

## **Geological Association of Canada Code of Ethics**

### **Preamble**

The Geological Association of Canada (GAC®) is a member-led, national multi-disciplinary geoscience organization in Canada with representatives in all Canadian Territories and Provinces as well as the United States, Europe, and other parts of the world. The GAC® is dedicated to excellence, inclusivity, openness, and integrity in geoscience research, as well as the promotion and development of the geological sciences in Canada through publications, awards, conferences, meetings and exhibitions.

Representing a diverse scientific community, the GAC® provides a means to share, publish, promote and collaborate on the latest geoscience research within Canada. The GAC® annual general meeting is a major forum for sharing geoscience knowledge and building collaboration opportunities and community for geoscientists.

This document outlines the Code of Ethics (the Code) adopted by the GAC®. The aim of this Code is to promote ethical integrity and an inclusive, constructive, and positive approach to geoscience within the scope of GAC® activities. Scientific integrity and ethics are fundamental to the geosciences and depend upon the respectful and equitable treatment of all those engaged in the scientific community. The principles, standards and guidelines in this document are intended to guide GAC® members and participants on expectations for professional behaviour. The Code also outlines the process for reporting and addressing violations. The word “member” as used throughout this Code includes all classes of membership. This code supplements and works in concert with other professional codes of ethics members may be subject to, such as those associated with Professional Geoscientist (P.Geo) registration or public service, or requirements in other workplaces like academic or government institutions.

All members must comply with this Code as a condition of GAC® membership. This document stands as an umbrella Code of Ethics for GAC® activities, and is supported by our general statement on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and our Events Code of Conduct.

### **Code of conduct – general principles**

The GAC® is committed to providing an ethically sound, equitable, safe, open, and respectful environment for scientific activities. The GAC® encourages all geoscientists to pursue integrity, honesty, respect, responsibility, rigour and equity in their professions. Specifically:

- Each member shall be guided by the highest standards of ethics, personal honour, scientific integrity, and professional conduct, and prioritize honesty, integrity, fairness, and impartiality;

- The GAC® values diversity, equality, and inclusion within its membership. Discrimination, harassment, bullying, coercion, intimidation, and exclusion are considered unethical behaviours.
- Members shall exemplify high standards in science, teaching, management, and interactions with others, particularly when in a position of power or privilege. In particular, members shall treat students and subordinates respectfully, without exploitation, and provide a safe, supportive environment to encourage learning and professional development.
- Members shall endeavour to cooperate with others in science and will encourage the ethical dissemination of geological knowledge.
- Members are expected to conduct their research and draw their conclusions based on critical analysis of the evidence. Findings and interpretations are expected to be reported fully, accurately and objectively, along with the related uncertainties.
- Members shall give credit for work done by others to whom the credit is due, refrain from plagiarism in oral and written communications, and not knowingly accept credit rightfully due to another.
- Members shall communicate with each other, with professional colleagues, and with individuals from other workplaces and cultures in a respectful and collegial manner, avoiding disparaging remarks, stereotyping, negative language, and ad hominem attacks. Standards of respectful communication apply in any forum or medium, including print, online and social media, conference presentations, and media interviews.
- Members shall proactively disclose any real or perceived conflict of interest in situations related to any discharge of professional or volunteer obligations.

### **Policy and procedure for handling potential ethical violations**

GAC® members who experience or witness any form of unacceptable behaviour or have any questions about what is unacceptable behaviour are encouraged to contact the GAC® Vice President who is the official Safety Officer for the association. The GAC® annual general meeting, and GAC® field trips and similar events shall have a designated Safety Officer to whom ethical violations can be reported in person, by email or by telephone. Complaints submitted to the GAC® Safety Officer or event-specific Safety Officer will be handled confidentially to the extent possible and will be investigated and resolved promptly according to the process detailed below.

Reports of unacceptable behaviour will be presented by the Vice President and reviewed by the GAC® Executive. The Executive will review all submitted evidence and if warranted will ask for additional statements from the parties involved. The Executive may bring in external assistance, or form ad-hoc committees to address any reports where potential conflict of interest is involved. The Executive or ad-hoc committee will make decisions based on submitted evidence.

If the Executive feels that legal help is needed they may consult a lawyer before making a decision.

If the Executive or committee determines that sanctions are warranted based on the Code of Ethics they will notify all parties of the result and enact any sanctions (e.g. revocation of GAC® membership, ban on future conference attendance). It should be clearly understood that anything that could be a criminal issue will be referred to legal authorities immediately. Reports of ethical violations in the course of someone's employment will be referred to their employer or other professional regulatory organization.

The GAC® Code of Ethics strictly prohibits retaliation against anyone for reporting or inquiring in good faith about what that person believes to be unacceptable behaviour or for participating in any related investigation. GAC® will not tolerate retaliatory behaviour from its members, especially from those in senior positions.

Adapted from:

GSA Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

EGU Code of Conduct