**PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

**Ethics**is a branch of philosophy that addresses the concepts of right and wrong or good and evil.

**Professional ethics** encompass the personal and corporate standards of behavior expected by professionals

**Professional ethics** provides us means to solve certain ethical problems related to a certain profession

Professionals and those working in acknowledged professions exercise specialist knowledge and skill. How the use of this knowledge should be governed when providing a service to the public can be considered a moral issue and is termed professional ethics.

It is capable of making judgments, applying their skills, and reaching informed decisions in situations that the general public cannot because they have not attained the necessary knowledge and skills.

Codes of professional ethics are often established by professional organizations to help guide *members in performing their job functions according to sound and consistent ethical principles*.  
**Code of Professional Ethics lays down the standards of integrity, professionalism and confidentiality which all members of the Association shall be bound to respect in their work as conference interpreters.**

*Components/Ethical Principles*

Ethical principles underpin all professional codes of conduct.

Ethical principles may differ depending on the profession; for example, professional ethics that relate to medical practitioners will differ from those that relate to lawyers or real estate agents.

However, there are some universal ethical principles that apply across all professions, including:

* *Honesty* - honesty is a [facet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Facet) of [moral character](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Moral_character) that connotes positive and [virtuous](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Virtue)attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, straightforwardness, including straightforwardness of conduct, along with the absence of lying, cheating, theft, etc. Honesty also involves being trustworthy, loyal, fair, and sincere.
* *Integrity*- is the quality of being honest and having strong moral principles, or moral uprightness. It is a personal choice to hold one's self to consistent standards.
* *Transparency*- implies openness, communication, and accountability. It guides an organization's decisions and policies on the disclosure of information to its employees and the public, or simply the intended recipient of the information.
* *Accountability* - is answerability, blameworthiness, liability, and the expectation of account-giving. It is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies including the administration, governance, and implementation within the scope of the role or employment position and encompassing the obligation to report, explain and be answerable for resulting consequences.
* *Confidentiality* -  involves a set of rules or a promise usually executed through confidentiality agreements that limits access or places restrictions on certain types of [information](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information).
* *Objectivity*- may refer to fairness, disinterestedness, factuality, and nonpartisanship, but most often encompasses all of these qualities.
* *Respect* - is a positive feeling or action shown towards someone or something considered important or held in high esteem or regard; it conveys a sense of admiration for good or valuable qualities; and it is also the process of honoring someone by exhibiting care, concern, or consideration for their needs or feelings.
* *Obedience to the law*- is a system of rules that are created and enforced through social or governmental institutions to regulate behavior.
* *Loyalty* - in general use, is a devotion and faithfulness to a nation, cause, philosophy, country, group, or person.
* doing good and avoiding harm to others

#### Codes of conduct

Professional codes of conduct draw on these professional ethical principles as the basis for prescribing required standards of behavior for members of a profession. They also seek to set out the expectations that the profession and society have of its members.

The intention of codes of conduct is to provide guidelines for the minimum standard of appropriate behavior in a professional context. Codes of conduct sit alongside the general law of the land and the personal values of members of the profession.

Professional codes of conduct provide benefits to:

* the public, as they build confidence in the profession’s trustworthiness
* clients, as they provide greater transparency and certainty about how their affairs will be handled
* members of the profession, as they provide a supporting framework for resisting pressure to act inappropriately, and for making acceptable decisions in what may be ‘grey areas’
* the profession as a whole, as they provide a common understanding of acceptable practice which builds collegiality and allows for fairer disciplinary procedures
* Others dealing with the profession, as the profession will be seen as more reliable and easier to deal with.

#### Other contributors to professional ethics

##### **Fiduciary duties**

When an adviser agrees to assist a client, they agree to take on a level of responsibility for that person and their immigration matter. The client becomes dependent on the adviser in relation to that assistance. This is a fiduciary relationship between the fiduciary (the adviser) and a principal (the client). Even without a Code this fiduciary relationship means the adviser has certain obligations to their client.

##### **Contractual obligations**

When an adviser enters into a contract (or written agreement) with a client this creates legally binding obligations to perform the terms of the contract in a particular way. This includes a duty to act with diligence, due care and skill, and also implies obligations such as confidentiality and honesty, even if they are not specifically set out in the contract.

## Sources of Ethical Guidance for IT Professionals

A number of resources help IT professionals searching for ethical guidance within the scope of their job duties. For example, IEEE has a code of ethicsfor its members; the Association of Information Technology Professionals (AITP) has a code of ethics and standards of conduct; and SANS has published an IT code of ethics. There are other examples beyond these three, and many elements in these codes could be useful to higher education IT professionals. For example, among other elements that describe ethical behavior in the profession, in general these codes assert that IT professionals need to commit to:

* Integrity
* Competence
* Professional responsibilities
* Work responsibilities
* Societal responsibilities

Specific guidance stems from these general principles. Some common commitments between the three codes are to:

* Maintain technical competence
* Avoid injury to others, their property, reputation, or employment
* Reject bribes, kickbacks, etc.

# Characteristics of a Profession Renders a specialized service based upon advanced specialized knowledge and skill, and dealing with its problems primarily on an intellectual plane rather than on a physical or a manual labor plane.

## Involves a confidential relationship between a practitioner and a client or an employer.

## Is charged with a substantial degree of public obligation by virtue of their profession of specialized knowledge.

## Enjoys a common heritage of knowledge, skill, and status to the cumulative store of which professional men are bound to contribute through their individual and collective efforts.

## Performs its services to a substantial degree in the general public interest , receiving its compensation through limited fees rather than through direct profit from the improvement in goods, services, or knowledge, which it accomplishes.

## Is bound by a distinctive ethical code in its relationships with clients, colleagues, and the public.

# Characteristics of Professionalism

Being a professional in your chosen field means much more than wearing a coat and tie or possessing a college degree and a noted title.

Professionalism also has to do with how you conduct yourself during your business affairs. True professionals possess a number of important characteristics that can apply to virtually any type of business.

### *Appearance*

A professional is neat in appearance. Be sure to meet or even exceed the requirements of your company's dress code, and pay special attention to your appearance when meeting with prospects or clients.

### *Demeanor*

Your demeanor (conduct/behavior) should exude confidence. Be polite and well-spoken whether you're interacting with customers, superiors or co-workers. You need to keep your calm, even during tense situations.

### *Reliability*

As a professional, you will be counted on to find a way to get the job done. Responding to people promptly and following through on promises in a timely manner is also important, as this demonstrates reliability.

### *Competence*

Professionals strive to become experts in their field, which sets them apart from the rest of the pack. This can mean continuing your education by taking courses, attending seminars and attaining any related professional designations.

### *Ethics*

Professionals must adhere to a strict code of ethics. Even if your company or industry doesn't have a written code, you should display ethical behavior at all times.

### *Maintaining Your Poise*

A professional must maintain his poise (calm confidence in a person's way of behaving) even when facing a difficult situation. For example, if a colleague or client treats you in a belligerent manner, you should not resort to the same type of behavior.

### *Phone Etiquette*

Your phone etiquette is also an important component of professional behavior. This means identifying yourself by your full name, company and title when you place a call. Be sure not to dominate the conversation and listen intently to the other party.

### *Written Correspondence*

During written correspondence, keep your letters brief and to the point. Your tone should be polite and formal without being "stuffy." This also applies to email correspondence.

### *Organizational Skills*

A professional can quickly and easily find what is needed. Your work area should be neat and organized, and your briefcase should contain only what is needed for your appointment or presentation.

### *Accountability*

Professionals are accountable for their actions at all times. If you make a mistake, own up to it and try to fix it if possible. Don't try to place the blame on a colleague. If your company made the mistake, take responsibility and work to resolve the issue.

**Professional Responsibility**

It is legal and moral duty of a professional to apply his or her knowledge in ways that benefit his or her client, and the wider society, without causing any injury to either.

Legal, moral and ethical responsibility of a professional to serve the needs of the client (s) being served, without infringing any harm upon both the parties.

**Principle 1 – Integrity:** Provide professional services with integrity.

*Integrity demands honesty and candor which must not be subordinated to personal gain and advantage. Certificants are placed in positions of trust by clients, and the ultimate source of that trust is the certificant’s personal integrity. Allowance can be made for innocent error and legitimate differences of opinion, but integrity cannot co-exist with deceit or subordination of one’s principles.*

**Principle 2 – Objectivity:** Provide professional services objectively.

*Objectivity requires intellectual honesty and impartiality. Regardless of the particular service rendered or the capacity in which a certificant functions, certificants should protect the integrity of their work, maintain objectivity and avoid subordination of their judgment.*

**Principle 3 – Competence:** Maintain the knowledge and skill necessary to provide professional services competently.

*Competence means attaining and maintaining an adequate level of knowledge and skill, and application of that knowledge and skill in providing services to clients. Competence also includes the wisdom to recognize the limitations of that knowledge and when consultation with other professionals is appropriate or referral to other professionals necessary. Certificants make a continuing commitment to learning and professional improvement.*

**Principle 4 – Fairness:** Be fair and reasonable in all professional relationships. Disclose conflicts of interest.

*Fairness requires impartiality, intellectual honesty and disclosure of material conflicts of interest. It involves a subordination of one’s own feelings, prejudices and desires so as to achieve a proper balance of conflicting interests. Fairness is treating others in the same fashion that you would want to be treated.*

**Principle 5 – Confidentiality:** Protect the confidentiality of all client information.

*Confidentiality means ensuring that information is accessible only to those authorized to have access. A relationship of trust and confidence with the client can only be built upon the understanding that the client’s information will remain confidential.*

**Principle 6 – Professionalism:** Act in a manner that demonstrates exemplary professional conduct.

*Professionalism requires behaving with dignity and courtesy to clients, fellow professionals, and others in business-related activities. Certificants cooperate with fellow certificants to enhance and maintain the profession’s public image and improve the quality of services.*

**Principle 7 – Diligence**: Provide professional services diligently.

*Diligence is the provision of services in a reasonably prompt and thorough manner, including the proper planning for, and supervision of, the rendering of professional services.*