

Energy Efficiency Experts Code of Professional Conduct

All members of the Energy Institute sign the Code of Professional Conduct when they join the EI. In doing so they show that they recognise the importance of their professional activities for the quality of life and the benefit of society as a whole. They accept a personal obligation to act ethically and with integrity in the public interest and to maintain and improve their competence. Those on the Energy Efficiency Experts register are required to maintain professional membership of the EI throughout their registration and are therefore bound by the EI Code of Professional Conduct.

Consultancy and the provision of advice to business, public sector organisation and others is in itself a professional competence and involves certain specific responsibilities and obligations. Those on the register are expected to demonstrate high standards of professionalism in their interactions with client and others, working in the client's best interest.

Registrants are therefore, in addition to the EI's general code, also required to sign and agree to abide by the EI Energy Efficiency Experts Code of Conduct. The Code is intended to

- inform and guide registered consultants of the high standards of professional conduct and practice to which they are required to adhere
- inform current and prospective clients of the standard of professional conduct and practice they can expect of a registered consultant.

Registrants should inform prospective clients about the Code.

Main principles

As a registrant on the Energy Efficiency Experts register, you are personally responsible for your actions and omissions. You have a duty of care to your clients, who are entitled to receive a professional and competent service, and appropriate advice.

You must:

- Obtain written consent before you start fee-paying work on a client's behalf.
- Declare any actual or potential conflicts of interest in writing.
- Act to identify and minimise risk to the client, including communicating any potential risks in writing.
- Maintain and develop your professional knowledge and competence on a continuing basis to ensure that the advice you give is accurate, appropriate and up to date.
- Practice within your competence, and advise a client should any situation arise which exceeds your capacity, training and/or competence.
- Protect and maintain the security and confidentiality of information to which you may have access through your consultancy.
- Recognise and respect the value of other consultants' work, and where applicable work with other consultants in the client's best interests.
- Maintain appropriate professional indemnity insurance to cover your work.
- Take steps to ensure that the information contained within the public facing register is an accurate and truthful representation of your competence and experience, qualifications and certifications.
- Be trustworthy and ensure you do not exploit the client.

- Reject bribery, avoid deceptive acts, and take steps to prevent corruptive practices or professional misconduct, including taking positive steps to ensure others do likewise.
- Act at all times honourably, responsibly and lawfully and uphold the reputation, standing and dignity of the profession, and that of the register.

Guidance

2.1 The interest of the client is paramount

The relationship between consultant and their clients is based on trust and on the principle that the correct advice to the client is paramount. Registrants must take care to observe this trust and principle; they must be aware of their level of knowledge, and ensure they are in a position to provide advice in the areas in which they are working with their client. Appropriate records should be kept; all record keeping should be legible, attributable and kept together with any correspondence relevant to the project.

2.2 Honesty with regard to investigations and advice

The recorded history must be an accurate record of attendance, advice, and observations; it must include record of client consent where appropriate. All records should be considered to be admissible as evidence in a Court of Law.

2.3 Acceptance of responsibility for the work completed on behalf of clients

Registered consultants are free to choose who they accept as clients.

Where consultants work together in any capacity in the same practice, they should provide the client with written confirmation of:

- The name and status of the person responsible for the client's agreed contract.
- The person responsible for supervising the client's overall contract of work if this is different from the above.
- The person to approach in the event of any problem with any contract if this is not the above.

Any actual or potential conflicts of interest should be declared in writing, as should any associations the consultant may have with relevant businesses or providers of products or services.

You should give advance written notice should these details change. If this is not possible, notice should be given without delay and as soon as reasonably practicable.

2.4 Guidance when unable to help

In any case where a consultant discovers that the client requires advice which is outside the consultant's scope of competency, the consultant must advise the client of this. An alternative consultant or appropriate third party should be used who has the relevant experience for this work, and this should be agreed with the client and confirmed in writing.

2.5 Reports on behalf of third parties

Before a consultant prepares a report on behalf of a third party, such as an employer or insurance company, barrister or lawyer, the consultant shall obtain the client's consent in writing to the release of information to the third party and shall ensure at the outset that the client is aware of the purpose of the report and of the obligation which the consultant has towards the third party.

2.6 Notification of fees

Registered consultants shall ensure that details of their fees and a schedule of all payments to be received is made known to clients in advance, in writing, before liability for payment is incurred.

2.7 Commercial transactions

Consultants who supply to a client goods of any description, shall ensure that such goods are likely to be beneficial to the client. The consultant must advise the client in writing of any business relationship with the supplier or manufacturer of any such products.

2.8 Environmental sustainability and social value

The work undertaken by consultants should fully take into account considerations relating to sustainability, and minimise environmental impact for the client and relevant local or wider communities. They must ensure that they are aware of a client's Social Value requirements and ensure compliance with these throughout each programme of works. Consultants should have an up-to-date knowledge of current regulations and impending changes.

2.9 Professional indemnity insurance.

Consultants must hold and maintain appropriate professional indemnity insurance to cover their work of at least £1,000,000. This must be maintained for two years following leaving the Register or retiring or changing profession if work has been completed which is covered by this insurance. Current certificates of insurance must be submitted on application to the Register and on request within 28 days.

2.10 Criminal offences and bankruptcy

Notify the Register if convicted of a criminal offence or upon becoming bankrupt or disqualified as a Company Director.

2.11 Complaints and claims by clients

Registered Consultants shall deal promptly and fairly with any complaint or claim made against them by a client. In particular, consultancies should establish and make known to their client a formal complaints procedure.

Where a consultant is in breach of this Code, a complaint may be made to the EI.

The EI reserves the right to suspend a consultant from the Register pending investigation on receipt of a formal complaint on a matter within the scope of this Code, or in any matter which it

believes may otherwise bring the Register into disrepute, such as improper conduct. "Improper conduct" shall mean:

- a failure to comply with all sections above of the Code
- the making of any false representation when applying for membership of the Register
- any act or omission which shall have rendered the member unfit to remain a Registered Consultant or shall be injurious to the Register.

The Disciplinary and Appeals procedure is available from the Energy Institute.