

CODE OF ETHICS



apcer

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1 MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

APCER's success is based on the daily trust placed in its quality and service excellence by various stakeholders, including customers, employees, and partners. It is this trust that, since 1996, has allowed APCER to continue and expand its activities and thus fulfil its mission, which is to provide society with competence and confidence.

To further cement this trust and thus achieve APCER's vision - to be recognised as a trustworthy company that operates throughout the world - it is necessary to promote a high degree of awareness of our ethical requirements at the individual level, which justifies this consolidation of the main standards of ethical conduct derived from the values and principles of action by which we operate.

Our values are represented by the following figure:



From these values we can draw the following guiding principles for our actions:

- ▶ To act in a professional, responsible, honest and committed manner for the benefit of our customers, employees and partners, always aiming for performance excellence;
- ▶ To fully comply with the legal instruments applicable to our professional practice, including international conventions and treaties, laws, regulations and other normative acts;
- ▶ To respect the commitments we undertake;
- ▶ To take responsibility for our actions.

2 OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

This Code of Ethics, serves to reinforce our commitment to providing economic and social value that is sustainable and in harmony with ethical principles. In a context where the workplace is increasingly demanding, complex and global, with challenging situations and difficult decisions to be made, the Code of Ethics calls each of us to act at all times according to the criteria of integrity and professionalism in compliance with APCER's values. It is important to note that, despite its scope, this Code of Ethics does not (and cannot) cover all possible situations that may arise. It is expected that those addressed here will be guided by the values and principles referred to above, even in cases not expressly mentioned.

Simultaneously with this Code of Ethics the Regulation of APCER's Ethics Commission is also written. This Regulation creates APCER's Ethics Commission and establishes the rules of its operation. In order for all recipients, as well as other stakeholders (e.g., Customers, business partners, local communities, public authorities and regulatory bodies, etc.), to have knowledge of the existing rules, this Code will be widely disseminated through the APCER website.

The Code of Ethics applies to APCER (this term covers the non-profit association APCER - Portuguese Certification Association - and its subsidiaries), to the members of its bodies, including the Board of Directors and any committees, its employees - in particular the management - and also the partners and contractors through other entities or self-employed professionals who operate or provide services on behalf of APCER and are thereby integrated into the APCER value chain.

Contracts concluded or to be concluded with partners and staff employed by third parties or self-employed professionals are also under obligation to comply with this Code.

The Code of Ethics shall enter into force on 1 September 2016. However, as with any legal instrument, it should not be understood as a finished work; rather, to ensure its suitability to a reality in constant evolution, it is to be understood as a constant "work in progress", so it will be subject to periodic reviews.

3 STANDARDS OF ETHICAL CONDUCT

In harmony with the fundamental principles contained in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Conventions of the International Labour Organization, and the United Nations Global Compact, and in light of APCER's values and guiding principles, the following are the standards of ethical conduct, which as a whole, make up our Code of Ethics:

RESPECT FOR THE RULE OF LAW

- We work in order to fully comply with the laws and regulations applicable to our professional activities in all countries where we are present, co-operating with the authorities as much as possible.

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- We respect the customs and traditions of the countries in which we operate, thereby contributing to developing socially responsible communities.
- We respect internationally recognised human rights and commit ourselves to their protection, by not participating in business activities that violate these rights.



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

- We act in the interest of sustainable development in economic, social and environmental terms.
- We encourage and influence all stakeholders in the development and adoption of best practices at the environmental level, minimising any environmental impacts that may result from their professional practices.

WORK

- We respect freedom of association, ensure the absence of discrimination, intimidation, or retaliation against worker's representatives.
- We do not use child labour or forced labour, nor do we condone such practices.
- We do not hire or dismiss, reward or punish, grant or deny contracts based on personal considerations, such as favouritism or bribery.
- We do not discriminate based on gender, race, geographical or social origin, ethnicity, age, religious orientation or belief, disability, nationality, ideology, sexual orientation, family responsibilities, membership in structures representing workers, or any other circumstance involving unlawful discrimination, and we promote effective equal opportunities.
- We do not accept or condone any form of harassment, including sexual and moral, or any acts of violence, whether verbal or physical.



PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR

- We perform all our work in a professional, responsible, honest and committed manner, defending and ensuring APCER's good reputation and avoiding situations that may give rise to a conflict between respective personal interests and APCER's interests.
- We do not implicate APCER in our conduct at a personal level.
- We maintain an honest conduct, striving to understand the truth and providing timely, accurate, and reliable information.
- We respect the confidentiality and privacy of customers, employees and other stakeholders. We do not use confidential information for personal benefit or release it to third parties.
- We do not act abusively toward others. We condemn any form of violence, physical, psychological and moral coercion, sexual harassment, abuse of authority or any other intimidating behaviour, or violation of any individual and/or labour rights of any interested parties.
- We provide professional services in accordance with the policies and procedures of APCER, and relevant normative and professional references.
- We protect sensitive and/or confidential information. We only disclose confidential information - professional or personal - when needed and after proper authorisation to do so and/or if required due to legal, judicial or professional requirements.
- We have a high regard for all stakeholders, colleagues, clients and others, treating them with respect, dignity, fairness and courtesy.
- We are aware of potential conflicts of interest and take the necessary measures to eliminate or minimise those that are identified in order to act with objectivity, independence and impartiality at all times.
- We demonstrate transparency in the decision-making process, acting impartially and objectively. Our professional conduct must be free from self-interest, prejudice, and favouritism.

ANTI-CORRUPTION AND ANTI-BRIBERY

- We promote zero tolerance with regard to acts of corruption and bribery.
- It is strictly forbidden to request or receive any bribe, financial or otherwise.
- We reject and denounce any form of bribery and/or corruption.

HYGIENE, HEALTH AND SAFETY AT WORK

- We provide a good working environment, appropriate for our professional activity, promoting team spirit, unity and mutual assistance, and respecting the safety, health and hygiene conditions at work, in particular with regard to pregnant workers, mothers and breastfeeding women.
- We ensure compliance with rules on safety, health, hygiene and well-being in the workplace.
- We guarantee and preserve the integrity of the people, the facilities and the processes.

USE OF PROPERTY

- We use APCER resources only within the scope of activities pursued by APCER, in a rational and efficient manner, refraining from using APCER resources for personal or third party gain.
- We ensure the integrity, protection and conservation of property, tangible or intangible, including computer systems and intellectual property belonging to APCER.



4 ETHICS COMMITTEE

The Ethics Committee is the APCER body responsible for the implementation of the application, interpretation (in particular regarding questions pertaining to cases not expressly covered here), the resolution of any issues related to non-compliance, and also the presentation of proposed amendments to the Code of Ethics.

Any person may contact the Ethics Committee by email (comissao.etica@apcer.pt) to request clarification regarding a specific situation, to report any actions likely to constitute violation of the standards of this Code, and as such, the APCER values and acting principles, or to make suggestions and proposals for improvement. APCER undertakes to treat all submitted information as confidential and to keep the identity of the complainants confidential.



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