

SOP No.	BE-03.01	Supersedes SOP No.	BE-03.00	Effective Date	4 November 2023		
Page	1	of	3	Original Issue Date	29 September 2023	Retirement Date	

## **SQA Member and Program Participant Code of Conduct**

### **1. Significant Change(s) from Previous Version**

Updated title and process for complaints

### **2. Purpose**

The purpose of this policy is to communicate to all members and HQ staff that SQA will not in any instance tolerate bullying, disrespectful behavior, or harassment. Members/program participants found in violation of this policy will be disciplined, up to and including the withdrawal of membership benefits and/or event access.

### **3. Scope**

This SOP applies to all SQA Headquarters (HQ) staff, members, and program participants.

### **4. Responsibilities**

All SQA members, vendors, and program participants are responsible for showing respect for their colleagues while participating in SQA activities.

The SQA Board of Directors administers this policy and enforces it.

The Bylaws and Ethics Committee reviews complaints and recommends actions to the Board.

### **5. Procedures**

#### **5.1 Definition**

SQA expects all individuals who participate in SQA programs (members, non-members, Chapter members, SQA HQ staff, vendors, etc.) are expected to demonstrate ethical and respectful behavior while interacting during SQA programs, on SQA platforms, and during SQA events. Disrespectful behavior, bullying, or harassment will not be tolerated (hereafter “disrespectful behavior”).

SQA defines disrespectful behavior repeated mistreatment of one or more people by one or more perpetrators. It is abusive conduct that includes:

- Threatening, humiliating, or intimidating behaviors
- Interference/sabotage that prevents work from getting done
- Verbal or online (cyber-bullying) abuse

Such behaviors violate SQA's Code of Ethics, which clearly states that members will always act in a manner that reflects creditably upon their profession.

## 5.2 Examples

SQA considers each of the following as disrespectful behavior:

- Verbal or online (cyber). Slandering, public ridiculing, or maligning a person, their company, or their family; persistent name-calling that is hurtful, insulting or humiliating; using a person as the butt of jokes; abusive and offensive remarks, including sexual innuendo.
- Physical. Pushing, shoving, kicking, poking, tripping, assault or threat of physical assault, damage to a person's property.
- Gesture. Nonverbal gestures that can convey threatening messages.
- In addition, the following examples may constitute or contribute to evidence of unacceptable behavior:
  - Persistent singling out of one person.
  - Shouting or raising one's voice at an individual in public or in private.
  - Using obscene or intimidating gestures.
  - Not allowing a person to speak or express themselves (i.e., ignoring or interrupting).
  - Personal insults and use of offensive nicknames.
  - Public humiliation in any form.
  - Constant criticism on matters unrelated or minimally related to the person's SQA participation.
  - Public reprimands.
  - Repeatedly accusing someone of errors that cannot be documented.
  - Deliberately interfering with mail and other communications.
  - Spreading rumors and gossip regarding individuals or their companies.
  - Deliberately excluding an individual or isolating someone from SQA-related activities, such as meetings.
  - Unwanted physical contact, physical abuse, or threats of abuse to an individual or an individual's property (defacing or marking up property).

### 5.3 What to Do

Individuals who feel they have experienced or observed behavior like that described above are asked to report it to [reporting@sqa.org](mailto:reporting@sqa.org), which is monitored by the SQA Executive Director. All members are strongly encouraged to report any problematic conduct they experience or witness as soon as possible to allow SQA to take appropriate and timely action.

### 5.4 Repercussions

All reports will be referred to the SQA Bylaws and Ethics Committee (BEC) for review/recommendation to the SQA Board of Directors for action.

SQA Members found to have participated in disrespectful behavior based on the definitions listed above may be temporarily prohibited from participating on online forums, removal from a leadership position, prohibited from participating in an SQA program(s), or have their membership withdrawn. Consequences depend on the seriousness of the offense and the context in which it took place.

If action is taken, written notifications outlining the decision of the BEC and the Board will be made to both the individual reporting the behavior and the individual found to have violated this policy.

## 6. Other Documents to Consider

SQA Code of Ethics

### SOP Reviewed by:

*Signature on File*

Alison Cockrell, CAE  
SQA Executive Director

4 November 2023

Date

### SOP Approved by:

*Signature on File*

Cheryl McCarthy  
SQA President

4 November 2023

Date