

Ask Gareth Code of Conduct

For visitors, registered members, consultants, contributors and partners

Standards Knowledge • Expert Insight • Open Discussion

Introduction

Ask Gareth is built for respectful, practical and evidence-led professional discussion. This Code of Conduct explains the standards expected from everyone who reads, posts, comments, contributes, advertises or participates on the platform.

Ask Gareth is a public knowledge hub and moderated professional community for standards, assurance, benchmarking, accreditation and practical compliance discussion. It is ISO-led at launch but open to wider UK and international standards communities, including accreditation, health and care compliance, SOC 1 and SOC 2, Cyber Essentials, environmental and sustainability frameworks, construction and supplier assurance, and other recognised benchmarking sectors.

Core principles

- Treat every user professionally and respectfully.
- Contribute in good faith with practical, evidence-led information.
- Protect confidential, personal and commercially sensitive information.
- Be honest about qualifications, approvals, accreditation and endorsements.
- Support open discussion without harassment, discrimination or intimidation.
- Respect intellectual property and lawful use of standards, templates and materials.

Visitors

Anyone can read public content and post questions or comments in open discussion areas. Visitors must follow the behavioural rules below and accept that content is moderated. Visitors are asked to identify themselves accurately and to avoid disclosing information about employers, clients or third parties without authority.

Registered members

Members create an account to comment, follow topics and take part in discussion. Members must keep account details accurate, must not share credentials, and must not create duplicate or fake accounts. Members are responsible for content posted under their account.

Consultants, contributors and service providers

Consultants and contributors accepted onto Ask Gareth agree to higher expectations: accurate representation of qualifications, transparent conflicts of interest, no undeclared promotion, and no misuse of the platform to solicit clients aggressively. Contributions must be original or properly attributed and must not disclose confidential client information.

Advertisers and partners must comply with UK advertising standards, must clearly label sponsored content, and must not make misleading claims about certification, accreditation or endorsement.

Behaviour not acceptable on Ask Gareth

- Do not harass, bully, intimidate, threaten, stalk or target other users.
- Do not post hate speech, discriminatory content, slurs or degrading language linked to protected characteristics.
- Do not post malicious, grossly offensive, threatening, obscene or abusive communications.
- Do not defame, unfairly attack or make unsubstantiated claims about clients, consultants, auditors, certification bodies, accreditation bodies, regulators, employers or competitors.
- Do not disclose personal data, confidential client information, audit reports, private correspondence, employee information or commercially sensitive material without authority.
- Do not impersonate people, companies, regulators, certification bodies, accreditation bodies or official representatives.
- Do not make false or misleading claims about qualifications, approvals, accreditation, certification, competence, partnerships or official endorsement.
- Do not upload or copy copyrighted standards, templates, training materials, images, logos, documents or articles without permission or a lawful basis.
- Do not encourage unsafe or unlawful professional practice such as falsifying records, concealing nonconformities, misleading auditors, manipulating audit evidence or ignoring legal duties.
- Do not spam, scam, phish, post malware links, create fake reviews or use the platform for aggressive sales activity.
- Do not post sexual harassment, cyberflashing, explicit content, non-consensual intimate content or exploitative material.
- Do not promote terrorism, violent extremism, self-harm, serious violence or criminal activity.
- Do not abuse the platform through scraping, automated posting, duplicate accounts, moderation evasion or attempted service disruption.

UK legal and regulatory context

Ask Gareth moderates content with reference to UK expectations. This is a summary, not legal advice.

- Equality Act 2010 and protected characteristics.
- Malicious Communications Act 1988, Communications Act 2003 and the Online Safety Act 2023 where relevant.
- Laws covering harassment, stalking, threats and related conduct.
- UK GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018.
- Defamation and reputational harm.
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.
- Consumer protection, advertising and professional conduct expectations.
- Certification, accreditation and regulatory integrity.

This Code of Conduct is not legal advice. It explains the standards expected on Ask Gareth. Serious unlawful, harmful, safeguarding or regulatory concerns may result in content removal, account restriction and, where appropriate, referral to the relevant authority or professional body.

Moderation and enforcement

Content is subject to anti-spam controls, keyword filters and human review. Moderators may edit, label, hide or remove posts, restrict accounts and, in serious cases, refer matters to the relevant authority or professional body. Enforcement is proportionate: minor issues are corrected with guidance; repeated or serious breaches lead to suspension or removal.

Common moderation flag reasons include: harassment or abuse; discrimination or hate speech; personal data or confidential information; misleading professional claim; spam or aggressive promotion; copyright or intellectual property issue; unsafe or unlawful advice; other policy concern.

Reporting concerns

Every post has report and flag controls. Users can also contact the Ask Gareth editorial team via the Contact page. Reports about safeguarding, threats to life, criminal activity or serious professional misconduct are prioritised. Where appropriate, matters may be referred to the police, regulators or professional bodies.

Acceptance

By reading, posting, commenting, contributing, advertising or participating on Ask Gareth you agree to follow this Code of Conduct. Registered members, contributors and consultants confirm acceptance at sign-up and each time they submit content.

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