

Code of Conduct

1. Purpose and Scope

This Code of Conduct outlines the behaviours expected of all fellows of the Royal Statistical Society (RSS) in order to maintain public trust. It is informed by the values and principles set out in the Charter and delivers responsibilities set out in Byelaw 23. It was formally approved by Council in November 2025.

This Code supports the Society's mission to advance the science and application of statistics for the public good.

The Code is not exhaustive, and it is not possible to anticipate every situation Fellows may encounter. Fellows are expected to exercise their professional judgement and common sense, guided by the principles of this Code, in regulating their conduct and decision-making. The word statistics is used in this code to include data science and related professional areas.

2. The Public Interest

2.1 Fellows should uphold the public good as a guiding principle in the application and communication of statistics.

2.2 Fellows should give due consideration to public health, privacy, safety, the wellbeing of others, and the environment. These responsibilities take precedence over obligations to employers, clients, or the profession.

2.3 Fellows should ensure they have the appropriate knowledge within their field and adhere to all relevant legislation, regulations, codes, and standards.

2.4 Fellows should treat all individuals with dignity, respect and without discrimination. Professional activities should be conducted without bias or prejudice on the grounds of age, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, disability, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation.

3. Professional Conduct

3.1 Fellows should uphold the integrity and reputation of the profession, and must avoid any conduct that could bring it into disrepute.

They should:

- Seek to advance the knowledge and understanding of statistics and data science and advocate for its use.
- Ensure that statistical methods and results are presented accurately, clearly, and without misrepresentation.
- Take personal responsibility for work bearing their name and ensure that authorship accurately reflects their contributions.

- Ensure that, when using AI for statistical purposes, models are trained on appropriate representative data, biases are assessed, results are validated, and findings are communicated transparently.
- Ensure that professional judgement is impartial and not compromised, or perceived to be compromised, by bias or undue influence from others.
- Disclose any conflict of interest to employer, client, or other relevant stakeholders as soon as they arise.
- Advocate the value of qualified statistical advice, encouraging others to seek advice from appropriately trained professionals.
- Make public statements in a personal capacity only when appropriately qualified to do so, ensuring accuracy and credibility.
- Avoid making false or misleading statements which could harm the reputation of the profession and by implication the Society.

3.2 Fellows should foster professional relationships with fellow statisticians, data scientists and members of other professions based on mutual confidence, trust, respect and integrity.

They should:

- Maintain a respectful and collegial environment, raising concerns about another professional's competence only when there is a compelling and well-founded reason.
- Respect and acknowledge the intellectual property of others, and adhere to the relevant codes of practice across professions.

4. Obligation to Employers and Clients

4.1 Fellows should carry out work with due care and diligence in accordance with the requirements of the employer or client.

4.2 Fellows should respect any agreements of confidentiality entered into with an employer or client.

4.3 Fellows should not allow their name to be attributed to work that they have not contributed to or which presents their contribution in a misleading way.

4.4 Fellows should indicate risks and possible consequences if their professional judgement is overruled.

4.5 Fellows facing circumstances that compromise their ability to act professionally should:

- notify their employer of the circumstances in writing, if salaried
- notify their client of the circumstances in writing and consider disengagement from the work if appropriate.

4.6 Fellows should raise concerns when they reasonably believe that wrongdoing has occurred, is occurring, or is likely to occur. Whistleblowing should be considered when suspected misconduct, unethical behaviour, health and safety risks or violations of laws or regulations.

5. Responsibilities to the Society

5.1 Fellows should uphold and promote the reputation of the Society. They should:

- Comply with the Charter, Bylaws, and Regulations of the RSS.
- Pay membership and registration fees in a timely manner.
- Participate in Society activities, including elections, meetings, and events, in good faith and with integrity.
- Avoid making false or misleading statements, and actively counter such statements when they may harm the Society's reputation.
- Speak on behalf of the RSS, its Council, or committees only with formal authorisation from Council.
- Support and advance the Society's objectives as set out in the Charter.

6. Personal Integrity

6.1 Fellows should model high standards of personal integrity, acting in ways that uphold the values, reputation and standards of the profession. This applies to colleagues, other Fellows, other professionals in related fields, and RSS employees.

6.2 Fellows should act with honesty and integrity in all aspects of their professional and academic life. They should:

- Offer work or service only within their area of professional competence.
- Accept responsibility for their own work and for the work of colleagues under their supervision.
- Accurately represent their qualifications and membership status of the RSS.
- Provide professional opinions that are objective, reliable and free from bias.

6.3 Fellows should uphold professionalism and high standards of conduct in all forms of communication whether professional and personal, including emails and online activities (including social media).

6.4 Fellows must not engage in corrupt or illegal activity. They must report to the Society:

- Any unspent criminal convictions against them.
- If they are disqualified as a company director.

6.5 Fellows should take appropriate action to prevent breaches of this Code by other Fellows. If they become aware of a potential breach, it must be reported to the RSS (see section 7).

6.6 Fellows are expected to cooperate fully with the RSS Disciplinary Procedure or Complaint Procedure when requested.

7. Reporting Suspected Breaches of the Code of Conduct

Fellows of the RSS are required to report any suspected breaches of the Code of Conduct. Reports may also be submitted by individuals who are not members of the Society.

All reports will be handled in accordance with the RSS Disciplinary Procedure.

If you wish to raise a concern, please submit it in writing to either the Director of Professional Services or the Vice President for Professional Affairs at professionalaffairs@rss.org.uk.

8. General Enquiries and Requests for Advice

The Professional Affairs Committee is able to provide confidential and personal advice on the Code of Conduct and other professional matters including where an individual feels their ability to act professionally is compromised by circumstances. Enquiries can be directed to pa@rss.org.uk.

Version control

Author / Reviewer	Date	Version	Revisions
Stella Macaskill, Director of Professional Services	19 11 2025	0.1	

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