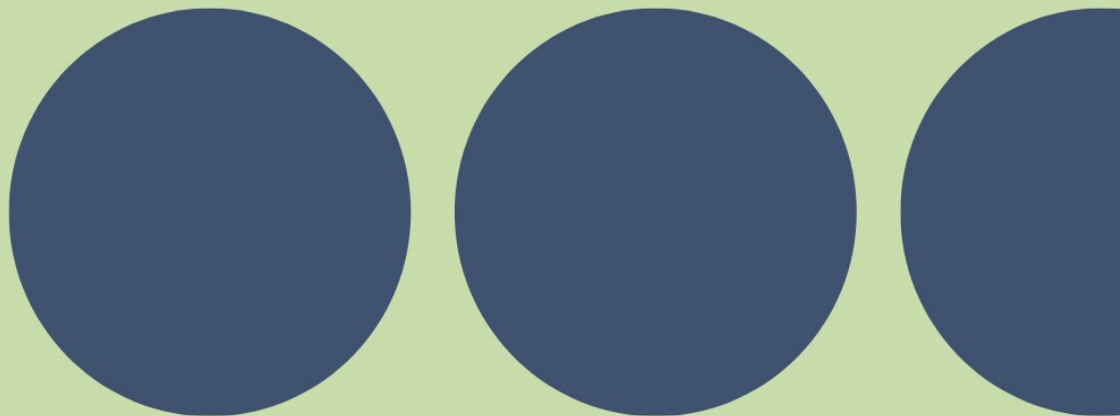




Chartered  
Institute of  
Editing and  
Proofreading

# **General Code of Conduct**

## **Including the Disciplinary Code**





# The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading Membership Codes

As adopted by the Council on 15 January 2024.

## Introduction

- 1 The Institute is established for the purposes set out in its Royal Charter, being:
  - 1.1 to encourage and foster in the public interest high standards of editing, proofreading and other editorial work;
  - 1.2 to develop and uphold the editorial profession, particularly editing and proofreading, by promoting honourable professional practice;
  - 1.3 to exchange and disseminate information on editorial work and associated matters; and
  - 1.4 to act as the authoritative body in matters of principles, practice, standards, education, training, qualifications, research and awards of the editorial profession.
  
- 2 The Institute's governing documents (comprising its Royal Charter, Bylaws and Regulations) contain provisions:
  - 2.1 empowering the Council to introduce and amend Regulations for the proper conduct and management of the Institute and its members, and for the purposes of prescribing the conditions of membership (Regulations); and
  - 2.2 allowing for the expulsion of members for 'conduct unbecoming', following the application of procedures set out from time to time in the Regulations.

- 3 On 15 January 2024, the Council adopted a set of principles-based Membership Codes that regulate the conduct of the Institute’s members. These include the following Codes:
  - General Code of Conduct and Disciplinary Code
  - Professional Practice Code and Professional Complaints Code
  
- 4 The Institute also maintains a Council Members’ Code to which all Council Members sign up on appointment (but which does not apply to the Institute’s members more broadly). It is supported by the Procedure for Handling Complaints against Council Members.
  
- 5 The Council shall determine any dispute or disagreement as to the interpretation of the Codes, and such determination shall be final.

## Definitions

Capitalised terms not defined below will have the meaning given to them in the Institute’s Charter, Bylaws and Regulations.

In these Codes, unless the context requires otherwise, the following terms will have the meaning set opposite them below.

<b>Affected Council Member</b>	A Council Member affected by a complaint under the Disciplinary Code, either because the complaint has been made against them or because it otherwise, in the Council’s reasonable opinion, concerns them, directly or indirectly.
<b>Bullying</b>	Offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour that makes the recipient feel vulnerable, upset, humiliated and/or threatened.
<b>Complainant</b>	A person or organisation who makes a complaint under the Professional Complaints Code or the Disciplinary Code.
<b>Complainee</b>	A member who is the subject of a complaint under the Professional Complaints Code or the Disciplinary Code.

<b>Council</b>	The governing body of the Institute, as set out in its Royal Charter.
<b>Data Protection Law</b>	All applicable data protection and privacy legislation in force from time to time in the UK, including the General Data Protection Regulation ((EU) 2016/679) as applicable as a part of UK domestic law (UK GDPR); the Data Protection Act 2018; the Privacy and Electronic Communications Regulations 2003 (SI 2003 No. 2426) as amended; and any other UK or European Union legislation relating to Personal Data (as defined in UK GDPR); and the guidance and codes of practice issued by the Information Commissioner’s Office.
<b>Disciplinary Officer</b>	A member of the Institute’s staff, appointed from time to time by the Council, who is responsible for reviewing complaints on receipt and appointing the Examiner in accordance with the Disciplinary Code.
<b>Discrimination</b>	<p>Unfavourable treatment of someone on the basis of a Protected Characteristic, including:</p> <p><b>(a) Direct discrimination:</b> treating someone less favourably because of a Protected Characteristic. Direct discrimination can include associative discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably because of their association with an individual with a Protected Characteristic, and perception discrimination, where a person is treated less favourably because of the mistaken belief that they possess a Protected Characteristic.</p> <p><b>(b) Victimisation:</b> retaliation against someone who has complained or has supported someone else’s complaint about discrimination or harassment. This includes where someone mistakenly believes that the person victimised has done so.</p>

<b>Examiner</b>	An independent person with appropriate experience and expertise, appointed by the Disciplinary Officer or the Council to investigate complaints as set out in the Disciplinary Code.
<b>Harassment</b>	<p>Any unwanted physical, verbal or non-verbal conduct that has the purpose or effect of violating a person’s dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment for them.</p> <p>A single incident can amount to harassment. It also includes treating someone less favourably because they have submitted or refused to submit to such behaviour in the past.</p> <p>Unlawful harassment may involve conduct of a sexual nature (sexual harassment), or it may be related to certain Protected Characteristics.</p>
<b>Hearing</b>	A formal Hearing, held before the Council as part of a Council meeting, to consider a complaint that the Council (having considered the Examiner’s report into such complaint) considers sufficiently serious to warrant formal consideration of the potential non-renewal or termination of a member’s membership of the Institute in accordance with the Disciplinary Code.
<b>Institute or CIEP</b>	The Chartered Institute of Editing and Proofreading.
<b>Membership Codes or Codes</b>	These Membership Codes (excluding the Council Members’ Code), as may be amended, superseded or added to by the Council from time to time; ‘Membership Code’ or ‘Code’ means any one of them.
<b>Privacy Policy</b>	The Institute’s privacy policy in force from time to time, which is <b>available on the Institute’s website</b> .

<b>Protected Characteristic</b>	Includes the following characteristics: age, disability, gender reassignment, marital or civil partner status, pregnancy or maternity, race, colour, nationality, ethnic or national origin, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation, gender variance, body type, neurodivergence, lawful political opinion and national, regional or socioeconomic background.
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## General Code of Conduct

- 1 This Code is divided into the following sections:
  - 1.1 Section A – Responsibilities to the Institute
  - 1.2 Section B – Responsibilities to the Institute’s members and staff
- 2 Any member who is judged by the Council (having reviewed the Examiner’s report and recommendations) to have broken this General Code of Conduct may have their continued membership reviewed and may face disciplinary action, including suspension or termination of membership, in accordance with the Disciplinary Code.

### Section A – Responsibilities to the Institute

- 3 By accepting any level of membership of the Institute, I agree:
  - 3.1 to support the Institute’s aims and objects as set out in its Royal Charter;
  - 3.2 not to act in any manner that contravenes the Royal Charter, Bylaws or Regulations, copies of which can be found on the Governance section of the **Institute’s website**;
  - 3.3 to allow the Institute’s staff and directors to contact me by post, email and/or telephone to keep me informed about the Institute’s activities and initiatives;
  - 3.4 to abide by the Institute’s Membership Codes;
  - 3.5 to behave in good faith and in an appropriate manner with respect to the Institute, and to treat with dignity and respect the Institute’s staff, other members and anyone else that I encounter when (a) attending an event as a member of the Institute, or (b) participating in online CIEP spaces.
  - 3.6 not to take any action or conduct myself in a manner that could damage the Institute’s reputation;
  - 3.7 not to comment on any complaints process under the Professional Complaints Code or the Disciplinary Code on social media or any other public forum, whether that process (a) is in contemplation, (b) is in process, or (c) has concluded;

- 3.8 not to engage in conduct that, in the Council's reasonable opinion, leads or is likely to lead to an inappropriate and/or disproportionate drain on the resources of the Institute;
- 3.9 to make complaints under the Disciplinary Code only as a last resort after seeking to resolve any dispute using alternative methods;
- 3.10 when raising a complaint, to do so in accordance with the terms of the Professional Complaints Code or the Disciplinary Code, as appropriate; and
- 3.11 not to make any written or oral statement (whether in writing, in person or online) that might reasonably be perceived as having been made for or on behalf of the Institute, or to make any commitments on its behalf, without the prior written authority of the Council.
- 3.12 when deciding whether to stand for election as a Council Member, to consider my suitability as a CIEP officer in the context of any historical information in the public record that I'm aware of which could: affect members' trust and confidence in my ability to carry out my duties and responsibilities; impact on the Council and its ability to govern effectively; erode members' and non-members' confidence in the CIEP as an organisation more generally; or bring the Institute into disrepute.

## **Section B – Responsibilities to the Institute's members and staff**

- 4 I acknowledge and agree to uphold the Institute's strategic values – ethical, inclusive, professional, supportive, trustworthy – so that all members feel supported and empowered to access all of the Institute's services.
- 5 When participating in Institute events and activities, whether in person or online, I agree to:
  - 5.1 treat others with respect; and
  - 5.2 be considerate and collaborative in my approach.
- 6 I agree to refrain from behaviours in CIEP online spaces and at CIEP events and activities that impact negatively on other members, such behaviours to include:
  - 6.1 discrimination;



- 6.2 harassment;
- 6.3 bullying; or
- 6.4 other forms of threats, hostility and abuse.

## Disciplinary Code

- 1 This Code is divided into the following sections:
  - 1.1 Section A – Complaints about the conduct of the Institute’s members
  - 1.2 Section B – Complaints procedure
  - 1.3 Section C – Determination of complaints
  - 1.4 Section D – Procedure for Hearings

### Section A – Complaints about the conduct of members

- 2 This Disciplinary Code applies to any complaints about the conduct of a member of the Institute relating to a potential breach of the Membership Codes, apart from complaints about a member’s editorial or proofreading practice, which are addressed in the Professional Complaints Code.
- 3 Complaints dealt with under this Code include allegations that a member has breached the General Code of Conduct or that they otherwise fall within one of the reasons for disciplinary action set out in paragraph 3.6 of the Regulations.
- 4 All complaints should, in the first instance, be sent to [chiefexec@ciep.uk](mailto:chiefexec@ciep.uk), which will be monitored by the Disciplinary Officer. Complaints should be sent within two months of the event that is the subject of the complaint (or within two months of the most recent event if part of a perceived pattern of behaviour), and should include the following information:
  - 4.1 a written summary of the conduct complained about, referencing specific examples where a member’s conduct is alleged to have breached the Codes;
  - 4.2 (where relevant) supporting documentation, for example copies of the material that is the source of complaint (which might be forum posts, text messages or any written, audio or video record of the conduct being complained about); and
  - 4.3 (where relevant) written permission from witnesses to the conduct being complained about to be identified and their contact details shared such that the Examiner can gather their statements in relation to the same.

- 5 Complaints involving an allegation of a criminal offence should, in the first instance, be sent to the police or other appropriate regulatory authority.
- 6 The Disciplinary Officer will notify the Complainant that they will not be proceeding with a complaint, or referring it to an Examiner under paragraph 8, in the following circumstances:
  - 6.1 if someone pursues a complaint that the Institute has already responded to without setting out compelling reasons for the matter to be revisited;
  - 6.2 if, in the Disciplinary Officer's reasonable opinion, the substance of the complaint fails to present any *prima facie* evidence that the Complainee's conduct amounts to a breach of the Membership Codes or the Regulations;
  - 6.3 if the Complainant behaves in a way that is contrary to Section B of the General Code of Conduct;
  - 6.4 if the complaint is incoherent or illegible; or
  - 6.5 if the complaint is made anonymously.
- 7 If the Council becomes aware of a member's conduct that could form the basis of a legitimate complaint under this Code without a complaint being made, it may proceed to investigate that conduct in accordance with this Code as if a complaint had in fact been made.
- 8 On receipt of a complaint, the Disciplinary Officer will consider all information and supporting documentation submitted to them, following which they will either (a) record the fact that a complaint has been made and notify the Complainant, but not progress its investigation, on the basis that it falls within one of the categories set out in paragraph 6, or (b) explore alternative approaches to resolution, or (c) appoint an Examiner to investigate the substance of the complaint, within guidelines set by the Council from time to time.

## **Suspension of membership**

- 9 A person who is the subject of a complaint in respect of which an Examiner has been appointed may be suspended from membership of the Institute (or from certain activities or online spaces managed by the Institute) by the

Council, on the recommendation of the Examiner pursuant to paragraph 14.1, prior to commencement of the formal investigation by the Examiner.

- 10 In the case of a suspension in circumstances where a member has been charged with a criminal offence, the suspension will remain in place until the member is acquitted or convicted, or for longer if the Examiner recommends and the Council so decides.
- 11 In other cases, suspension will last either:
  - a) until the investigation into the member's conduct has concluded;
  - b) until the Complainee ceases by reason of resignation or lapse of membership status to be a member of the Institute; or
  - c) for such period as the Council (on the recommendation of the Examiner, where applicable) deems appropriate.
- 12 Where, during a period of suspension, a Complainee resigns or lets their membership lapse, the circumstances that gave rise to their suspension may be taken into account in determining any future application for membership.

### **Complaints against or concerning a Council Member**

- 13 Where a Council Member is an Affected Council Member in respect of a complaint, they will not participate in the handling of that complaint in any capacity.

### **Section B – Complaints procedure**

- 14 On receipt of a complaint, the Disciplinary Officer will, if proceeding with using an Examiner, provide the Examiner with all information and supporting documentation submitted to the Institute in connection with the complaint. On receipt of such information and documentation, the Examiner will:
  - 14.1 decide whether to make a recommendation as to the Complainee's suspension from membership of the Institute, in accordance with paragraph 9;
  - 14.2 inform the Complainee of the nature of the complaint, wherever possible without naming the Complainant(s);

- 14.3 (subject to (a) the Institute's obligations under Data Protection Law, (b) the terms of the Privacy Policy, and (c) the consent of the Complainant) provide copies of the supporting information provided to it by the Complainant to the Complainee. In providing such information the Institute may (whether it is required by Data Protection Law to do so or not) redact it to remove confidential material not pertinent to the complaint or (subject to paragraph 15) material that the Complainant would prefer not to be shared with the Complainee;
  - 14.4 request the Complainee's response to the complaint within a reasonable period (being not less than 15 working days);
  - 14.5 (if either the Complainee or the Complainant requests it) conduct interviews with the Complainee and/or the Complainant, either in person or remotely by way of video-conferencing. Each party has a right to be accompanied at any such interview by another CIEP member, and a right to refuse to be interviewed;
  - 14.6 consider the evidence received from the Complainee and the Complainant (both in writing and (where one has been held) in interview), and such other evidence as seems to the Examiner to be appropriate; and
  - 14.7 present a report and summary of their findings to the Council, along with a recommendation as to the action that should be taken, as soon as practicable.
- 15 In providing copies of the complaint and supporting documents to the Complainee under paragraph 14.3, the Examiner must balance any desire of the Complainant to remain anonymous with the need to ensure that the investigation is conducted fairly in the interests of natural justice.
  - 16 Complainants should be aware that a confidential process will rarely, if ever, mean an entirely anonymous process (even where they are not expressly named), and that information or materials provided by Complainants (and other witnesses) will in nearly all cases need to be put to the Complainee (or others) for their comment or response because those facing allegations need to be guaranteed a full and fair opportunity to defend the allegation.
  - 17 Where a Complainant does not consent to the sharing of sufficient information to, in the Examiner's reasonable opinion, allow the Complainee the opportunity to defend the allegation, it may not be possible to proceed

with the investigation. In such cases, the Complainant will be informed as soon as reasonably practicable.

- 18 Complaint reports shall be held by the Institute in accordance with its data retention policy.
- 19 In providing a response to the complaint under paragraph 14.4, the Complainee may include such supporting information as they see fit.
- 20 If the Complainee does not wish to participate in the complaints process under this Disciplinary Code, or fails to respond to the Examiner's requests under paragraph 14.4 within a reasonable timeframe, the Examiner will determine the complaint based on the information and evidence available to them, without the Complainee's involvement.
- 21 All information provided by the parties to a complaint under this Code will be treated in confidence by the Examiner, to be used for the sole purpose of determining the complaint. Information provided to the Examiner in connection with a complaint will be shared with the Council in full as enclosures to the report and recommendations submitted at the end of the investigation.

## **Section C – Determination of complaints**

- 22 On receipt of the Examiner's report and recommendation, the Council will decide whether, on the balance of probabilities, a complaint is or is not upheld based on the evidence provided by the parties to the complaint and the Examiner's report and recommendation.
- 23 If the complaint is upheld, the Council will decide what further action should be taken in respect of the complaint, which may be:
  - 23.1 no further action;
  - 23.2 the issue of a formal warning to the member that if similar conduct is repeated, any further complaints will be investigated and (to the extent relevant) the course of conduct which led to the formal warning considered in determining the outcome of that further complaint;
  - 23.3 the suspension of the member from specified activities and/or spaces managed by the Institute for a fixed period;

- 23.4 the suspension of the member's membership of the Institute (during which period they will not be permitted to (a) participate in activities or spaces managed by the Institute, or (b) promote their membership on any forum);
  - 23.5 the referral of the matter to a Hearing, as set out in more detail in Section D, at which the Council will consider resolutions to (a) not allow the Complainee to renew their membership at the next renewal date, or (b) expel the Complainee from the Institute with immediate effect; or
  - 23.6 a combination of two or more of the above.
- 24 In most cases the Council will follow the recommendation of the Examiner in determining the appropriate sanction (if any).
  - 25 The Council will advise the Complainee and Complainant(s) of its decision, and both the Complainee and Complainant(s) will be given a summary of the Examiner's report and recommendations by letter, within ten working days of receipt by the Council of the Examiner's report. Neither the Complainee nor the Complainant(s) will be provided with the Examiner's report in full except at the Council's discretion and with the written consent of the Examiner, and redacted in accordance with subject access principles under relevant data protection legislation.
  - 26 Where a complaint is upheld by the Council, this fact should be recorded in the minutes of the next following Council meeting.

## Section D – Procedure for Hearings

- 27 If the Council determines under paragraph 23.5 to refer a matter to a Hearing, the Council will proceed to convene a Council meeting to hear the complaint and to consider the most appropriate sanction (if any).
- 28 The chair of the Institute will chair the Council for the purpose of the Hearing, provided that if the chair is an Affected Council Member, the Council will appoint an alternative chair who is not an Affected Council Member (who will usually be the vice-chair) from among their number for this purpose.
- 29 The purpose of the Hearing is not to determine whether the complaint in question has been upheld; that determination is the purpose of the Council's decision taken under paragraph 22. The sole purpose of the Hearing is to consider whether to pass one of the following resolutions concerning the Complainee's membership of the Institute:
  - 29.1 not to renew the member's membership of the Institute at the end of the subscription year on the grounds that, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, the member's continued membership is not in the best interests of the Institute (non-renewal); or
  - 29.2 to terminate the member's membership with immediate effect on the grounds that, in the reasonable opinion of the Council, the member's continued membership is not in the best interests of the Institute and to protect the Institute, it is necessary to withdraw their membership with immediate effect (expulsion).
- 30 Notice of a Hearing will be sent not less than 21 working days before the date of the Hearing to (a) the Complainee, and (b) all members of the Council (excluding any Affected Council Members).
- 31 The notice of the Hearing will:
  - 31.1 restate the general nature of the upheld complaint; and
  - 31.2 inform the Complainee that they may either (at their option):
    - a) be heard by video conference by the Council at the Hearing, in which case they are entitled to be accompanied by a fellow CIEP member; or



- b) submit written representations to the Council up to seven working days prior to the date of the Council meeting at which the Hearing will be held.

- 32 Hearings held pursuant to this Disciplinary Code will be held in private, and the substance and evidence presented will be confidential.
- 33 The Council will have the autonomy to conduct the proceedings and Hearing as they see fit, subject to the Institute's governing documents, the Membership Codes and the requirement to conduct the process fairly.
- 34 In deciding whether to implement one of the sanctions set out at paragraph 29, the Council will:
  - 34.1 decide whether either of the sanctions set out in paragraph 29 (and if so, which one) would be in the Institute's best interests, and a proportionate and fair consequence of the Complainee's behaviour;
  - 34.2 take into account the findings of the Examiner, but come to their own conclusion on the basis of the evidence as a whole;
  - 34.3 come to a decision by a majority verdict;
  - 34.4 produce a reasoned written decision; and
  - 34.5 provide a copy of its decision to the Complainee as soon as reasonably practicable, and in any event within 30 working days of the Hearing (regardless of the outcome).
- 35 There will be no appeal of the Council's decision following a Hearing.
- 36 Where a member has been expelled from the Institute, or their membership has not been renewed following a Hearing under this Disciplinary Code, they may not reapply for membership for a period of at least five years from the date on which their membership ceased.

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