



Code of Conduct for Licensed HCV Assessors of the HCV Resource Network Assessor Licensing Scheme

Commitments

Licensed HCV assessors of the High Conservation Value Resource Network (HCVRN) Assessor Licensing Scheme (ALS) commit to:

- a) Support the mission of the HCVRN and sign the HCVRN Charter;
- b) Conduct HCV assessments in accordance with this Code of Conduct and the guidance and procedures developed by the HCVRN;
- c) Identify and declare any conflict of interest to the HCVRN ALS
- d) Sign and abide by a general confidentiality agreement applicable to all confidential and sensitive information in HCV assessment reports or disclosed during the assessment process;
- e) Make explicitly clear that any other HCV-related work, outside of HCV assessments conducted as licensed assessors and submitted to the ALS for evaluation, is carried out independently of the fact that the assessor holds an ALS licence and, unless explicitly agreed otherwise, independently of the HCVRN.
- f) Refrain from any form of plagiarism in the production of HCV assessment reports and ensure that assessment reports are the original work of the licensed assessor.
- g) Abstain from making false claims regarding their skills and experience and agree to undertake only those activities they can reasonably expect to complete given the required skills, knowledge and competence.

Conflicts of Interest

Conflicts of interest may arise when there is a connection between the Licensed Assessor and 1) the Organisation commissioning the HCV assessment, 2) the Peer Reviewer, or 3) a stakeholder significantly affected by the outcome of the HCV assessment. Examples include where Licensed Assessors:

- are currently employed by the organisation commissioning the HCV assessment or have worked within the last two years for the organisation that commissioned the HCV assessment;
- have financial or personal connections to the organisation that commissioned the HCV assessment;
- are directly affected, or have close associates who are directly affected, by the proposed activities covered by the assessment.

It is the responsibility of each Licensed Assessor to identify any conflict of interest, considering all current and previous connections with the individuals and organisations involved, and to declare them to the HCVRN ALS. Whenever a potential conflict of interest has been identified, the Licensed Assessor must take adequate measures to remove or manage the conflict so as to ensure the integrity of the assessment before agreeing to conduct the assessment. If, after implementing such measures, the Quality Manager concludes that a significant conflict of interest still remains, the Licensed Assessor can be sanctioned.

Confidentiality

Licensed Assessors may, in the course of their work, come into contact with confidential or sensitive information. Therefore all Licensed Assessors are required to sign and abide by a confidentiality agreement not to disclose to anyone else any confidential information related to the organisation that commissioned the HCV assessment, information that could put an HCV at risk, or any information provided by stakeholders in confidence. The agreement applies to work by all Licensed Assessors, both whilst their licence status is active and at any time thereafter.

Failure to comply with the present Code of Conduct may result in complaints from stakeholders through the HCVRN ALS Complaints Procedure and/or the HCVRN temporarily or permanently revoking the HCV assessor licence.

Claims

Licensed Assessors remain free to work on other applications of the HCV concept, in the spirit of the HCVRN Charter, independently of their function as Licensed Assessors. For instance, Licensed Assessors may also conduct Peer Reviews of HCV assessment reports as long as there is no conflict of interest.

In contexts other than conducting HCV assessments, Licensed Assessors may legitimately state their qualification as a Licensed Assessor of the HCVRN ALS as evidence of their HCV competence. However, whenever making such a reference, Licensed Assessors must also clearly state that they are acting wholly independently of their licence status, and of the HCVRN, and must make no claim to act or speak on behalf of HCVRN.

I agree to fully abide by the commitments as stated and outlined in this Code of Conduct

Date:

Signature:

Name and contact details:
