

# Australian Computer Society CODE OF ETHICS

## Values and Ideals subscribed to by Society Members

The professional person, to uphold and advance the honour, dignity and effectiveness of the profession in the arts and sciences of information processing, and in keeping with high standards of competence and ethical conduct, will be honest, forthright and impartial, and will serve with loyalty employers, clients and the public, and will strive to increase the competence and prestige of the profession, and will use special knowledge and skill for the advancement of human welfare.

## CODE OF ETHICS

I will act with professional responsibility and integrity in my dealings with clients, employers, employees, students and the community generally. By this I mean:

1. I will serve the interests of my clients and employers, my employees and students, and the community generally, as matters of no less priority than the interests of myself or my colleagues.
2. I will work competently and diligently for my clients and employers.
3. I will be honest in my representations of skills, knowledge, services and products.
4. I will strive to enhance the quality of life of those affected by my work.
5. I will enhance my own professional development, and that of my colleagues, employees and students.
6. I will enhance the integrity of the Computing Profession and the respect of its members for each other.

## STANDARD OF CONDUCT

The standards set out below explain how the Code of Ethics applies to member's professional work. The list of standards is not necessarily exhaustive, and should not be read as definitively demarcating the acceptable from the unacceptable in professional conduct in all practical situations faced by a member. The intention of the Standard of Conduct is to illustrate, and to explain in more detail, the mean of the Code of Ethics in terms of specific behaviours. However, the mere fact that a member engages in, or does not engage in, these behaviours does not of itself guarantee that a member is acting ethically, or unethically, respectively. The ACS accepts that the standards are ideal, and many not all be achievable at all times in all circumstances. In practice, a member may occasionally find that some standards conflict with other standards, including standards from other sources. On these occasions the member must weight up the relevant factors and choose to act in the manner which is most consistent with the Codes of Ethics, given the circumstances.

It is not possible to set totally objective standards about ethical conduct, and this Standard does not attempt to do so. The delineation of ethical and unethical behaviour requires some element of subjectivity. A member is expected to take into account the spirit of the entire Code in order to resolve ambiguous or contentious issues concerning ethical conduct. In the final analysis the member is answerable to other members in jointly determining what is ethical and what is not in particular circumstances.

In summary, a member is expected to act at all times in a manner likely to be judged by informed, respected, and experienced peers in possession of all of the facts as the most ethical way to act in the circumstances.

## **I. PRIORITIES**

I will serve the interests of my clients and employers, my employees and students, and the community generally, as matters of no less priority than the interests of myself or my colleagues.

- 1.1. I will endeavour to preserve continuity of computing services and information flow in my care.
- 1.2. I will endeavour to preserve the integrity and security of others' information.
- 1.3. I will respect the proprietary nature of others' information.
- 1.5. I will advise my client or employer of any potential conflicts of interest between my assignment and legal or other accepted community requirements.
- 1.6. I will advise my clients and employers as soon as possible of any conflicts of interest or conscientious objections which face me in connection with my work.

## **II. COMPETENCE**

I will work competently and diligently for my clients and employers.

- 2.1. I will endeavour to provide products and services which match the operational and financial needs of my clients and employers.
- 2.2. I will give value for money in the services and products I supply.
- 2.3. I will make myself aware of relevant standards, and act accordingly.
- 2.4. I will respect and protect my clients' and employers' proprietary interests.
- 2.5. I will accept responsibility for my work.
- 2.6. I will advise my clients and employers when I believe a proposed project is not in their best interests.
- 2.7. I will go beyond my brief, if necessary, in order to act professionally.

## **III. HONESTY**

I will be honest in my representation of skills, knowledge, services and products.

- 3.1. I will not knowingly mislead a client or potential client as to the suitability of a product or service.
- 3.2. I will not misrepresent my skills or knowledge.
- 3.3. I will give opinions which are as far as possible unbiased and objective.
- 3.4. I will give realistic estimates for projects under my control.
- 3.5. I will qualify professional opinions which I know are based on limited knowledge or experience.
- 3.6. I will give credit for work done by others where credit is due.

## **IV. SOCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

I will strive to enhance the quality of life of those affected by my work.

- 4.1. I will protect and promote the health and safety of those affected by my work.
- 4.2. I will consider and respect people's privacy which might be affected by my work.
- 4.3. I will respect my employees and refrain from treating them unfairly.
- 4.4. I will endeavour to understand, and give due regard to, the perceptions of those affected by my work, whether or not I agree with those perceptions.
- 4.5. I will attempt to increase the feelings of personal satisfactions, competence, and control of those affected by my work.
- 4.6. I will not require, or attempt to influence, any person to take any action which would involve a breach of this Code.

## V. PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I will enhance my own professional development, and that of my colleagues, employees and students.

5.1. I will continue to upgrade my knowledge and skills.

5.2. I will increase my awareness of issues affecting the computing profession and its relationship with the community.

5.3. I will encourage my colleagues, employees and students to continue their own professional development.

## VI. COMPUTING PROFESSION

I will enhance the integrity of the Computing Profession and the respect of its members for each other.

6.1. I will respect, and seek when necessary, the professional opinions of colleagues in their areas of competence.

6.2. I will not knowingly engage in, or be associated with, dishonest or fraudulent practices.

6.3. I will not attempt to enhance my own reputation at the expense of another's reputation.

6.4. I will not operate in advancing information processing by communication with other professionals, students and the public, and by contributing to the efforts of professional and scientific societies and schools.

6.5. I will distance myself professionally from someone whose membership of the ACS has been terminated because of unethical behaviour or unsatisfactory conduct.

6.6. I will take appropriate action if I discover a member, or a person who could potentially be a member of the ACS, engaging in unethical behaviour.

6.7. I will seek advice from the ACS when faced with an ethical dilemma I am unable to resolve by myself.

6.8. I will do what I can to ensure that the corporate actions of the ACS are in accordance with this Code.

6.9. I acknowledge my debt to the Computing Profession and in return will protect and promote professionalism in computing.

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