



Code of conduct

What is expected of Industry Reference Committee (IRC) members?

Being an IRC member is voluntary and helps industry sectors contribute to an effective vocational education and training system.

There is a code of conduct to guide how IRC members undertake their committee duties. All IRC members are expected to abide by the following code of conduct.

Members of IRCs:

- are required to undertake their duties as a committee member in good faith—that is, they must:
 - act in the public good
 - act in the best interests of the constituents of the industry sector their committee represents (rather than in the member’s own interests or the interests of the organisation or enterprise the member represents)
 - act in line with the principles for developing training packages agreed by the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) Industry and Skills Council
- must not improperly use their IRC position or information obtained in the role to gain an advantage for themselves or others
- will not vote on IRC matters if they have a conflict of interest on any matter before the committee
- must adhere to the *IRC Operating Framework* and respect requirements related to confidentiality, conflict of interest, privacy and intellectual property.

What is a conflict of interest?

IRC members may face a conflict of interest at some point. A conflict of interest is where any matter, circumstance, interest or activity affecting an IRC member may impair, or appear to impair, the member’s ability to make a decision diligently, independently and without bias.



This could be because a member represents training providers, people who purchase training, or other industry sector stakeholders.

It is important that all IRC members deal with this properly and openly—to make sure the IRC's decisions are for the benefit of the whole industry sector they represent.

How do IRC members manage conflict of interest?

Each IRC works with its supporting Skills Service Organisation (SSO) to establish a process for managing conflict of interest. This includes:

- members declaring any actual and perceived conflict of interest when they join the IRC, and updating their SSO before each meeting
- members declaring any actual or perceived conflict of interest regarding a particular decision, and demonstrating how they will separate their interests from their IRC role.

A quorum of the committee (half the members, plus one) decides if a member with a declared conflict of interest can stay in the room for a discussion that may involve a conflict of interest. In this case, the member may still contribute to the debate but not vote.

How do IRC members manage confidentiality?

Discussions during IRC meetings may include details about industry practice, specific technologies or workplace operations.

IRC members may also deal with training package material that is classified as 'controlled access' or 'not for public access'.

To make sure there is no misuse of such information, each IRC decides what content is confidential.

Individual IRC members can also ask for specific information to be treated as confidential.

More information

IRC Operating Framework: www.aisc.net.au/content/irc-operating-framework

Other fact sheets in this series: <https://www.aisc.net.au/content/irc-toolkit>

General information about IRCs: <https://www.aisc.net.au/content/what-irc>

