NEW Code of Professional Conduct

Introducing the draft document

Why we need Codes and Standards

These documents work together to provide a comprehensive framework for professional governance:

- The Code of Professional Conduct sets out specific behavioural expectations for professional translators and interpreters.

- The Code of Ethics establishes overarching ethical principles that guide professional practice.

- Professional Standards articulate the skills and knowledge needed to uphold these ethical and behavioural standards in practice.

Together, they help maintain the integrity, quality, and public trust in the profession, while also supporting members in their professional practice and development.

Why we need Codes and Standards

Document	Purpose	Audience/Users	Benefits
Code of Professional Conduct	A Code of Professional Conduct outlines specific, practical rules and guidelines for behaviour that members of a professional body are expected to follow in their day-to-day practice.	Primary audience is the members of the professional body. Secondary audiences include clients, the public, and regulatory bodies.	- Provides clear expectations for professional behaviour - Offers a basis for disciplinary procedures - Enhances public trust in the profession - Helps protect clients and the public
Code of Ethics	A Code of Ethics sets out the core values and ethical principles that underpin the profession. It's typically more aspirational and less prescriptive than a Code of Conduct.	Members of the professional body, students/trainees, the public, and other stakeholders.	- Establishes the moral framework for the profession - Guides decision-making in complex or ambiguous situations - Fosters a shared professional identity and culture - Enhances the profession's reputation and credibility
Professional Standards	Professional Standards define the level of competence, skills, and knowledge expected of practitioners in the field. They often include technical requirements and best practices.	Members, employers, educators, regulators, and clients.	- Ensures consistency in professional practice across the field - Provides a benchmark for professional development and training - Helps maintain quality of service for clients - Supports the assessment and accreditation of practitioners - Informs curriculum development in professional education

ITI Code of Professional Conduct – a brief history

The current Code of Professional Conduct was approved by ITI members at the AGM on 8 September 2013 and is available on the ITI website: Professional standards.

Subsequent amendments:

- 3.1.4, Principle 3 - approved at the AGM on 29 October 2016
- 2.3.1, Principle 2 - approved at the AGM on 13 October 2018
- Minor word amendments - 5.1/2.8.1(a)/2.8.1(b) approved at the AGM on 08 October 2022
- 2.5.2, Principle 2 - approved at the AGM on 08 October 2022
- 3.1.4, Principle 3 - approved at the AGM on 08 October 2022

It appears that the process for dealing with an alleged breach of the Code was reviewed in 2017, but the recommendations were not implemented.

Critique – areas for improvement

1. **Length and complexity**: The document is lengthy and detailed, which may make it challenging for members to fully absorb and remember, and difficult for clients to understand.

2. **Overlap and repetition**: Some sections contain overlapping information. For example, confidentiality is mentioned in multiple places. Streamlining could improve clarity.

3. **Accessibility**: The format and presentation of the document is not user-friendly. A searchable version with hyperlinks between related sections could improve usability.

4. **Examples and case studies**: Including practical examples or case studies could help members and clients better understand how to apply the code in real-world situations.

5. **Enforcement practicality**: The disciplinary procedures are quite elaborate.

Faced with an incident involving unprofessional behaviour that had no remedy in the Code of Professional Conduct the Board agreed that a review was needed.

The Board reviewed the initial draft and concluded that there was a need to look at the concept more strategically and to seek wider perspectives.

The group worked on the new Code and supporting documents over the winter.

Wider consultation with members using an online deliberation platform takes place.

Winter 2023–2024

September 2024

April 2025

October 2025

Summer 2023

June 2024

Winter 2024 - 2025

July – August 2025

The Professional Conduct Committee was reinstated and was given the task of reviewing the Code and producing an updated version.

A task and finish group was set up to advise on the drafting of a new Code of Professional Conduct.

A working draft of the Code was presented for initial discussion at a Coffee House session.

Members will vote on the final version of the revised Code at the AGM.

Code of Professional Conduct – review timeline

Institute of Translation and Interpreting

Our ambition

The revised Code of Professional Conduct should:

- be more accessible and user-friendly for ITI members and their clients

- maintain rigorous standards while being less prescriptive in its approach

- recognise the evolving nature of the translation and interpreting profession

- place greater emphasis on professional judgement

- include updated provisions that reflect current industry challenges e.g. use of technology

A few challenges…

- ITI members may be individuals or companies; they may be translators or interpreters or project managers or academics, or some other type of language specialist or related profession. So… one Code of Professional Conduct or many?

- It's impossible to make absolute statements about what is OK and what is not OK due to different approaches used across the breadth of translation and interpreting practices.

- The boundary between conduct and ethics could be drawn in many places.

Key changes

Restructuring and consolidation

The original Code's four principles (honesty and integrity, professional competence, client confidentiality and trust, relationships with other members) have been reorganised into three elements:

- Professional values

- Professional competence

- Professional business practices

New elements

New Element	Description
Purpose statement	Clear articulation of members' role as professionals acting with integrity to deliver a good service to clients
Self-care	Recognition of wellbeing as a professional responsibility
Professional judgement	Explicit acknowledgement of the importance of exercising professional judgement
Technology use	With the increase in MT and the evolution of genAI a new section on appropriate use of technology and associated risks is needed

Removed or reduced elements

Removed/reduced element	Notes
Detailed advertising rules	Simplified to core principles
Media statements section	Removed (as not necessary in the Code)
Specific translation direction requirements	Not proscribed in the Code but will be discussed in new guidance
Competition compliance details	Removed – but the principle of acting fairly and ethically remains
Detailed subcontracting requirements	Condensed but core responsibility maintained

Post-AGM actions

Communication

- Publish the revised Code of Professional Conduct on the website
- Notify members that the new Code and supporting information is available for use

Actions

- Develop a plan to create the supporting guidance
- Publish an updated procedure for dealing with potential breaches of the Code of Professional Conduct