

Code of ethics

Preamble

The purpose of drawing up a code of ethics for the Librarians is to help set standards of professional conduct expected of members in line with the aims and objectives of the Association. It will also help regulate professional behavior in terms of safeguarding the interests of the community served. As librarians significantly influence or control the selection, organisation, preservation and dissemination of information, they are entrusted with the responsibility to provide their clientele access to information. Hence a code of ethics is vital in defining their professional responsibility.

The National Information Policy which was formulated in 1989 provides a framework to guide the free flow of information to all sectors of the Malaysian population. It does not, however, include the role and responsibility of the librarian in the provision of information services – perhaps a reflection of the ‘low-key’ image accorded to librarians in this country. A written code of ethics to guide their professional conduct will certainly help enhance the professional image of librarians.

Code of Ethics

1. Librarians must uphold and maintain the principles as laid down in the Constitution of the Librarians Association of Malaysia. In addition to this, they:
2. Must provide the highest level of service to library users through appropriate and usefully organized resources, equitable service policies and accurate, unbiased and courteous response to all requests. Must strive for excellence in the profession by maintaining and enhancing their knowledge and skills, and keeping abreast of developments in librarianship
3. Should uphold the principle of intellectual freedom and allow users to have free and equal access to sources of information without discrimination, within the limits of the law.
4. Must protect the library user's right to privacy and confidentiality with respect to information sought or received, and materials consulted or borrowed.
5. Must distinguish between personal philosophy or attitudes and professional duties by not allowing personal beliefs to interfere with aims of the institution or professional body.
6. Must avoid situations in which personal interests and gains may be advanced at the expense of library users, colleagues or employing institutions.
7. Must ensure that actions and decisions are determined solely by professional judgement; librarians should not profit from their position other than by normal remuneration or fee for professional services.
8. Must treat co-workers and fellow librarians with respect, fairness and goodwill.