



Criminal Cases Review Commission

ORGANISATION POLICY

Policy Title: **Code of Conduct for Commissioners and INEDs**
Reference: **CCRC-POL-04** Version: **1.0**

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Foreword

The Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC) was established as a body corporate under the [Criminal Appeal Act 1995](#) (the Act) from 1 January 1997. The CCRC was established under the Act to investigate possible miscarriages of justice in the criminal courts of England, Wales, and Northern Ireland, and in the Court Martial and the Service Civilian Court; and to refer appropriate cases to the relevant appeal court.

Provisions in relation to the composition, functions, powers, and duties of the CCRC are contained in sections 8 to 25 inclusive, and Schedule 1, of the Act.

This Code of Conduct (revised as of February 2025) sets out clearly and openly the standards expected of the CCRC's Commissioners and Independent Non-Executive Directors (INEDs), and forms part of their terms and conditions of appointment. It also makes clear that harassing, bullying or other inappropriate or discriminatory behaviour is not consistent with what is expected of a CCRC Commissioner or INED and will not be tolerated. Any breach of the Code will be viewed as a breach of the terms of appointment.

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This Code is based on the [Code of Conduct for Board Members of Public Bodies](#)¹ and sits alongside a suite of CCRC HR and corporate policies and documents.

Any questions on this Code should be directed to:

The Chief Executive Officer
Criminal Cases Review Commission
23 Stephenson Street
Birmingham
B3 4BH

All CCRC Staff are subject to [CCRC-POL-01 Code of Conduct for Staff](#).

For definitions of key terms please see the end of the document.

1 Introduction

- 1.1 This Code of Conduct applies to all Commissioners and INEDs unless otherwise stated. It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with, and comply with, all the relevant provisions of this Code.
- 1.2 SLT members of the Board, as well as all CCRC Staff, are instead subject to [CCRC-POL-01 Code of Conduct for Staff](#).

2 Key Principles of Public Life

- 2.1 The key principles upon which this Code is based are the Seven Principles of Public Life.² These principles, set out below, should inform your actions and decisions:
- a) **Selflessness** - You should take decisions solely in terms of the public interest. You should not do so in order to gain financial or other material benefits for yourself, your family, or your friends.
 - b) **Integrity** - You must avoid placing yourself under any financial or other obligation to outside individuals or organisations that might, or might be perceived to, influence you in the performance of your official duties.

¹ Published by the Cabinet Office in June 2019.

² *Standards in Public Life: First Report of the Committee on Standards in Public Life*. Volume 1: Report. CM 2850-I. These are also called the '[Nolan Principles](#)'.

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- c) **Objectivity** - In carrying out public business, including awarding contracts and recommending individuals for rewards and benefits, you must act and take decisions impartially, fairly and on merit, using the best evidence and without discrimination or bias.
- d) **Accountability** - You are accountable for your decisions and actions to the public and must submit yourself to whatever scrutiny is appropriate for your office.
- e) **Openness** - You should be as open as possible about the decisions and actions that you take. You should give reasons for your decisions and restrict information only when the wider public interest clearly demands.
- f) **Honesty** - You should be truthful. You have a duty to declare any private interests relating to your public duties and to take steps to resolve any conflicts arising in a way that protects the public interest.
- g) **Leadership** - You should promote and support these principles by leadership and example.

3 General Conduct

3.1 Use of Public Funds

You have a duty to ensure the safeguarding of public funds³ and the proper custody of assets which have been publicly funded. You must carry out these obligations responsibly – that is, take appropriate measures to ensure that the CCRC uses resources efficiently, economically, and effectively, avoiding waste and extravagance. It will always be an improper use of public funds for public bodies to employ consultants or other companies to lobby Parliament, Government, or political parties.

3.2 Allowances

You must comply with the rules set by the CCRC regarding remuneration, allowances, and expenses. It is your responsibility to

³ This should be taken to include all forms of receipts from fees, charges, and other sources. For more guidance on how to handle public funds, please refer to Managing Public Money <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/managing-public-money>

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ensure compliance with all relevant HM Revenue and Customs' requirements concerning payments, including expenses. See [FIN-POL-01 Travel and Subsistence Expenses Policy](#) and [FIN-POL-02 Non-Travel Expenses Policy](#) for further information.

3.3 Gifts and Hospitality

You must comply with the rules set by the CCRC on the acceptance of gifts and hospitality (see [HR-POL-08 Gifts & Hospitality Policy](#)).

3.4 Use of CCRC Powers and Resources

You must not misuse CCRC powers or resources⁴ whether for personal gain or for political purposes. Use of any CCRC powers or resources must be in line with the CCRC's rules on their usage.

3.5 Use and Disclosure of Information

3.5.1 You must not misuse information gained in the course of your work at the CCRC for personal gain or for political purposes.⁵

3.5.2 You must have regard to [Sections 23 and 24](#) of the Criminal Appeal Act 1995. The duties imposed by those sections continue to apply after you have left the CCRC.

3.5.3 Similarly, you must have regard to the provisions of the Data Protection Act 1998.

3.5.4 You must not disclose without authority any information which is confidential in nature or which is provided to you in confidence. This duty also continues to apply after you have left the CCRC. For these purposes, all information which is provided to you in the performance of your duties should be presumed to have been provided to you in confidence.

3.6 Political Activity

3.6.1 In your public role, you should be, and be seen to be, politically impartial. You should not occupy a paid party-political post or hold a particularly sensitive or high-profile role in a political party. You

⁴ This includes facilities, equipment, stationery, telephony, IT, and other services.

⁵ Commissioners and INEDs who misuse information gained by virtue of their position may be liable for breach of confidence under common law or may commit a criminal offence under insider dealing legislation.

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should abstain from all controversial political activity and comply with the principles set out in Cabinet Office rules on attendance at party conferences⁶ and on conduct during the period prior to elections and referendums, whether local or national.⁷

- 3.6.2 On matters directly related to the work of the CCRC, you should not make political statements or engage in any other political activity.
- 3.6.3 You should inform the Chairman, Chief Executive and/or the parent/sponsor department before undertaking any significant political activity. Subject to the above, you may engage in political activity but should, at all times, remain conscious of your responsibilities as a board member and exercise proper discretion.
- 3.6.4 If you are an MP, member of the House of Lords, member of a devolved legislature, directly elected mayor, local councillor or police and crime commissioner, you are exempt from these requirements. There is no bar on such representatives taking a political party whip relating to their political role. You must exercise proper discretion on matters directly related to the work of the body and recognise that certain political activities may be incompatible with your role as a board member. You should not allow yourself to become embroiled in matters of political controversy.
- 3.6.5 In your official capacity, you should be even-handed in all dealings with political parties.

3.7 Employment and Appointments

If a Commissioner or INED takes up additional employment during their employment, you must inform the CCRC by completing a [HR-F-14 Declaration of Financial and Other Interests](#). You should refer to your contract of employment and this Code of Conduct. Care should be taken if you accept additional public appointments to ensure that you are not being paid twice from the public purse for the same time.

4 **Conflicts of Interest**

- 4.1 When accepting an appointment to the public body you should consider if any conflicts of interest arise from your private interests or by virtue of any other roles you hold. You should consider, with advice from the

⁶ www.gov.uk/government/publications/civil-servants-and-party-conferences-guidance

⁷ www.gov.uk/government/publications/election-guidance-for-civil-servants

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appointing department how these should best be managed, and agree these with the organisation.

- 4.2 You must ensure that no conflict arises, or could reasonably be perceived to arise, between your public duties and your private interests, financial or otherwise. You must also ensure that no conflict of interest and/or bias (actual or perceived) arises or could reasonably be perceived to arise, in your conduct of casework or casework decision-making. Please consult [CW-CGN-09 Conflicts of Interest in Casework](#) for further details.

You must comply with the rules of the CCRC on handling conflicts of interests set out in [HR-POL-22 Declaration of Financial and other Interests Policy](#).

These require you to declare publicly any private interests which may, or may be perceived to, conflict with your public duties⁸. The rules also require you to remove yourself from the discussion or determination of matters in which you have a financial interest. In matters in which you have a non-financial interest, you should not participate in the discussion or determination of a matter where the interest might suggest a danger of bias.⁹

- 4.3 It is your responsibility to ensure that you are familiar with the CCRC's rules on handling conflicts of interests, that you comply with these rules, and that your entry in the CCRC's public record of members' interests is accurate and up-to-date.

5 Responsibilities

- 5.1 You should work to the highest personal and professional standards and play a full and active role in the work of the CCRC. You should at all times act in good faith, responsibly and in the best interests of the CCRC.
- 5.2 You should promote an inclusive and diverse culture in the body and your actions should help create an environment where different perspectives and backgrounds are encouraged and valued.

⁸ In general, all financial interests should be declared. When considering what non-financial interests should be declared, you should ask yourself whether a member of the public, acting reasonably, would consider that the interest in question might influence your words, actions or decisions.

⁹ These are common law provisions.

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- 5.3 You should deal with the public and their affairs fairly, efficiently, promptly, effectively and sensitively, to the best of your ability. You must not act in a way that unjustifiably favours or discriminates against particular individuals or interests, you should make efforts to understand people's needs and make reasonable adjustments accordingly.
- 5.4 You must not harass, bully or act inappropriately towards or discriminate towards others. Such behaviour is not consistent with what is expected of a Commissioner or INED and will not be tolerated.
- 5.5 You must comply with the statutory and administrative requirements relating to your post.
- 5.6 You should respect the principle of collective decision-making and corporate responsibility. This means that, once the board has made a decision, you should support that decision.¹⁰
- 5.7 You must not use, or attempt to use, your role at the CCRC to promote your personal interests or those of any connected person, firm, business, or other organisation.
- 5.8 You must inform the Chairman of any bankruptcy, current police investigation, unspent criminal conviction or disqualification as a company director in advance of appointment or should any such instances occur during your appointment.
- 5.9 You must also inform the Chairman of any change in your circumstances which results in you becoming bankrupt, subject to a police investigation, convicted of a criminal offence or disqualified from being a company director.
- 5.10 Communications between the CCRC and ministers at the Ministry of Justice will normally be through the Chairman or the Chief Executive. Before an employee makes an individual approach to such an official or minister, you should normally seek the agreement of the Chairman or Chief Executive.

6 Responsibilities Towards Employees

¹⁰ This does not apply to departmental non-executive board members, whose role is to advise and challenge the board and department.

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- 6.1 You will not ask or encourage employees to act in any way which would conflict with [CCRC-POL-01 Code of Conduct for Staff](#).

7 Social Media

- 7.1 Social media is a public forum and the same considerations, including the provisions of this Code, apply as would to speaking in public or writing something for publication, either officially or in a personal capacity. When engaging with social media you should at all times respect confidentiality, financial, legal and personal information.
- 7.2 Where any personal social media accounts used by you make reference or link to your role at the CCRC, you should take care to ensure that it is clear in what capacity you are acting.

8 Raising Concerns

- 8.1 You should ensure that the CCRC has an open, transparent and safe working environment where employees feel able to speak up and raise concerns, and complaints procedures are clearly communicated to them.
- 8.2 If you have a concern about a possible breach of this Code, a concern that you or any CCRC Staff are being asked to act in contravention of the Code of Conduct, or a concern about misconduct or wrongdoing in any other areas, then you have a responsibility to raise that internally with the Chairman.

Definitions

Key Word	Meaning
Board	The group providing governance of the CCRC, comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Chairman (a Commissioner)• Commissioner (x3)• Independent Non-Executive Director (x3)• Chief Executive (SLT)• Casework Operations Director (SLT)• Finance and Corporate Services Director (SLT)

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Commission	CCRC
Commissioner	Casework decision-maker appointed by the Monarch
Employee	Used interchangeably with 'staff' (see below)
INED	Independent Non-Executive Director
Personnel	The collective term for Staff, Commissioners, and INEDs
SLT	Senior Leadership Team, comprising: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chief Executive • Casework Operations Director • Finance and Corporate Services Director • Head of Communications and External Affairs • Head of Business Planning and Performance • Head of Human Resources, and • In-House Counsel
Staff	Employees on permanent and fixed-term contracts, and secondments.
WLT	Wider Leadership Team, comprising all other managers not otherwise defined as the SLT.

Appendices

None

Relevant CCRC Documents

Q-POL-01	CCRC Quality Policy
CCRC-POL-01	Code of Conduct for Staff
CW-CGN-09	Conflicts of Interest in Casework
CW-POL-19	Disclosure by the CCRC
FIN-POL-01	Travel and Subsistence Expenses Policy
FIN-POL-02	Non-Travel Expenses Policy
HR-POL-06	Whistleblowing Policy
HSF-POL-05	Handling Government Classified Information Policy
HR-POL-08	Gifts & Hospitality Policy
HR-F-08	Gifts and Hospitality Declaration Form
HR-POL-22	Declaration of Financial and other Interests Policy
HR-F-14	Declaration of Financial and other Interest Form

Legal Documents (available for free from www.legislation.gov.uk)
Criminal Appeal Act 1995

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Document author: Wayne Gough (Head of Business Planning & Performance)

Issue authorised by: Karen Kneller (Chief Executive)

Version History

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