ADE Event Code of Conduct

ADE is committed to providing events, meetings and online spaces that are welcoming, inclusive and safe. Everyone taking part in an ADE event is expected to treat others with dignity and respect. Harassment, sexual harassment, discrimination, bullying, threatening behaviour and other inappropriate conduct will not be tolerated.
ADE will take all reasonable steps to prevent sexual harassment of its employees and all reasonable steps to prevent harassment of employees by third parties in the course of employment. This Code supports this by setting clear standards for members, delegates, speakers, sponsors, contractors, guests and other people who interact with ADE staff through events and related activities.

Scope
This Code applies to everyone participating in or supporting ADE activities, including attendees, members, speakers, panelists, exhibitors, sponsors, suppliers, contractors, venue staff, guests, volunteers and ADE staff.
It applies to in-person and online events, receptions, forums, working groups, workshops, roundtables, webinars, networking activities, social events, site visits and other ADE-hosted or organised activities. It also applies to event related communications and interactions before, during and after an event where there is a clear connection to ADE activity.

Expected standards of behaviour
All participants are expected to:

- Treat other people with dignity, courtesy and respect.
- Use professional and inclusive language and respect different experiences, identities and viewpoints.
- Respect personal boundaries and stop behaviour when asked to do so.
- Follow reasonable instructions given by ADE staff, event organisers, venue staff or security where these relate to safety, conduct or the running of the event.
- Take particular care where alcohol is being served. Alcohol does not excuse inappropriate conduct.
- Avoid conduct that could reasonably make another person feel intimidated, humiliated, degraded, threatened, excluded or unsafe.

Harassment, sexual harassment and discrimination

Harassment can include unwanted conduct related to age, disability, gender reassignment, race, religion or belief, sex or sexual orientation where the conduct has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. ADE also prohibits discriminatory, bullying or abusive conduct on other grounds, including conduct connected with pregnancy or maternity, marriage or civil partnership, neurodiversity, physical appearance or other personal characteristics.

Sexual harassment is unwanted conduct of a sexual nature that has the purpose or effect of violating a person's dignity or creating an intimidating, hostile, degrading, humiliating or offensive environment. It can occur regardless of the sex, gender identity or sexual orientation of the people involved and does not require an intention to cause offence.

Examples of behaviour that may breach this Code include, but are not limited to:

- Unwanted sexual advances, touching, physical contact or repeated invitations.
- Sexual, suggestive, lewd or discriminatory comments, jokes, gestures or messages.
- Comments about someone's body, appearance, identity, private life or protected characteristic that are inappropriate or unwelcome.
- Displaying, sharing or sending sexually explicit, offensive or discriminatory images, videos or other material.
- Deliberate intimidation, threats, stalking, persistent unwanted attention or following someone.
- Bullying, insulting, demeaning or exclusionary behaviour, including online behaviour.
- Retaliating against, disadvantaging or pressuring someone because they raised a concern, supported another person or acted as a witness.

Third-party harassment and ADE staff

From 30 October 2026, employers can be liable for harassment of employees by third parties where the harassment occurs in the course of employment and the employer failed to take all reasonable steps to prevent it. A third party is someone other than the employer or one of its employees. At ADE events this may include, for example, a member representative, delegate, speaker, sponsor, supplier, contractor, guest or venue representative.

Participants must therefore understand that conduct towards ADE staff is covered by this Code in the same way as conduct towards other participants. The seniority, commercial importance, membership status or external relationship of a person

will not prevent ADE from taking reasonable protective or disciplinary action within its control.

Raising a concern

If you experience, witness or become aware of conduct that may breach this Code, you are encouraged to raise it as soon as you feel able. You do not need to confront the person involved or attempt to resolve the matter yourself before seeking support.

A concern can be raised with:

- The ADE event lead(s) or another ADE staff member at the event
- The Head of Operations and Wellbeing
- The ADE CEO

Immediate safety and intervention

ADE staff and event organisers may take reasonable and proportionate steps to protect participants and staff where a concern arises. Depending on the circumstances, this may include checking on the person affected, stopping interaction, separating individuals, involving venue staff or security, restricting contact, or asking a participant to leave.

ADE staff are authorised to end or leave an interaction and seek assistance if they reasonably believe that conduct is unsafe, harassing or otherwise inappropriate. No member of staff is expected to continue an interaction solely because the other person is a member, senior stakeholder, sponsor, speaker or other influential contact.

Where there is an immediate risk of harm or a suspected criminal offence, ADE may contact venue security, emergency services or another appropriate authority.

Bystanders and/or witnesses

People who witness inappropriate conduct are encouraged to support the person affected and report the concern where appropriate. Bystander intervention should be safe and proportionate. Nobody is expected to place themselves at risk. Where direct intervention is not appropriate, seeking help from an ADE staff member, event organiser, venue representative or security is encouraged.

How ADE will respond

ADE will take concerns seriously and will respond as promptly, sensitively and fairly as reasonably possible. Information will be shared only where there is a legitimate reason to do so, for example to assess a concern, protect people, investigate what happened, obtain advice or comply with legal or governance obligations.

Where a concern involves an ADE employee, it may also be dealt with under ADE's Sexual Harassment Policy, Grievance Policy and Procedure, Disciplinary and Dismissal Policy and Procedure, Whistleblowing Policy or other relevant employment procedures.

Consequences of breaching this Code

ADE reserves the right to take action where a participant breaches this Code. The action taken will depend on the seriousness of the conduct, the available evidence, any immediate safety considerations and ADE's authority in the circumstances.

Action may include:

- A verbal or written warning.
- Removing or separating a participant from an activity or another person.
- Restricting a participant's contact with ADE staff.
- Requiring a participant to leave an event without refund where appropriate.
- Refusing or restricting attendance at future ADE events.
- Raising the matter with the participant's employer, member organisation, sponsor, supplier or another relevant organisation where appropriate.
- Taking action under ADE employment procedures where the person involved is an ADE employee.
- Referring the matter to venue security, the police or another relevant authority where appropriate.

ADE may take immediate protective action before reaching any final conclusion about what occurred. Such action is not, by itself, a finding of misconduct.

Review and related policies

This Code will be reviewed periodically and following significant incidents or material changes in law or ADE practice. It should be read alongside ADE's Sexual Harassment Policy, EDI policy, the Staff Handbook and related grievance, disciplinary and whistleblowing procedures. All relevant policies can be found on our website www.theade.co.uk.

This Code sets behavioural standards for ADE activities. It does not remove any statutory rights, legal remedies or reporting routes available to an individual.