

Membership Rules

Application of the Rules

1. Members accept and agree to be bound by the Code of Conduct and these Membership Rules.
2. Members will submit a Code Compliance Statement each year. For all members this will be a signed statement agreeing to be bound by the Code of Conduct and Membership Rules. For members who are firms, this will also include a statement that their relevant staff have signed and agree to be bound by the Code of Conduct and Rules.
3. Members will ensure that any relevant freelance consultant retained by the member or the organisation for whom they work, or in the case of an 'in-house' or employed Practitioner, their employer, will sign and agree to be bound by the Code of Conduct each year.
4. Consulting firm members will ensure that the Code of Conduct is included in the member's staff handbook or equivalent.
5. Members, who are not 'in-house' Practitioners, will ensure that all prospective Clients of the member have been notified that the member is bound by the Code of Conduct.

Application for Membership

6. Subject to these Membership Rules, each applicant for membership shall be approved by the Management Committee provided the applicant agrees to abide by the Code of Conduct and Membership Rules and meets any other qualification for membership determined by the Management Committee from time-to-time.
7. Applicants may be refused membership by the Management Committee if:
 - a. Their application contains a materially false or misleading representation or declaration
 - b. The applicant has not undertaken to comply with obligations under the Code of Conduct or Membership Rules
 - c. The applicant is the subject of a corruption investigation
 - d. A finding of corruption has been made against the applicant
 - e. The applicant has been removed from a register of lobbyists held by a Government Institution, having regard to the facts and circumstances which resulted in that removal
 - f. The applicant has been convicted of an offence, as an adult, in the last ten years, one element of which involves dishonesty, such as theft or fraud, or sentenced to a term of imprisonment of two years or more
 - g. In the reasonable opinion of the Management Committee, any prior or current conduct of the applicant or his or her employees, contractors or person otherwise engaged to provide services for the applicant has contravened any of the terms of the Code or these Rules
 - h. The registration details of the applicant are inaccurate or incomplete; or
 - i. The Management Committee considers there are other reasonable grounds for doing so.
8. Subject to these Membership Rules, each applicant for membership shall be approved by the Management Committee provided the applicant agrees to abide by the Code of Conduct and Membership Rules and meets any other qualification for membership determined by the Management Committee from time-to-time.

9. A member may resign their membership of the Association by notice in writing to the Management Committee.

Breaches of Code or Membership Rules

10. Any breach of the Code of Conduct or these Membership Rules will be dealt with in accordance with the Constitution and these Rules.
11. Members accept the right of the Management Committee to check and audit a member's claims, investigate any complaints received and, if appropriate, implement sanctions up to and including the termination of membership. Members will cooperate with all such audits and investigations and agree to comply with any such sanctions.
12. Members agree to keep confidential the Management Committee audits and investigations (although the Management Committee may, if asked, confirm that either a complaint has been received or that a possible breach of the Code or Membership Rules is being considered, but will give no further information).
13. In the event of a complaint being made against a member, the Management Committee will inform the member of the complaint and give the member a reasonable opportunity to respond to the complaint as per Clause 11 of the Constitution - Disciplining Members. The Management Committee will then consider the complaint and the member's response before determining whether the member has breached the Code or Rules.
14. By a majority decision of the Management Committee, members may be issued with a warning, a direction to undertake remedial action, or have their membership suspended or cancelled on any of the following grounds:
 - a. The member was registered because of a materially false or misleading representation or declaration
 - b. The member has failed to comply with an obligation under the Code of Conduct or Membership Rules, or encouraged others to do so
 - c. The member is the subject of a corruption investigation
 - d. A finding of corruption has been made against the member
 - e. The member has been removed from a register of lobbyists held by a Government Institution, having regard to the facts and circumstances which resulted in that removal
 - f. The member has been charged or convicted of an offence, as an adult, in the last ten years, one element of which involves dishonesty, such as theft or fraud, or sentenced to a term of imprisonment of two years or more
 - g. In the reasonable opinion of the Management Committee, any prior or current conduct of the member or his or her employees, contractors or person otherwise engaged to provide services for the member has contravened any of the terms of the Code or these Rules
 - h. Another ground the Management Committee considers sufficiently brings the government relations profession or the Association into disrepute; or
 - i. There are other reasonable grounds for doing so.
15. Members agree to notify the Management Committee as soon as practicable if they become aware that one or more of the grounds listed in clause 14 above apply to their membership. The fact of their notification will be taken into account by the Management Committee when determining what, if any, action to take.
16. Members agree to undertake any remedial action as directed under clause 14 above as soon as practicable.

17. In the event the Management Committee proposes to suspend or terminate a member's membership, the member will be provided with a draft of the Committee's decision and be provided with a reasonable opportunity to provide further information which the Committee will consider before it finalises a decision.
18. Notwithstanding any other rights of members, a member's membership may be immediately suspended by the Management Committee if:
 - a. The member is the subject of a corruption investigation
 - b. The member has been removed from a register of lobbyists held by a Government Institution, having regard to the facts and circumstances which resulted in that removal
 - c. The member has been convicted of an offence, as an adult, in the last ten years, one element of which involves dishonesty, such as theft or fraud, or sentenced to a term of imprisonment of two years or more; or
 - d. After considering the circumstances, the Committee determines the member has breached the Code or Membership Rules and the member's continuing membership brings the government relations profession or the Association into disrepute.
19. If a member's membership has been suspended by the Management Committee, the member will be advised of the suspension, the reasons for the suspension and will be given a reasonable opportunity to respond. The Management Committee will take that response into consideration when determining whether the member's membership should be reinstated, terminated or continue to be suspended.
20. In the event of suspension, a member is required to comply with the Code of Conduct and Membership Rules, but may not claim membership of Association nor use the Association's logo on its website or publications nor in presentations to prospective Clients or other third parties.
21. Notwithstanding any other rights of members, a member's membership may be immediately terminated by the Management Committee if:
 - a. The member is convicted of an offence, one element of which involves dishonesty, such as theft or fraud, or sentenced to a term of imprisonment of two years or more; or
 - b. A finding of corruption has been made against the member.
22. At its discretion, the Management Committee may keep confidential or publish its decisions and in particular its decisions regarding warnings, a direction to a member to undertake remedial action, or the suspension or termination of a member's membership.
23. It is in the interests of the Association and the government relations profession as a whole that the Lobbying Rules be enforced. Accordingly, where a breach of the Code of Conduct or Membership Rules is suspected or has been found, which the Management Committee believes might also be a breach of a relevant Lobbying Rule, the Management Committee will inform the relevant government authority of that breach and their view that it may also constitute a breach of the relevant Lobbying Rules.

Members' Obligations to the Association

24. Members will disclose the following information which will be made available on the AGPRA website:
 - a. In the case of members who are Large or Small Consulting Firms, their corporate details and names and position titles of staff covered by the membership; or
 - b. In the case of an 'in-house' Practitioner or other individual member, their name, title and, where applicable, the organisation for whom they work.

25. Notwithstanding any other rights of members, a member's membership may be suspended if they have not provided the Management Committee with a Code Compliance Statement by the date prescribed by the Management Committee in each calendar year. Membership will be cancelled if they have not provided the Management Committee with a Code Compliance Statement by the date prescribed by the Management Committee in each calendar year.
26. Members will pay the annual fee set by the Management Committee.
27. Notwithstanding any other rights of members, membership may be suspended by the Management Committee in the event the member has not paid the membership fee within one month of it becoming due. Membership will be cancelled by the Management Committee if the membership fee has not been paid within two months of it becoming due.
28. Each member, who is a firm, will designate a senior executive as the firm's compliance officer and notify the Management Committee of the name and contact details of this senior executive as soon as practicable.

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