

APCDA Ethical Guidelines

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Introduction

The Asia Pacific Career Development Association (APCDA) is committed to provision of career services by competent and recognized professionals. APCDA members facilitate the dignity, freedom, and integrity of people in making lifelong choices and decisions at all ages, across their life roles, as they anticipate, prepare for, enter into, face and cope with the dynamics of the labor market and the workplace.

APCDA members recognize that career planning and development have an impact that reaches beyond the individual, including responsibilities to families, communities, and the larger society and environment. National and global economies and the structure of the labor market influence individual's and families' opportunities and constraints related to career directions, decisions and sustainable careers. Thus, members have important roles for influencing the social discourse in institutions and networks that shape the nature of policies and services, the theories and tools that are used, and the resources available to clients and the public. In turn, members are engaged in the process of defining and redefining the nature of services and the goals and targets of organizations concerned with career services. Thus, social justice is a foundation for supporting clients and the public and for shaping the organizational structures where members deliver career services.

The APCDA Ethical Guidelines are dedicated to supporting members in their practices to enhance the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of those persons whom APCDA members serve. Through joining APCDA, members agree to the conscious and deliberate application of ethical standards of conduct. The Guidelines provide a reference for (a) making decisions and actions as individual practitioners, (b) planning agency policies and services, (c) informing the public of expected standards of professional practices and behavior, (d) providing evaluative criteria for self-assessments, peer evaluation, and supervision to ensure quality standards in service provision, and (e) seeking organizational support for professional development.

The Ethical Guidelines are intended to stimulate the professional development of APCDA members in their ethical behavior, through identifying minimum essentials and aspirational goals for ethical behavior. The Guidelines cannot address every possible ethical conflict that APCDA members experience in their national or cultural contexts. However, the Guidelines can be used to create ethical guidelines in the countries and local regions for which these may be applied and adapted.

<p><i>A. Professional Values and Principles</i></p>	<p>Demonstrate a commitment to ethical behaviour by:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Enhancing career development throughout the life span 2. Safeguarding the integrity of the professional working relationship 3. Practicing in a competent and ethical manner 4. Supporting the worth, dignity, potential, and uniqueness of everyone 5. Honoring diversity and promoting wellness <p>The following professional values provide a conceptual basis for all ethical principles:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Beneficence</i>, or working for the good of the individual and society by promoting mental health and well being • <i>Veracity</i>, or dealing truthfully with individuals with whom career practitioners come into contact • <i>Autonomy</i>, or fostering the right to control the direction of one's life • <i>Objectivity</i>, or treating individuals equitably • <i>Non-maleficence</i>, or avoiding actions that cause harm • <i>Accountability</i>, or honoring commitments and keeping promises, including fulfilling one's responsibilities of trust in professional relationships
<p><i>B. Relationship with Clients</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Overall: Career practitioners take into account: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. the whole person (education, career, personal and social) as they interact in the planning process b. the adjustment to education and training, occupations, and careers c. clients' capacity to fully engage with services and seek additional resources and other experts, to address clients' needs. 2. Respect: Career practitioners accept the primary obligation to mutually respect the dignity of each person to whom career services are provided. This obligation includes acceptance of the rights of the individual to make independent and socially just choices, to take responsibility for decisions reached, to engage in self-direction and self-development, and to preserve confidentiality. 3. Self-awareness of Values: Career practitioners are aware of their own values and attitudes. They avoid imposing their personal values on clients. Members refrain from consciously dictating or coercing client choices, values, lifestyles, plans, or beliefs (e.g., general views on economic life) that represent the worldview of the practitioner or other people, but not the client's worldview. 4. Informed Consent: Career practitioners inform clients, orally or in writing, of the purposes, goals, techniques, policies and ethical guidelines under which career services are provided, conditions in which consultation with other practitioners might occur, and legal or policy constraints which relate to how services are provided. 5. Confidentiality Everything the client discloses is confidential. Career practitioners communicate their intent to maintain confidentiality.

	<p>6. Disclose Limits of Confidentiality: When working with minors and other vulnerable persons there may be laws and policies that pertain to client rights and limits of confidentiality, particularly in case of self-harm and harm to others. Any limits on confidentiality set by others will be discussed with the client before proceeding, supporting the client to choose personal responses to such limits and involvement. Disclosure of confidential information normally requires the client's expressed consent except in cases of self-harm and harm to others.</p> <p>Members are responsible to behave according to laws and policies that pertain to client rights and limits of confidentiality. Career practitioners explain the limits of confidentiality in a culturally competent manner.</p>
	<p>7. Conflict of Interest: Career practitioners avoid conflicts of interests which compromise the best interests of their clients. Where potential conflicts of interests occur, they should be made known to the client as soon as possible, and preferably before commencing services. When they engage concurrently in direct roles with clients such as career counselling and serve as representatives of paid employment exchanges or as paid recruiters or intermediaries for education and training institutions/organizations, they must disclose these potential conflicts of interest.</p>
	<p>8. Self-Representation: Career practitioners, in representing their professional competencies, training and experience to individual clients as well as to organizations for which consultation is requested, provide information that is true, clear, accurate, current, and relevant and does not include false or deceptive statements or materials.</p>
	<p>9. Scope of Practice: Career practitioners function within the scope of practice relative to their education, training and experience. Career practitioners make appropriate referral when their professional assistance cannot be provided or continued, or when services requested are beyond the scope of practice or level of competence which the APCDA member is qualified to provide.</p>
	<p>10. Fees: Career practitioners who work as independent practitioners are transparent about their professional fees and other costs for services, e.g., assessment material. Members structure their fees to provide reasonable access to services and/or provide appropriate referrals. In providing independent services, members respect intellectual property, brands, and patents on the use of material for commercial purposes. Seeking fees for services does not outweigh the responsibilities for practitioners to work within their qualified scope of practice.</p>
	<p>11. Social Responsibility: Career practitioners demonstrate social responsibility for increasing access to vocational and guidance services, and for providing relevant and beneficial professional services. In striving for social equality, members recognize the responsibility to promote equitable opportunities in career services without prejudice to persons, including diversity on dimensions such as social class, educational background, age, gender, race/ethnicity, religious beliefs, differently-able, sexual orientation, and their intersections.</p>

<p><i>C. Attitudes toward Professional Associates</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>1. Cooperation: Career practitioners proactively develop and maintain cooperative and collaborative relationships with professional associates and administrators in order to facilitate the provision of quality career services.</p> <p>Career practitioners are respectful of traditions and practices of other professional groups with which they work.</p> <p>Career practitioners make full use of the resources provided by other professionals to best serve the needs of the client, including professional, technical, or administrative resources.</p> <p>2. Explaining Ethical Standards: Career practitioners inform others (such as administrators, colleagues, clients, students, employers, and third-party sources) about the APCDA Ethical Guidelines and relevant laws as they apply to the provision of career services. Topics such as confidentiality and privacy guidelines may need frequent explanation. When appropriate, they explain mechanisms for dealing with violations of the Code of Ethics or laws which may be perceived to have taken place.</p> <p>3. Sharing Information: Career practitioners provide professional colleagues and administrators with accurate, objective, concise and relevant information about the needs of the clientele they serve and the public, while respecting confidentiality. Members also provide data that may be used in the evaluation and presentation of outcomes related to service provision.</p> <p>Case discussion should respect the personal data privacy rights of the client by sharing information strictly on need to know basis and caution should be taken not to disclose unnecessary identifying details.</p> <p>4. Implementing Ethical Practices: Career practitioners cooperate with their professional colleagues in implementing the Ethical Guidelines in the procedures and practices of their work setting. When concerns arise as to the ethical behavior of professional colleagues, whether career practitioners or not, the member should discuss such concerns with the colleague or/and use available institutional channels, such as agency administrators, local or national associations, to address the concerns and remedy potential harm to clients, agency, or the public.</p>
<p><i>D. Behaviours Toward Government, Employers, Community Agencies, and Community Members</i></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <p>1. Official Policies: Career practitioners familiarize themselves with current relevant national and regional policies for education, training, employment, social inclusion, which provide the context for their work.</p> <p>2. Community Liaison: Career practitioners are encouraged to liaise proactively with parents, community elders and leaders, and other representatives of local populations who may have a significant influence on career choices and service access.</p>

	<p>3. Advocacy: Career practitioners identify the needs of clients and the public to overcome structural and social barriers to accessing relevant, timely, and equitable service provision. Members use their knowledge to advocate for career services and policies that are ethical and relevant to client needs in cooperation with policymakers, legislators, and/or the administrative personnel of publicly and privately funded organizations.</p>
	<p>4. Taking a Stand: Career practitioners insist that professional guidance entails more than providing information and/or job placement activities and services. Members take a stand, individually and collectively, on public policies that pose barriers for their clients and the public, and that limit their capacity to deliver high quality services.</p>
	<p>5. Educating the public: Career practitioners support their professional associations in efforts to educate and inform administrators, legislators, members of other organizations, and the public, of the accepted qualifications and training expectations of competent practitioners of career services.</p>
	<p>6. Workplace Balance: Career practitioners engage employers to work collaboratively in the development of workplaces that invest in training, provide respectful and safe conditions, and offer opportunities for enhancing the career development of employees. While recognizing employers' needs for flexibility, employees also need workplace conditions that provide security and meaningful work.</p>
<i>E. Responsibilities to Theory and Research</i>	<p>1. Ethical Research: Career practitioners participate in research and report findings using procedures that are consistent with the accepted ethical and scientific standards of educational and psychological research practices. When client data are used for statistical, evaluative, research or program planning purposes, the APCDA member ensures the confidentiality of the identity of individual clients and seeks client permission for use of such data.</p>
	<p>2. Theoretical Implications of Research: Career practitioners use their knowledge to inform theory and its applicability to clients and the public. Such knowledge can also be used to inform relevant research directed at improving conditions in the lives of clients and the public.</p>
	<p>3. Purpose of Research: Career practitioners strive to conduct research in ways that inform individuals, groups, and personnel within organizations who have participated in the research, with the intention of contributing to their understanding of the research results and ways that the results can be applied.</p>
	<p>4. Disseminating Research: Career practitioners share in the improvement of career services by mobilizing research knowledge and dissemination to colleagues, professional associations, policymakers, organizations, and society at large.</p>

<i>F. Responsibilities for Professional Learning and Development</i>	<p>1. Updating Skills: Career practitioners obtain the initial career services training and maintain a process of continuous professional development and learning to be a qualified and competent practitioner.</p>
	<p>2. Professional Affiliations: Career practitioners seek opportunities to support their individual professional development and participate in networks that influence the topics and resources available for professional development.</p>
	<p>3. Professional Reflection: Career practitioners continue to reflect in their practice both the humanistic principles that underlie ethical behavior as well as attention to the changing social and political contexts that have ethical implications for practice. Reflections may include questions and discussions about the nature of our work; who are our clientele (students, parents, workers, employers, society as a whole); and what are the ethical issues of importance in these relationships? How do different forms of intervention (individual counselling, group work, technology-assisted programs, and consultation with management on behalf of workers) differ in ethical concerns? How should career services ethically respond to the global tensions between economic and environmental issues in the working lives and workplaces of clients? How can practitioners actively address issues of equity, social justice, and sustainable careers? What is our role in supporting individuals and families while also supporting the sustainability of systems and economic structures in society?</p>
	<p>4. Professional Growth: Career practitioners are responsible for monitoring and maintaining their professional competencies and for ensuring that they are able to provide competent services to diverse clientele, taking into account people’s cultural contexts, effectively using contemporary assessment processes, theories, intervention techniques, and technology and social media resources. Career practitioners strive to be current with innovations and trends in the local and global contexts of career services and counseling and do so with a commitment to addressing social inequities.</p>
<i>G. Responsibility for Assessment and Interpretation</i>	<p>1. Use of Assessment: Career practitioners use and follow relevant standards to select and administer assessments and provide interpretation of results.</p>
	<p>2. Explanation of Results Career practitioners explain the content, purposes, and results of tests in language that is understandable to clients. Career practitioners consider the cultural context when interpreting results.</p>
	<p>3. Online Assessments When using online assessments career practitioners recognize that emerging techniques require background training and staying up to date with the professional literature.</p>

<i>H. Responsibility for Using Technology, Online Tools, and Social Networking</i>	<p>1. Using Technology Career practitioners actively attempt to understand the evolving use of technology, online career services, and social media to provide career services, and how such resources may be used to better serve their clients.</p>
	<p>2. Staying Up to Date with Technology Career practitioners recognize that periodic training is needed to develop necessary technical and professional competencies.</p>
	<p>3. Ethical Issues of Technology Career practitioners understand the additional concerns related to providing career services online and using technology and/or social media, and make every attempt to protect confidentiality and data security, and meet any legal and ethical requirements for the use of such resources.</p>
<i>I. Professional Consultation (Clinical Supervision)</i>	<p>1. Professional Consultation (Clinical Supervision): Professional consultation or clinical supervision addresses staff professional development and quality assurance but does not include staff performance appraisal. It can be internal or external.</p>
	<p>2. Seeking Supervision Partners: Career practitioners seek and participate in regular supervision through which to understanding complex cases, increase their knowledge and skills, and develop goals for continuous life-long learning.</p>
	<p>3. Providing Consultation to Colleagues: Career practitioners are encouraged to provide supervision to their colleagues. Peer-to-peer supervision is encouraged in contexts where formal supervision arrangements are not available. Prior to offering supervision, career practitioners seek training in clinical supervision methods and techniques.</p>
<i>J. Resolving Ethical Issues</i>	<p>Resolving Issues: Members, in cases where ethical issues are unclear or ambiguous, will consult in a confidential manner with a local professional association or colleagues to attempt to clarify the issue or develop strategies to rectify the conditions that caused the problem. Failing that possibility, practitioners should directly contact either the APCDA President or APCDA Ethics Committee to seek clarification, advice, or to raise a query of professional ethics.</p>