



*Promoting the highest standards of Feng Shui practice*

The Feng Shui Society  
January 2010

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**CONSULTANTS CODE  
STANDARDS OF CONDUCT AND PRACTICE**

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## Foreword

The Feng Shui Society aspires to give the public confidence in the integrity of Feng Shui practice by ensuring that its professional members operate properly within pre-determined standards.

The Society has established professional standards of conduct and practice, which the Society believes the public have a right to expect from its professional members. In pursuit of this, the Society represents and regulates the interests and practice of its professional members.

The Code should be central to the professional life of a consultant, not only as a source of ethical guidance, but also as a common sense indicator to the principles of good practice. It is the spirit of the Code, as well as its precise terms, that are to be the guide. The Code may form the basis of disciplinary proceedings in the event of complaint against a professional member, It is only through the maintenance of high standards by individuals that Feng Shui practice as a whole will be served, the public protected and the profession thrive.

Feng Shui is an honourable calling with an ancient tradition. Those traditional principles are assumed to be encoded here and accepted by all practising professionally – they should be upright, selfless, dedicated to upholding the virtues; respectful of teacher and teaching; honourable and honest in all dealings with fellow human beings.

## Introduction

1. This Code sets out the standards of professional conduct and practice expected of feng shui consultants. The Code does not **replace** obligations placed upon consultants by **the** general law, for example, in the areas of discrimination, health, safety, employment **and trading standards**.
2. The Society aims to promote Feng Shui in a manner consistent with the highest standards of professional behaviour and personal integrity and requires **all** its professional **consultant** members to abide by this Code as the first condition of membership of the Society.
3. The Society has developed minimum standards for the education and training of those wishing to practice professionally. Only those meeting the standards of the Society will be eligible for accreditation by the Society leading to professional membership as defined within the Constitution.
4. Consultants should be guided as much by the spirit of the Code as by its expressed terms. That a course of conduct is not specifically referred to in the Code does not mean it cannot form the basis of disciplinary **action**.
5. All professional members of the Society are subject to **its** disciplinary procedures if, **as the result of a formal complaint or other reasons**, it is satisfied that **when practicing, teaching, or otherwise presenting themselves professionally, a consultant has demonstrated** unacceptable professional conduct, or that serious professional incompetence **may have taken place**.

6. The Society recognises that other disciplines, therapies and practices can be complementary to Feng Shui, but are outside the context of this Code. This Code is not a substitute for those of other professional bodies to which an individual member may belong. Members are encouraged to join the professional bodies of any other disciplines they may practice.
7. The professional work of consultants can take many different forms. Accordingly not all parts of this Code will apply automatically to every consultant.
8. The Society does not favour or endorse any one interpretation, school or application of Feng Shui. Rather, it encourages the various schools of Feng Shui to co-exist and develop alongside each other. However, Feng Shui in the context of this Code refers specifically to the Chinese art of energising and harmonising environments using traditional and accepted practice.
9. Maintaining an appropriate Code is a continuing and developing process. The Society will review this Code regularly to enable it to build constructively on its professional standards. The Code may be changed at any time by resolution of the Executive Committee, after publication of any proposed change in the Society's journal, **website or otherwise communicated to consultants.**

## **Code of Practice**

### **Conduct and Competence**

- 1.0 Integrity: at all times act with integrity and avoid any action or situations inconsistent with professional obligations.**
- 1.1 Consultants should not make, support or collaborate in any statement, written or otherwise, which is contrary to their professional opinion or which they know to be materially misleading, unfair to others, or otherwise discreditable to the profession or members holding differing views.
- 1.2 Consultants **must** disclose to a prospective client any personal or business interests that, if not so disclosed, might raise a conflict of interest or doubts about their integrity.
- 1.3 Consultants should not, within Feng Shui practice, be in partnership or otherwise engaged with an unsuitable person, for example a person whose name has been removed from the registers of the Society by virtue of disciplinary measures; or disqualified from membership of any other recognised and relevant professional body.
- 1.4 Consultants should be guided by a high standard of personal integrity and compassion, never causing a client to be exploited and **at all times maintaining** their confidentiality and safety, physically and psychologically:
- 1.5 Personal beliefs should not prejudice interactions with clients, Views about a client's lifestyle, culture, belief, race, colour, gender, sexuality, age, social status

- or perceived economic worth, **must not** prejudice the work undertaken or carried out, or recommendations made.
- 1.6 The clients' needs and desires should be adequately assessed. Consultants should listen to and respect their clients' views and allow them to be fully involved in decisions about the work. Only **agreed and** necessary services should be recommended or performed.
  - 1.7 Consultants are expected to accept their clients' right of choice, including their right to decline any service offered.
  - 1.8 Consultants have the right to decline a consultation provided the refusal is carried out in a professional manner. Where a client is mentally unstable or addicted to alcohol or drugs, discretion must be used for the protection of the consultant.
  - 1.9 it is a consultant's responsibility to ensure they are physically, medically, psychologically and spiritually fit to practice and that **they do** not in way put themselves or their clients at risk.
  - 1.10 Consultants are expected to express opinions and preferences about their own branches or schools of Feng Shui in a mature, ethical fashion. They should not openly **undermine** any other school or tradition of Feng Shui.
  - 1.11 Consultants shall not behave in any manner likely to discredit themselves, Feng Shui or the Society.
- 2.0 Competence: consultants are expected only to undertake work for which they are able to provide adequate professional and technical competence and resources.**
- 2.1 Consultants must not lay claim to credentials and expertise they do not honestly possess. They must know their limitations and not advise beyond their ability. When appropriate, they may recommend referral to another more suitably qualified professional to provide the service required.
  - 2.2 Where professional work **is** carried out by an employee or anyone acting under a consultant's direct control, the consultant is responsible for ensuring such person is competent to perform the task and, if necessary, is adequately supervised **and insured**.
- 3.0 Advertising: only promote professional services in a truthful and responsible manner.**
- 3.1 In advertising their professional services or otherwise drawing **themselves, their practice or services** to the attention of potential clients, consultants must not make untruthful, unwarranted, exaggerated or misleading statements.
  - 3.2 Advertisements should be legal and conform, as appropriate, to the current policies of the Advertising Standards Authority and similar agencies **in the country**

in which the advert is placed and in which the consultant resides. Use of logos denoting membership or approval by an organisation must be legitimate, current and not misused.

- 3.3 The described business style of a practice should not be misleading. Unless practicing under your own personal name, the corporate name, name of each partner and an address at which documents can be served should be provided.
- 3.4 Consultants **may** not make unfounded claims or implications **in their promotions or elsewhere**, about their own training, ability or experiences, **nor** seek to attract business unfairly, immorally, unprofessionally or in any way which would discredit Feng Shui, the Society or **themselves**.
- 3.5 Advertising should be accurate, ethical and dignified in tone and not contain unsustainable testimonials or claims, nor knowingly make comparisons with the services of other consultants. It should be confined to drawing attention to the range of services available, qualifications of the consultant and directly relevant details.
- 3.6 Where a consultant advertises services online, the website must display full contact details including name, geographic and e-mail address, description of the services being sold, details of any professional body the consultant may be registered with including details of its code of practice, and all other requirements of the Electronic Commerce (EC Directive) Regulations 2002 and subsequent legislation.
- 3.7 Consultants are encouraged to use media publicity provided they fully understand and approve the context and provided that the manner in which media coverage of any aspect of their work or lifestyle is carried out is in keeping with the dignity of the profession and their **own** membership of the Society.

#### **4.0 Client Services: management of professional work.**

- 4.1 Consultants **must** not undertake professional work unless the express and implied terms of the contract have been agreed beforehand as to the scope of the work and the fee or method of calculating it. The right of any client to decline these services after they have been outlined and explained should be respected.
- 4.2 Where services are sold online, the client must be given clear information and sent confirmation of any agreement. Under these circumstances the client's right to cancel within seven working days must be respected.
- 4.3 The consultant will take reasonable professional responsibility for ensuring that the client fully understands the nature and implications of the Feng Shui consultation. It is recommended **that** a written report describing the recommendations made and advice given should be provided.
- 4.4 If requested at the end of a contract, or upon reasonable demand, the consultant should return to the client any papers, plans or other property to which the client is legally entitled and confirm whether any copies have been retained.

- 4.5 Insofar as it relates to Feng Shui, consultants should ensure that the work of their practice, and any branch, is under the control and management of a Feng Shui consultant and that the identity of the consultant is made clear to existing or potential clients.
- 4.6 Consultants must ensure they comply with the Data Protection Acts as appropriate and all such similar legislation as may be enacted.
- 4.7 Consultants should carry out their professional work, so far as is reasonably practicable, in accordance with any time-scale and **within** the cost limits agreed with the client.
- 4.8 Consultants **must** observe the confidentiality of their clients' affairs and not disclose **any** confidential information without the prior consent of the client or other lawful authority.
- 4.9 Consultants have a duty to keep all attendance, records, knowledge, information, views relating to clients, clients' premises and clients' circumstances entirely confidential.
- 4.10 **All** consultants **must** keep clear and accurate comprehensive records of all consultations, such as will enable them to deliver an efficient client service and ensure appropriate and effective dispute resolution. In the event of a complaint **resulting in** disciplinary procedures, **the Society** may require access to these records.
- 5.0 Client relations: carry out professional work conscientiously and ethically, with due regard to relevant technical and professional standards.**
- 5.1 The Code encourages integrity, honesty and responsibility in the practice of Feng Shui, upholding and furthering the honourable standing of the profession and the Society. In relations with clients, colleagues and the public, consultants should behave respectfully, discreetly and honestly at all times.
- 5.2 The client's welfare should have priority at all times. The consultant, in recognising the potential of Feng Shui, should work with integrity and compassion for the benefit of the client, listen to and respect the client's views, treat the client politely and considerately and encourage full involvement and understanding in the work undertaken.
- 5.3 Consultants should not knowingly work simultaneously for clients who are in direct competition with each other without their full knowledge.
- 5.4 Consultants shall perform their work with due skill, care and diligence. The professional manner of consultants towards their clients should be positive, supportive and competent, without making unsustainable promises about the outcome of any consultation.

- 5.5 Whilst consultants' primary responsibilities are to the client, they **shall in the same context** have due regard to conserve and enhance the natural quality of the environment.
- 5.6 A consultant should never instil fear or put pressure on clients, their family or staff by, for example, arousing unsubstantiated fear or anxiety for their health or wellbeing. Consultants **must** not exploit vulnerability or ignorance or abuse trust.
- 5.7 Consultants **must** not carry out any practice auxiliary or complementary to Feng Shui during a consultation, unless it has been **properly** described to and accepted by the client beforehand **in writing**.
- 5.8 Proper moral conduct should always be paramount in consultants' relationships with clients. Their professional position shall not be used to establish improper personal relations with clients, their families or staff.
- 5.9 Consultants shall not take advantage of their position within the Society for unethical gain, nor behave in any way that causes detriment to the profession of Feng Shui or the reputation of the Society.

## **6.0 Continuing Professional Development**

- 6.1 All consultants **are expected to** update and expand their Feng Shui training, knowledge and skills as a necessary part of **their** ongoing professional development.
- 6.2 Where consultants have not maintained **their mandatory annual level of Continuing Professional Development**, it may count against them in the event of their competence being investigated.

## **7.0 Insurance: Consultants must have current professional insurance cover in place before undertaking work.**

- 7.1 Consultants **must** be adequately insured to practice professionally in Feng Shui and any **other** chosen complementary disciplines **in the country or countries in which they work**.
- 7.2 **Consultants are expected to possess** a certificate of their current insurance policy covering public and employee liability; malpractice and professional indemnity, **and to provide evidence of it to the Society upon request**. Cover is expected to include consultations, sale of goods, and other activities, including teaching where appropriate. Such insurance is to be valid in all countries where the consultant's professional practice of Feng Shui is undertaken.
- 7.3 Consultants **may only** recommend or prescribe remedies and therapies beyond Feng Shui, as it is defined and understood by the Society, **if** entitled by training and qualifications that are covered by **appropriate professional** insurance **relating to them**.

## 8.0 Disputes: Deal responsibly and promptly with disputes and complaints

- 8.1 It is the consultant's responsibility to explore all possible avenues for **reaching an amicable conclusion when they are involved with a complaint or dispute**, before referring it to the Society.
- 8.2 Complaints **or disputes must** at every stage be handled **promptly**, courteously and sympathetically by consultants, and, within the following **recommended maximum** time scale **when in writing**, where **reasonably** possible:
- a) acknowledgement to be sent within ten days from receipt of a complaint, then
  - b) **a comprehensive** response **which** addresses the issues **raised** to be sent within thirty working days **from receipt of the complaint**.
- 8.3 In the event of a complaint **against a consultant in any professional capacity** being referred to the Society, it will be investigated thoroughly and impartially. **The Society will give the consultant an** opportunity to answer any **accusations**. The **Society's** disciplinary process is **further** described in **the** document entitled '*Making a Complaint to the Feng Shui Society*'.
- 8.4 If the Society finds the consultant **has behaved unprofessionally**, it may –
- a) **Issue a warning to the consultant**
  - b) suspend the consultant from professional **registration** and membership for a specified time
  - c) expel the consultant and remove him/her from the professional register
  - d) **issue** a public announcement about the action **taken**

## 9.0 Discipline: **Upholding** the Standards within this Code

- 9.1 Consultants **must** conduct their professional work in accordance with this Code and report to the Society any serious breach of the Code that they are aware of.
- 9.2 Consultants **are expected to** report to the Society within twenty eight days any **known** circumstances that **could** render themselves liable to serious breach of the Code. Failure to make a prompt report may count against them in the event of **any** disciplinary proceedings.
- 9.3 Should a serious breach of the Code by a consultant be brought to the Society's attention, the matter may result in disciplinary action being taken.
- 9.4 Disciplinary action may be taken against any **consultant who is** convicted of a criminal offence **that has** material relevance to their fitness to practice professionally.
- 9.5 In the event that any consultant becomes involved in civil or criminal proceedings arising from professional activities; or constituting an act of dishonesty or otherwise calling into question the integrity of the consultant, the Society may find that such action constitutes unacceptable professional conduct and will act accordingly.

- 9.6 Failure to co-operate with the Society's Officers in the event of any disciplinary **action being necessary**, may, in itself, constitute grounds for disciplinary proceedings
- 9.7 Any threat by a consultant to bring defamation proceedings in an attempt to frustrate investigation of a complaint may, in itself, be regarded as unacceptable professional conduct and treated accordingly.
- 9.8 Shortcomings on the part of a consultant, **or** failure to comply with the provisions of the Code, **may not** necessarily give rise to disciplinary **action**. However should it be necessary to examine the conduct or competence of a consultant, failure to follow the guidance of this Code will be taken into account.
- 9.9 **A consultant is liable to reprimand, suspension or expulsion by the Society if his or her conduct is found to be in contravention of the Code or any other act inappropriate to, or inconsistent with, the consultant's professional status, whether practicing, teaching or otherwise presenting themselves professionally, or where the consultant has been found to have behaved in a manner prejudicial to the interest of the Society.**
- 9.10 **In the event of disciplinary action being necessary, the Society reserves the right to suspend a consultant for a period of time, expel them or refuse membership renewal, and to disassociate itself from the consultant.**
- 9.11 **A consultant who resigns voluntarily, defaults on payment of membership fees, is suspended, or is struck off the professional register, is no longer entitled to use the letters FSSA. The Society may decide to request return of their certificate of accreditation.**

## **10.0 General Guidance**

- 10.1 Throughout this Consultants Code document, *Consultant* means a consultant currently named on the Society's register of Accredited Consultants and **offering professional services or education within the domain of Feng Shui and associated topics**; *Client* means the person or corporate body with whom the consultant makes an agreement or contract for the provision of services; *Society* means The Feng Shui Society, its Officers and Executive Committee for the time being.
- 10.2 Consultants should observe this Code whether working on their own account, or as a partner or employee within another practice. Consultants are responsible for ensuring that they and their own staff behave in accordance with this Code.
- 10.3 Consultants are expected to observe this Code wherever they work, except in a country where there are laws or nationally accepted standards for consultants which are at variance with this Code, **in which case those lawful regulations would take precedence**.
- 10.4 The Society is not a statutory body, **nor** empowered in law to regulate Feng Shui-related activities by non-registered consultants or other non-members. However

it has produced this Code with the intention that the professional consultant members of the Society agree to abide by it unswervingly.

10.5 This Code has not been drafted in legal language and is not to be read as such.

10.6 The Society is not in a position to give legal advice.

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