



## **CAREER DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.**

# **CODE OF ETHICS**

The CDAA Code of Ethics has been developed from the Code of Ethics in the Professional Standards for Australian Career Development Practitioners.

The Code of Ethics provides a practical guide for professional behaviour and practice for CDAA members.

“Such codes require behaviour and practice beyond the personal moral obligations of an individual. They define and demand high standards of behaviour in respect of services provided to the public and in dealing with professional colleagues. Further, these codes are enforced by the profession and are acknowledged by the community” (Professions Australia, 2004).

The Code of Ethics for CDAA members lists the principles of professional conduct developed to safeguard:

- the welfare of consumers/clients of career services provided by members.
- the integrity of the Association.
- the integrity of the profession.

All members of the Career Development Association of Australia Inc. are bound by the CDAA Code of Ethics irrespective of the career development services provided or their mode of delivery.

The following principles will guide members in their professional practice.

### **1. Ethical principles for professional competency and conduct**

CDAA members will

- have qualifications necessary to provide career development services, including those qualifications required to undertake specialised tasks or roles and/or work with specialised populations (see also Appendix 1 - Training, Mentoring and Supervision, Assessment).
- use the privilege of membership of the Association with discretion in all his/her dealings.
- represent their professional competencies, training and experience accurately (see also Appendix 1 – Public Statements).
- function within the boundaries of their training and experience (see also Appendixes 1 and 2).
- treat clients with honesty, respect, empathy and integrity.
- refrain from consciously dictating to, judging or coercing client choices, values, lifestyles, plans or beliefs.

- explain the content, purposes, potential benefits and results of tests and interventions in language that is easily understood by the person or persons for whom it is intended (see also Appendix 1, Appendix 2 - Assessment).
- monitor, maintain and enhance professional competencies.
- seek and participate in continuing professional development (CPD) in order to remain current with innovations and trends in the contexts, processes and content of career development.
- ensure that material contained in web-based programs, resource materials and career development programs used is current and accurate (see also Appendix 21 – Use of Information, Appendix 2).
- conduct research and report findings using procedures that are consistent with the accepted ethical and scientific standards of educational, psychological and social research practices (see also Appendix 1 – Research).
- conduct internet career services in line with the specified Guidelines in Appendix 2.

## **2. Ethical principles for career development practitioner-client relationships**

### **2.1 Equity and diversity**

CDAA members will:

- respect the dignity of each person for whom career development services are rendered.
- ensure that each individual's feelings and cultural customs are respected.
- inform individuals, orally or in writing, of the purposes, goals, techniques, policies and ethical standards as appropriate to the service being provided (see also Appendix 1 – Financial Arrangements, Appendix 2,).
- accept the rights of the individual to make independent choices and to take responsibility for those choices and their consequences.
- deal with each person fairly, equitably and without prejudice, respecting their values, beliefs and life-experiences and those of their families and the communities to which they belong.
- avoid all forms of discrimination or exploitation including financial exploitation (see also Appendix 1 – Financial arrangements, Client Relationships).
- ensure that the services provided are culturally appropriate and relevant to individuals' needs, and valid and reliable concerning the information they provide.
- take into consideration the career development stage that their clients are at, and their career/life experiences.
- use non-discriminatory, current and accurate information within whatever medium is used (See Appendix 1 – Use of Information).

### **2.2 Confidentiality, disclosure and informed consent**

CDAA members will:

- maintain a current understanding of laws, policies and professional ethics that pertain to client rights.
- inform individuals of the limits of confidentiality.
- preserve confidentiality.
- preserve the individual's right to privacy.
- seek clients' expressed consent before disclosure of client information.
- avoid or disclose conflicts of interest which compromise the best interests of their clients (see Appendix 1 – Confidentiality, Appendix 2).

### **2.3 Scope of practice**

CDAА members will:

- conduct career development services for which they are appropriately trained and currently qualified.
- make appropriate referral when their own competency does not meet the individual's need or when their professional assistance cannot be provided or continued.
- contextualise career development theory and practice according to work setting, clientele and societal context.

### **3. Ethical principles for professional relationships**

CDAА members will:

- avoid conflicts of interest (See Appendix 1 – Financial Arrangements, Client relationships).
- resolve conflict between professional ethical standards and directives or practices within the workplace through ethical decision-making and appropriate consultation and communication.
- advocate for and assist in the development of career development services that are ethically rendered and relevant to client needs in cooperation with policy-makers, organisations, administrative personnel and community agencies.
- respect and acknowledge the contribution of other professionals.
- cooperate with other professionals and/or colleagues according to the ethical practices and procedures relevant to the situation.

### **4. Breaches of the Code of Ethics**

CDAА members will deal with concerns about the ethical behaviour of colleagues either directly with the colleague/s or through the CDAА Ethics Sub-Committee or other appropriate institution according to CDAА guidelines. (See Guidelines for Breaches of the Code of Ethics in the Procedures Handbook – **Appendix 3**)

## Appendix 1

### CDAA Code of Ethics - Additional Information

#### 1. Training, Mentoring and Supervision

Members who supervise, mentor or train students or junior colleagues who are members of the CDAA have a responsibility to promote awareness of, and adherence to the CDAA Code of Ethics. It is unethical for members who are providing supervision, mentoring or training to require or coerce those being supervised, mentored or trained to disclose personal information, either directly or in the context of any training procedure. Where self-disclosure is a normal expectation of a given training procedure, participation must be genuinely voluntary and informed consent must be obtained from participants prior to training. Trainees must always have the option to withdraw from participation without incurring penalty.

#### 2. Public Statements

Public statements made by members in periodicals, books, circulars, brochures and other publications such as lists, directories, business cards and on television, radio, film, video, the internet, web pages, e-mail or other forms of electronic communication must not contain:

- statements which are false, fraudulent, unfair, discriminatory, defamatory, misleading or deceptive or likely to mislead or deceive.
- statements intended or likely to create unjustified expectations of favourable results.
- any statements which would bring the Association or profession into disrepute.

Members may participate in any lecture, talk, public appearance, transmission or publication on any subject and be identified by name, by academic qualifications and as a Member of the Association, providing it is not contrary to the interests of any client who has sought their professional services, or to the interests of the CDAA. Members may not speak on behalf of the CDAA unless expressly required to do so by the National or Divisional Executive Committees.

#### 3. Assessment

Assessment is a process in which a person seeking career services may participate, with or without the assistance of any of a wide range of measurement devices. There is no obligation for career development practitioners to use assessment tools. CDAA members will only use those instruments for which they have appropriate training. Those who are not trained psychologists must not use restricted psychological tests.

Members must:

- satisfy themselves that any assessment instruments used are chosen, administered and interpreted appropriately and accurately.
- supply the persons being assessed with explanations of the nature and purpose of the assessment and feedback of results, in language that can be understood, unless an explicit exception to this right has been agreed upon in advance.
- in all cases, career development practitioners must choose carefully those instruments which have an adequate level of validity and reliability.
- specify the original purposes and uses of the assessment techniques and clearly indicate the limits of their applicability.
- use only appropriate norming tables should be in interpretation.
- not endorse the inappropriate use of assessment results or their interpretation by others.
- satisfy themselves that services for scoring and interpreting assessment tools can produce appropriate evidence for the validity of the programs and procedures used in arriving at the interpretation.

- satisfy themselves that instruments chosen remain valid in the light of current research.

Assessment data obtained about a person for one purpose, may be used for another purpose only with the written consent of that person. Anonymous data will be stored securely for 5 years and may be used for research purposes, after which it will be destroyed.

#### **4. Use of Information**

The member will:

- make every effort to ensure that information provided to a person is in a form which can be readily understood by that person.
- provide materials such as course information and statistics which, to the best of the member's knowledge, contain only accurate and current information.
- where appropriate and within reason, inform the client of the date, source and accuracy of the information.
- inform the client when in doubt about providing information.
- make every effort to encourage the client to source his/her own information.

#### **5. Research**

In planning any research in the career field, it is the principal investigator's responsibility to ensure that ethical practices are undertaken.

In particular:

- the physical, emotional, psychological and socio-economic welfare of the participants must not be compromised.
- the participants must not be exposed to any form of risk or injury.
- the respect and dignity of all participants must be preserved at all times.
- participants must be fully informed about the nature and purposes of the research, and any subsequent changes must be notified.
- the consent of participants to be involved must be voluntary.
- participants must be informed that they may withdraw from the project without penalty.
- pressure must not be applied to a person to participate.
- results obtained in research must be recorded and reported in such a way as to preserve the anonymity of participants unless their permission to reveal their identity has been obtained.
- procedures for confidentiality need to be made clear to participants at the beginning of the investigation.
- all research results and data must be stored securely and not revealed, traded or sold to any unauthorised person or body.
- credit must be given to those who have contributed materials published in any medium.

#### **6. Financial arrangements**

- all financial arrangements must be made clear in advance.
- members will not solicit or receive fees for professional work with a client who is entitled to free career services through an agency or institution unless the person freely chooses to consult the member privately.
- a member will not be paid money to encourage a person to leave a position of employment.
- a member will terminate the consulting relationship when it is reasonably clear that the person has received adequate assistance or is not benefiting from the consultations.

## **7. Client Relationships**

CDAА members:

- will not abuse the privilege of helping the person, through sexual or any other means of exploitation.
- will not take unfair advantage of the person; will not be a party to any defamatory action regarding the person.
- a member should avoid situations which could impair professional judgment or increase the risk of exploitation by or of any person.

## **8. Confidentiality**

CDAА members must:

- respect the confidential nature of any sensitive information entrusted to them. Information gathered in the course of working with a client must be maintained in a secure place and only revealed to others with the expressed permission of the person concerned or that person's legal representative.
- advise clients and potential clients that all discussions and documents are confidential so far as the law allows..
- where information is given or received from agencies or people within their own organisation other than the client, about the client, then the limits of confidentiality must be established with the authors and recipients of that information.

When a member agrees to provide services to a client at the request of a third party, the member assumes the responsibility of clarifying the nature of the relationship and communicating this to all parties concerned.

## Appendix 2 - CDAA Code of Ethics

### Guidelines for the delivery of career development services through the Internet

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#### 1. Introduction

Increasing use of Internet technology has over recent years led to a range of new responses in the delivery of career development services, offering clients greater access to these services without traditional time and location constraints.

Web-based career development interventions can be grouped in the following ways:

1. To deliver information about:

- occupations, including their descriptions, employment outlook, skills and training requirements and estimated salary.
- training and education opportunities.
- how to engage effectively in job search activities – including the preparation of written applications and for other selection processes.
- the use of on-line job search engines.

With respect to the delivery of information through the internet the CDAA Code of Ethics applies – see Section 1 and Appendix 1, section 4

2. To deliver interactive career development services through means such as advice forums, chat rooms, on-line assessment, e-counselling/coaching and videoconferencing. This use assumes that clients, either as individuals or as part of a group, have intentionally placed themselves in direct communication with a career development practitioner with the intent of engaging in dialogue about their career development that extends beyond provision of information.

#### 2. Guidelines for use of the Internet in delivering interactive career development services

##### 2.1 Practitioner qualifications, competencies and knowledge

When delivering interactive on-line services, CDAA members should clearly state their qualifications and credentials particularly in regard to the development and delivery of these services. CDAA members must be competent in the facilitation of all services provided through electronic means.

CDAA members also have an obligation to be as aware as possible of local conditions and socio-cultural factors relevant to the client. Current, accurate and culturally relevant information and methodologies must be employed.

##### 2.2 Screening of potential clients and clarity of contract

CDAA members should ensure that potential clients are screened for intellectual, emotional and physical compatibility with the use of computer applications and on-line interactive services and that this compatibility continues to be monitored should on-line services commence. Where appropriate a pre-inquiry questionnaire or on-line registration form to establish identity, age, contact details, the nature of their enquiry, familiarity with technology and access to private and secure computer usage should be completed.

A clear statement must be provided for clients outlining the services to be provided including:

- fees and payment arrangements.
- technology requirements and protocols for dealing with technical glitches.
- privacy and confidentiality measures and procedures.
- protocols for referral to face-to-face, telephone or other forms of assistance.
- content of the services.

- duration of services.
- agreed upon goals for the services.
- the nature of the client information that will be stored electronically and for how long.
- reference to the CDAA Code of Ethics.

### **2.3 Confidentiality and security of records**

Every effort must be made by CDAA members to protect the confidentiality of client records. Where appropriate password-protected or encrypted systems should be implemented. Assurances must be made to the client regarding the protection of personal information in accordance with the Code of Ethics. (See Appendix 1 – Confidentiality)

### **2.4 Assessment**

Where CDAA members utilise online inventories or tests with their clients they must ensure that the assessments have been tested in computer delivery mode to ensure their viability and where relevant their psychometric properties are the same in this mode of delivery as in print form.

Practitioners must be diligent about ensuring that the client understands assessment results. Should evidence suggest otherwise, CDAA members must ensure clarification is provided through other interventions such as telephone or referral to a qualified career practitioner in his or her geographic area. Refer section on CDAA Website (see Appendix 1 – Assessment)

## **Appendix 3 - Guidelines for Breaches of the Code of Ethics**

When a complaint is received and an allegation of violation of the Code by a member of the Association occurs, the Ethics Sub-committee will initiate an inquiry. The member against whom the allegation was brought must co-operate with the inquiry in line with the constitutional requirements or face expulsion from the Australian Association of Career Counsellors. All members of the Career Development Association of Australia Inc. are bound by this Code of Ethics for Career Practitioners as agreed in the application for membership of the Australian Association of Career Counsellors. When a decision has been made by the Ethics Sub-Committee as a result of an inquiry the member must comply with that decision or face expulsion from the Australian Association of Career Counsellors. There shall be no appeal by the member to the Australian Association of Career Counsellors.

Where legal mediation, arbitration or accounting services are requested by either party the cost of those services shall be borne by either party. The Chair of the Ethics Sub-Committee will advise either party of likely costs prior to the commencement of any proceedings.

### **PROCESS FOR THE HEARING OF COMPLAINTS**

#### **1. COMPLAINANT**

- Submit the complaint in writing to the Chair of the Ethics Sub-Committee of the CDAA with any documentation they may have supporting their complaint.

#### **2. ETHICS SUB-COMMITTEE – COMPLAINANT**

- Contact complainant on receipt of letter and any documentation provided by the complainant.
- Explanation of the CDAA procedure to complainant.
- Listen to complainant.
- Document what is said and submit this to the complainant for verification that it reflects the dialogue held with the CDAA and the process to be followed.
- Complainant to sign the document verifying that it reflects the dialogue held with the CDAA and the process to be followed.
- Mutual agreement on the process.

#### **3. ETHICS SUB-COMMITTEE – CDAA MEMBER**

- To contact the Member.
- Member informed there has been a complaint against them.
- Member informed of the nature and substance of the complaint e.g. Code of Ethics or CDAA Constitution.
- Listen to the member's response.
- Document what is said and submit this to the member for verification that it reflects the dialogue held with the CDAA and the process to be followed.
- Member to sign the document verifying that it reflects the dialogue held with the CDAA and the process to be followed.
- Request a written response from the member outlining a possible solution to the Chair of the Ethics Sub-Committee within the stipulated time-frame.
- Clarify with the member that we as an Association want a win/win for all parties.

#### **4. CONSULTATION PROCESS**

- Ethics Sub-Committee considers responses.
- Legal Advice sought if required.

- Further communication to complainant and member as required in terms of an acceptable resolution.
- Deliberation with all parties involved.
- Arbitration: Decision made by Ethics Sub-Committee that is hopefully agreeable to all parties.
- President informed of decision.

## 5. ENACTMENT

- Member informed.
- Right of response.
- Further deliberation.
- Ratification.
- Member informed.
- Complainant informed.