

Ag Institute of Australia (AIA) Code of Ethics and Accompanying Guidelines

Policy Statement

April 2018

PREAMBLE

This policy sets out the Code of Ethics (Code) for all members of the Ag Institute Australia (AIA). By joining the AIA, and when becoming a Chartered Agricultural Professional, members and candidates agree to abide by the Code. Adherence to the Code will be enforced and for chartered members, knowledge of the code will be tested by an examination.

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that members adhere to the highest standards of professional conduct in the discharge of their duties. The Code and Guidelines for Professional Conduct underpins our professional standards and provides the foundation on which the AIA can provide and administer a professional accreditation program (CPAg) and the highest level of professional recognition, through the chartered scheme. It also presents to our stakeholders, including service users, regulators and the business community, our commitment to the industry in providing the highest quality of professional service.

Members of the AIA employed by organisations such as the CSIRO, educational organisations, local, state and federal government departments, and public and private companies, are required to adhere to this Code irrespective of whether they are separately bound by other codes of conduct that may apply through their own organisations.

POLICY STATEMENT

The quality of work performed by agriculturists depends on their competence and the values they hold with respect to the community and environment in which they operate.

It is the policy of the AIA and of the chartered scheme (currently administered by the AIA), to maintain the highest level of honesty and integrity in dealing with others, to conduct business in an open,



constructive and ethical manner, and to ensure that members do not knowingly assist others to engage in improper conduct. It is expected that the professional conduct of all AIA members and chartered scheme participants, reflect these core values.

Members of the AIA as well as non-members who choose to participate in the Chartered Agricultural Professional (chartered), are expected to meet or exceed the expectations of the users of our professional services. This includes the highest levels of:

- ethical standards
- professional development
- interpersonal relationships

Together, this policy and the code and Guidelines for Professional Conduct adopt common principles of professionalism, fairness and equity.

The elements of the Code of Ethics and the Guidelines for Professional Conduct are as follows:

- Demonstrate integrity
- Practise competently
- Exercise leadership
- Promote sustainability

Each of these four elements is further described in the accompanying Code of Ethics and Guidelines for Professional Conduct.

This policy affects anyone who is a member of the AIA, and other professionals in agriculture who are candidates of, or professionals who have attained, the Chartered Agricultural Professional (chartered) level of recognition. As appropriate, the policy and code can apply to, or should be made known to the following stakeholders:

- Affiliated organisations
- Volunteers
- Service users
- Contractors
- Suppliers (to members)

RELATED POLICIES, PROCEDURES AND CODES OF CONDUCT

- AIA Code of Ethics
- AIA Board Code of Conduct



- AIA Conflicts of Interest Policy
- AIA Ethics Committee – Bylaw J (adopted Board AIAST 7 February 2012)

AUTHORISATION AND REVIEW

The Chair is responsible for approving all policies including the ethics policy and the Guidelines for Professional Conduct.

This policy is reviewed on a two-yearly basis or more frequently as required.

Review date: April 2020



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Code of Ethics

The AIA Code of Ethics is a framework for members of AIA and affiliated organisations to use when exercising their judgment in the practice of professional agriculture.

The Code of Ethics and the accompanying guidelines are not intended to be, nor should they be interpreted as, a full or exhaustive list of the situations and circumstances which may comprise compliance and non-compliance with the Code of Ethics. If called upon to do so, members are expected to justify any departure from both the provisions and spirit of the Code.

Ethical professional agriculture practice requires judgment, interpretation and balanced decision-making in context.

The AIA and affiliated organisations recognise that, while our ethical values and principles are enduring, standards of acceptable conduct are not permanently fixed. Community standards and the requirements and aspirations of professional agriculture practice will develop and are expected to become more stringent, changing over time. Within limits, what constitutes acceptable conduct may also depend on the nature of individual circumstances.

Allegations of non-compliance will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis and administered in accordance with the AIA by-laws and complaints process. Any non-AIA members who desire the chartered status will also be held accountable to this code.

The four elements of the Code of Ethics, and the accompanying guidelines, are as follows:

- Demonstrate integrity
- Practise competently
- Exercise leadership
- Promote sustainability

1. DEMONSTRATE INTEGRITY

1.1 Act based on a well-informed conscience

- a) be discerning and do what you think is right
- b) act impartially and objectively
- c) act appropriately, and in a professional manner, when you perceive something to be wrong
- d) give due weight to all legal, contractual and employment obligations
- e) serve the best interests of the person or entity seeking the advice

1.2 Be honest and trustworthy

- a) accept, as well as give, honest and fair evaluation, assessment or review.
- b) be prepared to explain your work and reasoning
- c) give proper credit to those to whom proper credit is due
- d) in managing perceived conflicts of interest, ensure that those conflicts are disclosed to relevant parties
- e) respect confidentiality obligations, express or implied
- f) do not engage in fraudulent, corrupt, or criminal conduct

1.3 Respect the dignity of all persons

- a) treat others with courtesy and without discrimination or harassment
- b) apply knowledge and skills without bias in respect of race, religion, gender, age, sexual orientation, marital or family status, national origin, mental or physical handicaps and transactional status.

2. PRACTISE COMPETENTLY

2.1 Maintain and develop knowledge and skills

- a) continue to develop relevant knowledge and expertise

- b) act in a careful and diligent manner
- c) seek peer review
- d) support the ongoing development of others

2.2 Represent areas of competence objectively

- a) practise within areas of competence
- b) neither falsify nor misrepresent qualifications, grades of membership, experience or prior responsibilities

2.3 Act based on adequate knowledge

- a) practise in accordance with legal and statutory requirements, and with the commonly accepted standards of the day
- b) inform employers or clients if a task requires qualifications and experience outside your areas of competence

3. EXERCISE LEADERSHIP

3.1 Uphold the reputation and trustworthiness of the practice of professional agriculture

- a) advocate and support the extension of ethical practice
- b) engage responsibly in public debate and deliberation
- c) openly declare conflicts of interest, which will not stop the advice being given however, allow explanation of other stakeholders' influence

3.2 Support and encourage diversity

- a) select, and provide opportunities for, all professional agriculture practitioners on the basis of merit
- b) promote diversity in professional agricultural leadership

3.3 Communicate honestly and effectively, taking into account the reliance of others on professional agriculture expertise



a) provide clear and timely communications on issues such as professional agriculture services, costs, outcomes and risks

4. PROMOTE SUSTAINABILITY

4.1 Engage responsibly with the community and other stakeholders

a) be sensitive to public concerns

b) inform employers or clients of the likely consequences of proposed activities on the community and the environment

c) promote the involvement of all stakeholders and the community in decisions and processes that may impact upon them, such as amenity and values, and the environment

4.2 Practise professional agriculture to foster the health, safety and wellbeing of the community and the environment

a) incorporate social, cultural, health, safety, environmental and economic considerations into the professional agriculture task

4.3 Balance the needs of the present with the needs of future generations

a) in identifying sustainable outcomes consider all options in terms of their economic, environmental and social consequences

b) aim to deliver outcomes that do not compromise the ability of future life to enjoy the same or better environment, health, wellbeing and safety as currently enjoyed

c) promote market widening in agriculture and awareness of customer requirements

d) advocate diversified agricultural practices, and awareness of market players beyond commodity supply chains and corporate vertical integration models

I have read and understood the Ag Institute Code of Ethics and as an accredited member (CPAg) or Chartered Agricultural Professional (chartered) of Ag Institute Australia, agree to abide by this code.

Name: _____

Membership Number: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Approval Date: April 2018

Review Date: April 2020



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Accompanying Guidelines

The following elements provide guidance that may be helpful for Chartered Scheme applicants and Chartered status recipients in interpreting and using the Code of Ethics in their day to day professional work.

It is note here that these elements below ARE NOT a Code of Ethics¹.

Guidance on Standards of Practice in Relation to Demonstrate Integrity & Practise Competently

1. Signatories or applicants should maintain the highest standards of honesty and integrity towards all those with whom they come in contact. All work undertaken by signatories or applicants should be of high quality and be fitting of the public's expectations of a professionally trained and experienced agriculturist.
2. Signatories or applicants should not misuse the name or misrepresent qualifications of any party in securing or completing work.
3. Whilst recognising that direction from other persons is necessary in some situations, signatories or applicants should not permit any such directions to compromise their professional judgement.
4. Signatories or applicants must take all necessary precautions to safeguard the interests of employers or clients in so far that such actions do not breach this code or the wider community laws and expectations.
5. Signatories or applicants should respond to professional correspondence and enquiries expeditiously and accurately to the best of their ability and knowledge.
6. A member should not accept any instructions where that signatory or applicant has an interest, either directly or indirectly, unless this is clearly indicated to the instructing party prior to acceptance.
7. A signatory or applicant should not receive, directly or indirectly, any royalty, gratuity or commission in respect to any aspect of work unless the fact is fully disclosed in writing to the employer or client.
8. A signatory or applicant should inform his/her employer or client if circumstances arise in which the signatory or applicant's judgement or advice may be called into question by reason of business connection, personal relationship, interest or affiliation.
9. Signatories or applicants are permitted to market their services provided they do not use any unfair or improper method of securing professional work or advancement and that the content or nature of any material used to market their services is not false, misleading, deceptive or in any way reflects adversely on the profession or the AIA.

¹ These guidelines are based on the AIA's previous code of ethics.

10. Signatories or applicants should not encourage any employer or client to undertake more work than is required to reach the contracted outcome.
11. Signatories or applicants should provide to the client or employer all information that the signatory or applicant knows or ought to know is relevant in reaching a decision regarding the commissioning of any work or proceeding with further segments of a phased contract.
12. Signatories or applicants will be required to co-operate with the Ethics Committee and any committee of inquiry that may be established to investigate a complaint brought before the Institute. Signatories or applicants should provide all relevant documentation and not withhold information or act in any manner that is dishonest or not consistent with allowing the committee to reach a fully informed determination.
13. A signatory or applicant should not disclose, or use for personal advantage, information obtained from a client, employer or colleague who that signatory or applicant knows or ought to know is confidential to such person except with such person's permission or unless the signatory or applicant believes that the information relates to illegal activities. Where signatories or applicants believe, the latter is the case, they may use their discretion in bringing the information to the attention of the relevant authority. Signatories or applicants should use the utmost tact in disclosing information technical or otherwise.
14. A signatory or applicant should not refuse to accept a client without sound reason.
15. A signatory or applicant should not accept a client unless that signatory or applicant can give adequate service in the matter. Should such a situation arise in the course of rendering services outside the signatory or applicant's expertise, that signatory or applicant should inform the client in writing, and if required, should seek appropriate advice or assistance acceptable to the client or employer.
16. A signatory or applicant should ensure that tasks are allocated to personnel with the appropriate level of competence.
17. Where a signatory or applicant nominates the services of another professional in securing a contract, this professional must be used as represented unless the client or employer agrees in writing to a change.
18. A signatory or applicant should be responsible for any services to or on behalf of clients by assistants who are employed or sub-contracted by that signatory or applicant.
19. Signatories or applicants must not accept instructions if their employment is contingent upon reporting a pre-determined or specified outcome.
20. A signatory or applicant should not recommend to a client any business, process, substance, material or matter in which that signatory or applicant has a personal or financial interest, without first informing that client of such interest.
21. Signatories or applicants will identify to clients the sections of reports which have been substantially used in reports for other clients.

22. Signatories or applicants engaged to prepare a legal expert report, which may lead to giving evidence in Court, must not accept work of this nature, if the matter in dispute lies outside their area of expertise. Prior to engagement, signatories or applicants must also disclose any potential conflict of interests they may have in the matter. Signatories or applicants engaged in this manner, must diligently abide by the guidelines for experts issued by the Court. In particular, signatories or applicants must ensure that details in their Curriculum Vitae, which must be submitted to the Court, accurately reflect their level of expertise based on both experience in, and competence in, areas relevant to the case.
23. A signatory or applicant should issue or publish only such reports or statements as are an accurate record of soundly based experimentation and observation and of logical deduction therefrom.
24. Signatories or applicants publishing or presenting research should acknowledge all those who made a substantial contribution to the work and any significant facilitators where appropriate.
25. Signatories or applicants who submit substantially similar work to more than one publisher should disclose that fact to the publishers at the time of submission.
26. Signatories or applicants who use animals for teaching, scientific, research or production purposes will treat the animals with respect and consider their welfare and any conditions imposed by the Ethics approval for that trial, as an essential factor in planning experimentation. Signatories or applicants must be familiar with, and adhere to, the 'Australian Code of Practice for the Care and Use of Animals for Scientific Purposes', and relevant state legislation. Education and Professional Development
27. Signatories or applicants who provide education or training services will ensure that the information they provide is up-to date and relevant
28. Signatories or applicants must continue professional development to improve personal standards of expertise and competence and to maintain a high quality of service to clients.
29. Signatories or applicants should not refer to their academic qualifications, or status in Ag Institute Australia or other professional organisations, unless such reference should be specific and accurate.

Guidance on Exercising Leadership

30. A signatory or applicant should not unfairly, falsely, or maliciously, undertake any actions which may injure the professional career, reputation, prospects or business of another signatory or applicant.
31. A signatory or applicant must not engage in any activities which may adversely reflect on the professionalism and reputation of the profession.
32. A signatory or applicant in the employment of another signatory or applicant should exercise the same diligence as if the practice was that signatory or applicant's own and carry out duties and behave in such manner so that that signatory or applicant should not discredit the employer.

33. Signatories or applicants should acknowledge the source of any information published by them, and where this information is not already in the public domain, they should obtain permission to publish such information.
34. A signatory or applicant who acts as a sub-contractor for any part of a project should be responsible to the contracting signatory or applicant for that part.
35. Signatories or applicants should provide equal opportunity in all circumstance and show no preference on the basis of gender, colour, race, nationality or religion and be aware of statutory legislation relating to equal opportunity and to adhere to such legislation, regulations and principles.

Guidance on Promoting Sustainability

36. Signatories or applicants should regard the health, welfare and safety of the community and the environment as their prime responsibility and will not knowingly contribute to actions which will threaten human health or welfare or the environment.
37. Signatories or applicants should be aware of the occupational health, safety and welfare, legal and moral requirements and ensure that they contribute to maintaining a safe working environment.
38. Results of research, or factual information, should not be presented to the public in a way showing bias or unfair interpretation.
39. Signatories or applicants should use their best endeavours to promote and develop the principles of sustainable development as defined below:
40. (i) Sustainable agriculture is the use of farming practices and systems which maintain or enhance:
 - (a) economic viability of agricultural production;
 - (b) the natural resource base;
 - (c) other ecosystems which are influenced by agricultural activities.

The principles of sustainable agriculture are such that:

- (ii) Farm productivity is sustained or enhanced over the long term
 - (a) Adverse impacts on the natural resource base of agriculture and associated ecosystems are ameliorated, minimised or avoided.
 - (b) Residues resulting from the use of chemicals in agriculture are minimised or avoided. The net social benefit derived from agriculture is maximised.
 - (c) Farm systems are kept sufficiently flexible to manage risks associated with the variability of climate and markets.
 - (d) Signatories or applicants should support environmental impact studies related to agriculture where appropriate and assist in scientific interpretation as required.