

## **Association for Scottish Public Affairs - Code of Conduct**

The following Code contains a statement of the basic values and principles which form the foundation of the business of members of the Association for Scottish Public Affairs. Members of the Association are expected to act with integrity and the Association will uphold the essential relationship of trust between the member and the client, between the member and all levels of national and devolved governments or parliaments, and between members and their professional colleagues.

Members shall:

- a) be bound to abide by any rules of all local, national and devolved governments or parliaments designed to regulate their activities and to provide any information required by those bodies as a condition of their obtaining access.
- b) abide by the Scottish Parliament's Lobbying Register and the terms of the Lobbying (Scotland) Act 2016 in addition to similar legislation adopted in other parts of the UK.
- c) state the interest or interests they represent when in contact with elected representatives in any national and devolved governments or parliaments, their staff or officials.
- d) refrain from any action designed to obtain information dishonestly and act at all time in such a way as to put their political integrity beyond question.
- e) neither incorrectly claim nor conceal any formal relationship with the any national and devolved governments or parliaments in any dealings with third parties.
- f) not circulate for profit to third parties copies of documents obtained from the Scottish Parliament.
- g) not employ any officials of any national and devolved governments or parliaments and shall comply, when recruiting former officials of those bodies, with any relevant regulatory provisions.
- h) not knowingly mislead Members of national and devolved governments or parliaments, their staff or officials.
- i) not knowingly or recklessly disseminate false or misleading information and shall exercise reasonable care to avoid doing so inadvertently.
- j) avoid any professional conflicts of interest.

k) save for reasonable hospitality, as defined by the relevant bodies, neither directly nor indirectly offer or give any financial or other inducement to any member of any local, national or devolved government or parliament, or any official or staff of those bodies. Members shall be willing participants in reminding elected representatives of their obligation to declare an interest to their national and devolved government or parliament.

l) honour confidences given in the course of their professional activity.

m) shall not allow any member of their organisation involved in public affairs work to hold a pass entitling them to gain access to local, national or devolved governments or parliaments, other than the holding of a temporary visitor's pass.

n) when required by the appropriate authorities, surrender any visitor pass issued to them.

o) not employ or offer any board appointment or pay any retainer or commission to any member of national and devolved governments or parliaments, except that members of the Association which are voluntary, charitable or non-profit-making bodies may offer an unpaid appointment to such individuals provided that:

(1) the offer of such appointment does not contravene any rule, order or regulation of the national or devolved government or parliament; or

(2) any conflict of interest of either a pecuniary or non-pecuniary nature is declared by or on behalf of the member of the Association whenever it arises.

p) Members of the Association are duty-bound to report, to the committee, any evidence which they believe highlights that a breach of the code of conduct has taken place – either within their own organisation or another member organisation.