Model Code of User Conduct

Dating Services can be national or international in nature. They can serve niche interest groups or the public at large. Some focus strongly on longer-term romance and possible marriage while offers are lighter in nature allowing people to get together quickly for more casual relationships.

Each service should have guidance for Users that reflects the nature of the service. This guidance may vary in nature but there are a set of core guidelines to keep online dating and dating apps as safe and as enjoyable as possible.

These core guidelines are set out in this Framework. It is an approach based on respect:

Showing respect for others

- Services are there for those seeking new relationships and friendships. Treat them that way.
- Be friendly and kind to others. Show respect and be courteous.
- Think about the service and those who may use it: context matters. Do not post messages or content they are likely to find rude, offensive or sexually explicit and/or inappropriate. This may result in you being blocked from the service or reported to the police.
- Be yourself: imperfections and all! Do not post information or profile pictures about yourself that is misleading or false.
- Remember people come on services for enjoyment. Do not provoke, intimidate or harass others. Defamatory, abusive, obscene behaviour is unacceptable.
- Do not respond harshly to rejection. Respect decisions other users take. Cease contacting with someone if they ask you to stop contacting them.
- Keep it decent. Never promote racism, bigotry or hatred against any individual or group.
- Show respect in terms of race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientations, gender and gender orientation, age, disability, health or any other characteristic.
- Respect people's privacy. Do not post another person's identity, picture or other private information without their permission.

Help us safeguard those not old enough to use services

Services are for adults (in most countries, those aged 18 and above). It's important to respect rules that safeguard minors:
- If you are under 18 please respect the age requirement set. It is there for your and everyone else's safety and welfare.

- If you are using a dating service do not solicit communications with someone you know or believe to be under 18. Please alert the services to any profiles or communications seen that seem to be from an under 18 user.
- Alert the service if another adult user makes reference to sexual or other exploitation of children.
- Think about privacy when sharing images of others, particularly children.

Help keep the dating service strong and enjoyable

- Use the service's messaging system to communicate with other users: it is there to maximise safety.
- Only send messages to people you are interested in getting to know. Do not spam large numbers of people with the same message.
- Never ask for money, to borrow it, or agree to lend it, in any circumstances.
- Do not put up with abuse or other unacceptable behaviours.
- Report any activity by others that worries or offends you to the service provider – and the police if the activity may be unlawful. Services can and will warn and, if necessary, remove users whose behaviours are unacceptable.
- Respect the purpose and standards of the service. Unless a service is of a clearly adult nature do not seek to post profile pictures or other content containing nudity.
- Do not use a dating service to share material containing or promoting violence, self-harm or other dangerous or unlawful activities – and report any such content found or directed to you.

This Model Code from the Online Dating Association is offered as a form of guidance to services. The ODA is not an approvals or enforcement body but has developed this material as part of its efforts to put safety at the heart of dating services. Accordingly, the material is not prescriptive or mandatory, but is freely available for any service to adopt and adapt as they think best suits their service and user base.