

Revised  
2016

# Orthoptic Code of Ethics: Standards of Professional Behaviour

***THIS CODE OF ETHICS HAS BEEN PREPARED BY THE  
ORTHOPTISTES DE LA COMMUNAUTÉ EUROPÉENNE (OCE)  
AND IS ENDORSED BY THE INTERNATIONAL ORTHOPTIC  
ASSOCIATION (IOA) AS AN ETHICAL GUIDE FOR QUALIFIED  
ORTHOPTISTS AND ORTHOPTIC STUDENTS FOR  
PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR.***





# Code of Ethics - Standards of professional behavior

## Introduction

The OCE realizes that a high standard of professional conduct in all orthoptists is important both for the patient and the high regard of the profession.

Therefore, the OCE has drawn up a Code of Ethics and offers guidelines for the practice of orthoptics in Europe. The document may be used to supplement existing national codes or assist in establishing such codes where they do not already exist. It is not intended that this should replace any national code of conduct and orthoptists must primarily comply with the rules of the country in which they practice.

## OCE code of ethics (Professional Duties)

I

Orthoptists must possess qualifications recognized by the appropriate authority.

II

Orthoptists must follow the law and respect the principles defined by the authorities.

III

Orthoptists should offer the best possible treatment to their patients and not by any act or omission do anything to endanger or adversely affect the health or safety of their patients.

IV

Orthoptists should avoid exceeding their scope and confine themselves to those fields of practice in which they have been trained and maintained competence.

V

Orthoptists should treat all people with whom they have professional contact with dignity and respect.



## VI

Orthoptists are responsible for the public image of the profession and therefore should refrain from any action which might discredit themselves or their profession.

## VII

Orthoptists will seek to promote the profession and present orthoptics in a positive manner.

# Standards of professional behavior

## **1 Professional practice**

- 1.1. Orthoptists will provide services that fall within their scope of practice, level of competence, considering their level of education or training and recent experience and in accordance with their national requirements of registration, licensure or certification.
- 1.2. Orthoptists will treat patients without discrimination on any basis. They will not knowingly engage in or condone behavior that is harassing or demeaning to persons with whom they interact in their work.
- 1.3. Orthoptists have a professional responsibility to evaluate the effectiveness of their work and modify their practice accordingly.
- 1.4. Orthoptists will maintain and develop their knowledge and skills throughout their careers and enhance their practice based on best available evidence and professional consensus.
- 1.5. Orthoptists will liaise and collaborate with others involved in the care of the patient. They will participate in an interdisciplinary framework.
- 1.6. Orthoptists should not allow their professional judgement to be influenced by the offer of gifts or money, or let their behavior or treatment of the patient be affected by financial interests or professional advancement.

## **2 Communication**

- 2.1. Orthoptists will obtain informed consent from a patient before assessment or treatment (written or verbal) and respect the patient's right to refuse or withdraw consent once given.



- 2.2 Orthoptists must maintain strict professional confidentiality and should only seek and store information for the benefit of patient care.
- 2.3 Orthoptists will maintain full records and must ensure that these data are adequately protected.
- 2.4 Orthoptists will give well founded and honest professional opinion and advice.
- 2.5 Orthoptists will only advertise their professional activities in a restrained manner. Advertisements should not be false or misleading. Orthoptists will not make exaggerating claims in terms of their personal skill, or outcomes of treatment, or in a manner that disparages the skills of colleagues or other professionals.

### **3 Education and Research**

- 3.1 Orthoptists involved in the education of students will deliver the highest standard possible in both academic and clinical aspects and ensure the professional competencies are achieved.
- 3.2 Orthoptists who undertake clinical training will provide adequate supervision of the student and assume full responsibility for the patient.
- 3.3 Orthoptist will be personally responsible for actively maintaining and developing their personal development and professional competence.
- 3.4 Orthoptists will contribute to the development of orthoptic practice through research activity and will share research findings with colleagues. Research must conform to generally accepted scientific principles and care should be taken that ethical implications are addressed and standards are maintained.

*This document has been prepared by the members of the working party on ethics -Mirjam van Lammeren, Mireille Louly, Manuel Oliveira and Chris Timms- and has been approved by the General Assembly of the OCE on May 5, 2000  
Updated 2016.*

*This document was reviewed and endorsed in 2016 as the professional code of ethics for orthoptists globally by the International Orthoptic Associations (IOA), Code of Ethics Committee. This Code is a affirmation of both the OCE's and IOA's commitment to conducting ethical orthoptic practice both in European Union countries and globally and to observing applicable laws, rules and regulations.*

*Honesty, integrity, transparency, accountability, confidentiality, objectivity,*