

## **British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG) President-Elect / President Code of Conduct**

### **1. Purpose and Principles**

This Code of Conduct outlines the expected behaviour of candidates standing for election to the role of President-Elect / President of the British Society of Gastroenterology (BSG). It is designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and integrity throughout the election process and to uphold the reputation of the Society.

All candidates must agree to abide by this Code before being accepted as a nominee.

### **2. General Conduct**

Candidates must:

- Conduct themselves with integrity, honesty, and respect throughout the election period.
- Maintain the confidentiality, reputation, and good standing of the BSG at all times.
- Avoid any conduct that could bring the election process or the BSG into disrepute.
- Refrain from using their current position within BSG (if applicable) to promote their candidacy or disclose confidential matters from BSG committees, Council, or Board.

### **3. Election Materials**

The only materials to be submitted and used in the election are:

- A personal statement (maximum 500 words)
- Responses to set questions focusing on leadership experience, governance understanding, and strategic aims for BSG
- A short CV
- A current photograph
- A completed Declaration of Interests form
- A pre-recorded video interview (responding to the same set of questions for all candidates, as determined by the Nominations Committee, incorporating member input via Elected Councillors)
- A signed commitment to adhere to the Election Code of Conduct, including rules on appropriate campaigning and social media use
- A letter of support from the candidates' employing organisations (e.g. NHS Trusts / Universities), confirming support for participation in the role and its associated time commitment.

- Confirmation from the candidate's Responsible Officer, or equivalent for non-medical professionals, that they are in good professional standing, with no known fitness-to-practise or professional conduct concerns that would impact their ability to serve as President-Elect / President.

Candidate information will be published on the Civica-hosted election platform and the BSG website and may also be used across official BSG communication channels.

Candidates must ensure that all statements made are accurate, reasonable, and not misleading. Statements should focus on ideas, values, and alignment with BSG's vision. No references, implied or explicit, to other candidates are permitted.

#### **4. Canvassing and Promotion**

The election process will be conducted in a way that fosters positive, respectful, and inclusive engagement. Candidates are expected to focus on their vision, values, and ideas for the BSG, and to uphold the integrity of the process at all times.

To support a fair and transparent election:

- Candidates and their supporters are encouraged to share or repost official BSG election content and to promote general participation in the election (e.g. encouraging voter turnout) without referring to or comparing individual candidates. Supporters must not initiate or promote independent campaigns beyond this, and any such activity may be treated as a breach by the candidate concerned
- Negative campaigning, personal criticism of other candidates, or any activity likely to undermine confidence in the election process is strictly prohibited.
- Candidates must commit to a positive campaign pledge, focusing on their own ideas, values, and priorities for BSG. Candidates are expected to discourage third-party campaigning undertaken on their behalf. While recognising the limits of enforcement, candidates remain responsible for reminding supporters of this Code and must not endorse or encourage such activity.
- Campaigning should focus on constructive engagement and maximising voter participation, rather than on personal promotion or criticism of others.

#### **5. Handling of Breaches**

- Alleged breaches of this Code will be reviewed by the Nominations Committee.
- The Committee may consult Civica Election Services for advice or investigation support, where appropriate.
- The Committee has the authority to determine the appropriate action, up to and including standing down or disqualifying a candidate. This may include situations where a candidate's supporters have acted in breach of this Code. The Nominations Committee recommends and reserves the right to apply proportionate sanctions, ensuring all breaches are documented. If

there are serious breaches of this code the Committee may recommend a reversion to an appointment process in future cycles.

- The final decision rests with the Chair of the Nominations Committee, guided by the Committee's consensus. This decision is final and binding.

**Note:** As the Chief Executive Officer is a voting member of the Committee, they will fully participate in any decision-making process regarding conduct breaches. If additional procedural clarity is required (e.g., on process interpretation or precedent), the Committee may seek guidance from Civica Election Services or the Board of Trustees as needed.

## **6. Role of Civica Election Services**

Civica Election Services will facilitate the secure and impartial management of the election, including publication of materials, communication with the electorate, and the voting process. Civica may also be consulted in relation to procedural or conduct concerns.

## **7. Media and Communications**

Any media enquiries relating to the election must be immediately directed to the BSG Communications Team via [insert contact details].

## **8. Social Media Policy**

As per Section 4, candidates and their supporters must not use social media to actively promote their candidacy outside of official BSG election communications. However, candidates and their supporters are welcome to share or repost official BSG election content and to encourage general participation in the election.

All social media activity should reflect the positive campaign pledge, avoiding negative campaigning, personal criticism, or any content that could damage the reputation of the BSG or the integrity of the process.

## **9. Enforcement and Accountability**

- The BSG expects the highest standard of professional conduct from all candidates.
- Any breaches will be documented, and action taken will be proportionate and transparent.
- Candidates disqualified under this Code will be informed in writing and have the right to submit an appeal as per the BSG Appeals Process. [\[hyperlink document here\]](#)

## **10. Review and Approval**

This Code of Conduct will be reviewed annually and updated as required by the Governance Review Working Group or equivalent and approved by the Board of Trustees.

## **11. Acceptance**

All candidates must confirm their acceptance of this Code of Conduct by signing the Candidate Nomination Form and acknowledging their understanding of its contents.