

Codes of Conduct Relating to the Marketing Industry

A code of conduct, sometimes called a code of ethics, defines a set of principles and behaviour that a company, organisation, institute or professional body abides by. Some codes are effectively voluntary laws' which have to be adhered to else you can have adverts withdrawn. Others are aimed at individuals to ensure they act in a professional manner.

This list is not exhaustive – please alert us to others that you may know of.

Advertising

Advertising Standards Authority (ASA)

The Advertising Standards Authority is the UK's independent regulator of advertising across all media. It has the responsibility to apply the Advertising Codes, which are written by the Committees of Advertising Practice (CAP).

UK Code of Broadcast Advertising (BCAP Code)

This set of codes covers issues including taste, decency and product placement, as well as rules on scheduling for all TV and radio broadcast media. They are enforced by the ASA and must be followed by advertisers, agencies, marketers and companies. Available to read and download from the [CAP](#) website.

UK Code of Non-broadcast Advertising, Sales Promotion and Direct Marketing (CAP Code)

The CAP non-broadcast code has rules that cover non-broadcast advertising (such as print and online) sales promotion and direct marketing (including telesales and email) and is also enforced by the ASA. The code specifies standards for accuracy and honesty that businesses must adhere to, including specific conditions relating to advertising to children, political advertising and causing offence. Available to read and download from the [CAP](#) website.

Office of Communications (Ofcom)

Some of the main areas Ofcom presides over are licensing, research, codes and policies in the television, radio, telecoms and postal sectors. On 1 July 2015 an updated [Broadcast Code](#) for TV and radio came into force covering standards in programmes, sponsorship and product placement.

Cinema Advertising Association (CAA)

The CAA is the [clearance body](#) for any commercial advertising shown in cinemas. They utilise the UK CAP codes (above) and the [Code of Standards for Advertising, Promotional and Direct Marketing in Ireland](#). Clearance for public information and campaigning films resides with the British Board of Film Classification.



British Board of Film Classification (BBFC)

As well as clearing public information and campaigning films the BBFC also arrange classification for all cinema films, theatrical shows, videos and video games.

Individuals

Association for Qualitative Research (AQR)

The AQR represents and furthers the interests of the qualitative recruitment industry in the UK and beyond. The [Best Practice Rules and Guidelines](#) are aimed at professionals engaged in this industry, including individuals and organisations. Primarily research, field recruitment practitioners and clients who commission qualitative research are covered. However, the guidelines also address the needs, interests and responsibilities of respondents and members of the public who take part in this research.

CIM (Chartered Institute of Marketing)

The Chartered Institute of Marketing is the only Chartered body for Marketing and requires its members to adhere to the [Code of Professional Standards](#) as a condition of membership.

Chartered Institute of Public Relations (CIPR)

All Public Relations professionals who are members of the CIPR (the professional body for PR practitioners in the UK) are bound by its [Code of Conduct](#). The CIPR also issue a [Best Practice Guide](#) on areas of public relations such as inclusive communications and communicating with children which may require special consideration.

Market Research Society (MRS)

The MRS code covers research 'from inception to design and from execution to use'. MRS members must adhere to this [Code of Conduct](#).

Other

Association of the British Pharmaceutical Industry (ABPI)

The ABPI has formulated a [Code of Practice](#) which sets standards for the promotion of medicines to health professionals and other relevant decision makers in the UK. Although promoting or advertising prescription-only medicines to the public is prohibited, the code does include requirements for the provision of information to this group.

Direct Marketing Association (DMA)

The Direct Marketing Association is a trade organisation which aims to promote and advance all forms of direct marketing, as well as acting as a contact and support point for consumers. The [DMA Code](#) is an agreement to which all DMA members and their business partners should adhere.



EphMRA

EphMRA is a body that pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies or agencies and suppliers to that market can belong to. Their [Code of Conduct](#) supports EphMRA members when they are carrying out research over multiple countries whether it is primary or secondary research. It covers not only market research but also data protection and privacy.

ESOMAR

A range of market research codes are produced by [ESOMAR](#) and the [International Chamber of Commerce](#). As well as their main [code](#) on market and social research they also have guidance covering sampling, opinion polls, mobile marketing, interviewing children and mystery shopping.

Portman Group

The advertising of alcohol is covered by [code](#) containing eleven rules developed by the Portman Group. The group role was initially to promote responsible drinking but in 1996 it took on the additional role of encouraging responsible marketing. They also run a Code Advisory Service.

ABB Responsible Gambling Code

Members of the Association of British Bookmakers (ABB) are required to adhere to their responsible [gambling code](#); it is mandatory. The code is continually monitored and updated as required, the most recent update was to require establishments to carry out local risk assessments.

Other resources

Diageo also have their own code

UNICEF: International code of marketing of breastmilk substitutes

Sainsbury's

The UK Government website has useful advice:

[Food labelling and packaging](#)

[Marketing and advertising: the law](#)

[Product labelling: the law](#)

[Weights and measures: the law](#)

This document is for guidance only and should not be used as a substitute for specific legal advice.

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