Code of Professional Conduct

Chartered Institute of Linguists

CIOL Code of Professional Conduct

Introduction

This Code of Professional Conduct applies to, and is binding on, all members and honorary members of the Chartered Institute of Linguists (CIOL) and chartered linguists, including those who are members of other qualifying organisations. The Code does not bind CIOL itself. Members and chartered linguists have a duty of integrity and professional responsibility to clients/employers, to colleagues, to their professional body and its staff/officers, and to society at large. The Code is based on a series of General Principles of Professional Conduct, which serve as benchmarks for the conduct that the above groups are entitled to expect. Alleged contraventions of the Code will be addressed through the CIOL's Investigation and Conduct Procedures (approved by CIOL Council in April 2018, replacing the Disciplinary Procedures 2013), which can be found on the CIOL website (www.ciol.org.uk/code).

The Code of Professional Conduct is approved by Council, and the current version enters into force on 1 September 2017. The current version of the Code is always available on the CIOL website.

This Code of Professional Conduct:

1. defines standards for best practice by members/chartered linguists;
2. provides members/chartered linguists with a framework for making decisions on ethical professional and business conduct;
3. fosters good professional relationships between members/chartered linguists, between members/chartered linguists and their clients/employers, and between members/chartered linguists and other professionals;
4. protects members/chartered linguists against undue pressure from clients/employers or fellow professionals in relation to professional conduct;
5. in conjunction with the CIOL's Investigation and Conduct Procedures, upholds the integrity and reputation of the language professions

Definitions

The following definitions apply in this Code of Professional Conduct:

'Chartered linguist': a person designated with this title and listed on the register of chartered linguists maintained by the Chartered Institute of Linguists

'CIOL': the abbreviated form for the Chartered Institute of Linguists

'Council': the governing body of the Chartered Institute of Linguists

'Investigation and Conduct Procedures': the Investigation and Conduct Procedures of the Chartered Institute of Linguists, applicable to members of CIOL and to chartered linguists

'Member': a linguist in any class of membership

'Qualifying organisation': a professional body or similar organisation whose members may be registered as chartered linguists under the rules for admission as chartered linguists

'Registered with [CIOL]': a person who is admitted into membership [in any grade] having satisfied CIOL Council that they meet the admissions criteria for membership

General Principles of Professional Conduct

The framework for ethical professional conduct by members/chartered linguists is underpinned by the following eight General Principles of Professional Conduct:

1. Professional judgement
2. Linguistic competence
3. Subject competence
4. Professional competence
5. Continuing Professional Development (CPD)
6. Responsibilities to clients/employers
7. Responsibilities to fellow linguists and to the Chartered Institute of Linguists
8. Responsibilities to other agencies, public bodies and society

1. Professional judgement

1.1 The Code of Professional Conduct represents a framework for professional judgement by members/ chartered linguists. In particular, it offers members/chartered linguists protection against requests by clients/employers to carry out work that places them in breach of the Code. Members/chartered linguists will apply the provisions of the Code to the judgements they make concerning their competence to carry out work they are offered and the compatibility of that work with the General Principles of Professional Conduct.

2. Linguistic competence

2.1 Members/chartered linguists will normally offer professional services in the language or languages in which they are currently registered with CIOL or other recognised professional body. At the professional discretion of the member/chartered linguist, this clause may be waived but only with the prior knowledge and agreement of the client ordering the work. Members/chartered linguists who translate will normally translate into their native language/language of habitual use; this clause may be waived but only with the prior knowledge and agreement of the client ordering the work.

2.2 Members/chartered linguists will work only within their linguistic competence. 'Linguistic competence' means their spoken and/or written command of the language(s) concerned, their awareness of dialects and other language variants, and their knowledge of the cultural, social and political features of the country or countries concerned.

3. Subject competence

3.1 Members/chartered linguists will work only within their subject competence. 'Subject competence' means their familiarity with the specialist field(s) involved in the work, whether gained through formal qualifications, experience, research, self-guided learning or training (informal and formal).

4. Professional competence

4.1 Members will work only in areas of professional practice for which they have the necessary technological, practical and theoretical knowledge and skills.

5. Continuing Professional Development

5.1 CIOL endorses Continuing Professional Development (CPD) as good professional practice. It strongly recommends practising members to engage in CPD to maintain, update and develop their skills.

5.2 For chartered linguists, CPD is a condition of initial and continuing registration.

6. Responsibilities to clients/employers

6.1 Members/chartered linguists will take responsibility for their work and for its quality, even where part or all of the work is sub-contracted.

6.2 Before accepting any work, members/chartered linguists will consider carefully whether they are breaching any aspect of the Code in doing so. They should disclose to their client/employer any actual or potential conflict of interest or any other factor that may breach the requirement on them to carry out all work impartially and to the requisite professional standard before accepting the work. Members/chartered linguists should keep a record of any discussion with the client/employer and, if appropriate, of the client's/employer's consent to them carrying out such work and their acceptance of that work. CIOL recommends that members/chartered linguists make every effort to secure a briefing from clients/employers regarding the requirements for each job and to keep a record of this information. Members/chartered linguists will inform their client/employer promptly of any delays or problems arising in connection with the work.

6.3 Members/chartered linguists will carry out all work impartially.

6.4 Members/chartered linguists will take all reasonable precautions to keep information and material provided by clients/employers confidential and secure (except where disclosure is required by law). This requirement will also apply to members/chartered linguists to whom part or all of a job is sub-contracted.

6.5 Members/chartered linguists will not use information acquired during their work to gain unfair advantage or to disadvantage their client/employer. In particular, members/chartered linguists will not solicit work directly from end clients for whom they have worked through an agency. Any member/chartered linguist who is approached by such an end client with a view to working directly for him/her should exercise their professional judgment and be mindful

of their contractual obligations in determining their response. In the case of doubt, the member/chartered linguist should raise this with the agency concerned.

7. Responsibilities to other members/chartered linguists and to CIOL

7.1 Members/chartered linguists will not act in any way that might bring individual professional colleagues, CIOL, and/or the language professions as a whole into disrepute.

7.2 Members/chartered linguists will show courtesy, honesty and integrity in their dealings with all individuals in the course of their work.

7.3 In particular, members/chartered linguists will ensure that statements made in a public arena and where the member/chartered linguist identifies himself/herself as a member of CIOL (through a statement and/or post nominals) are professional in tone and content. This includes, but is not limited to, social media channels and online forums and chat rooms.

7.4 Members/chartered linguists will endeavour to the best of their ability and capacity to contribute to a professional community of practice.

7.5 Members/chartered linguists are required to engage with the Investigation and Conduct Procedures should a complaint be raised against them for an alleged breach of the Code.

8. Responsibilities to other agencies, public bodies and society

8.1 Members/chartered linguists will comply with all statutory requirements and keep all records required by official agencies.

8.2 CIOL strongly recommends practising professional linguists to have Professional Indemnity Insurance cover.

8.3 Members/chartered linguists will not carry out work that they are aware might expose them to criminal prosecution or civil liability or in relation to which they have a duty of disclosure to an official agency.

8.4 Members/chartered linguists will not accept or carry out work that may result in discrimination of any kind against another individual/group except where rendering such material falls under the professional obligation to provide accurate translation or interpretation of specific content e.g. interpretation of discriminatory comments in a court case or translation of some political/religious material. This provision should be read in

conjunction with the provisions of 6.3 on impartiality; if members/chartered linguists have a concern about their ability to carry out work impartially, they should declare that concern to their client/employer or refuse the work.