

Professional Standards

A guide to standards for quality assurance,
privacy & ethics in market and social
research in Australia



Professional Standards

Introduction

→ Australian market and social researchers adhere to a range of professional standards that have evolved to meet changing needs in the industry and within society in general.

This booklet is designed as a summary to outline these initiatives.

Code of Professional Behaviour

Individual members of the Australian Market and Social Research Society (AMSRS) are bound by the Code of Professional Behaviour, which covers both the ethical requirements and standard conditions of conducting and reporting market and social research.

The purpose of market and social research is to collect and analyse information, not to directly sell or promote goods or services, influence respondents' opinions or engage in non-research activities. It is in this spirit that the Code of Professional Behaviour has been developed.

This Code sets out the basic principles that must guide the actions of those who carry out or use market and social research. Individuals and organisations that subscribe to it must follow not just the letter but also the spirit of these rules. The Code of Professional Behaviour outlines ethical obligations and rules under the three key areas:

- Responsibilities to respondents
- Researchers' professional responsibilities
- Researchers' and clients' mutual rights and responsibilities

A copy of the Code of Professional Behaviour is available at www.amsrs.com.au

A great guide to the practical challenges of applying the Code is the *Ethical? e-book* which is also available for AMSRS members. This can be provided on CD or as a PDF document.

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Market and Social Research Privacy Principles

AMSRO members subscribe to a Market and Social Research (M&SR) Privacy Code. The Market and Social Research Privacy Principles (M&SRPPs) in this Code replace the National Privacy Principles (NPPs) in the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth). The M&SRPPs give clarity to market and social research practice.

The M&SRPPs were approved by the Privacy Commissioner in 2003, and again in 2007, upon Review. This approval indicates that the Privacy Commissioner is satisfied that the obligations in the M&SRPPs are at least the overall equivalent of those set out in the National Privacy Principles in the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth).

The aims of the Code are:

- to facilitate the protection of identified information provided by, or held in relation to, the participants or subjects of market and social research;
- to enable quality research to be carried out, so as to provide accurate information to government, commercial and not for profit organisations to support their decision-making processes;
- to allow market and social research small business operators that are otherwise not subject to the Privacy Act 1988 (Commonwealth) to benefit from compliance with industry best practice in relation to the handling of identified data.



Qualified Practising Market Researcher (QPMR)

A Qualified Professional Market Researcher (QPMR) is a market and social research professional with a specific qualification.

A QPMR can be a member who works as a supplier of market and social research, or as a buyer or user of research services.

A QPMR must:

- Be a full member of AMSRS
- Have at least five years research experience, relevant tertiary or practical experience, be able to recommend appropriate research approaches and interpret and apply findings.
- Agree to undertake continuing professional development each year to maintain current knowledge.
- Abide by the industry Code of Professional Behaviour.

Each year, accredited QPMRs are requested to document their continuing professional development activities undertaken in the previous 12 months. Relevant professional development activities are awarded points per hour of learning. A minimum of 100 points must be achieved in order to maintain QPMR accreditation.

For further details contact AMSRS on 02 9566 3100 or email: qpmr@amsrs.com.au

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ISO Quality Assurance Standards

AS:ISO 20252

AS:ISO 20252 is now recognised internationally as the industry quality control standard for market and social research. For Australian companies, it replaces AS 4752 and incorporates functions of IQCA.

It is a company based standard and includes requirements for the entire research process.

The Standard is available to all market and social research companies.

The standard can be purchased from SAI Global www.saiglobal.com or NCS International www.ncsi.com.au and assessment and certification is available from industry approved certification bodies.



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Access Panel Standards AS: ISO 26362

ISO 26362 is the new international standard for access panels, both online and offline.

It addresses a wide range of matters such as organisational responsibilities for quality management, confidentiality and transparency, methods and sources of recruitment, confirmation of identity, panel structure/size, and profile data of panels. It also covers aspects of panel management including use of incentives, sampling, frequency of participation, screening and validation of data.

The Standard is now available to all market and social research companies who operate access panels.



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