

# **Y Pwyllgor Safonau Ymddygiad/ Standards of Conduct Committee SoC(5)-06-17 PTN2**

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## **Code of Conduct for Public Affairs Cymru**

### **Mission Statement of Public Affairs Cymru**

Established in October 2006 Public Affairs Cymru (PAC) is a membership organisation for public affairs professionals in Wales. Members come from a wide variety of backgrounds – commercial public affairs agencies, PR companies, the voluntary sector, trade associations, advocacy groups and professional bodies who all share a common desire to ensure that public affairs and lobbying activities are undertaken professionally and responsibly.

Public Affairs Cymru recognises that lobbying and public affairs activity is an entirely legitimate and a vital part of Welsh democracy and its members are committed to:

- Safeguarding the reputation of the public affairs profession;
- Encouraging best practice amongst public affairs professionals;
- Promoting wherever possible the work of public affairs professionals operating in Wales

## **The Code of Professional Conduct**

For the purposes of this Code of Professional Conduct, lobbying is defined as: “All activity associated with representing the interests of a client, employer or organisation as regards any matter of public policy. This includes the provision of information and advice, as well as the actual advocacy of a point of view.”

All members of PAC are expected to behave in accordance with this Code and to ensure that they meet all its provisions in their professional activity. The most important benefit attached to compliance with the terms of the Code of Professional Conduct is that the lobbying/government relations/public affairs profession in Wales will both be professional and ethical, and seen by others as being professional and ethical. That is of inestimable value to all practitioners, in whose interest it is that policy makers and the public alike perceive their profession as reputable, legitimate and of a high standard.



From May 2017 PAC has created a new membership system whereby every member of PAC, both Full members and Associate members, must sign the Code on an annual basis as part of the joining process with individuals signing a copy of the Code when they become a member of PAC. A full list of PAC members will be published on the PAC website. PAC undertakes to review the Code on an annual basis at our Annual General Meeting.

Full members of PAC (not associate members) are expected to comply by the following standards of Professional Conduct:

1. Members of PAC are expected to take care to ensure that none of their professional activities or behaviour causes, or has the potential to cause, damage to the reputation of PAC itself or to their profession more generally.
2. Members are expected to deal with clients, employers, organisations and all the institutions of government honestly, transparently and with integrity.
3. Members are expected to take reasonable steps to establish that information supplied by them to clients, employers and organisations or to public office-holders and press is factually accurate and honest. Members are expected to not knowingly mislead elected public office holders, their staff or officials.
4. Members are expected to observe a positive duty in all their professional dealings to disclose the identity of their client, employer or organisation and to be open in providing other information when requested (within the normal boundaries of commercial confidentiality). Any PAC member which routinely sells public affairs commercial services (excepting trade or representatives bodies) will lodge a publicly available list of clients with PAC.
5. Members are expected to advise their client, employer or organisation if they believe that the objectives or activities of their client, employer or organisation may be unethical, illegal or contrary to good professional practice and not to take action to further such objectives or activities.
6. Members are expected to ensure that any financial relationships involved in their professional dealings could not reasonably be construed as being potentially illegal or dishonest.
7. Members are expected to provide information on the cost and value of hospitality provided to public office-holders if the public office-holders concerned request such information.
8. Members are expected to take care to keep entirely separate, and to be seen to do so, their professional activities and responsibilities and their personal and individual membership of, and involvement in, political parties, pressure groups, related organisations and other political causes.
9. Members are expected to neither hold nor seek to obtain permanent passes which confer entitlement to access (or other privileges) to elected public office holders, their staff or officials for use. No Full member of PAC is allowed to hold a pass to the Assembly in any capacity.



10. Members are expected, while in the National Assembly for Wales, Welsh Government or any other parliamentary or governmental building to observe the rules and procedures of that institution. Any PAC member which routinely sells public affairs commercial services will respect the National Assembly as an institution and undertake not to use the Assembly estate as a marketing initiative either by direct company marketing or attending events speculatively with the purpose of attracting new clients.

11. In relation to the process of drafting manifestos, members will not exploit their roles within a political party, nor indeed their membership of a political party, to seek advantage for those for whom they lobby or represent professionally.