

Malta Union of Professional Psychologists

Charter of Professional Ethics

The aim of this Charter is to set down guidelines for all psychologists, whatever their specialization, method, duties, theoretical/practical orientation and professional goals. Their research and practice are based on a corpus of established and agreed upon scientific knowledge. The subject matter of this science is the whole range of mutual relationships between psychic life and modes of conduct, both individual and group. To achieve the specific objectives of their science and discipline, psychologists have to work with that which is most intimate in individuals and groups. Therefore, psychologists are obliged to ensure the highest ethical guarantees. It follows that the responsibilities incumbent on psychologists define the parameters for the proper exercise of their duties. Thus, the basic ethical principles of this charter lay the foundations for the dissemination and practice of psychology by professionals who act by it, are guided by it, and abide by its principles.

The basic principles are:

Competence

Psychologists' competence is derived from theoretical studies given at university at the highest levels and which are being continually updated as well as from practical training supervised by peers. Psychologists can only claim particular qualifications which are derived from their education, and training and personal experience, thereby establishing their own professional limits.

Responsibility

Within the framework of their competence psychologist assume the responsibility for the choice, application, consequences, methods, and techniques to be used, and for the professional advice which they provide concerning individuals, groups, and society. They refuse to become in any way involved in, or to assume, the duties of a theoretical or technical nature should these be in conflict with their ethical principles.

Respect and Development of the Rights and Dignity of Persons

Psychologists respect, and strive to promote the fundamental rights, freedom, dignity, confidentiality, autonomy, and psychological well-being of the individual. They can only accomplish this with the consent of the individual concerned except in cases where otherwise sanctioned by law. On the other hand, any person must be in a position to consult directly and without restraint the psychologist of his/her choice. Psychologists guarantee confidentiality, respect professional secrecy, and protect the privacy of the individual even when they are required to pass on information regarding their work.

Integrity

The cornerstone underlying the application of the above principles is integrity, which psychologists must respect and promote in the conduct of all their activities, in their efforts to clarify their role, their approach, their functions and the services they offer.

These four principles are fundamental and essential. Psychologists are committed to respect and promote these principles, are guided by them, and disseminate them. Psychologists follow these principles to regulate the relationships both with the members of their own scientific community as well as with other professional bodies in general.