The Financial Services Council
Setting Standards for the Industry

The Financial Services Council Ltd (**FSC**) represents Australia's retail and wholesale funds management businesses, superannuation funds and financial advisory networks. The FSC promotes best practice for the financial services industry by setting mandatory Standards binding on FSC's Full Members as well as providing Guidance Notes to assist in operational efficiency.

How to find FSC's Standards and Guidance Notes

The current FSC Standards and Guidance Notes are available on FSC's website at **www.fsc.org.au** under the "FSC Standards" tab or "FSC Guidance Notes" tab in the "Resources" pull-down menu.

FSC's Standards

By adhering to FSC's Standards, member companies are required to operate with integrity, transparency and in the interests of customers. The current FSC Standards are listed below:

List of Standards

1 *Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct;*

24 *Life Insurance Approved Product List Policy;*

27 *Removal of Occupational Exclusions and Occupation Based Restrictive Disability Definitions in Default Cover;*

28 *Claims Handling for Superannuation Funds;*

29 *Fraud and Scam Mitigation for Superannuation Funds (from 1 July 2026);*

30 *Private Markets Best Practice Principles (from 1 July 2027); and*

31 *Wrap Superannuation Platform Trustee Investment and Adviser Governance Principles Standard and Better Practice Guidance.*

FSC Standard No. 1 *Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct* is the foundation for all other FSC Standards and provides an overarching Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct.

FSC Standard No.1 - *Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct – An Overarching Standard*

Please note the current version of FSC Standard No.1 has been in force since 25 August 2025, with latest changes reflecting a new look and feel for the Standard which is focussed on basic ethical principles and promotes an ethics-based compliance culture.

FSC Standard No.1 has the following parts:

1. ***Application of the Standard and Commentary*** serves as an introduction to the Codes, including their purpose and scope of application;
2. the ***Code of Ethics*** comprises an ethical framework identifying:
   a. a general duty; and
   b. subject to the general duty, a set of specific duties; and
3. the ***Code of Conduct*** comprises a set of rules based on the ethics set out in the Code of Ethics.

All FSC Full Members must comply with the ethical principles and rules set out in Standard No. 1 *Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct*. This document articulates a common set of values shared by FSC Members.

Code of Ethics

The general duty requires FSC Full Members to act in "the public interest" to establish and maintain a strong ethical foundation for the financial services market.

Accordingly, FSC Full Members must conduct themselves with integrity in a manner consistent with fostering and maintaining a good reputation for their industry and refrain from conduct that may discredit the industry.

The specific ethical duties are to:

- give primacy to duties owed to customers;
- treat all stakeholders with fairness and equity;
- instil trustworthiness by establishing and publishing an ethical framework;
- apply a high standard of conduct, including:
  - performing tasks diligently and respectfully; and
  - ensuring appropriate risk and compliance practices;
- manage conflicts of interest; and
- abide by the spirit and letter of the law.

Code of Conduct

FSC's Code of Conduct requires FSC Members to:

- apply all the above tenets of the Code of Ethics;
- compete fairly and appropriately in addition to complying with applicable law;
- provide clear, concise and effective disclosure;
- ensure there are appropriate breach reporting and whistleblowing policies;
- manage conflicts;

- ensure confidentiality and appropriate use of information; and
- promote and support ethical decision-making behaviour through sound corporate governance.

FSC Standards – Member compliance

Between July and September every year, the Boards of Full Member companies are required to adopt a resolution:

- that they are satisfied they have complied with the FSC Standards for the previous financial year;
- that states where they have not complied and confirm the exemptions that have been granted by FSC in this regard; and
- that confirms the Standards not applicable to their business,

and lodge signed documents confirming the above with FSC by 30 September.

FSC's Guidance Notes

Compliance with FSC's Guidance Notes is voluntary but strongly encouraged. The Guidance Notes are designed to assist in operational efficiency and set out what is considered industry best practice.

Governance of FSC's Standards and Guidance Notes

Collectively, FSC's Standards and Guidance Notes are overseen by the Standards, Oversight and Disciplinary Committee (the **SODC,** which is a committee of the FSC Board) and the FSC Board. The SODC is comprised of three members of the FSC Board.

Role of the SODC

The SODC's role also includes:

- considering proposals for the development of new Standards or Guidance Notes and revisions to existing Standards or Guidance Notes; once these have been developed by, or under the direction of, the relevant FSC Board Committee (being those that focus on Superannuation, Funds Management and Advice respectively);
- making final recommendations to the FSC Board for the approval of draft Standards or Guidance Notes, and revisions to existing Standards or Guidance Notes;
- overseeing the annual FSC Standards compliance process (under which FSC Full Members are required to attest as to their compliance with FSC Standards);
- ongoing review FSC Member compliance with the requirements of the FSC Standards and
- considering any:
    - requests for any exemption from requirement(s) under the FSC Standard(s);
    - disclosure by FSC Members of any non-compliance with the Standards;
    - complaints brought to FSC's attention against FSC Members, or any non-compliance with FSC Standards; and
    - any appropriate response which may include disciplinary action in the case of breaches of FSC Standards.

The SODC considers all such Member related issues on an anonymous basis.

Contact the FSC

For more information about FSC's Standards and Guidance Notes please email standards@fsc.org.au.

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