

# Code of Ethics

## and Professional Conduct

### Purpose

This document establishes the ethical principles, standards of conduct, and accountability expectations that govern participation across the GMI ecosystem. It is designed to protect dignity, autonomy, fairness, confidentiality, and trust in all mentoring-related activities.

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*This Code should be read alongside the MBOK Guide and related GMI policies governing mentoring, certification, education partners, assessments, governance, and program operations.*

## Who This Code Applies To

This Code applies to all individuals and organizations participating in the Global Mentoring Institute ecosystem, including mentors, mentees, certification applicants and holders, exam proctors, Registered Education Partners, instructors, volunteers, board and council members, staff, sponsors, organizational partners, and participants in GMI programs, assessments, events, and platforms.

### Relationship Participants

Mentors, mentees, peer mentors, reverse mentoring participants, coaches serving within GMI-defined mentoring roles.

### Credentialing & Assessment Participants

Certification applicants and holders, candidates, exam proctors, assessment administrators, facilitators, and reviewers.

### Delivery & Partner Organizations

Registered Education Partners, instructors, consultants, platform providers, and sponsoring organizations.

### Governance & Community

Board members, council members, volunteers, staff, researchers, and any person representing GMI or using GMI intellectual property within authorized activities.

## Guiding Intent

Ethics in mentoring is not merely the avoidance of harm. It is the active creation of conditions that support dignity, autonomy, fairness, trust, psychological safety, and responsible developmental growth.

## Core Ethical Principles

These principles anchor ethical judgment, behavior, and governance across the GMI ecosystem.

Principle	Meaning	What It Requires
<b>Respect for Autonomy</b>	Affirms the mentee's right to self-determination.	Listen deeply, avoid coercion, and support independent decision-making.
<b>Beneficence</b>	Promotes the mentee's well-being, growth, and capability.	Offer support, insight, challenge, and care in service of development.
<b>Non-Maleficence</b>	Requires avoiding harm in all forms.	Prevent boundary violations, confidentiality breaches, misuse of influence, and unsafe conduct.
<b>Justice and Equity</b>	Requires fairness, inclusion, and equitable access.	Avoid favoritism, bias, and discrimination; design accessible and culturally responsive systems.
<b>Integrity and Honesty</b>	Requires truthfulness, transparency, and consistency.	Honor commitments, disclose limitations, and avoid misrepresentation or conflicts of interest.

# Standards of Professional Conduct

Ethical principles become meaningful only when translated into consistent behavior. The following standards apply across all GMI activities.

## 1. Dignity, Respect, and Fair Treatment

- Treat all participants with respect, professionalism, courtesy, and cultural sensitivity.
- Do not discriminate on the basis of identity, background, belief, status, disability, or protected characteristics.
- Foster psychological safety, equitable participation, and respectful dialogue, including in digital and hybrid settings.

## 2. Confidentiality and Responsible Use of Information

- Safeguard confidential and sensitive information obtained through mentoring, assessments, exams, reviews, or governance work.
- Communicate clearly about the limits of confidentiality, including risks of harm, legal obligations, and policy-based disclosure requirements.
- Use personal, assessment, and program data only for authorized developmental, evaluative, or governance purposes and in accordance with applicable privacy requirements.

## 3. Boundaries and Scope of Practice

- Maintain clear boundaries between mentoring and roles such as therapy, supervision, friendship, romantic involvement, procurement, or performance management unless formally disclosed and authorized.
- Recognize when an issue exceeds the scope of mentoring and refer the individual to appropriate professional, organizational, or support resources.
- Avoid dependency, over-identification, dual relationships, favoritism, and undue influence.

## 4. Honesty, Integrity, and Transparency

- Represent credentials, qualifications, outcomes, affiliations, and evidence truthfully.
- Honor commitments, communicate honestly, and disclose relevant conflicts of interest or limitations.
- Do not falsify records, plagiarize, mislead participants, or misstate the purpose or validity of assessments, certifications, or program outcomes.

## 5. Competence and Professional Responsibility

- Practice within the boundaries of your competence and engage in ongoing development, reflection, and feedback.
- Seek consultation, supervision, or ethics guidance when dilemmas arise or when bias, uncertainty, or elevated risk may affect judgment.
- Support the mentee's autonomy and development rather than personal control, dependency, or agenda advancement.

## 6. Stewardship, Quality, and System Integrity

- Protect the integrity of GMI programs, standards, assessments, exams, events, and partner relationships.
- Report misconduct, irregularities, cheating, safety concerns, or material policy violations in good faith.
- Contribute to equitable access, quality assurance, and the responsible evolution of mentoring practice across the ecosystem.

## Role-Specific Responsibilities

Role Group	Key Responsibilities
<b>Mentors</b>	Protect confidentiality; maintain boundaries; avoid coercion; support mentee autonomy; deliver challenge with care; manage power responsibly; refer when issues exceed mentoring scope.
<b>Mentees</b>	Engage honestly and responsibly; respect agreed boundaries; use mentoring in good faith; provide truthful information; avoid misuse of access, influence, or confidential information.
<b>Program Leaders &amp; Sponsors</b>	Design ethical systems; establish reporting channels; monitor quality and equity; train participants; support mentors through consultation and oversight.
<b>Certification Participants</b>	Comply with exam security, proctoring, and integrity requirements; avoid cheating, impersonation, content sharing, or misrepresentation of status or qualifications.
<b>REPs, Instructors &amp; Partners</b>	Deliver MBOK-aligned education honestly; avoid false marketing claims; cooperate with audits and investigations; maintain customer resolution and complaint procedures.
<b>Board, Council, Staff &amp; Volunteers</b>	Act in GMI's best interest; disclose conflicts; maintain confidentiality; uphold fiduciary and governance duties; protect good-faith reporters from retaliation.

## High-Risk Ethical Areas

### Confidentiality

Confidentiality must be clearly defined and consistently upheld, while explaining the circumstances in which disclosure is required by law, policy, or safety concerns.

### Power Dynamics

Mentors, leaders, and credentialing actors must recognize positional, professional, and informational power and avoid undue influence, dependency, or pressure.

### Dual Relationships

Participants must avoid relationships or arrangements that impair objectivity, create favoritism, or compromise fairness, trust, or safety.

### Assessment & Credentialing Integrity

Assessment results must be used responsibly and within purpose; exams and certifications must be protected from cheating, falsification, content leakage, or deceptive claims.

## Technology & Data

Digital mentoring, AI-supported tools, recordings, messaging platforms, and assessment systems must be used transparently, lawfully, and with privacy safeguards.

### Boundary Rule of Thumb

When a mentoring action increases dependency, blurs role clarity, creates coercion, or places the participant's dignity, safety, or autonomy at risk, the action should be paused, examined, and redirected through ethical review or appropriate referral.

## Ethical Decision-Making Model

When dilemmas arise, GMI participants should use a structured process rather than intuition alone.

1	Recognize the ethical trigger and name the dilemma clearly.
2	Clarify the facts, context, and any relevant uncertainty or power dynamics.
3	Identify affected stakeholders and the likely short- and long-term impacts.
4	Evaluate options against the Code, MBOK guiding principles, and applicable policies.
5	Consult an appropriate authority, ethics resource, supervisor, or program leader when needed.
6	Decide, document the rationale, and implement the least harmful, most principled action.
7	Reflect on the outcome and integrate learning into future practice and system improvement.

## Reporting, Review, and Enforcement

GMI expects good-faith reporting of substantiated concerns and maintains transparent accountability processes consistent with due process, fairness, and confidentiality.

### Reporting

Anyone may report suspected misconduct, cheating, credential misuse, harassment, retaliation, conflicts of interest, or other ethical violations in good faith.

### Review

Reports should be triaged promptly, assessed objectively, and reviewed by an appropriate ethics, certification, or governance authority.

### Outcomes

Responses may include education, coaching, remediation, private reprimand, suspension, revocation, removal from role, public censure when appropriate, or referral to legal/organizational authorities.

Appeals and due process should be available for adverse determinations, and good-faith reporters must be protected from retaliation. False or malicious allegations may themselves constitute misconduct.

## Acknowledgment

### Participation Standard

By participating in GMI programs, certifications, partnerships, assessments, events, or governance activities, individuals and organizations acknowledge their responsibility to act in accordance with this Code and to help protect the integrity of the mentoring profession.

### Recommended acknowledgment statement:

*I have read and understand the Global Mentoring Institute Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct. I agree to uphold its principles, comply with its standards, respect confidentiality and boundaries, report ethical concerns in good faith, and conduct myself in a manner that protects the dignity, safety, fairness, and integrity of mentoring.*

## Foundational Basis

This document was developed from the ethical architecture of the MBOK Guide, including Ethics Management; ethical principles and standards of conduct; boundaries, power, and professional responsibility; and ethical decision-making guidance, as well as GMI policy framework elements governing REPs, certification integrity, appeals, and enforcement.

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