



STANDARDS COMMITTEE

ANNUAL REPORT



COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Iain Christie – Chair, Independent Member
- Carol Westrop – Vice Chair, Independent Member
- Paul Thorogood – Independent Member
- Jonathan Curtis – Chair, PR & Comms Board
- Emily Fermor – Acting Chair, Public Affairs Board

PRCA BACKGROUND

Following the PRCA Governance Review in 2023, the PRCA Professional Practices Committee was replaced by the Standards Committee.

Recruitment for independent members took place in November/December 2023 with shortlisting and interviews being undertaken by the Nominations Committee. Appointments were made and independent roles filled by 1st January 2024.

PRCA PURPOSE

- Determine the Codes of Conduct;
- Determine the procedure, whereby any complaints under the Codes of Conduct are to be investigated.
- Decide upon any such complaints and impose, where appropriate, any sanction

STRUCTURE

- The Standards Committee comprises a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 15 members.
- Recommended by the Nominations Committee and appointed by the Steering Committee.
- A majority of the members of the Standards Committee (including the chair) shall be chosen from outside the Industry.
- The chairs of the Professional Boards shall be members of the Standards Committee.

TERMS

- The Committee are permitted to serve between a 2 and 5 year single term.

MEETINGS

- The Committee should meet a minimum of twice per year.

- The Standards Committee has recently consolidated and updated the Codes of Conduct which will replace the Professional Charter and the Health Public Relations Code of Conduct.
- The review included input from external legal advisors and stakeholders within the PRCA.
- The revised Codes set out more clearly the ethical standards and principles which members are required to adopt in their professional lives.
- A copy of the new Code of Conduct is attached at Annex A.

- The Standards Committee has also revised the process for making and determining complaints of a breach of the Codes of Conduct and Public Affairs Code.
- The new procedure will make it easier for the PRCA to uphold professional standards within the industry and streamlines the process for dealing with complaints.
- PRCA staff will receive training to ensure they comply with the new procedures.
- A copy of the new procedure is attached at Annex B.

PRCA FUTURE PLANS

- The Standards Committee will conduct a consultation exercise with members to revise the Public Affairs Code.
- A campaign to raise awareness of the changes to the Codes of Conduct and the new procedures for complaints handling will be undertaken.