



# CODE OF ETHICS AND COMMUNICATION POLICY FOR ESRA- DPM DIPLOMA CANDIDATES

EUROPEAN SOCIETY OF REGIONAL ANAESTHESIA  
& PAIN THERAPY

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## 1 POLICY STATEMENT

The European Society of Regional Anaesthesia and Pain Therapy (ESRA), aims to stimulate research, promote education, train and qualify anaesthesiologists in scientific subjects and advancements relevant to Regional Anaesthesia, Pain Therapy, POCUS, and Peri-operative care, in Europe and globally.

ESRA organizes two different examinations regarding:

- The ESRA European Diploma of Regional Anaesthesia (ESRA-DRA)
- The ESRA European Diploma of Pain Medicine (ESRA-DPM)

Both diplomas were established to set and harmonize high standards in these fields.

The European Society of Regional Anaesthesia and Pain Therapy (ESRA) is committed to ensuring the highest standards of integrity, impartiality, fairness, and professionalism in its examination process.

ESRA is committed to maintaining the integrity and confidentiality of its examination processes. This policy provides guidelines for candidates taking the ESRA European Diploma of Pain Medicine (ESRA-DPM) on appropriate conduct regarding information exchange, interaction on social media and other communication channels before, during, and after their examinations.

It outlines the communication and ethical standards that examinees must adhere to, before, during and after their exams to maintain credibility and respect of ESRA Society and the applied procedures.

## 2 SCOPE

This policy outlines the communication and ethical standards that examinees must adhere to during and after their exams to maintain credibility, fairness, integrity, impartiality, fairness, professionalism and respect for all stakeholders involved.

This policy applies to all candidates participating in the ESRA European Diploma of Pain Medicine (ESRA-DPM) exams, whether conducted in Europe or abroad.

It covers behavior on social media platforms, forums, messaging apps, and any other communication channels, regardless of the examination outcome.

## 3 DEFINITIONS

**Candidate:** A medical professional taking part in the ESRA-DPM examinations.

**Confidential Information:** Any information related to the examination content, including questions, answers, scenarios, and results.

**Examiner:** An authorized individual overseeing and evaluating the examination process.

**Inappropriate Conduct:** Any behavior that compromises the integrity, confidentiality, or fairness of the examination process.

**Social Media:** Online platforms where users create and share content or participate in social networking (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn).

## 4 POLICY- CODE OF CONDUCT

### – General Principles

**Integrity and Honesty:** Examinees must conduct with honesty and integrity throughout the examination process. Any form of cheating, plagiarism, or misrepresentation is strictly prohibited.

**Confidentiality:** Examinees must maintain the confidentiality of the exam content and process. Disclosure of any exam material or specific questions to others is not permitted.

**Respect and Professionalism:** All interactions with examiners, staff, and fellow examinees should be conducted with the utmost respect and professionalism.

### – Communication Before the Examination

**Confidentiality Agreement:** Candidates by participating in the examination, acknowledge and agree to abide by the confidentiality policy, which strictly prohibits the sharing of any examination-related information.

**Social Media Use:** Candidates are advised to refrain from discussing examination details or preparation strategies that might lead to the sharing of sensitive information.

### – Communication During the Examination

**Authorized Communication:** Communication with examiners and staff should be limited to procedural or logistical questions. Any attempt to discuss exam content or seek assistance during the exam is strictly forbidden.

**Electronic Devices:** The use of electronic devices, including mobile phones, tablets, and smartwatches, is prohibited during the examination unless explicitly allowed by the examiners for specific purposes.

**Collaboration:** Collaboration with other examinees during the exam is not allowed unless the exam format specifically includes group activities or discussions.

– Communication After the Examination

**Non-Disclosure:** Examinees must not disclose their exam results or discuss specific exam questions and answers with others. This includes refraining from sharing information on social media platforms, forums, blogs, or any other public or private communication channels.

**Feedback and Complaints:** Any feedback or complaints regarding the exam process should be directed to the organization through the official channels provided. Public complaints or criticisms that undermine the examination process, especially on social media, are discouraged.

**Professional Conduct in Case of Failure:** Examinees who fail their exams are expected to handle the outcome with professionalism and dignity. They should refrain from making disparaging remarks about the examiners, the organization, or the examination process, particularly on social media or other public forums.

– Use of Social Media

**Confidentiality on Social Media:** Examinees must not share any confidential information about the examination process, content, or results on social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, or any other online networks.

**Professional Behavior:** Any posts or comments made on social media related to the examination process should reflect professionalism and respect. Defamatory, misleading, or unprofessional remarks about the organization, examiners, or fellow examinees are strictly prohibited.

In particular all examinees, staff, members or other persons engaging with ESRA and its functions, should adhere to the below principles

- act always with honesty and integrity, treating people fairly and without discrimination, bullying or harassment,

- treat people in a way that does not take advantage of their vulnerability or cause them upset or distress,

- undertake not to attempt to impersonate someone else or to promote any form of illegal conduct/ practice

- are aware of how their behavior can affect and influence the behavior of other people

- use all forms of spoken, written and digital communication (including social media and networking sites) responsibly

- recognize that if they act in any way that is unprofessional or unlawful through the use of social media including (but not limited to), 'bullying, intimidating or

exploiting people' or by 'inciting hatred or discrimination' that they may face legal and/or professional misconduct sanctions

- will avoid posting personal identifiable data including digital images without the individual's or written consent of ESRA

- accept that they are solely responsible for the content of all information that they contribute, link to, or upload.

**Engagement Guidelines:** Engage in discussions about the examination process in a constructive and respectful manner. If clarification or information is needed, use the official channels provided by the organization instead of social media.

- Enforcement and Consequences

**Monitoring:** The organization reserves the right to monitor and review the communication of examinees during and after the examination, including social media activity, to ensure compliance with this policy.

**Disciplinary Actions:** Violations of this Code of Ethics and Communication Policy may result in disciplinary actions, including but not limited to disqualification from the exam, reporting to relevant medical boards, and future bans from taking any exams organized by the organization.

**Appeals:** Examinees have the right to appeal against any disciplinary actions through the established appeal procedures of the organization.

## 5 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

### President

- Oversees the enforcement of this policy.
- Addresses any violations of the policy and takes appropriate action.

### Quality Officer

- Ensure candidates are aware of and adhere to ethical guidelines.
- Monitor candidate communications for compliance with ethical standards.
- Investigate breaches of ethics and recommend appropriate actions.
- Provide training and support on ethical communication practices.

### Board Members

- Support the development and dissemination of this policy.
- Monitor compliance and report any issues to the President.

### ESRA-DPM Board & Examiners

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- Ensure candidates are aware of and understand this policy before the examination.
- Provide guidance and clarification on acceptable conduct.
- Enforce this policy
- Handle feedback, complaints, and appeals related to the communication policies
- Report any violations
- Advise possible disciplinary actions to the President if necessary.

#### Candidates

- Adhere to the communication and ethical standards outlined in this policy
- Report any observed breaches of this policy to the Examination Committee.

## 6 DISTRIBUTION LIST

All personnel. Available online for all diploma candidates.

## 7 FILE KEEPING

QMS records are retained for at least 5 years.

This document shall enter into force, be revised and distributed in accordance with the applicable procedures for controlled documents of ESRA.

This document:

- ✓ It is the property of the ESRA and its unauthorized disclosure, reproduction and use in whole or in part, nor its use for work not related to the activities of ESRA is not permitted.
- ✓ It is an internal controlled document, distributed according to the distribution list and acknowledged under the responsibility of the recipient.
- ✓ It shall be subject to a review procedure at least once every three years since the last adoption or amendment.

		SIGNATURE	DATE
AUTHOR	Quality Officer	Aline Christen	27.12.2024
APPROVAL	ESRA President	Eleni Moka	03.01.2025
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