

ACNS Code of Conduct Procedure for Handling Complaints and Issues

Introduction

On 30 November 2022 the ACNS Executive and Membership passed the Code of Conduct (hereafter, the “Code”). This Procedure outlines the process for handling complaints in line with the Code.

Complaints and issues related to professional conduct at ACNS conferences and other events will be handled by the Professional Conduct Committee (hereafter, the “Committee”). The Committee will usually comprise of the current and immediate past and future Presidents (President, President-Elect, Past-President), and the two other Officers of the Society (Executive Secretary and Executive Treasurer). When deemed necessary by the Committee, the Committee may also nominate additional members or replace members, for example, to manage conflicts of interest or reach quorum. Quorum is defined as 5 Committee members.

In assessing conflicts of interest for Committee membership, actual and perceived conflicts for the complainant and other parties should be considered. Note that it is not necessary to remove a member with a conflict of interest (although this may be considered appropriate in some circumstances); rather, the balance of members and their conflicts should be considered when forming the Committee. If additional members are required, these should be drawn from the current Executive or past Society Officers (President, Secretary, Treasurer).

General Procedure

1. Information about the Code of Conduct will be prominently advertised on Society website/social media all year round.
2. There is a specific email address for complaints/feedback:
ProfessionalConduct@acns.org.au
 - a. This email address is centralised to avoid any unintentional single party gatekeepers.
 - b. The email address forwards to the five nominal members of the Professional Conduct Committee: President, President-Elect, Past-President, Executive Secretary and Executive Treasurer.
 - c. If any of the Committee members are involved/named in the complaint, they will delete the email immediately and have no more involvement in the processing of that specific issue.
3. On receipt of a complaint or issue, the Committee will confer to nominate a Chair. The Chair will determine if additional members are required to reach quorum or manage conflicts of interest.
4. The Chair will convene a meeting with the Committee as early as practicable (preferably within 2 weeks), from the date a complaint is received to discuss the issue. This meeting should be held sooner depending on the urgency and nature of the complaint.
5. Where possible and appropriate, the Committee will endeavour to maintain confidentiality of the details of the complaint and parties, including from

members of the larger Executive. Parties should note that while reasonable efforts will be made to maintain confidentiality, this cannot be guaranteed.

6. The Committee will decide on actions/sanctions.
 - a. In coming to this decision, legal advice may be obtained. The requirement for this will be determined by the Committee.
 - b. Actions/sanctions will be guided by the Code of Conduct.
7. At every Executive meeting, the Executive Secretary will inform the group if any complaints or issues have been raised since the last meeting.

Version Control

Version 1 30/11/2022

Version 2 20/02/2023

Version 3 17/06/2025