



Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct

Aims of Patoss

The aims of Patoss, The Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties, are to:

Establish and maintain the professional status of persons qualified to teach students with specific learning difficulties by:

1. giving a professional corporate response to appropriate government departments and agencies on matters affecting individuals with specific learning difficulties
2. enabling members to update and extend their knowledge and skills and to exchange ideas through an annual conference, bulletins and local groups
3. promoting the continued provision and development of appropriate specialist qualifications in the assessment, teaching and support of individuals with specific learning difficulties

Promote fuller understanding and recognition of specific learning difficulties by:

1. encouraging research into specific learning difficulties at all levels and disseminating the results of this research
2. promoting greater understanding and recognition of specific learning difficulties and sharing knowledge, awareness and understanding of the same at all levels
3. promoting links with teachers in all sectors of education working with individuals with specific learning difficulties
4. encouraging the development of the teaching of individuals with specific learning difficulties at all levels
5. promoting communication and mutual respect between practitioners, researchers and others engaged and interested in this field.

Code of Ethics & Professional Conduct

Patoss requires its members to follow the Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct set out below. The intention of this Code is to:

- Further the stated aims of Patoss;
- Encourage confidence on the part of members and the public in the standards of practice which Patoss supports.

The Code relates to three principles

- Competence and Quality of Practice;
- Responsibility to Client(s);
- Professional Integrity and Independence.

Professional Conduct Competency principle

Members shall apply the knowledge, skills and experience needed in the performance of teaching and assessment services.

Rules of Conduct

Members:

- Will engage only in those services for which they have the necessary knowledge, skills and experience.
- Will continually improve their proficiency and the effectiveness and quality of their services.

For each principle, defining statements are given below:

Competence & Quality of Practice

Each member should:

- Only undertake work for which s/he is suitably qualified and experienced;
- Ensure that resources, skills and preparation are sufficient to carry out the assignment or service;
- Update skills regularly both through relevant training and through learning activities, both in relation to the understanding of SpLDs, the practical skills needed by a specialist teacher, the context of learning and legal requirements;
- Work collaboratively with relevant personnel including colleagues, advisers, parents and the client;
- Promote fuller understanding and recognition of SpLD in the workplace or in dealings with clients;
- Define clearly to the client and to other relevant personnel the terms and conditions of the service being offered. This would include explanation of the scope and nature of the service to be provided, the allocation of responsibilities and the basis for remuneration;

- Negotiate agreements and charges for professional services in an ethical and proper way;
- Exercise good management of each assignment undertaken, through careful planning, working within time constraints, using collaborative ways of working and regular reviews of progress where these are appropriate and necessary;
- Give reasonable, balanced advice to clients based on the best available knowledge and practice;
- Work within the legal constraints imposed by her/his employers.

Responsibility to Client(s)

Each member should:

- Take responsibility for a high quality of practice;
- Consider the needs of the individual learner as paramount, subject to any legal constraints or ethical consideration;
- Respect individual, cultural and role differences, including (but not exclusively) those involving age, disability, education, ethnicity, gender, language, national origin, race, religion, sexual orientation, marital or family status and socio-economic status;
- Respect the knowledge and experience, views, aims and preferences of the client;
- Have the highest regard for the confidential nature of the work undertaken and individual records kept, safeguarding confidentiality at all times;
- Sub contract work only with the client's agreement;
- With client's agreement, refer client to another professional or another service where that is considered in the client's best interests, declaring any personal interest in such further work if it exists;
- Ensure that, as appropriate, all programmes and advice are discussed and agreed with the client prior to being finalised;
- Discuss and agree with the client changes of approach and methods when these are considered to be in the client's best interests.

Professional Independence & Integrity

Each member should:

- Avoid any action which might compromise her/his integrity and/or bring discredit on the profession;
- Refuse inducements to show favour;
- Ensure that advice and recommendations are based on impartial consideration of all pertinent facts, circumstances and opinions derived from reliable and relevant sources;
- Declare at the first possible opportunity any personal, financial or business relationship or interest which might be thought to influence her/his judgement or objectivity and withdraw from any assignment where her/his judgement or objectivity might be compromised;

- Refrain from being involved in inappropriate relationships with those to whom s/he is offering a professional service;
- Refrain from any actions which might be construed as harassment;
- Have a proper regard for the professional legal obligations of those with whom s/he is working;
- Never use, knowingly and without permission, copyright material or proprietary data or material to which s/he is not entitled;
- Acknowledge the source of any published or other research material used in his/her work;
- Take steps to ensure reasonable safety and supervision in the use of all procedures and equipment used in professional practice;
- When initiating or accepting a joint assignment with another specialist teacher ensure as far as possible that it will be carried out in accordance with this Code of Conduct;
- When publicising her/his work or services, give only information which is honest, factual and relevant to the profession of SpLD teacher assessor;
- Seek at all times to promote high standards within the profession of SpLD teacher/ assessor.

Use of the Code

Each member shall:

- Inform a client of her/his membership of the Association and of the existence of this Code of Ethics at the start of any assignment s/he undertakes. Explain that s/he will be guided by its principles;
- Respond to any complaint from a client concerning compliance with this Code, adhere to the Patoss Complaints procedure and co-operate with the Association's officers in the investigation of any complaint made to the Association.