



Association of
Translation Companies
DEFINING STANDARDS OF EXCELLENCE

Code of Professional Conduct

2019



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The Association of Translation Companies

The Association of Translation Companies (ATC) is a professional membership association representing the interests of its members in the UK and internationally. It is the leading voice for companies operating in the UK's language services industry.

From its beginnings as a small group of British translation companies in 1976, the ATC has become a worldwide association. It provides authoritative advice about matters relating to multilingual communication, and working with legislators and other stakeholders, lobbies on behalf of its members, promoting the value of language skills, translation and interpreting. The ATC is also at the forefront of the development of international standards for translation and interpreting.

ATC membership is recognised at government and international levels as the mark of quality-managed translation services. The ATC works on a non-profit basis and its activities are guided by its council, elected officers and its stated objectives.

Defining standards of excellence

The ATC defines standards of excellence for language service companies by promoting quality-driven language services and best practice to create recognition and trust to stakeholders.

The ATC is the UK authority for language service companies

The aims of our Association are to:

- support and nurture our members for sustainability and growth;
- create a network where our members can connect with each other as a professional community;
- influence the advancement of language service companies and the language profession;
- forge partnerships with associations and organisations whose vision and goals align with our own; and
- be the governing body for language service companies in the UK with regulatory function.

Our Values

For the Association

Integrity

We shall be straightforward and honest in all our professional and business dealings.

Objectivity

We shall act fairly and without prejudice, and we will consider carefully how our decisions may affect our members, UK language service companies and the wider industry.

Accountability

We shall be mindful of our responsibility to develop and maintain the ethos and reputation of our members.

Leadership

We shall be an influential leader in supporting language service companies and promoting the case for professional language services.

Expertise

We shall be a key source of credible information, guidance and support for all stakeholders.

Commitment

We shall be committed to all our members, regardless of size, and place them at the heart of every decision we make.

For our Members

Integrity

Members shall be straightforward and honest in all their professional and business relationships.

Professionalism

Members shall conduct themselves in a manner appropriate to their position within the language services industry and display the characteristics and skills that clients and suppliers might reasonably expect of a professional language service company. Members shall consider carefully how their behaviour and decisions may affect the Association.

Accountability and fairness

Members shall be mindful of their responsibility and answerable to their clients and suppliers for their decisions and behaviour, and conduct themselves in a fair and equitable manner.

Introduction

This edition of the Code of Professional Conduct was ratified by the ATC Council in February 2019. It is a fully revised version of the Code first adopted in 1976.

All ATC Members must comply with this Code. It applies to all Members, whether they are engaged in providing translation, interpreting or any other form of language service, and regardless of geographical location.

The Code of Professional Conduct is designed to support Members in maintaining professional standards.

The Code is also intended to reassure clients, suppliers and other stakeholders that language services provided by our Members are conducted in a professional and ethical manner.

It is the responsibility of Members to keep themselves updated on changes or amendments to any part of this Code. Updates are published periodically, communicated to all Members and are available for review on the ATC website (atc.org.uk).

Interpretation

In case of doubt about the interpretation of the Code, Members may contact the ATC Secretariat (secretary@atc.org.uk) for further advice and clarification.

ATC Council

The ATC is run by a voluntary, elected Council of Members headed by three Officers: Chair, Vice-chair and Honorary Treasurer. Posts are held for a period of four years.

The Council is supported in its duties by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO) and a Secretariat.

Functions of Council

- To guide the activities of the Association in fulfilling its vision and aims;
- To ensure the Association acts with integrity and in line with its professional duties and Code of Professional Conduct;
- To ensure the Secretariat, CEO and any other official representatives act with integrity and in line with their professional duties and the Association's Code of Professional Conduct.

Functions of Secretariat

- To carry out the day-to-day business of the Association;
- To act as an initial point of contact for Members and external parties.

Code for Council Members

ATC Council Members are governed by the ATC Code of Professional Conduct. They are also expected to comply with the supplementary Code for Council Members which states they shall:

- act in a financially responsible manner, applying due diligence to the scrutiny of all reports (financial, quality, operational) and any other relevant material that is presented to them;
- in the event of a conflict of interest:
 - a) disclose any personal or business interests which may give rise to actual or perceived conflicts of interest;
 - b) ensure personal or financial interests do not conflict with their ability to perform official duties in an impartial manner;
 - c) not allow personal or financial interests, or the interests of any associated person to conflict with the interests of the ATC; and
 - d) manage and declare any conflict between their personal and public duty.

Code for Members

Admission to the ATC is conditional upon Members agreeing to adopt and abide by the ATC Code of Professional Conduct. The Code shall be signed electronically or physically by the owner, director or nominated senior individual of the ATC Member.

The ATC expects its Members to conduct business in an ethical manner with integrity, honesty and fair dealing. This Code of Professional Conduct sets out the principles that should constitute ATC Members' method of doing business.

Legal and Regulatory Obligations

The ATC expects all Members to act in accordance with the laws and regulations of the country or countries in which they work.

The ATC Code of Professional Conduct does not take precedence over national law. Its provisions are intended as a minimum requirement by Members, who must also fulfil any other responsibilities set down in law or other nationally / internationally agreed standards.

If a Member becomes involved in litigation, either as claimant or defendant, they are required to inform the ATC. If litigation goes against the Member, the ATC reserves the right to carry out its own review of the events leading to the litigation to see if a breach of Code has occurred and to take appropriate action.

Breaches and Complaints

The ATC is committed to investigating complaints relating to alleged breaches by its Members of this Code of Professional Conduct fairly and objectively.

Complaints against Members are handled following the ATC's documented complaints handling process.

General Rules of Professional Conduct

When undertaking language service commissions, Members shall:

1. ensure that, to the best of their knowledge, the linguists used to carry out commissions are suitably qualified and experienced;
2. ensure that the rights and responsibilities of stakeholders are governed by a written contract or commissioning document;
3. ensure that quality control checks appropriate to and in line with the contract or commission document are carried out;
4. take reasonable steps to avoid conflicts of interest with clients or suppliers and shall make voluntary disclosures to all parties concerned of any matter that may give rise to such a conflict;
5. take all reasonable steps to ensure that recipients of linguistic commissions are not harmed or adversely affected by the activities of the Member;
6. respect the identity of and confidential information about stakeholders and not disclose any such unless there is a legal obligation to do so;
7. not disclose or use confidential client or supplier information or materials:
 - a) to the detriment or prejudice of any stakeholders
 - b) to their own financial or reputational advantage;
8. take all reasonable steps to ensure that all data, howsoever stored, is held, transferred, processed and destroyed securely in accordance with relevant data protection regulations and any contractual obligations;
9. take reasonable steps to ensure that all parties involved in a linguistic commission are aware of their obligations regarding data security;
10. treat clients, employees, sub-contractors and other stakeholders, including other ATC Members with respect, courtesy, honesty and fairness, have proper regard for their legitimate interests and rights, and act in accordance with the high standards appropriate to ATC Members; and
11. not make misleading or unsubstantiated claims in their literature, promotional material or correspondence and adhere fully to the requirements of current legislation and good practice.

Declaration

I (*first name*): _____

(*surname*): _____

of Company (*name*):

have read and understand the Code of Professional Conduct of the Association of Translation Companies and confirm I have the authority to hereby agree to oblige my company to adhere to it to retain our membership.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Job Title/Position: _____