



Institutional initiatives in professional scientific ethics: three case studies

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Learned and professional scientific bodies can play a vital role in promoting ethical behaviours, giving practical substance to theoretical consideration of geoethical principles and complementing the efforts of individual scientists and practitioners to behave in a professional and ethical manner. Institutions may do this through mandatory professional codes of conduct, by developing guidelines and initiatives to codify and stimulate the uptake of best practice, and through wider initiatives to engender a culture conducive to such behaviours.

This presentation will outline three current institutional initiatives which directly or indirectly address scientific ethics:

- i. The UK Science Council's Declaration on Diversity, Equality and Inclusion.
- ii. Development and promulgation of the American Geosciences Institute's (AGI) Guidelines for Ethical Professional Conduct.
- iii. The American Geophysical Union's (AGU) Scientific Code of Conduct and Professional Ethics.

The focus of the Science Council and its member bodies (including the Geological Society of London) on diversity is of central importance when considering ethical behaviours in science. First, improving equality and diversity in the science workforce is at the heart of ethical practice, as well as being essential to meeting current and future skills needs. Second, in addition to demographic diversity (whether in terms of gender, race, economic status, sexuality or gender identity, etc), an important dimension of diversity in science is to allow space for a plurality of scientific views, and to nurture dissenting voices – essential both to the development of scientific knowledge and to its effective communication to non-technical audiences.