

# Code of Professional Conduct

(current as at July 2017)



Australian  
Institute of  
Architects

The Royal Australian Institute of Architects Limited

Code of Professional Conduct

Adopted by the Council on 31 January 2006

## Introduction

The profession of architecture is a unique discipline, combining elements of art, science, commerce and law. The Institute and its members are dedicated to the advancement of architecture through involved and innovative practice, with the aim of raising the quality of the environment and, consequently, the quality of life. In this it seeks to improve standards of health and safety for the protection and welfare of all members of the community.

Architects who are Institute members commit themselves to the attainment of high standards in architecture, and through its practice to maintain general wellbeing by upholding commonly agreed values of:

- ethical behaviour;
- equality of opportunity;
- social justice;
- aspiration to excellence, and
- competent professional performance.

They are expected to:

- serve and advance the public interest through appropriate involvement in civic activities, as citizens and professionals;
- promote environmental awareness and the appreciation of architecture and urban design;
- encourage informed public debate on architectural and urban design issues;
- respect, conserve, and enhance, the natural and cultural environment;
- encourage and maintain responsible ecologically sustainable and energy efficient design and development, and
- strive to contribute to the development of architectural knowledge, culture, and education.

In their professional and personal lives members of the Institute are bound by this Code of Professional Conduct (**the Code**) to uphold the integrity of the profession and to ensure client and community needs are respected and well served. The Code establishes principles to which the Institute members are required to conform. The Code defines ethical standards to ensure the upholding of principles which address obligations to the public, the client, profession, and colleagues. Violation of any of these standards is grounds for disciplinary action, the potential consequences of which are detailed in Schedule 3 of the Institute's Constitution.

The Code applies to all activities by its members in which architecture is a component. It is intended to promote committed and responsible performance in architecture, to ensure that the profession will acknowledge and meet the responsibility vested in it by the public.

## **PRINCIPLE 1**

### **Obligations to the Public**

Members have obligations to the public to embrace the spirit and letter of the laws governing their professional affairs, and should thoughtfully consider the social and environmental impact of their professional activities.

- 1.1 Standard:** Members must respect and help conserve the systems of values and the natural and cultural heritage of the community in which they are creating architecture. They must strive to improve the environment and the quality of life and habitat within it in a sustainable manner, being fully mindful of the effect of their work on the interests of all those who may reasonably be expected to use or enjoy the product of their work.
- 1.2 Standard:** Members must neither communicate nor promote themselves or their professional services in a false, misleading, or deceptive manner.
- 1.3 Standard:** An architectural firm must not represent itself in a misleading fashion.
- 1.4 Standard:** Members must uphold the law in the conduct of their professional activities.
- 1.5 Standard:** Members must abide by the codes of ethics and conduct of the Institute and laws in force in the countries and jurisdictions in which they provide or intend to provide professional services.

## PRINCIPLE 2

### Obligations to the Client

Members have obligations to their clients to carry out their professional work faithfully, conscientiously, competently, and in a professional manner, and should exercise judgement with due regard to relevant technical and professional standards when performing all professional services. Learned and professional judgement should take precedence over any other motive in the pursuit of the art, science, and business of architecture.

- 2.1 Standard:** Members must perform their professional work with due skill, care and diligence.
- 2.2 Standard:** Members must carry out their professional work without undue delay and, so far it is within their powers, within an agreed reasonable time limit.
- 2.3 Standard:** Members must keep their client informed of the progress of work undertaken on the client's behalf and of any issues that may affect its quality or cost.
- 2.4 Standard:** Members must accept responsibility for the independent advice provided by them to their clients, and undertake to perform professional services only when they, together with those whom they may engage as consultants, are qualified by education, training, or experience in the specific areas involved and have the necessary resources to satisfactorily complete a commission.
- 2.5 Standard:** Members must not offer or receive any financial or other inducement or enter into any arrangement, in relation to procuring an appointment, which is not disclosed to the prospective client.
- 2.6 Standard:** Members must observe the confidentiality of their client's affairs and must not disclose confidential information without the prior consent of the client or other lawful authority; for example, when disclosure is required by order of a court of law.
- 2.7 Standard:** Members must disclose to clients or contractors, significant circumstances known to them that could be construed as creating a conflict of interest, and must ensure that such conflict does not compromise the legitimate interests of such persons or interfere with the architect's duty to render impartial judgement in relation to contract performance by others.

## **PRINCIPLE 3**

### **Obligations to the Profession**

Members have an obligation to uphold the integrity and dignity of the profession, and must in every circumstance conduct themselves in a manner that respects the legitimate rights and interests of others.

- 3.1 Standard:** Members must pursue their professional activities with honesty and fairness.
- 3.2 Standard:** Members must not take as a partner and must not act as a co-director with an unsuitable person, such as a person whose name has been removed from any register of architects otherwise than at his or her own request or a person disqualified from membership pursuant to the standards and process prescribed in the Institute's Constitution.
- 3.3 Standard:** Members must not act in any way that brings the profession into disrepute.

## PRINCIPLE 4

### Obligations to Colleagues

Members have an obligation to respect and acknowledge the professional aspirations and contributions of their colleagues and the contribution made to their works by others.

- 4.1 Standard:** Members must not discriminate on grounds of race, religion, disability, marital status, or gender.
  - 4.2 Standard:** Members must not appropriate the intellectual property of nor unduly take advantage of the ideas of another architect without express authority from the originating architect. Members must build their professional reputation on the merits of their own service and performance and should recognize and give credit to others for professional work performed.
  - 4.3 Standard:** Members must not attempt to supplant another architect, who has been appointed for a particular project.
  - 4.4 Standard:** Members must not maliciously or unfairly criticise or attempt to discredit another architect or their work.
  - 4.5 Standard:** Members must, if approached to undertake a project for which it is known, or should reasonably be known, that another architect is currently appointed, request the client to notify the other architect.
  - 4.6 Standard:** Members must provide their associates and employees with a suitable working environment, compensate them fairly, and facilitate their professional development.
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