

# **Code of professional standards and ethics**

## CHARTER

*Scientific and technological investigation shall be undertaken by rigorous method and with integrity in order to expand the knowledge of our universe; investigative methods and practices and their application shall be open to scrutiny and criticism from any competent quarter; investigations and applications shall not impact to the detriment of the living and physical environment and shall be undertaken in accordance with an accepted code of professional standards and ethics.*

## TITLE

The Code may be cited as The Royal Society of New Zealand Code of Professional Standards and Ethics.

## APPLICATION

This is a voluntary Code for all scientists and technologists in New Zealand. All members of The Royal Society of New Zealand subscribe to the Code and they will be asked to account to the Society should their conduct be considered to breach any provisions of the Code.

## GENERAL PURPOSES AND PRINCIPLES

The quality of science and technology depends on the competence of scientists and technologists, their values and the environment in which they work. Scientific and technological investigation flourishes in an open society that values honesty, criticism and communication, and in work environments that support the ethos and recognise the benefits of science and technology and where adherence to the highest professional standards and ethics prevails.

## INTEGRITY AND PROFESSIONALISM

1) Members shall behave with integrity and professionalism.

Specifically, Members shall at all times:

- conduct themselves in a manner that strives to enhance the reputation of their scientific or technological profession
- show respect, consideration and courtesy to clients and the public
- demonstrate integrity and professionalism and observe fairness and equity in research and the management of research
- demonstrate integrity and professionalism and observe fairness and equity in all aspects of the application of science and technology and in the transfer of technology
- strive not to compromise the welfare, health and safety of the community and the environment
- strive not to compromise the welfare, health and safety of people associated with scientific and technological endeavours
- avoid or declare real, or apparent, conflicts of interest.

## HONESTY

2) Members shall be intellectually honest.

Specifically, Members shall at all times:

- not falsify results and fairly represent results as they honestly perceive them
- fairly record the intellectual, material and practical contributions of others to their work
- ensure joint authors of publications and reports share responsibility for their contents

retain all types of records for as long as is practical and, where not commercially or personally sensitive, make them available for others to access  
not falsify results, qualifications or experience  
not allow or commit plagiarism  
be scrupulously honest in the application of science and technology and in the transfer of technology.

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH COLLEAGUES

3) Scientists and technologists shall support ethical behaviour, and professional conduct, of their New Zealand and overseas colleagues. Specifically, Members shall at all times strive to:

review the work of colleagues without bias and treat all information so provided as privileged and confidential  
not falsely or maliciously attempt to impugn the reputation of colleagues  
support the career development of colleagues by providing honest comment on career prospects, the conduct of work, proposals, manuscripts and papers  
encourage the development of emerging scientists  
not seek to gain advantage for oneself or one's employer through review processes  
not compromise or denigrate colleagues in order to achieve commercial or personal goals  
treat fairly the assumptions, points of view and perspectives of colleagues of other cultures  
be aware of ethical, social, legal and environmental implications and consequences of science and technology

#### COMPETENCE AND STANDARDS

4) Scientists and technologists shall claim expertise only within their fields of competence, make optimum use of available resources, and follow acceptable work practices. Specifically, Members shall at all times:

represent themselves only in their fields of competence as defined by formal qualifications and subsequent work experience  
ensure that there is appropriate disclosure of any limitations on their work due to insufficient resources  
adhere to the requirements specified in relevant New Zealand legislation and regulations, and any appropriate codes of work practice or ethical standards  
adhere to the codes and disciplinary standards of societies and organisations of which they are members or by which they are registered. Where there is any discrepancy or conflict in standards the higher standard shall prevail  
have regard to the requirements, work practices and ethical practices of the International Council of Scientific Unions or any other relevant international organisation

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH THE COMMUNITY

5) Scientists and technologists shall endeavour to make the results of their work available as widely as possible. Specifically, Members shall at all times:

endeavour to communicate the results of their work to the wider community where this is in the public interest  
endeavour to ensure all public statements are accurate and are supported by competent research  
ensure that all speculative and interpretative statements are identified as such.  
.not condone the manipulation of results to meet the perceived needs, or requirements, of employers, funding agencies, the media or other interested parties  
accept that researchers working on different approaches to the same question may each reach different but valid conclusions within the context of their research  
not attempt to influence public policy decisions where there is contradictory or inconclusive scientific evidence without disclosure of the circumstances

support the publication and dissemination of all competent research, even when its conclusions appear contradictory or contrary to perceived concepts

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH FUNDERS OF RESEARCH

6) Scientific and technological knowledge should be freely and publicly available whenever possible. Specifically, Members shall at all times:

endeavour to ensure that the purchasers of scientific and technological research accept that the research experience of scientists and technologists will eventually become part of their research competence  
ensure where possible the public dissemination of all scientific and technological research that is publicly funded  
encourage their employers to permit the public disclosure of their research results  
provide to funding agencies, within the appropriate time frames, accurate reports that are supported by competent research

#### RELATIONSHIP WITH CLIENTS

7) When scientists and technologists transfer technology to paying clients the interests of the clients are paramount. Specifically, Members shall at all times:

Render service to clients with absolute fidelity  
conduct themselves at all times in a manner that upholds the reputation of the Society or Societies of which they are members or through which they are registered and upholds the dignity and standing of the profession  
adhere to the specific rules, regulations and codes of practice of the professional organisations to which they belong  
.promote and maintain proper standards of professionalism in relation to other members  
take all reasonable steps to maintain a level of technical competence and to become familiar with recent advances in their area of expertise

#### ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

8) Scientists and technologists shall consider the environmental implications of their work.

Specifically, Members shall at all times:

seek to observe the principles and practices of sustainable management and the needs of future, as well as present, generations the world over  
strive to identify impacts of their work on the environment, endeavour to assess and report on such impacts and seek to avoid or mitigate adverse environmental impacts  
strive to encourage within the wider community and internationally the avoidance or minimisation of adverse effects of science and technology on the environment  
pay due regard to international agreements and protocols on the environment and biodiversity  
foster environmental awareness within the science and technology profession and among the public.