes and complaints in a fair, timely and professional manner. Never allow a complaint to affect the standard of behaviour or professionalism shown to those who raise concerns, engage authentically and respectfully.
- iii Take responsibility for your professional actions and decisions. Rectify issues and take all reasonable steps to mitigate loss or harm as soon as possible. Inform those affected of the potential impact.
- iv Co-operate with the CIPD, any process, investigations or enquiries. Approach any subsequent hearings in an open, honest and transparent manner as a witness or respondent. Identify and preserve relevant information.
- v Comply with all reasonable requests for information.
- vi Do not misrepresent your membership status, including the level of membership held.
- vii Ensure adequate liability insurance is held and maintained, and terms of reference are agreed for all work undertaken.
- viii Demonstrate professionalism and high standards of conduct in your professional and private communications, emails and online activities (including social media).

## Acknowledgements

The CIPD started a public consultation in September 2021 with a broad range of stakeholders regarding the Code, its obligations and content. Through a series of webinars, focus groups, round tables, one to one meetings and surveys, we were delighted to hear from members, non-members, academics, ethicists, business leaders, students, employers, employees and more.

As well as benchmarking the Code against other professional membership associations, the CIPD worked with the Professional Associations Research Network (PARN) the University of Birmingham's Jubilee Centre for Character and Virtues; and the University of Leeds's Inter-Disciplinary Ethics Applied (IDEA) Centre. The Code was also benchmarked and reviewed by the Institute of Business Ethics an organisation established to champion the highest standards of business ethics.

We would like to thank the thousands of people and the organisations who contributed to the consultation process and development of the new Code.



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