

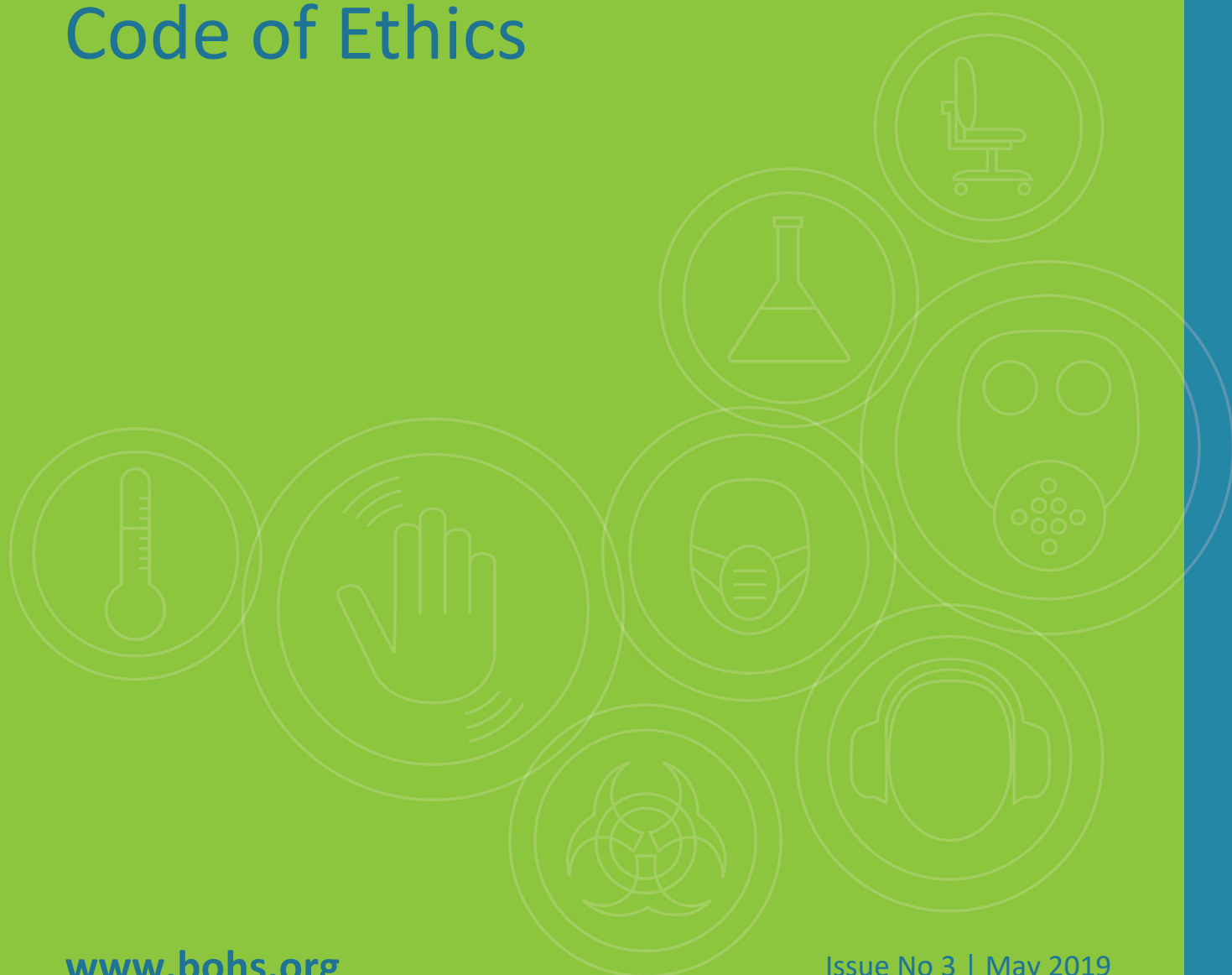


The Chartered Society for
Worker Health Protection

The British Occupational Hygiene Society

Faculties

Code of Ethics



1. Introduction

Code of Ethics

One of the main aims of the Society is the promotion of good practice in Occupational Hygiene. The Board has given the Faculty Committees the power to produce a Code of Ethics for the profession and the specialisms within, and to make rules by which the Faculty members must abide.

- 1.1 The primary objective of this Code is to ensure that at all times Faculty members act in such a way that the protection of worker health is their paramount responsibility. The Board and the Faculty Committees consider that the profession requires standards of conduct, which are as rigorous as those required in other professions such as medicine and law, since the consequences of lapses may be equally serious. They also consider that confidence in Faculty members is vital to:
 - the recognition of Occupational Hygiene and specialisms within,
 - the further development of its application, and
 - the protection and preservation of worker health.
- 1.2 This Code is designed to guide members who may be subjected to contradictory pressures and enable them to act with integrity and objectivity in spite of those pressures. The Code therefore protects the individual member who could be in a vulnerable position.
- 1.3 This Code provides a benchmark for clients, employers, other professionals and members of the general public where there is a question as to whether a Faculty member has conducted themselves in an appropriate manner. In more serious cases it will provide grounds for reference to the Faculty Committees for action. Following due process the relevant Faculty Committee will make recommendations to the Board, which has the power to warn, admonish, reprimand, suspend or expel a member from the Society.
- 1.4 This Code is mandatory and directly applicable to all Faculty members irrespective of their membership grade.
- 1.5 The following sections provide standards for the ethical conduct of BOHS Faculty members as they practise their profession. Risks to health may arise from exposure to chemical, biological and/or physical agents. Occupational hygienists, and specialists in particular aspects, may be employed by a variety of organisations and individuals, but there are common principles of conduct with which the Society expects them to comply. The Society reserves the right to warn, admonish, reprimand, suspend or expel any Faculty member who, after due process, has been found to have failed to maintain the professional standards of this Code.

2. General Integrity of Behaviour

Faculty members shall act responsibly to uphold the integrity and dignity of the profession. They must:

- 2.1 Ensure that at all times their primary responsibility is to the worker whose health may be at risk.

- 2.2 Avoid any conduct that is likely to discredit the profession or deceive the public.
- 2.3 Ensure that decisions made in relation to professional activities are not influenced inappropriately by considerations of the race, colour, creed, age, disability, sexuality or gender of any individual.
- 2.4 Not use statements which misrepresent facts or omit facts material to their accuracy when they advertise their expertise or services.
- 2.5 Not permit their employees, employers or others to misrepresent the professional backgrounds of individuals, as far as they are able to prevent this.
- 2.6 Ensure that they give informative and accurate references in relation to the work and abilities of staff they manage.
- 2.7 Recognise and respect the merit of other professionals.
- 2.8 Not maliciously or recklessly injure or attempt to injure the professional reputation of another Faculty member. This specifically includes the misuse of the Code of Ethics itself by unjustifiable, malicious or reckless complaints, whether directly or through a third party.
- 2.9 Comply with any specific direction made by the relevant Faculty Committee in relation to the minimum standards of professional ethics.

3. Professional Opinions Etc.

- 3.1 Faculty members shall practise their profession with integrity and follow recognised scientific and technical principles. They must:
- 3.2 Base opinions, judgements, interpretations of findings and recommendations on such principles and practises.
- 3.3 Not distort, alter or hide facts that may have a bearing on those judgements, etc.
- 3.4 Not knowingly make statements that misrepresent or omit significant facts that relate to opinions, etc., given.
- 3.5 Make clear the distinction between accepted facts and informed opinion.
- 3.6 Obtain information regarding risks to health and safety from reliable sources.
- 3.7 Provide sensible and proportionate advice by:
 - Making clear what the health and safety law requires;
 - Exercising professional judgement when deciding what action must be taken in a particular situation;
 - Distinguishing clearly between legal requirements and best practise (i.e. 'must do' and 'could do')

4. Competence

Faculty members shall perform services only in their areas of competence. They must:

- 4.1 Not undertake work unless they are qualified by education, training or experience in the specific technical fields involved; unless they receive sufficient assistance from associates, consultants or employees, and they make that clear to the relevant clients.
- 4.2 Not address issues of public concern unless they confine themselves strictly to matters they can speak about with authority.
- 4.3 Keep themselves reasonably up-to-date with developments in any relevant fields.

5. Confidentiality

- 5.1 Faculty members shall take all reasonable care to maintain the confidentiality of personal, managerial, technical, commercial or security information obtained as a result of the exercise of their professional functions. Such information remains in the ownership of the relevant managers, employers, clients, authorities, etc. It may not be used or released by members unless authorised to do so by the appropriate information owner.
- 5.2 Where the information obtained as a result of the exercise of professional functions relates directly to the health and safety of individuals, the same requirement specified in 5.1 applies. Members shall endeavour to ensure that such information is communicated to the individuals concerned by working through the information owners.
- 5.3 Without prejudice to the need to recognise the duty of confidentiality to the information owner, where this duty is breached by the Faculty member in the reasonable belief that this is necessary to protect the workforce from imminent and serious risks to health and safety, this shall be a defence under this Code of Ethics.
- 5.4 Where there is a legal requirement to release the information, this will override any requirements of 5.1 to 5.3.

6. Conflicts of Interest

Faculty members shall avoid circumstances where a compromise of professional judgement, or a conflict of interest, might arise. They must:

- 6.1 Disclose known or potential conflicts of interest promptly to parties who may be affected.
- 6.2 Not solicit or accept financial or other valuable consideration from any party that is directly or indirectly liable to influence professional judgement.

- 6.3 Not offer any substantial gift, hospitality or other valuable consideration in order to secure work.
- 6.4 Advise clients or employers when they initially believe a project to improve health and safety is unlikely to be successful.
- 6.5 Not accept work that is likely to damage the ability to fulfil existing commitments to Occupational Hygiene or specialisms within.
- 6.6 Consider primarily the health and safety of parties, where they are subject to other professional codes which appear to conflict with this Code of Ethics.