



CODE  
of

PRACTICE

Research Association New Zealand

Introduction to RANZ Code of Practice 2023



## Setting the scene

- Research is public
- Media content is survey rich
- Our industry needs to hold its head high in order to thrive
- Distanced from misinformation
- Capable of self-regulating
- **Collective commitment to our Code is central to maintaining the reputation of our industry**
- Thank you for investing in the sustainability of our industry

# Agenda

1. Purpose of the Code
2. Overview of the new Code
3. Member responsibilities
4. Summary of key additions and changes
5. General principles of professional practice
6. Key Code clauses and insights
7. Questions



# 1. Purpose of the Code



**Principles-based framework for self-regulation**



**Minimum standards**



**Critical legal context:**

Privacy Act 2020 & 13 privacy principles

Unsolicited Electronic Messaging Act 2007 (UEMA)

Data and Statistics Act 2022

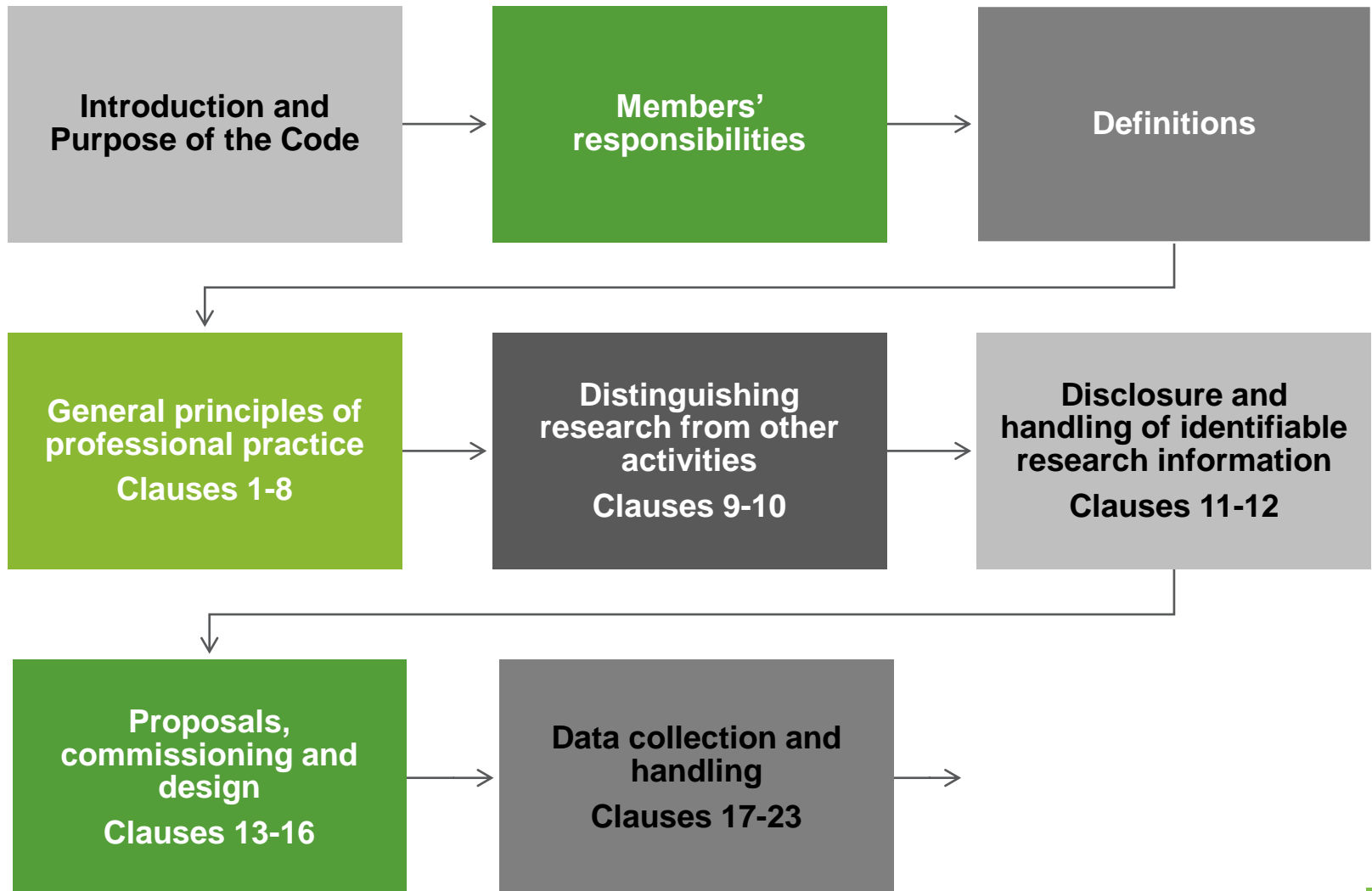
International law such as GDPR (where relevant)

Electoral Act....and others

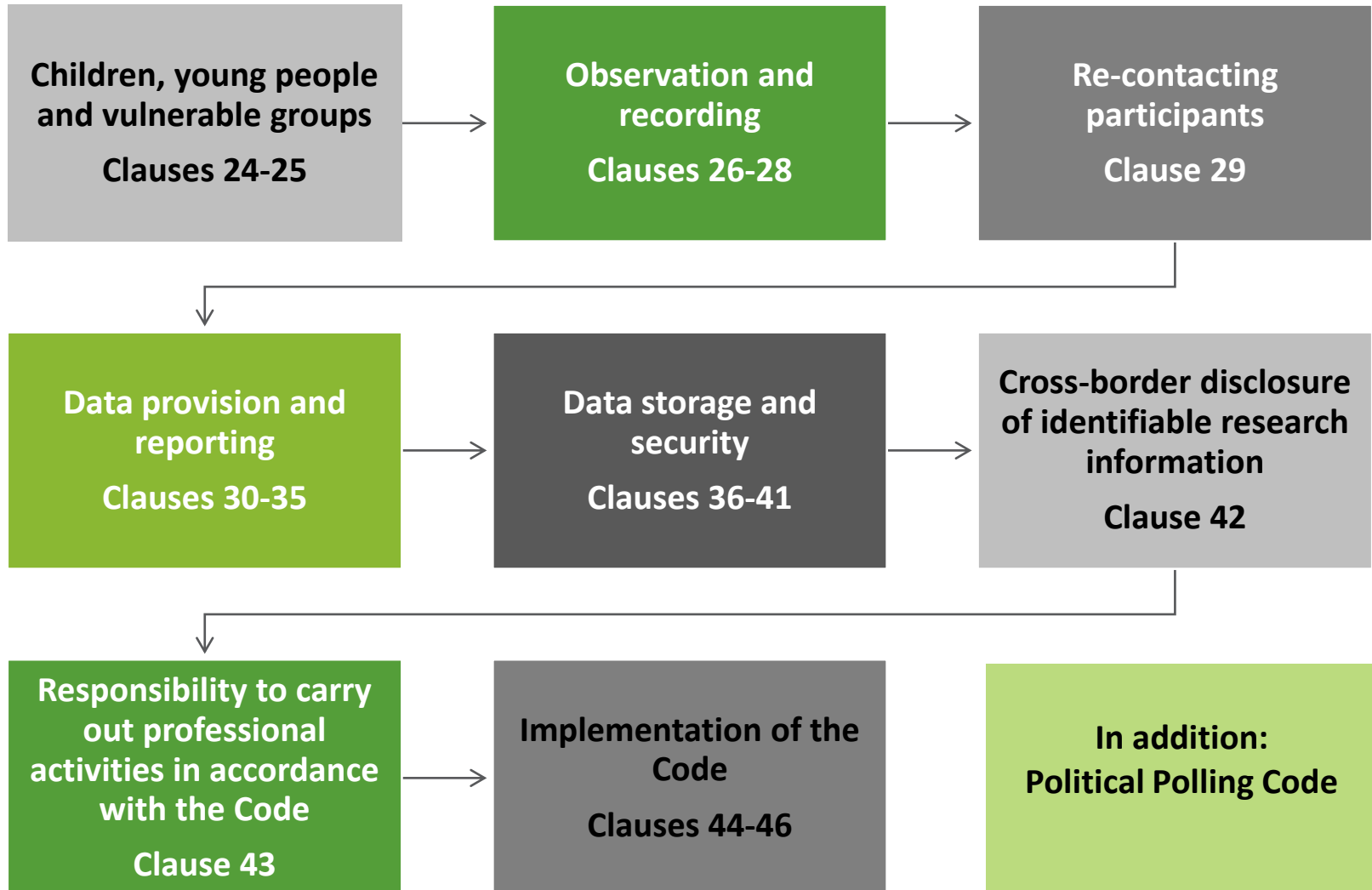


**Promote public confidence**

## 2. Overview of the new Code



## 2. Overview of the new Code (continued)



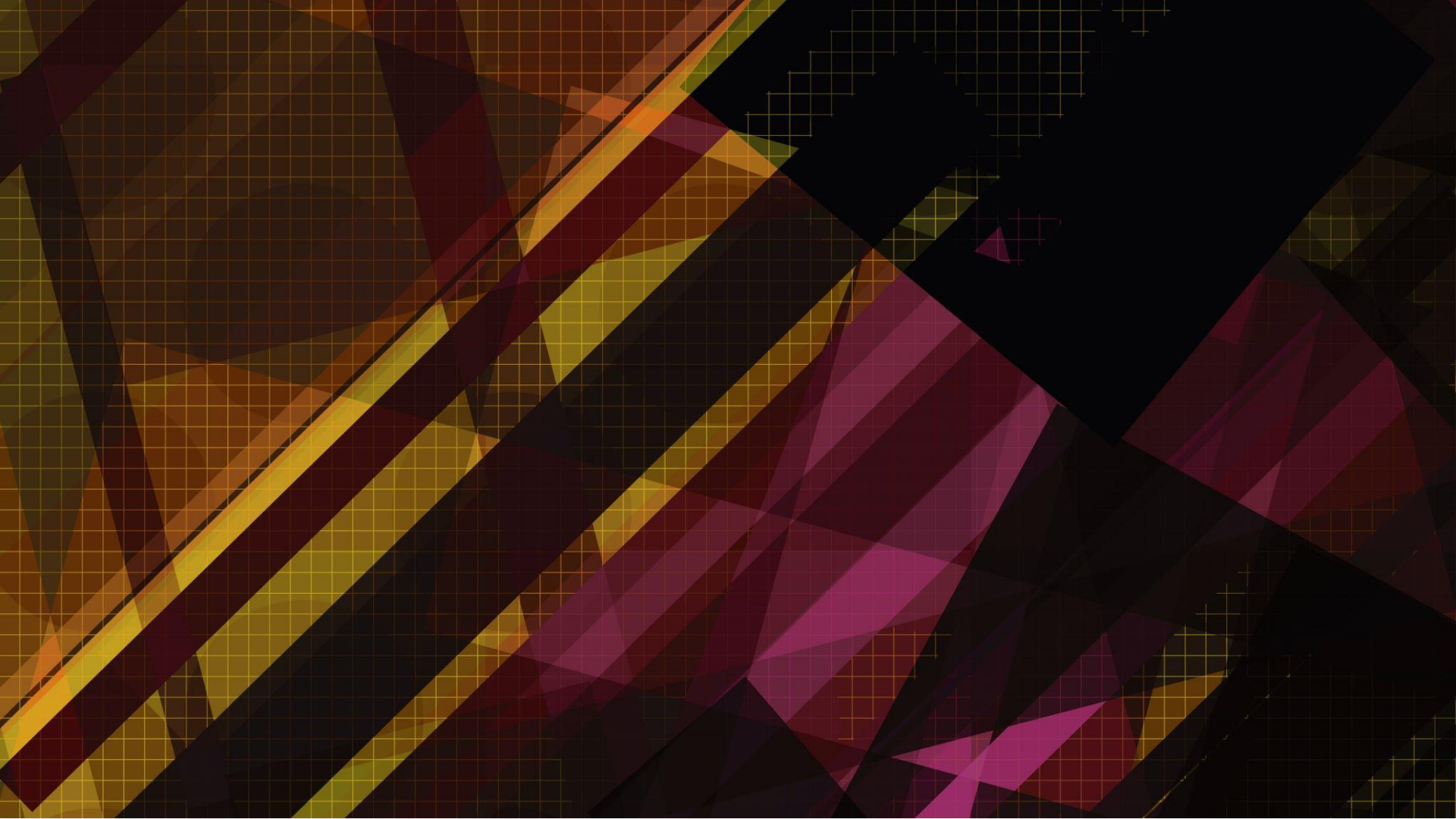
### 3. Member responsibilities

- All Members are bound by the Code
- Law takes precedence
- **Company Members** must ensure that **all** individuals employed or engaged by them comply with the Code
- Promote the Code to others
- In spirit as well as to the letter

#### Notes:

- “Must”
- “Should”
- Queries encouraged
- Professional Conduct Officer (PCO) and the Professional Standards Group (PSG)
- Anyone can make a complaint





## 4. Summary of key additions and changes





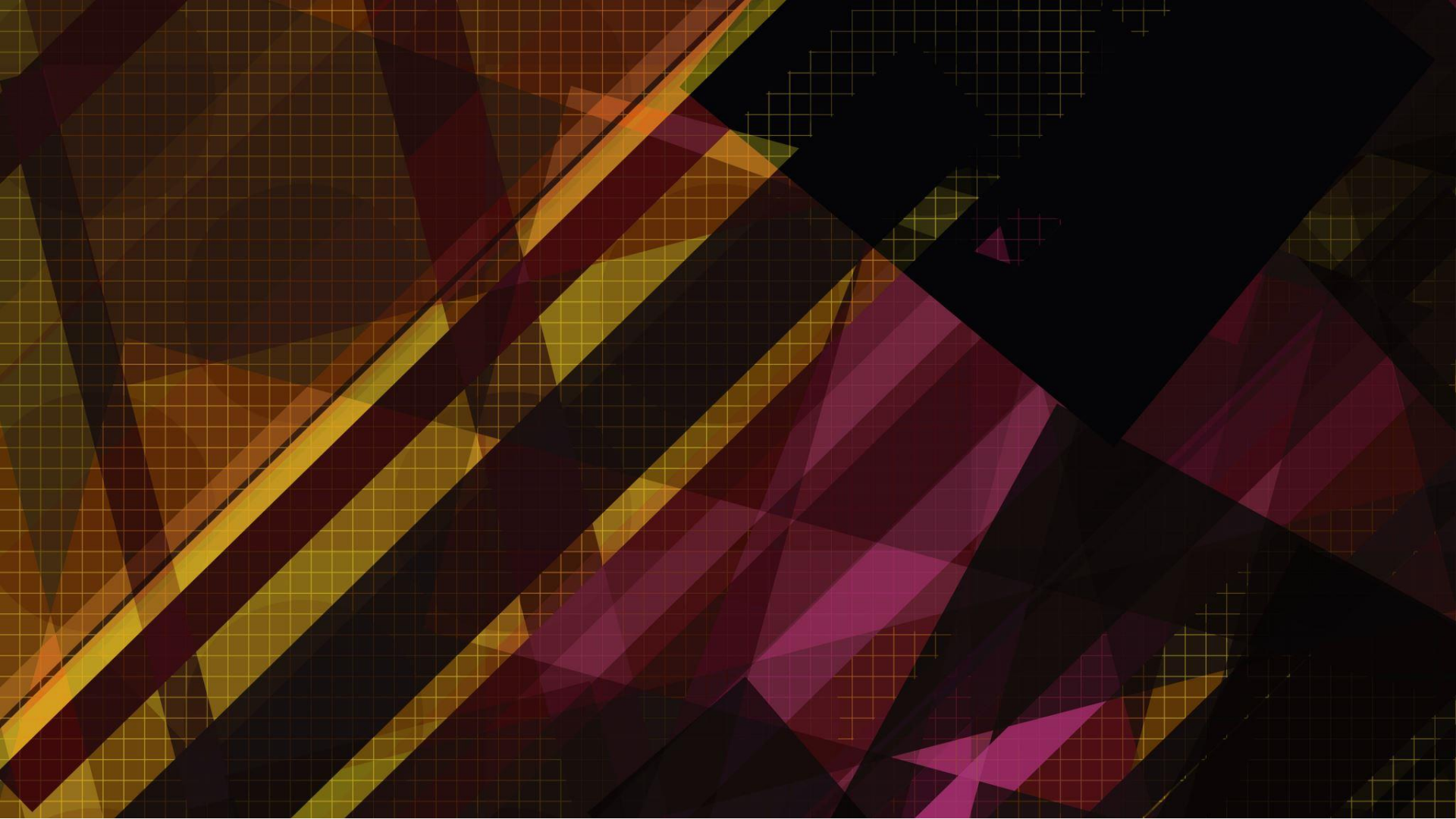
# Summary of key additions and changes

## Key additions/changes:

- Consent requirements
- Passive data collection
- Vulnerable people
- Age range of young people: 14-17
- Re-contacting participants

## Increased emphasis:

- Distinguishing research
- Protecting privacy
- Data security
- Clarity of reporting

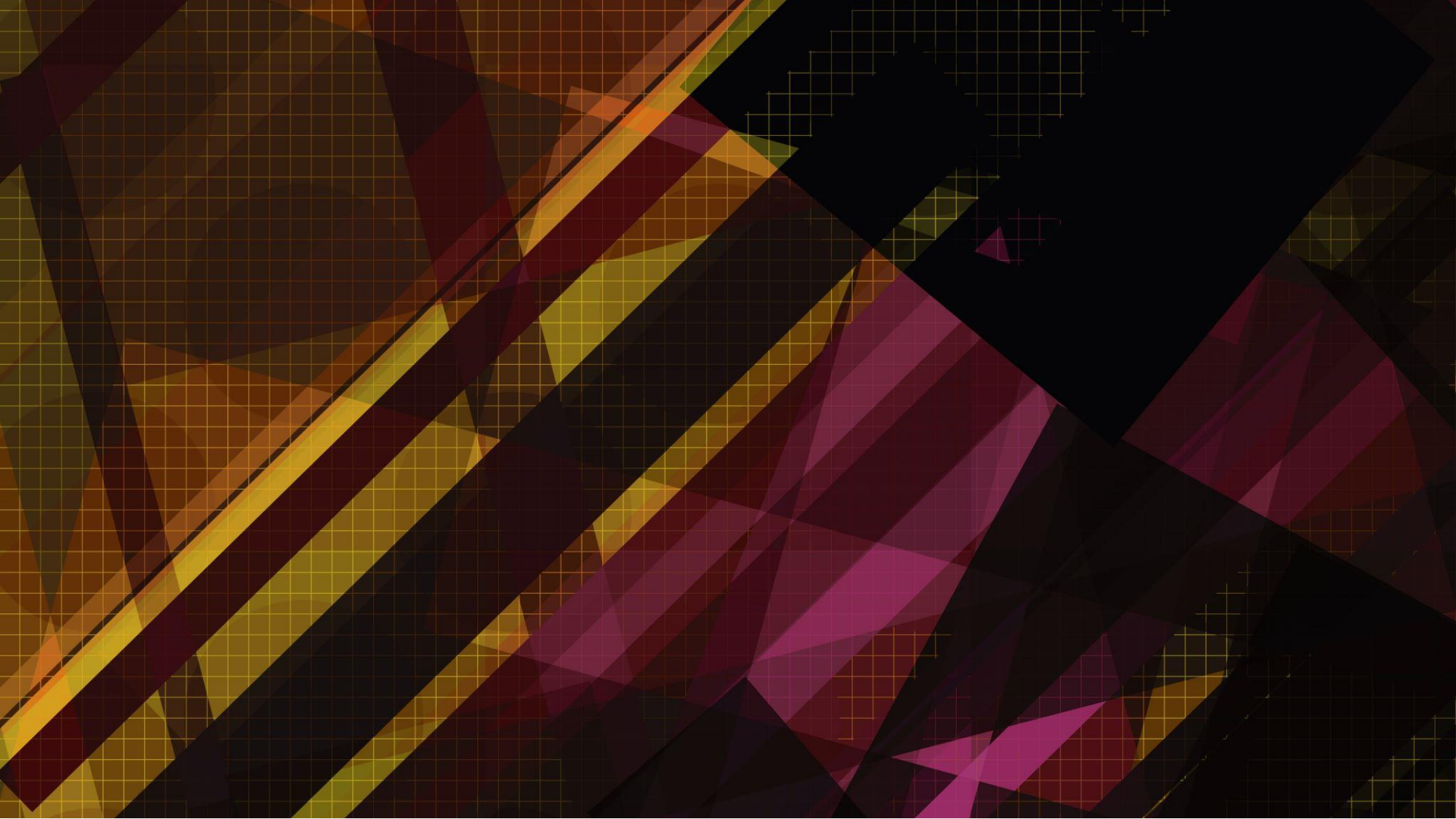


## 5. General principles of professional practice

## General principles (clauses 1-8)

1. Activities must be **legal**
2. Be **honest** and **objective**
3. Act with **professional responsibility** and fairness
4. Behave **ethically**
5. Be **truthful** and **transparent**
6. Don't **criticise** other Members
7. Don't abuse the **trust** of participants
8. Do **no harm**





## 6. Key Code clauses and insights

## Marketing

*Research must be clearly distinguished and separated from any marketing activity directed at individual participants, such as sales promotion, direct marketing, direct selling and similar activities (clause 9).*

- A very common query area.
- We **must** distance ourselves from sales and marketing to maintain our credibility.
- Question examples:
  - Are mailing list sign-ups on surveys classified as promotion?
  - Is leaving a brochure with a respondent about a client's product after I interview them okay?

## Disclosure of identifiable research information

*Members must obtain consent if they intend to disclose participants' identifiable research information (clause 11)*

- If you will be disclosing any identifiable research information you **must obtain consent**
- And you must tell participants **the purpose** for this
- If sharing with a client (clause 12) you must get consent and the client can only use identifiable research information for the purpose consented to
- If confidential, confidentiality must be preserved
- We are often asked about whether respondent identities can be disclosed to clients in certain circumstances. The answer is always **no**, unless the respondents have given explicit consent.
- **Complaint example.** We received a complaint where a member disclosed a significant volume of identifiable research information to a client. The client then made follow up contact with the respondents. Triggering a complaint. We found the member in breach of the code.



## Disclosure of identifiable research information (continued)

- Questions:
  - *Can I let a client know which respondents have expressed interest in their new product?*
  - *The client might be able to guess 'who said what'. What should I do?*
  - *Can I tell a client which of their own contacts have completed their survey, so they know who to remind that they would like them to respond?*
  - *Can I show my client photos or videos of respondents?*
- Watch for tricks – you might be asked (or be asking) in many different ways if identifiable information can be disclosed.

## Accurate, transparent and objective

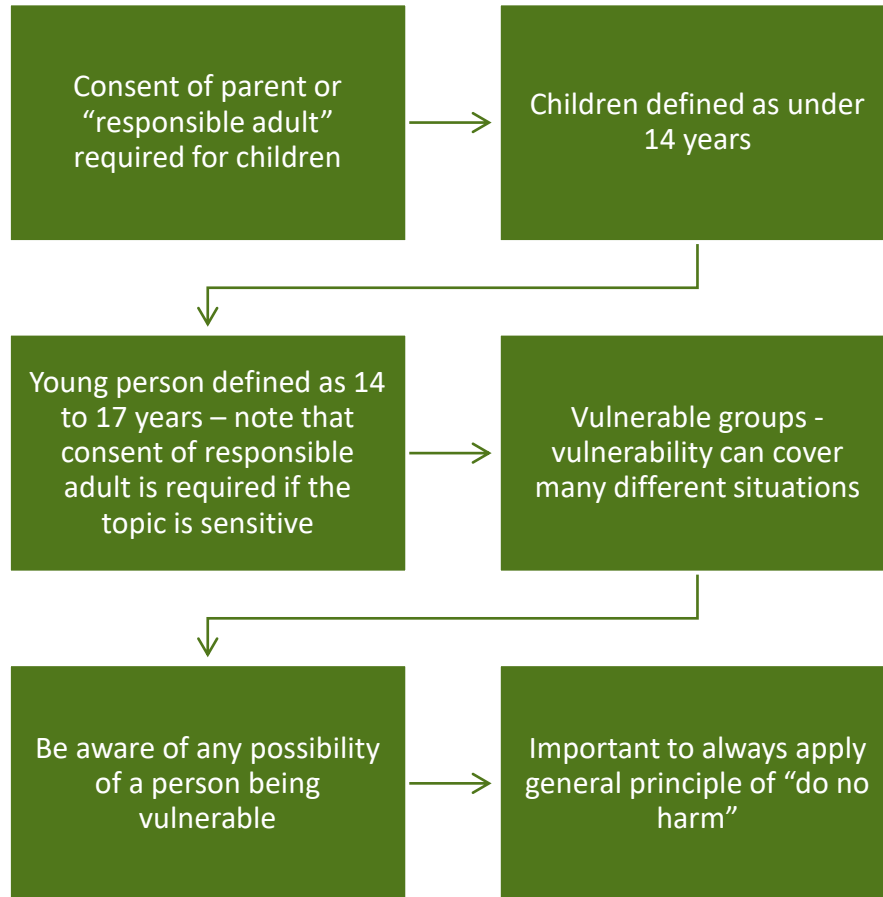
*Members must ensure that projects are designed, carried out, reported and documented accurately, transparently and objectively (clause 15)*

- Complaints often argue that the research fails in this area.
- These are the kinds of questions we ask Members when considering these complaints:
  - *Is the approach to sampling explicit?*
  - *Is it clear where the sample was sourced from and who the sample represents?*
  - *Are the sample limitations made clear? (e.g. low response rates, small samples and use of sample errors for non-probabilistic samples)*
  - *Are the questions unbiased (frequent source of complaints)?*
    - *Particularly where respondents are forced to choose an option.*
  - *Are appropriate inferences drawn from the results (e.g. does the analysis match the results)?*
  - *Is all reporting objective (not just reflective of the researcher's personal views)?*



## Children, young people and other vulnerable groups

Members must take **special care** when collecting information from people in vulnerable circumstances in the community (clause 25).



## Research publication

*Members must take reasonable steps to check and where necessary amend any client prepared materials prior to publication to ensure that the published findings will not be incorrectly or misleadingly reported (clause 34).*

- Another common complaints area.
- There appears to be low awareness of this obligation among members (client and agency side).
- **Typical complaint:** the client releases a synopsis of the research to media or publishes a report on the project online. The material names the research company. Conclusions are drawn that are not evidenced by the research results. Significant research limitations are missing. The member is found in breach (client and agency side).
- Clearly a two-way responsibility here. Both the client and the research company need to proactively collaborate to make sure that results released publicly are accurate (results and analysis) and are transparent about limitations.



A large, glowing pink question mark is centered on a black background. The question mark is composed of a thick, neon-like line that glows with a soft pink and purple aura. The text "7. Questions?" is overlaid on the middle of the question mark.

7. Questions?