ISANA: International Education Association Incorporated is the professional body for international educators in Australia and New Zealand.

This Code, adopted by members at the Annual General Meeting in December, 2002, is a tool to support members in their work and articulates a set of standards for our emerging professional group.

Preamble

ISANA members work in a broad range of roles, providing services to international students, either directly through education provider institutions, (on or off shore), or via ancillary service providers such as accommodation, health and welfare services, government and corporate agencies in Australia and New Zealand.

In recognition of the diversity of roles performed by ISANA members and their variety of qualifications, professional memberships, workplaces, job descriptions and levels of experience, ISANA has developed a Code of Ethics to guide members in their professional conduct.

ISANA's Code of Ethics draws from and is consistent with, the objectives outlined by its Mission Statement:

ISANA: International Education Association Inc. is an association of Australian and New Zealand international education professionals whose members are dedicated to the advancement of international education through:

- *Leadership, promotion and advocacy of best practice standards in the service of education;*

- *Facilitation of relevant forums, training and information exchange for its membership and the community; and*

- *Working in partnership with stakeholder organisations including international students, educational, government, business and community groups.*

The Code of Ethics reflects its members' collective commitment to the principles of professional competence, integrity, professional responsibility, respect for people's rights, dignity and diversity, and social responsibility.

Furthermore, to promote ISANA's identity and profile as a professional association to institutional leaders, government and corporate agencies, and to the wider community, the Code of Ethics looks beyond the immediate role of "service provider" of its members, and then attempts to define the values and principles which determine how ISANA members carry out their work. In summary, the Code is intended to:

1. Set standards for its members
2. Strengthen relationships among members
3. Create an ethos rather than rules
4. Be an inclusive tool
5. Provide general guidelines in areas where ambiguity exist
6. Facilitate a "self regulation" approach to service provision to international students
7. Reflect ISANA membership consensus regarding professional and moral responsibilities

Ultimately, ISANA members should strive to "live by the Code", not simply look at it. The subscription to ISANA's Code of Ethics by its membership will strengthen the association's identity, in turn further strengthening the effectiveness of the Code. It is anticipated that the Code will be reviewed and updated at regular intervals, in order to continually reflect the identity and values of the membership, the dynamic nature of ISANA, and its relevance in the international education sector.

Acknowledgement is gratefully attributed to a number of organisations, whose own codes of ethics espouse values and principles that are similar to those shared by ISANA's membership. Elements of the ISANA Code of Ethics are drawn from these organisations:

- NAFSA Association of International Educators
- UKCOSA (United Kingdom Council for International Education)
- Australian Association of Social Workers

Guidelines for ethical decision making

Ethical Decision Making is the process of critical reflection, evaluation and judgement through which an ISANA member resolves ethical issues, problems and dilemmas. Ethical dilemmas arise when an ISANA member must make a choice between alternative courses of action, each of which is supported by moral considerations, yet each of which will result in an outcome which is in some way undesirable.

These can occur in diverse circumstances when advising international students: Two examples are:

1. When the interests of the students conflict with those of various other parties, or with those of the ISANA member or their employer.
2. When the ISANA member's ethical responsibilities conflict with the interests of other professionals, professional groups, agency policies/procedures or government departmental requirements.

When ethical values conflict, ISANA members have a responsibility to decide which will take priority. In this process of decision making, the following principles should be incorporated:

Having full and relevant information on the matter about which the decision is being made.

By taking reasonable steps to ensure that the decision making is being undertaken in an ethical manner, i.e., by checking against the ISANA Code of Ethics.

Being open in the decision making process, within the appropriate confidentiality requirements of the ISANA member's employer organisation.

Being accountable at all stages of the advising role and the decision making process.

In making ethical decisions, consultation with ISANA colleagues, supervisors and/or other competent professionals is advisable. Such consultation is not unethical when the situation is outside the ISANA member's area of expertise. ISANA members are often called upon to justify their decisions and should be able to clearly demonstrate the factors involved in arriving at these decisions.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may arise when an ISANA member's dealings with an international student result in, or may influence, or be perceived to result in, influence over the member's capacity to work in an impartial manner. When a conflict of interest is foreseeable, or actually occurs, members must identify the conflict of interest, declare it to the relevant authority and take appropriate action (e.g. referral to another party, record keeping, mediation, or follow up).

Involuntary Students

ISANA members are sometimes required to attend to students who present unwillingly or involuntarily as a result of conflict with their institution, other students, sponsoring bodies or agents, etc. When addressing such conflicts, consultation with other professionals is recommended. As far as possible, ISANA members should be open with the students about such conflicts, and should seek to involve students in identifying and negotiating the best possible outcomes.

Multiple Students

When dealing with students or a group of students in conflict, the ISANA member should clarify with all parties whose interests will take precedence, and make clear their objectives for conflict resolution. As with involuntary students, members should be open with all parties and should seek to involve all parties in identifying and negotiating the best possible outcomes.

Confidentiality

Taking into consideration the privacy or confidentiality policies of their employer organisation or institution, ISANA members are sometimes faced with difficult dilemmas in terms of reporting, with parties such as Immigration authorities, sponsors, agents and families. ISANA members are ethically obliged and justified to share information that will enhance the student's welfare or that will inform relevant decision making. Such disclosure may constitute a legitimate breach of confidentiality. On the other hand, the ISANA members may decide that maintaining strict confidentiality is ethically justified in certain circumstances. However, when this decision conflicts with legal disclosure requirements, the ISANA member may not be protected from legal sanction by relying on the ISANA Code of Ethics and these guidelines for ethical decision making.

Confidences may be revealed without student consent when compelling ethical or legal reasons prevail, for instance, to protect students, staff or the wider community where the ISANA member becomes aware that there is a risk to the student's safety or the safety of others.

Students should be notified when disclosure without consent is intended or has occurred, unless there is a risk of potential harm to any party.

Workplace

Conflicts may arise between adhering to ISANA's Code of Ethics and carrying out employment demands that are inconsistent with the Code's provisions. Tensions among ethical considerations, official orders, the interests of students, contractual agreements and the need to remain employed may be difficult to balance and resolve. In these circumstances, ISANA members should seek the support of ISANA colleagues, co-workers, supervisors and managers where available. When the employer's interests or instructions conflict with ethical practice considerations, ISANA members should make this clear to the employing authority, and attempt to negotiate a solution, protecting the best interests of the international students where they are involved.

If serious ethical conflicts continue, advice and support should be requested from ISANA's Council, other pertinent departmental or representative groups, or the wider community. However, challenging the employers on ethical grounds may expose ISANA members to organisational/institutional or legal censure. Members should acknowledge and take account of this in developing strategies to address the situation.

Conscientious Objection

In exceptional circumstances, conscientious objection may be justifiable grounds for redirecting or referring a student to alternative means of assistance. Given the diversity of reasonable ethical views held within the ISANA membership, the rights of members who elect not to engage in work with international students that offends against deeply held personal, moral, spiritual or cultural convictions should be respected. However, conscientious objection must be based on reasoning that is consistent with ISANA's aims, values and principles, including a clear understanding of the member's role and duty.

code of ethics

ISANA members accept that all international students have the right to expect the highest standards of conduct from those who work with them in a professional capacity. In this Code, 'Professional Conduct' implies competence, fairness, honesty, and a primary responsibility for the best interests of the international student (detailed further in Section: Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making).

1. ISANA members have a general responsibility to:

1a) Maintain high standards of professional conduct by actively upholding and promoting this code.

1b) Act in the best interests of the student, while respecting institutional policies, governmental, and legal requirements, and the interests of sponsoring bodies.

1c) Recognise the power of influence that comes with their role in dealing with international students and ensure that it is not used inappropriately.

1d) Be alert to ethical dilemmas and potential conflicts of interest and seek guidance when they arise.

1e) Share professional knowledge and skills and contribute to the professional development of colleagues.

1f) Further their education through a commitment to improve their professional standing in terms of lifelong learning.

2. In discharging their professional duties, ISANA members will:

2a) Accurately represent their areas of competence, education, training and expertise.

2b) Recognize the boundaries of their qualifications and competence, making appropriate referrals where necessary.

2c) Actively seek to promote their professional development and keep themselves informed of current developments in their fields.

2d) In particular, keep themselves informed, as may be relevant to their areas of advice, of developments in statutory requirements, immigration rules and procedures, institutional policies and other codes aligned with their particular role.

2e) Work to ensure that there are arrangements in place that will secure objective advice from other sources where conflicts of interest arise (See Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making).

3. In their dealings with both students and colleagues, ISANA members will:

3a) Act in good faith and with fairness, consideration and objectivity.

3b) Recognise their own cultural and value orientations, and be aware of how those orientations affect their interactions with people from other cultures and language backgrounds.

3c) Be aware of, and show appropriate sensitivity to, and respect for other cultures and value systems.

3d) Not discriminate or tolerate discrimination on the part of others, on the basis of ethnic or national origins, gender, sexual orientation, religion, disability or age.

4. In dealing with international students, ISANA members will:

4a) Make their role clear to all parties and limit advice to matters consistent with that role, referring students to other services where necessary.

4b) Provide students with the information they need to make informed choices or decisions and not withhold information.

4c) Avoid advising a student where a conflict of interest exists (see Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making).

4d) Ensure that students are fully advised of procedures for them to follow to pursue complaints, or to seek redress or to defend themselves, and secure appropriate referrals when the member's role precludes them from providing support or representation for the students in any formal procedure (see Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making).

5. In matters relating to confidentiality, ISANA members will:

5a) Respect the rights of all international students to privacy and confidentiality of their information, and make responsible use of information obtained in the course of professional service.

5b) Comply with privacy, record keeping and confidentiality policies of the member's employer organisations (see Guidelines for Ethical Decision Making).

5c) Obtain informed consent from students or their nominated representatives to use their information.

5d) Use confidential information only for the purpose for which it was acquired, or with the consent of the students, for a directly related purpose, or with lawful excuse (e.g. court subpoena, statutory requirement).

5e) Communicate student's confidences only to appropriate personnel, within the student's presence or with informed consent.

5f) Protect student's anonymity and remove identifying details when permitted to use confidential information for purposes such as public presentation, consultation, teaching or research.

END OF CODE