



Code of Conduct

Association of Postgraduate Students Inc

ABN: 91 734 561 348

1 Introduction

As a condition of their appointment to the:

- (a) Board of Directors;
- (b) Executive Committee; or
- (c) Advisory Committee

for the Association of Postgraduate Students Inc (**APS**), all Directors and Committee members are expected to observe the highest possible standards of behaviour, ethics and integrity. Directors and Committee members are also expected to maintain confidentiality of information, avoid conflicts of interest and foster an environment free of discrimination.

This Code of Conduct (**Code**) provides a framework for Directors and Committee members to achieve minimum standards of ethical behaviour and professionalism in their dealings and relationships with other Directors and external stakeholders.

This Code is underpinned by APS values, purposes and objectives. APS will be guided by this Code as to what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. All Directors and Committee members receive this Code as part of their induction.

2 Purpose

This Code outlines the general behaviour expected of Directors and Committee members. It does not attempt to provide Directors and Committee members a detailed or exhaustive list of how to manage all communications and relationships with one another and external stakeholders.

3 Scope

- (a) This Code applies to all Directors and Committee members (for both the Executive Committee and Advisory Committee) of APS when engaging with each other, members of the APS community and external stakeholders of APS.
- (b) For the avoidance of doubt, this Code applies to all forms of behaviour and communication arising out of or in connection with the operations or activities of APS, including:
 - (i) at meetings and events;
 - (ii) in person;
 - (iii) by email, telephone or text message;
 - (iv) using any form of electronic or online platform; and
 - (v) on social media.

4 Conduct of Directors and Committee members

4.1 General expectations of Directors and Committee members

All Directors and Committee members are expected to:

- (a) comply with all APS policies, procedures and rules;

- (b) conduct themselves in a kind, respectful and courteous manner, including not engaging in bullying, harassment, sexual harassment, victimisation or threatening behaviour of any kind;
- (c) act with integrity;
- (d) act in accordance with the charitable purpose of APS;
- (e) approach differences of opinion with respect and courtesy through rational discussion and appropriate forums;
- (f) treat others fairly, without discrimination in relation to personal attributes, including (without limitation) their age, gender identity, disability, political belief or activity, race, religious belief or activity, sex or sexual orientation;
- (g) refrain from acting in a manner which undermines the reputation and image of APS;
- (h) refrain from making defamatory, malicious or vexatious statements or communications (including by social media) against one another or to any external stakeholder;
- (i) act with discretion and maintain confidentiality when communicating with one another, including by respecting privacy and confidentiality in sensitive matters; and
- (j) refrain from behaviours and conduct which would violate laws or regulations or cause danger to public health and safety.

4.2 The role of Directors and Committee members

In carrying out their role, all Directors and Committee members are required to:

- (a) further the purposes of the APS;
- (b) work towards the Board's agreed strategic objectives;
- (c) abide by majority decisions, while retaining the right to challenge such decisions through ethical and constructive channels;
- (d) attend scheduled meetings;
- (e) prepare adequately for scheduled meetings by reading and understanding papers ahead of meetings;
- (f) represent decisions to the APS community without bias or prejudice;
- (g) stand by this Code, speak with one voice in concert with fellow Directors and Committee members, maintain a positive culture, maintain orderly decision-making processes and work openly with the Board and Committees; and
- (h) commit to embracing and celebrating diversity as an essential strength of all members, volunteers and staff of APS.

5 Duties of Directors and Committee members

- (a) Directors are required to comply with their legal duties. The APS expects Committee members to comply with the same duties as Directors.

- (b) In particular, Directors and Committee members must:
 - (i) act with reasonable care and diligence;
 - (ii) act honestly and fairly in APS' best interests and for APS' charitable purposes;
 - (iii) not misuse their position or information gained by virtue of their position;
 - (iv) disclose conflicts of interest in accordance with APS' Rules and Conflict of Interest Policy;
 - (v) ensure that APS' financial affairs are managed responsibly; and
 - (vi) not allow APS to operate while it is insolvent.

6 Confidentiality

- (a) Directors and Committee members must maintain confidentiality regarding APS' sensitive information, including strategic plans, financial data, operational plans, and personal information of members and program participants.
- (b) Directors and Committee members must not disclose sensitive information or the content of discussions between Directors (in their capacity as Directors) or Committee members (in their capacity as members of the Executive or Advisory Committee) outside of the Board or Committee setting without the express consent of the Board or the Committee, or unless permitted by law.
- (c) Breaches of confidentiality can lead to legal consequences, including removal from the Board or Committee or, potentially, civil penalties.
- (d) This duty of confidentiality will survive the termination of the tenure of Directors and Committee members.

7 Breach of this Code

- (a) Any actual or suspected breach of the duties and expectations in clauses 4-6 must be reported to the Chair (or the President if the breach involves the Chair).
- (b) Directors and Committee members who are in breach of this Code may be liable to disciplinary action in accordance with APS' Rules and policies. This includes:
 - (i) a motion of no confidence against a Director;
 - (ii) inviting the members to remove a Director pursuant to clause 18.3(a) of the APS Rules;
 - (iii) removal from an Advisory Committee; or
 - (iv) dismissal of an Executive Committee member pursuant to clause 31.10 of the APS Rules.

8 Review

This Code will be reviewed by the Board at least once every two years (or as necessary) to ensure the Code is up to date and consistent with APS' operations and legislative requirements.

9 Contact

If any Director or Committee member requires more information or is unsure of APS' expectations of their behaviour and conduct, they should contact the Chair.

10 Authorisation

(a) This Code was first adopted by the Board on 31 March 2025.

(b) This Code will be reviewed by the Board on or before 31 March 2027.

Version	Revisions	Date	Editor	Approved
1	Creation	11 March 2025	Moores	Board

Acceptance of Code of Conduct

It is a condition of appointment as a Director or Committee member of APS that I acknowledge and agree to comply with APS' Code of Conduct.

I have read, understood and agree to comply with APS' Code of Conduct.

Full name

Signed