



Code of Practice for Trade Associations

This Code of Practice for Trade Associations has been developed by the Trade Association Forum. The Code builds on the *Best Practice Guide for Trade Associations*, published in 2006. It sets out the ethical and other standards that a modern Trade Association should apply and the nature of the services it should provide. Members of the Forum are expected to accept the Code as a condition of their membership.

July 2009

Introduction

The Trade Association Forum already helps member trade associations to raise the quality of their work by identifying and developing best practice and enabling the sharing of information and experience among members.

One element in best practice is a code of practice, and this document is intended to help those associations that do not already have such a code, or would like to test an existing code against a TAF model.

We believe that in addition to helping member associations to demonstrate best practice to their stakeholders, adoption of a code of practice by the Trade Association Forum will also demonstrate to our wider stakeholders (Government, Parliament, regulatory bodies and others) that we are prepared to set standards for the quality of our work, and be judged by them. We believe that this will enhance the credibility of the Forum in seeking to influence policy in the UK, in Europe and elsewhere.

The Code

Ethics

- TAF Members will offer services honestly and honourably, and expect our member companies and stakeholders to do the same. Our advice, strategic planning and the methods we use will take proper account of ethical considerations, together with the protection and enhancement of the moral and legal position of our member companies and other stakeholders.

Confidentiality

- We are committed to maintaining the highest degree of integrity in all our dealings with potential, current and past members as well as other stakeholders. We will always maintain commercial confidentiality, and also protect all personal information received in the course of providing business services. Where we lobby on behalf of a business sector, the identity of interested individual companies will not be revealed.

Legitimacy

- TAF members will always try to represent the common interests of all companies operating in a specific sector, and avoid promoting the interests of a narrow section of membership if this will prejudice the interests of others. Where there is diverging opinion, TAF members should be prepared to present a balanced case (eg to Government), respecting the different interests involved. Where appropriate we will work with non-members and other associations in allied sectors on matters of joint concern.

Competitiveness

- TAF members will promote co-operation within the sector or sectors in which we work, and between the sectors, its customers and suppliers, to enhance competitiveness. In doing this, they will seek to identify and apply best practice.

Conflicts of Interest

- We recognise that our member companies may be direct competitors. We will avoid showing favour to one member company over another. Where it is desirable to offer a selection of companies that are geographically and sectorally qualified to take on work, the selection will be generated either randomly or by geographical region as appropriate.

Contracts

- Where TAF members undertake contract work they will avoid competing with member companies.

Payment

- TAF members will pay their bills promptly, and expect the same of their members and suppliers.

Quality Assurance

- TAF members endeavour to maintain the quality of our work through constant review of our aims, activities and outcomes, and the cost-effectiveness of every activity. Where there is a positive cost/benefit analysis, members will seek accreditation under a recognised quality assurance scheme.

Equality and Discrimination

- We always strive to be fair and objective in our advice and actions, and we are never influenced in our decisions, actions, recommendations or dealings with our own staff, by gender, race, creed, colour, age, personal disability; or by anything else that may create unlawful discrimination.

Signed By: Date:
(Chief Executive /Chairman/President)

Printed Name:

Organisation: