

**Comité d'agrément des programmes
de formation à l'enseignement**

(CAPFE)

***CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL
CONDUCT***

June 7, 2005

**Comité d'agrément
des programmes
de formation
à l'enseignement**

Québec 

Table of Contents

1	CAPFE’S MANDATE	1
2	CAPFE’S MEMBERSHIP	2
3	PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE CODE	3
4	ETHICAL PRINCIPLES	4
5	CODE OF ETHICS AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT	5
5.1	MANAGEMENT VALUES	5
5.2	ETHICAL RULES	6
5.2.1	<i>Ethical considerations for partners</i>	<i>6</i>
5.2.2	<i>Conflicts of interest</i>	<i>7</i>
5.2.3	<i>Rules of confidentiality</i>	<i>8</i>
5.2.4	<i>Transmission of information to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports</i>	<i>8</i>
5.2.5	<i>Political neutrality</i>	<i>9</i>
5.2.6	<i>Participation in outside professional activities</i>	<i>9</i>
5.2.7	<i>Document disclosure</i>	<i>9</i>
5.2.8	<i>Public relations</i>	<i>10</i>
5.2.9	<i>Monetary compensation</i>	<i>10</i>
5.2.10	<i>Post-employment confidentiality</i>	<i>10</i>
6	ENFORCEMENT	11
	FORM	12

1 CAPFE's Mandate

The *Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement* (CAPFE) is an independent, autonomous body reporting directly to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports. It does not fall under the authority of any administrative unit of the Ministère de l'Éducation, du Sport et du Loisir (MELS). It strives to maintain a healthy distance from its partners (i.e. the MELS, school boards and universities), failing which, its decisions would lack credibility and integrity, and would therefore carry little weight. CAPFE is accountable to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports for its decisions and actions.

CAPFE's mission is to advise the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports on all matters relating to the accreditation of teacher education programs for preschool, elementary and secondary education. Teacher education programs lead to various bachelor's degrees with the following specializations:

- preschool and elementary education
- secondary education
- special education
- physical and health education
- teaching French as a second language
- teaching English as a second language
- arts education
- vocational education

In pursuit of its mission, CAPFE is mandated by the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports to:

- **examine and approve** teacher education programs for preschool, elementary and secondary education
- **make recommendations concerning** teacher education programs required for the issue of a teaching licence
- **advise** the Minister on the determination of the qualifications required of school teachers at the elementary and secondary levels¹

1. *Education Act*, R.S.Q., c. I-13.3, s. 477.13 and following.

2 CAPFE's Membership

CAPFE is made up of nine members appointed by the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports after consultation with interested education bodies, such as teacher associations and other partners in the education community. Members include:

- the chair, who alternates between an education professional and a representative of the academic community
- three elementary or secondary school teachers
- an education professional
- three university professors
- a representative of the university education sector with experience at the preschool, elementary or secondary level

At least two of these members must represent the English-language school system.

The Minister may also appoint two associate members, one selected from among MELS employees and the other from among school board managerial staff. Associate members are not entitled to vote.

A secretary-coordinator takes care of day-to-day operations and manages the work performed by CAPFE members.

3 Purpose and Scope of the Code

In accordance with the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*,² this code establishes CAPFE's management values and the ethical principles to be upheld by its members.

The chair and the members and associate members appointed by the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports are deemed CAPFE members and public office holders, in accordance with section 477.14 of the *Education Act*. All members and associate members are subject to the standards of ethics set forth in the *Act respecting the Ministère du Conseil exécutif* (R.S.Q., c. M-30) and the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*.

The CAPFE chair is obligated to remind members that the rule of confidentiality applies to anyone invited to attend a CAPFE meeting or sit on one of its subcommittees. This rule also applies to contract employees hired by CAPFE to conduct studies, surveys or inquiries.

Lastly, one of the appointed associate members and the secretary-coordinator are MELS employees and therefore subject to the standards of ethics under the *Civil Service Act* (R.S.Q., c. F-3.1) and related regulations.³ However, the associate member who is also an employee of the MELS is subject to the ethical norms outlined in the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*. Regardless of these regulations, the secretary-coordinator and this associate member accept to conduct their activities in the spirit of this code.

2. *Gazette officielle du Québec*, Part II, No. 27, June 30, 1998, pp. 3474 to 3480.

3. *Regulation respecting ethics and discipline in the public service*, *Gazette officielle du Québec*, Part II, p. 2095.

4 Ethical Principles

In keeping with its mandate, CAPFE adheres to the following ethical principles:

- Members and associate members are required to perform their duties in the public interest in an impartial, independent and objective manner.

- The rules of conduct set forth in this code cannot cover all problem situations. Consequently, all CAPFE members are obligated to act to the best of their knowledge and skills, with diligence and integrity, and in accordance with the public interest, all applicable laws and regulations, and CAPFE's management values.

5 Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct

Ethics: A matter of integrity and credibility

Whereas CAPFE recognizes the importance of discharging its publicly entrusted mandate;

Whereas CAPFE takes a dynamic approach to carrying out its operations and duties;

Whereas CAPFE members bear considerable responsibility with respect to teacher education programs;

Whereas CAPFE members and associate members serve limited terms of office and are affiliated with the various groups and institutions affected by CAPFE activities;

Whereas the credibility and integrity of CAPFE decisions are based on clearly defined and generally accepted operating rules;

the following rules, which constitute CAPFE's code of professional conduct, are hereby adopted.

5.1 MANAGEMENT VALUES

In light of its mandate and role in teacher education, CAPFE upholds the following management values:

- fair and equitable treatment, analysis and evaluation of teacher education programs and modifications thereto following their accreditation
- transparency in its actions and communications with clients
- helpful, courteous and prompt customer service

5.2 *ETHICAL RULES*

5.2.1 Ethical considerations for partners

To enable CAPFE to fulfill its mandate to grant professional accreditation in a fair, transparent and efficient manner, its partners—particularly the MELS, universities and school organizations—must follow certain ethical rules in their dealings and communications with CAPFE. The following are CAPFE’s expectations in this regard.

a) The MELS shall:

- respect CAPFE’s autonomy and integrity at all stages of the accreditation process
- provide the information that CAPFE needs to fulfill its mandate

b) Universities shall:

- respect CAPFE’s autonomy and integrity at all stages of the accreditation process
- provide all the information that CAPFE needs to evaluate their programs and to enable it to perform a thorough, objective analysis
- report any complaint or grievance in accordance with generally accepted procedures
- challenge a member of the accreditation follow-up committee or of an ad hoc committee only if they can demonstrate that this person has or may have a conflict of interest liable to compromise the evaluation of their programs

c) Schools shall:

- respect CAPFE’s autonomy and integrity at all stages of the accreditation process
- agree to release teachers from their duties to allow them to work with CAPFE, the accreditation follow-up committee and any ad hoc committee
- provide the information that CAPFE needs to fulfill its mandate

5.2.2 Conflicts of interest

Employment or academic ties

Any member with employment ties to a university submitting a program for accreditation must refrain from participating in the evaluation and decision processes concerning that program, including the application review and the appeal process, and he must withdraw from any meeting during which the program is under discussion as well as any vote associated with the program. This rule also applies to members of all ad hoc committees established by CAPFE to evaluate the program in question (e.g. accreditation follow-up committee, expert committees).

This rule applies as well to members from universities offering joint teacher education programs.

This general rule applies equally to members from the university system whose spouses or children have employment ties with the university in question or are enrolled in its teacher education program. This rule governs members from the different school systems whose spouses or children have employment ties to one of their institutions applying for accreditation or are enrolled in its teacher education program.

In accordance with the provision outlined in the first paragraph, members must refrain from participating in the evaluation of a university's teacher education program if they were employed in any capacity whatsoever by that university in the three years prior to the evaluation.

Lastly, members and associate members must disclose to CAPFE any direct or indirect interest they have in any organization, institution or association that may create a conflict of interest liable to compromise their positions and responsibilities.

Changes in employment status

Members must notify the CAPFE chair if their employment status changes during their term of office. If members are promoted to a managerial position in a university or professional association representing one of the school systems, they must notify CAPFE, which will review the situation to determine if this creates a conflict of interest and will, if necessary, explain how to proceed.

5.2.3 Rules of confidentiality

CAPFE members must abide by the following rules of confidentiality:

1. Members must refrain from advising universities on how to specifically develop a teacher education program for accreditation purposes. However, a member may convey general information on the accreditation process
2. The chair is the sole member authorized to provide authoritative information on the application of CAPFE criteria and procedures.
3. Members cannot offer their services as private consultants to universities preparing programs for accreditation.
4. Personal opinions expressed by members at the work sessions held by CAPFE or by its subcommittees are deemed confidential.
5. All information on the accreditation process of a particular program or on the work performed by the program accreditation follow-up committee must remain confidential (e.g. working papers, evaluation grids, discussions, names of people involved, names of teacher education centres) until such time as the program is accredited.
6. Meeting minutes are deemed confidential, but decisions compiled in a special binder are available to the public.

5.2.4 Transmission of information to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports

CAPFE has adopted the following rules regarding the transmission of information to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports:

1. CAPFE first submits its writings or briefs to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports. Unless the Minister provides notification to the contrary within 15 business days, CAPFE releases its publications.
2. CAPFE notifies the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports when a program has been approved for accreditation.
3. CAPFE notifies the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports of any non-accreditation decision regarding a given teacher education program.
4. CAPFE notifies the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports should a program lose its accreditation.

5.2.5 Political neutrality

In performing their duties within CAPFE, members must act independently of all lobby groups and partisan political considerations.

With the exception of the MELS representative, members must not defend the viewpoints of the organizations with which they are affiliated, given that the MELS has appointed them in their capacity as individuals.

5.2.6 Participation in outside professional activities

From time to time, members or associate members may take part in outside professional activities on education-related topics. CAPFE considers that participation in such activities also falls under the rules of this code.

5.2.7 Document disclosure

Subject to the provisions of the Act respecting access to documents held by public bodies and the protection of personal information (R.S.Q., c. A-2.1), the documents held by CAPFE can be consulted. The types of documents and the mechanisms for consultation are described in the *Protocole d'accès aux documents détenus par le Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement* (octobre 2006).

5.2.8 Public relations

Only the chair or the chair's representative is authorized to act on behalf of CAPFE. This provision governs public communications such as conference and symposium speeches and statements to the media. In all such cases, persons acting or speaking on behalf of CAPFE must demonstrate restraint in publicly expressing their opinions.

5.2.9 Monetary compensation

CAPFE members receive no remuneration; only the cost of substitute teaching, transportation and living expenses are reimbursed, in accordance with standard procedures.

Members may neither accept nor solicit favours or undue benefits for themselves or a third party; nor may they accept gifts, tokens of hospitality or any benefits other than those of modest use and value. Any other gift, token of hospitality or benefit received must be returned to the donor or government.

5.2.10 Post-employment confidentiality

After the expiry of their term of office, members may neither disclose any confidential information obtained while performing their duties for CAPFE, nor use, for their own or someone else's benefit, any information unavailable to the public that they obtained in the course of their duties.

6 *Enforcement*

In the event of non-compliance with the ethical principles and rules of professional conduct specified herein, disciplinary action may be instituted by the associate secretary-general responsible for executive appointments at the Ministère du Conseil Exécutif, following the procedure specified in the *Regulation respecting the ethics and professional conduct of public office holders*.

The CAPFE chair is responsible for implementing and enforcing this code. The chair must also ensure that all members comply with the ethical principles and rules of professional conduct set forth in this code and must notify the competent authority of any violation. Members are responsible for notifying the chair of a colleague's alleged violation of any of the rules provided in this code.

Members who have allegedly violated the rules of this code may be temporarily relieved of their duties by the competent authority to allow for a comprehensive review of the situation and a final decision. This measure applies to urgent situations and to allegations of serious offences.

The competent authority shall notify the member in question of the alleged violation and the applicable penalty. The authority shall inform any such members that they may submit their personal account of the situation within seven days and request a hearing on the matter.

If upon review of the file and discussion with the chair, the member is found to have violated the principles and rules of professional conduct of this code, the Secretary General of the Executive Council may impose the applicable penalty. This penalty may take the form of a reprimand, suspension or removal from office. Any penalty imposed must be justified in writing.

**Adopted by CAPFE members on June 7, 2005.
Decision 78-01**

**Amended on October 6, 2006, Decision 85-02
Amended on October 3, 2007, Decision 90-01**

CAPFE.Code d'éthique.2005.English Final Version.doc

Form

**ADHERENCE TO CAPFE'S CODE OF ETHICS AND
PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

I have read and understood the *Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct* of the *Comité d'agrément des programmes de formation à l'enseignement (CAPFE)* and agree to perform my duties in compliance with the provisions of this code.

Name (please print): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____