

HFESNZ Professional Members - Code of Conduct

This code is based on the International Ergonomics Association's (IEA) 'Code of Conduct for Ergonomists' (July 2006). The fundamental ethical principles of this code are:

- Beneficence – do good
- Veracity – truthfulness and integrity
- Autonomy – respect for persons
- Justice – fairness

All HFESNZ Professional Members must abide by this Code of Conduct.

Professional Conduct

In the conduct of their profession, human factors professionals/ergonomists shall:

1. Maintain at all times personal and professional integrity, objectivity and respect for evidence.
2. Not lay false claim to educational qualifications, professional affiliations, characteristics or capacities for themselves or their organisations.
3. Refrain from making misleading, exaggerated or unjustified claims for the effectiveness of their methods, and they shall not advertise services in a way likely to encourage unrealistic expectations about the effectiveness and results of those services.
4. Limit their practice to those areas of ergonomics for which they are qualified by virtue of training and/or experience, and endeavour to maintain and develop their professional competence. Any work taken outside the competence must be conducted only with proper professional supervision or they shall give every reasonable assistance towards obtaining the required services from those qualified to provide them.
5. Always value the welfare of all persons affected by their work, protecting the privacy of individuals and organisations and follow ethical principles when conducting or reporting on research involving human participants.
6. Not use race, ethnicity, disability, gender, sexual preference, age, religion, or national origin as a consideration in hiring, promoting, or training in any situation where such consideration is irrelevant.
7. Avoid all situations that contain elements of conflict of interest, and provide full disclosure of those conflicts to all potentially affected parties.
8. Take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information acquired through their professional practice and to protect the privacy of individuals or organisations about whom the information was collected or held. Furthermore, they shall not divulge the identity of individuals or organizations without permission from those concerned.
9. Neither solicit nor accept financial or material benefit from those receiving their services beyond what was contractually agreed. Furthermore, they shall not accept such rewards from more than one source for the same work without the consent of all parties concerned.
10. When becoming aware of professional misconduct by a colleague, that is not resolved by discussion with the colleague concerned, they shall take steps to bring that misconduct to the attention of appropriate authorities in the professional organisations to which they belong.
11. Take all reasonable steps to ensure that those working under their supervision act with full compliance to this code of conduct.
12. Endeavour to promote the cause of ergonomics and disseminate new knowledge toward the benefit of humankind individually and collectively.
13. Show an impeccable regard for the social, cultural and moral expectations of the community in which they work.
14. Not use their position as a teacher, a granting of contracting official, an employer or an employee, or any other position of influence, to coerce or harass others.
15. Present their educational background in detail where a brief summary statement of qualifications would be deceptive or misleading. Furthermore, they shall not allow their names to be used in connection with their services in such a way as to misrepresent the nature and efficiency of their services. When such a misrepresentation has occurred, the members should do everything to correct the situation as soon as they become aware.
16. Hold the safety of the person, property, and health of individuals potentially affected by their work of paramount importance.
17. Restrict criticism to professional issues and refrain from personal censure.

Conduct of Research

All human factors professionals/ergonomists shall comply with the Geneva Convention and Helsinki Accord in treating both human and animal subjects, in addition to obeying national and local laws and regulations, as well as generally accepted procedures within the scientific community. In particular, human factors professionals/ergonomists shall:

1. Where there is any potential for harm, seek and act on guidance from a competent ethics advisor or committee.
2. Identify all potential sources or causes of harm in the research they are conducting. These hazards must then be effectively managed, including compliance with any requirements of the ethics advisor, to ensure that the risk of harm to participants is minimised.
3. Ensure that participants are fully informed of the outcome of the risk assessment and of any requirements identified by the independent ethics advisor before seeking informed consent.
4. Obtain prior written informed consent from human participants. Information must be provided in writing and orally to human participants in plain and clear language indicating the terms of participation, particularly about any hazards involved. Occasionally there may be exceptions in which the human participant is not able to consent. In such cases prior informed consent should be obtained from a person with (preferably legal) responsibility for the participant.
5. Empower human participants to terminate their involvement in the research at any time without prejudice.
6. Terminate any research process or experiment immediately if the participant's exposure to hazards exceeds commonly accepted thresholds. Further, if necessary, medical treatment must be provided.
7. Keep the identity of human participants confidential unless permission is obtained from the participants.
8. Not coerce any potential human research subject to participate as a subject in a research project, nor use undue monetary reward to induce subjects to take risks they would not otherwise take.
9. Ensure these ethical guidelines are followed by their collaborators, assistants, students, and employees.

Reporting of Research

In pursuit of their profession, human factors professionals/ergonomists who are engaged in research and scholarly activities have an obligation to report their work to the scientific community. In particular, human factors professionals/ergonomists shall:

1. Ensure the integrity and accuracy of the data recorded before reporting results and conclusions to the scientific community.
2. Maintain the highest degree of objectivity when they are reviewing or editing works of other colleagues, In particular, they must ensure that their objectivity is not impaired by their own views even if the data and the reported results conflict with their own previously published work.
3. Identify original sources (i.e. not plagiarise) and give credit to those who have contributed on a professional level to the work.
4. Pay special attention to communication of research findings so as to facilitate their practical application.