

CODE OF CONDUCT – ISEAA

1. ISEAA Objectives

The objectives of the International Student Education Agents Association (ISEAA) are:

- To represent the interests of its members to:
 - Potential students overseas, and sources of these students
 - Australian and other Government agencies
 - Educational bodies in Australia and overseas
 - Media and other interested parties in Australia and internationally
- To promote Australian education services and society internationally
- To promote high standards of ethical behaviour throughout its membership by:
 - Abiding by the ESOS Act¹ covering education agents and the Australia International Education and Training Agent Code of Ethics² (ACE)
 - Publication and distribution of a Code of Conduct
 - Development and distribution of training materials for agents
- To act as a forum for the interchange of ideas and information within the membership and between members and other stakeholders
- To organise and / or participate in events and other initiatives which jointly promote the interests of all members
- To develop and distribute resources of interest and benefit to all members

2. To whom does this Code apply?

¹ <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/Regulatory-Information/Education-Services-for-Overseas-Students-ESOS-Legislative-Framework/National-Code/Pages/default.aspx>

² <https://internationaleducation.gov.au/News/LatestNews/Documents/Australian%20International%20Education%20and%20Training%20-%20Agent%20Code%20of%20Ethics.pdf>

This Code of Conduct applies to Members of the International Student Education Agents Association (ISEAA). Every Member of the Association is expected to to comply with this Code and the ACE, and to take all reasonable steps to ensure that their associates and employees are aware of and comply with the Code and the ACE.

3. The Aims and Objectives of this Code

This Code applies to business conducted by Members with students, educational bodies, governments and regulators, fellow Members, and other stakeholders. It also applies to the obligations of Members under the Constitution of the Association.

This Code aims to:

- a) promote the highest standards of ethics and conduct by Members;
- b) establish a simple and effective complaints handling and disputes resolution procedure, with appropriate sanctions for breaches of this Code;
- c) through responsible self-regulation, complement and enhance existing laws and codes governing Members; and
- d) strengthen the competitive position of Members of the Association by assuring all stakeholders that they have the right to expect the highest standards at all times.

All Members of the Association have agreed to be bound by this Code, under which they shall at all times conduct their business so as to:

- a) provide services with competence, fairness, value, honesty and integrity;
- b) ensure that all services they provide are delivered as advertised, and that all claims made are genuine;
- c) use their best endeavours to ensure compliance with the Code by all partners, associates, employees and contractors, to the extent that the Code applies to them; and
- d) avoid any action which might bring the Association and its Members into disrepute.

4. Relations Between Members

Members believe that the success of individual Members benefits the Association as an industry body and that this, in turn, aids each Member who can then represent themselves as part of a strong and reputable industry Association. Therefore, Members shall:

- a) seek to promote the goals of the Association by adhering to the principles in this Code and providing mutual support and assistance to other Members bound by this Code; and

- b) at all times conduct their business in free and fair competition, and refrain from making any misleading or untrue statements about other Members.

5. Ethical Standards

Members of the Association undertake to:

- a) abide by the International Education and Training Agent Code of Ethics under the ESOS Act (ACE);
- b) conduct their activities in a professional and competent manner with respect for the public interest, maintaining the privacy and confidentiality of their dealings, and at all times acting with integrity when dealing with clients and employees, past and present, with their fellow Members and with other stakeholders such as governments or regulators;
- c) not intentionally disseminate false or misleading information, whether written, spoken or implied, nor engage in false, misleading or deceptive conduct or otherwise bring the Association, its Members or the industry into disrepute;
- d) maintain truth, accuracy and good taste in advertising and sales promotion;
- e) refrain from knowingly associating with any enterprise, which uses improper or illegal methods for obtaining business;
- f) not intentionally injure the professional reputation or practice of another Member;
- g) comply with all applicable State and Federal legislation covering providers of immigration services, including but not limited to matters relating to consumer laws, work health and safety and workplace relations laws;
- h) help to improve the body of knowledge of the profession by exchanging information and experience with fellow Members, participating in industry related programs designed to raise the standard of service delivery, and by applying their special skill and training for the benefit of others;
- i) refrain from using their relationship with the Association in such a manner as to state or imply an official accreditation or approval beyond the scope of membership of the Association and its aims, rules and policies;
- j) cooperate with fellow Members in upholding and enforcing this Code Conduct; and
- k) have in place procedures to deal appropriately and promptly with complaints about the provision of their services and actively engage in the resolution of complaints raised via the Complaints procedure outlined below.

6. Best Practice

The Association may from time-to-time publish for the guidance of its Members details of what it considers to be appropriate standards of conduct, service, and ethical dealing in particular areas, and it is expected that all members will use their best efforts to implement these standards as appropriate to their own businesses.

7. Complaints and Non-compliance

- a) Any consumer, Member or other person who believes they have a complaint against a Member in connection with their conduct under this Code may ask the Association to deal with the complaint. Where a complaint relates to a matter which is subject to current or pending proceedings involving the Member before a court or tribunal, or a licensing or other regulatory or disciplinary authority, the Association will await the decision of that court, tribunal or authority before taking any further action to resolve the complaint. The Association is not a court and must respect the decisions of such bodies, nor will it attempt to anticipate what might be decided.
- b) Once it is satisfied that the complaint is a genuine one, and is not trivial or vexatious, the Association shall attempt to resolve the complaint informally, including by reference to independent mediation if appropriate.
- c) If the Association is unable to resolve the complaint informally, it shall refer the complaint to an independent Complaints Committee, to be appointed under the association's Constitution, for decision.
- d) The Committee shall conduct its proceedings in a fair and proper manner and in accordance with the principles of natural justice, giving all parties ample opportunity to present their points of view and to respond to the points of view of other parties. The Complaints Committee shall decide all matters referred to it in accordance with the principles of equity and good conscience, but is not bound by the rules of evidence.
- e) The Complaints Committee, if it finds that a Member is in breach of this Code, may take disciplinary action against the Member, including cautioning, reprimanding, suspending, obtaining undertakings in relation to future conduct or recommending that the Board of the Association terminate the membership of the Member.

8. Code Administration

This Code is administered by the Board of the Association, subject to the Constitution of the Association and any By-laws made under that Constitution from time to time. The Board shall:

- a) develop and distribute logos and other materials which will allow Members to identify themselves as members of the Association and provide suitable materials for Members to use in promoting the Association, its objectives and its benefits;
- b) keep this Code under review to ensure that it is achieving its stated objectives;
- c) if necessary, and after due consultation with interested bodies, implement any changes to this Code which appear desirable;
- d) provide guidance and assistance to Members in developing appropriate internal mechanisms to facilitate continuous compliance with this Code;
- e) make every effort to ensure that the benefits and obligations of this Code are known as widely as possible, both among its Members and their staff, and with the public generally; and
- f) cooperate with other bodies, including the ACCC and Departments of Fair Trading and other appropriate Government or regulatory agencies, in dealing with matters arising under this Code.