

Rules of Conduct

Approved by the Board of Trustees on 3 October 2019.

Introduction

The IET promotes and encourages ethical behaviour in the practice of science, engineering and technology by all stakeholders. In so doing, the IET seeks to raise the level of public trust and confidence in the positive contribution to society made by science, engineering and technology. Responsibility for professional and personal decisions and actions rests with the individual member.

Through its Knowledge Network and Rules of Conduct, the IET provides guidance and information sources to support members to take such decisions, and to act, ethically.

Commitment to a shared code of conduct is a defining characteristic of a profession. The IET Rules of Conduct are designed to guide members to meet the standard of professional conduct as specified in the Bye-laws. In publishing the IET's Rules of Conduct, the Board of Trustees shall have due regard to the related guidance published by the Engineering Council or a successor regulatory body

The Rules of Conduct also aim to support members to take an ethical stance when balancing the often conflicting interests and demands of employers, society and the environment. The IET aspires to promote the highest standards of conduct, and consequently, its Rules of Conduct are consistent with principles widely accepted amongst leading engineering bodies worldwide.

In joining the IET, all members must agree to abide by the Rules of Conduct. Members reaffirm their commitment to the Rules of Conduct through the annual renewal of their membership. The Rules of Conduct are defined by members for members and are reviewed regularly to ensure they remain relevant. Suggestions that a member's conduct has contravened the Rules of Conduct are reviewed under the IET's Disciplinary Regulations.

Extract from the Bye-laws

29. Persons in any category of membership shall at all times uphold the dignity and reputation of their profession, act with fairness and integrity towards everyone with whom their work is connected, and towards other members and safeguard the public interest in matters of health, safety, the environment and otherwise.
30. Persons in any category of membership shall, in addition, exercise their professional skill and judgement to the best of their ability and discharge their professional responsibilities with integrity. They shall encourage the vocational progress of those in their professional charge.

Rules of Conduct

1. These rules have been made in accordance with Bye-law 31. Unless a contrary intention appears, “member” means a member of any category; and “employer” includes “client”. Except where inconsistent with the context, words implying the singular shall include the plural, and vice versa, and references to one gender shall include references to each other gender.
2. Members shall observe the provisions of the current Statement of Ethical Principles published by the Engineering Council and the Royal Academy of Engineering.
3. Members shall uphold the reputation and standing of the Institution.
4. Members shall observe the provisions of the Institution’s Royal Charter and Bye-laws and any supporting regulations or rules.
5. Members shall keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date through planned professional development and seek to broaden and deepen that knowledge throughout their working life. Members shall keep adequate records of professional development undertaken. Members shall also encourage persons working under their supervision to do the same.
6. Members shall not undertake professional tasks and responsibilities that they are not reasonably competent to discharge.
7. Members shall accept personal responsibility for all work done by them or under their supervision or direction. Members shall also take all reasonable steps to ensure that persons working under their authority are both suitably equipped and competent to carry out the tasks assigned to them.
8. Members shall assess all relevant liability for work done by them or under their supervision, and if appropriate hold professional indemnity insurance.
9. Members whose professional advice is not accepted shall take all reasonable steps:
 - (a) to ensure that the person overruling or neglecting that advice is aware of any danger or loss which may ensue; and
 - (b) in appropriate cases, to inform that person’s employers of the potential risks involved.
10. Members are expected to report to their employers any suspected wrongdoing or dangers they identify in connection with the member’s professional activities. This includes:
 - (a) any breach of professional obligations; and
 - (b) bribery, fraud or other criminal activity, miscarriages of justice, health and safety risks, damage to the environment and any breach of legal obligations including any act of discrimination (in accordance with the Equality Act 2010).
11. Members shall support colleagues or others to whom they owe a duty of care who in good faith raises any concern about a danger, risk, malpractice or wrongdoing which affects others.

12. Members shall neither advertise nor write articles (in any medium) for publication in any manner that is derogatory to the Institution or to the dignity of their profession. Neither shall they authorise any such advertisement or article to be written or published by others.
13. Members shall not recklessly or maliciously injure or attempt to injure, whether directly or indirectly, the professional reputation, prospects or business of any other person.
14. Members shall at all times take all reasonable care to limit any danger of death, injury or ill health to any person that may result from their work and the products of their work.
15. Members shall take all reasonable steps to avoid waste of natural resources, damage to the environment, and damage or destruction of man-made products. Lawful work undertaken by members in connection with equipment intended for the defence of a nation will not infringe this Rule 15 or Rule 14.
16. Members convicted of a criminal offence or in receipt of an adverse civil court judgment related to any aspect of these Rules of Conduct anywhere in the world are required to inform the Institution promptly, and to provide such information concerning the conviction or judgment as the Institution may require, but this rule does not apply to either a conviction for a motoring offence for which no term of imprisonment (either immediate or suspended) is imposed or an offence which is regarded as “spent” within the meaning of the UK Rehabilitation of Offenders Act 1974 or equivalent legislation elsewhere.
17. Members who have:
 - (a) been declared bankrupt, disqualified as a company director or charity trustee (or any analogous sanction anywhere in the world); or
 - (b) had membership of another professional body terminated as the result of a disciplinary procedure;are required to inform the Institution promptly, and to provide such information concerning the matter as the Institution may require.
18. If a member becomes aware of any significant violation of these Rules of Conduct by another member, they shall promptly inform the Institution.
19. Members shall not use designatory letters to which they are not entitled. Members can state that they are a member of the IET but members shall not use the IET logo, coat of arms, email alias service or the designatory letters in a business capacity or which implies that they are acting on behalf of, or with the authority of, the Institution, except when conducting Institution business in the capacity of an honorary officer. Members who are given an “ietvolunteer.org” email account shall only use it for the purpose for which it is given.
20. Members who are not registered through an Institution as a Chartered Engineer, Incorporated Engineer, Engineering Technician or ICT Technician shall not use their entitlement to the suffix TMIET, MIET or FIET to imply that they are so registered.
21. Members shall exemplify professional behaviour generally and specifically in their relationships with the Institution, its employees and their fellow members.
22. Members shall be mindful of their obligation to exemplify professional behaviour in relation to any content that they publish in the public domain, including without limitation articles, blogs and all social media.

23. Members who are called upon to give an opinion in their professional capacity shall, to the best of their ability, give an opinion that is objective and based upon the best available knowledge and information, and shall state clearly any limitations or qualifications to such opinion.
24. Members shall actively promote public awareness and understanding of the impact and benefits of engineering and technology achievements.
25. Members shall not make any public statement in their professional capacity without ensuring that:
 - (a) they are qualified to make such a statement; and
 - (b) any association that they may have with any party who may benefit from the statement is known to the person or persons to whom it is directed.
26. Members standing as candidates for election to any board or committee of the Institution shall not undertake, or permit to be undertaken on their behalf, organised canvassing by means of circulars or otherwise.
27. Members shall inform their employer in writing of any conflict or potential conflict that may exist or arise between their personal interests and the interests of their employer.
28. Members shall not without proper authority disclose any confidential information concerning the business of their employer or any past employer.
29. Members shall not without their employer's consent accept any payment or benefit in money or money's worth from any person other than their employer in connection with professional services rendered to their employer. Neither shall they receive, directly or indirectly, any such payment or benefit in respect of any article or process used in or for the purpose of the work in respect of which they are employed without such consent.
30. Members shall not offer improper inducement to secure work as independent advisers or consultants, either directly or through an agent. Neither shall they improperly pay any person, whether by commission or otherwise, for the introduction of such work.
31. Members acting as independent advisers or consultants shall not be the medium of payment made on their employer's behalf unless so requested by their employer. Neither shall they place contracts or orders in connection with work on which they are employed, except with the authority of and on behalf of their employer.
32. Members shall co-operate with the procedure laid down in the Disciplinary Regulations from time to time, including without limitation any investigation conducted under the Disciplinary Regulations.
33. Members agree that the Institution may pursue the disciplinary process under the Disciplinary Regulations in connection with any complaint against them received by the Institution while they are a member notwithstanding that their membership subsequently comes to an end, however that occurs (eg it lapses or they seek to resign).
34. If any element of these Rules of Conduct conflict with local laws where a member is situate, such member shall comply with these Rules of Conduct to the maximum extent possible without breaching such laws.