

RGS-IBG code of conduct

Introduction

The Society exists to advance geographical science and in doing so fosters a supportive and inclusive community of professional and enthusiast geographers.

The Society's code of conduct sets out the principles of behaviour that govern all Fellows and members, staff, and anyone who participates in any Society event or activity. Any contractors working at or on behalf of the Society are also expected to abide by the principles outlined below.

This code of conduct exists in addition to several other activity-specific codes of conduct within the Society. These include those for:

- [Chartered Geographers](#)
- [Attendees at our annual conference](#)
- [Grant applicants and grant reviewers](#)
- Geography Ambassadors

Guiding principles

The Society is an organisation that allows geography and geographers from the breadth of the discipline to flourish through respectful, inclusive and equitable treatment of others.

All Fellows and members, staff and those participating in any Society events or activities are required to:

- Act in a manner worthy of the profession of geography and the reputation of the Society
- Behave professionally and with integrity
- Comply with all applicable legal requirements
- Ensure that their activities do not risk the health, safety or welfare of any person
- Treat everyone equally and with respect
- Listen to others' views and engage constructively with them
- Be committed to helping each other and to be kind

Discrimination, harassment, bullying and behaviours that are patronising have no place at the Society and will not be tolerated. This applies to electronic forms of communication as well as personal interactions (physical, verbal and non-verbal).

Definitions

Harassment includes but is not limited to offensive verbal or written comments related to gender, age, sexual orientation, disability, physical appearance, body size, race or religion, sexual images in public spaces, deliberate intimidation, stalking, following, unwanted photography or recording, sustained disruption of talks or other events, inappropriate physical contact, and unwelcome sexual attention.



Code of conduct panel

The Society's code of conduct panel comprises two senior members of Society staff and two members of Council. Before reviewing any allegation, all members of the panel will verify that there are no conflicts of interest.

The panel will first determine if the allegations raised are mistaken, frivolous, and/or malicious. They will then determine if the complaints are within the scope of the Society's code of conduct.

If the allegations are not assessed to be mistaken, frivolous, and/or malicious, but fall outside the scope of the Society's code of conduct, then the Panel may opt to notify the employer or place of study of the Respondent. This option will proceed on a case-by-case basis.

If the panel determines the allegations are not mistaken, frivolous, and/or malicious, and that they fall within the scope of the Society's code of conduct, they will progress the case to a full investigation. The Respondent will be notified of the complaint and will be allowed to provide an anonymised response to the allegation(s). Witness statements may be solicited from the Respondent and Complainant.

The panel will conclude, based on the evidence, whether allegations of misconduct are: (i) upheld in full, (ii) upheld in part, or (iii) not upheld. The standard of proof used is that of 'on the balance of probabilities'.

The panel will recommend if the matter requires disciplinary action, including expulsion from the Society.

If a complaint is upheld, Respondents have a right of appeal, which should be directed to the President of the Society. The President will then convene an Appeal Panel, drawn from the Council and Fellowship and not containing any member of the original panel, to review the case under the same conditions as the original panel.

Sanctions

If there is cause, the Director may issue a warning to the Respondent.

If appropriate, the Director may send the report of the allegation to the Respondent's place of employment or study.

In many cases of minor to moderate misconduct the Society would normally seek to facilitate training and education and/or arbitration between the Complainant and Respondent.

In more severe cases, sanctions could include expulsion of Fellows/members from the Society and/or a ban on involvement in Society events and activities.

Sanctions for Society staff (including the Director) will be as laid out in the Disciplinary Policy in the Staff Handbook and the ultimate sanction is dismissal.

If allegations are vexatious or malicious, they will be dealt with as breaches of the code of conduct.