



## **SACDA Code of Ethics**

### ***Preamble***

South African Career Development Association's (SACDA) Practitioners are committed to the provincial and national provision of career information, education, strategy development and guidance/advice processes, that are of high quality as provided by qualified, experienced, competent and recognised professionals. These processes are designed to facilitate the personal choices and decisions of persons of all ages as they anticipate, prepare for, enter into, face and cope with the dynamics of the learning environment, labour market and the workplace. The SACDA mission statement, a separate document to which the ethical standards cited here relate, details the multiple ways by which the Association discharges its responsibilities on behalf of the quality of the practitioners of educational and vocational guidance in their training and qualifications; in the development and provision of methods and materials pertinent to the provision of career development and guidance for persons of different ages, background, and settings; in the conduct of research and development; and in the advocacy of client needs for career development and guidance with government departments and educational institutions.

The commitment of SACDA's mission, as a professional Association concerned with the provision of quality services, research, and advocacy on behalf of personal career development and guidance choices, requires adherence to a public code of ethics that guides the actions of practitioners, provides evaluative criteria for self-assessments and peer evaluation regarding the

quality of the practitioner role, and informs the public of expected standards of professional practices and behaviour.

These ethical standards are consistent in essence with the ethical statements of colleagues in related professional areas. They are also concerned with providing assistance to persons preparing for or engagement the in workplace, training and education. Thus, the ethical standards of SACDA, like those of members in other educational, scientific, and professional organizations, are dedicated to the enhancement of the worth, dignity, potential and uniqueness of those persons whom SACDA serve.

Ethical standards, such as those which follow, identify minimum essentials by which to gauge ethical behaviour. They cannot address every possible ethical conflict that SACDA will experience in the society or culture. Thus, the Ethical Standards provided below are intended to stimulate the self-development of people who are designated by SACDA in their ethical behaviour and the creation of national, local and regional statements of ethical standards for which these standards may provide direction and advice.

## **Ethical Standards**

### ***Ethical Responsibilities to Clients***

1. SACDA practitioners accept the primary obligation to respect the dignity of each person to whom career development and guidance services are rendered. This obligation includes acceptance of the rights of the individual to make independent choices, to take responsibility for decisions reached, to engage in self-direction and self-development, and to preserve confidentiality. It also includes practitioner responsibility to be current with laws and policies that pertain to client's rights.
2. SACDA recognizes the obligation to provide equal opportunities in career development and guidance without prejudice to persons of diversity in social status or educational background, gender, race, ethnicity, religious beliefs, sexual orientation, or disability and avoid all forms of related discriminations.
3. SACDA practitioners are sensitive to the total needs of clients (educational, vocational, personal and social) as they interact to affect the planning for or the adjustment to education and training, occupations, and careers. They should refer to relevant experts if their own competency does not meet the client's need.

4. SACDA practitioners inform clients, orally or in writing, of the purposes, goals, techniques, policies and ethical standards under which career development and vocational guidance are provided; considering conditions in which consultation with other professionals might occur, and legal or policy constraints which relate to how services are provided.

Any limits on confidentiality set by others will be discussed with the client before proceeding to put him or her in the position to choose personal responses to such limits and involvement. Disclosing of confidential information needs the client's expressed consent.

5. SACDA practitioners enhance client's independent actions and therefore refrain from consciously dictating or coercing client choices, values, lifestyles, plans, or beliefs (e.g., general views on economic life) that represent the counsellor's or other people's, but not the client's personal orientation or perspective.

However; in situations where clients hold antisocial values that are of danger to themselves or others, it may be necessary for the counsellor to indicate what his/her professional values are and to what extent he/she supports social conventions.

6. As is their qualification, experience and skill competency, SACDA practitioners might counsel/advise, share information, provide explanations of content, purposes, and processes as well as results of tests/assessments in language or in communication that is understandable to clients. Such practitioners may use relevant standards and techniques to select, administer, and interpret completed assessments. They recognize that emerging techniques, e.g., computer-based testing or career guidance programs, products and models of delivery of service may require periodic training, refreshing updates and continuing familiarity with the professional literature in administration, scoring, communication and interpretation.

7. SACDA practitioners promote the benefits to clients of new techniques and appropriate computer applications when research or evaluation warrant such use. The practitioners ensure that the use of computer applications or other techniques are appropriate for the individual needs of the client, that the client understands how to use the technique or process involved, and that follow-up counselling assistance is provided. Practitioners further ensure that members of Under-represented groups have equal access to the best techniques available to computer technologies, and to non-discriminatory current and accurate information within whatever techniques are used.

8. SACDA practitioners, in representing their professional competencies, training and experience to individual clients as well as to organizations for which consultation is requested, provide information that is clear, accurate and relevant and does not include misleading or deceptive materials.

9. SACDA practitioners avoid conflicts of interests which compromise the best interests of their clients when they engage concurrently in the career counselling of clients, serve as representatives of paid employment exchanges or as paid recruiters or intermediaries for training facilities. Where potential conflicts of interests occur, they should be made known to the client.

10. SACDA practitioners make appropriate referral when their professional assistance cannot be provided or continued.

#### ***Attitudes to Colleagues and Professional Associates***

1. SACDA practitioners contribute to development and maintenance of cooperative relationships with professional colleagues and administrators in order to facilitate the provision of optimal career development and guidance

2. SACDA practitioners are responsible for informing colleagues and administrators about aspects of the provision of educational and vocational guidance such as confidentiality and privacy guidelines.

3. SACDA practitioners will provide professional colleagues and administrators with accurate, objective, concise and relevant information about the needs and outcomes of career development and guidance for evaluative or other purposes.

4. SACDA practitioners cooperate with their professional colleagues in implementing the Ethical Standards in the procedures and practices of their work setting. When direct information raises doubts as to the ethical behaviour of professional colleagues, whether SACDA members or institutional/organisational should discuss such concerns with the colleague or use available institutional channels to rectify the condition.

5. In cases of conflict between professional ethical standards and directives or non-cooperation of an employee, SACDA practitioner will seek to consult directly with responsible administrators about the implications of such conflicts and seek ways by which to eliminate them.

### ***Attitudes to Government and Other Community Agencies***

1. If necessary, SACDA practitioners will advocate for and assist in the development of educational and career guidance services that are ethically rendered and relevant to client's needs in cooperation with policy-makers, legislators or administrative personnel.

2. SACDA practitioners are aware of; and inform administrators, legislators and others of the accepted qualifications and training expectations of competent practitioners of educational and career guidance and counselling services.

3. SACDA practitioners actively cooperate with agencies, organizations and individuals in other institutions or in the community so as to appropriately meet the needs and provide services to clients.

4. SACDA practitioners will assist and support national drives and contribute to the development of qualifications and/or curriculum with relevant public stakeholders and mandated qualification authorities locally and internationally.

### ***Responsibilities to Research and Related Processes***

1. SACDA practitioners who have the appropriate training and skills to do so, acknowledge their responsibility to conduct research and report findings using procedures that are consistent with the accepted ethical and scientific standards of educational and psychological research practices.

When client data are used for statistical, evaluative, research or program planning purposes, the practitioner ensures the confidentiality of the identity of individual clients.

Should we clarify how far government can go – they do verify the data they collect and at this stage may contact a client. How far can they go with interviewing clients?

2. SACDA practitioners acknowledge their responsibility to share in the improvement of educational and career guidance by sharing skills, knowledge and expertise with colleagues and with other professional associations.

### ***Responsibilities as an Individual Practitioner***

1. SACDA practitioners obtain the initial training and maintain a process of continuous learning in those areas of knowledge and skills required by the profession to be a qualified and competent practitioner of career development and guidance.

2. SACDA practitioners function within the boundaries of their training and experience and refer to other professional persons, clients for whom the practitioner is not prepared to assist. Each practitioner accepts the consequences of his or her professional actions and does so within the conscious and deliberate application of ethical guidelines.

3. SACDA practitioners continue to reflect in their practice both the humanistic principles that underlie ethical behaviour as well as attention to the changing social and political questions that have ethical implications for practice. These include such questions as who are my clients (students, workers, employers, society as a whole) and what are the ethical issues of importance in these relationships?

How do different forms of intervention (individual counselling, group work, computer-assisted programmes, consultation with management on behalf of workers) differ in ethical concerns? How should career development and guidance services ethically respond to the provincial and national tensions between economic and environmental issues in the working lives and workplaces of clients?

4. SACDA practitioners are responsible for monitoring and maintaining their professional competencies and obtaining training on a periodic basis to ensure that they are able to provide competent services to culturally diverse clients and to effectively use new theories and interventional techniques, computer applications, and assessment processes. Practitioners strive to be current, innovative and trendy in the contexts and content of educational and vocational guidance and counselling; and do so with an acknowledgement that professional, personal experience and growth continue throughout and in each phase of one's life.

5. SACDA practitioners seek to participate in regular supervision by which to increase the knowledge and skills required to effectively discharge their professional responsibilities and to develop goals for continued learning.

6. SACDA practitioners are aware of their values and attitudes, in order to remain discrete and objective in the assistance they provide to clients. In particular, they avoid all forms of racial, sexual, and age stereotyping and discrimination.

7. SACDA practitioners, in cases where ethical issues are unclear or ambiguous, will consult in a confidential manner with a professional association or colleagues to attempt to clarify the issue or develop strategies to rectify the conditions that caused the problem. Failing that possibility, practitioners should directly contact the Chairperson of SACDA to seek clarification, advice or to file a question of professional ethics.