



# Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics

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First Edition





## Statement by the CEO

All praise is due to Allah and may His peace and blessings be upon Prophet Muhammad and his family.

The National Center for Assessment (NCA), alternatively known as “Qiyas”\*, was established to contribute to the development of standardized testing and measurement in Saudi Arabia by introducing educational and professional standards that help ensure reason and impartiality in university admissions and professional hiring practices. The NCA could not succeed in such serious, beneficent endeavors were its employees not beholden to the values that underpin them.

We have been guided by ethics in the performance of our professional duties since the establishment of NCA; however, the nature of institutional work makes it imperative that we document these ethics in the form of written principles binding for all. Thus, we have drafted this Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics to depict the NCA’s general policies and serve as a guide for ‘best practice’ detailing the manners in which our staff should and should not comport themselves in the workplace.

Needless to say, Islam was our primary source and guide in drafting this Code. In the Holy Quran Allah commands us to be just and impartial. Allah says: { So follow not [personal] inclination, lest you not be just. And if you distort [your testimony] or refuse [to give it], then indeed Allah is ever, with what you do, Acquainted.} (An-Nisa Verse No:135) The principles of sincere testimony, transparency, integrity, honesty, and similar values have always formed part of the Arab moral tradition. Islam came to perfect them. Muhammad, peace be upon him, said « I was only sent to perfect good morals». It is our pleasure to present to our colleagues a set of professional ethics to which we are confident they already agree and adhere. This is to serve simply as a reminder.

We ask Allah that we may be among those who listen to the Word, and abide by its most righteous meaning. May His peace, mercy and blessings be upon us all.

## Introduction

Day after day, it is confirmed in the world of management that the most important investment an organization can make is in its people. The human element of an institution is its main driver of successful work and the efficient achievement of its objectives. Still, left unchecked by the formalities of civil and religious life, this human element may represent a negative factor. Our religion was the source of our first calling to civilized behavior, and remains our guide in its preservation. Morality and decency are essential to successful relationships in the workplace and society as a whole.

In the professional realm, standards of behavior and guidelines for the performance of duties cannot be left to employees' conceptions of morality alone. Standards of conduct must be explicitly identified and explained for all stakeholders within an institution so that they may have every opportunity to abide by them with full understanding to the best of their ability. Thus, the NCA has set forth its principles of professional behavior. These standards have been designed to ensure integrity, transparency and accountability in the work of Qiyas employees in all its many and varied aspects.

The commitment to ethical ideals and behavior is an essential quality for an employee in any organization. This commitment may be said to be of particular importance for Qiyas employees, as the very nature of their work entails the provision of educational and professional standards for the institutions of society. In deference to this responsibility, Qiyas employees should strive to surpass standards of professional conduct deemed merely acceptable and aspire to the exemplary.

The Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics is a statement of the NCA's main policies, which guide its work and implementation of its objectives, and likewise determine the standards of behavior to which its staff are beholden. The Code is balanced in that it expresses the reciprocal nature of duty and responsibility within the institution. It details not only the NCA's expectations of its employees, but also its obligations toward them, as well as its duties toward greater society.



## Definition

The Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics consists of the rules and regulations that guide Qiyas employees in the performance of their job duties so as to achieve impartiality, fairness, transparency, integrity and equity.

## Purpose

The Code explicates the core ethical principles and standards employees must adhere to in the execution of tasks assigned to them, as governed by policies originating in the NCA's mission statement and charter of work.

## Terms of reference

**First:** Islamic Sharia and social norms.

Islam is considered the source of moral values governing human behavior in all contexts. The Quran, the sayings of the Prophet "Sunnah", and the Companions' applications of what they learned from the life of Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, are profound sources of moral and social values upon which to base a system of work and craft its perfection. Allah says, { And say, «Do [as you will], for Allah will see your deeds, and [so, will] His Messenger and the believers.} (Al-Tawba Verse No:105). The Prophet says, "Allah will be pleased with those who try to do their work in a perfect way". Other Qur'anic verses and Prophetic sayings offer instructions regarding proper conduct while at work. Customs and traditions of labor espoused by Qiyas are consistent with Islamic teachings as depicted in its two sources. Our society respects honesty, integrity, sincerity and similar values that are essential for employees' performance of their job duties.

**Second:** Regulations of the Ministry of Civil Service and other government agencies.

The Ministry of Civil Service has published a book on professional ethics, which includes an extensive list of regulations governing behavior in the workplace, including penalties for violations of such ethics. Many organizations both within the Kingdom and abroad have contributed a wealth of information regarding professional ethics and standards of conduct, and their influence has been drawn upon here as well.

**Third:** NCA policies and ethical values.

The nature of work at Qiyas makes it imperative that its employees adhere to a set of ethical values and principles consistent with its goals and objectives. In executing their job duties and responsibilities, Qiyas employees are required to comply with a set of administrative or technical decisions and instructions that are geared towards ensuring a smooth flow of work.

## Glossary of terms

**This Code includes terms and phrases with specific meanings congruent with Qiyas activities. These terms and phrases are defined as follows:**

- Suspicious funds: Funds whose origin is doubtful.
- Computer systems: Anything related to computers, communications and networks.
- Conflict of interests: A situation where an employee has a personal interest distinct from those of Qiyas which affects his objectivity or impartiality in taking a decision related to his job.
- Beneficiaries: Government or private entities that benefit from Qiyas services.
- Intellectual property rights: The exclusive rights of a party to benefit from creative works of the mind, whereby such works are protected against copying, printing, photographing or use without permission. Said rights include copyright, printing, publishing and systems software.
- Software license: Software right of use accorded by the owner, apart from ownership.
- Transparency: Acting with openness and clarity in procedures, goals, and objectives.
- Justness and impartiality: Commitment to provide equal opportunities for all, without bias.
- Rules of professional conduct: Qiyas' standards of conduct.
- Qiyas: The National Center for Assessment.
- Item writers: Employees or collaborators hired to write test items according to Qiyas' specifications.
- Collaborator / Consultant: A person who works for Qiyas for a specified period, paid monthly or on a piece-rate basis.
- Item reviewers: Qiyas employees and collaborators who review questions to determine their compliance with established criteria.
- User: A person authorized to use a Qiyas computer.
- Objectivity: The adoption of a decision or recommendation through proper analysis of the evidence and the exclusion of personal bias.
- Employee / Staff: A person who works for Qiyas, whether on a full-time basis or as a collaborator hired for a specific project and/or time period.
- Integrity: Employees' placing commitments to work above personal interests.
- Makers of standards: Qiyas specialists in the field of assessment.



## Professional conduct and work ethics

In the achievement of its objectives, the NCA implements a set of managerial policies designed to guide employees in the achievement of goals entrusted to them. These policies constitute the Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics.

The Code is organized to (1) identify policies followed by Qiyas in the conduct of its work, and (2) define their impact upon the nature of this work. Thus, the relationship between general work ethics and professional conduct and specific, day-to-day work on the job is made clear for employees.

### First: Employee's conduct and moral obligations

The key to NCA's success lies in its employees. They are the primary factor in the achievement of its objectives. The work of Qiyas employees is characterized by objectivity, impartiality, confidentiality, and the overarching pursuit of perfection. Ethics are fundamental to their every professional endeavor. The NCA seeks to improve the performance of its employees by facilitating their access to and familiarity with the leading concepts in the philosophy of testing and measurement. It considers the ethics and responsibilities of its staff from two angles. The first is related to employees' unique relationship with their work, including their commitment to personal and professional development. The second aspect pertains to their successful interaction with colleagues and superiors, as well as clients and affiliates. The Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics presents Qiyas' expectations of its staff through the following focus areas:

#### A) Ethics and general responsibilities

To perform his job duties and responsibilities in accordance with Qiyas ethics and moral values, an employee shall:

1. carry out assigned tasks in a timely and efficient manner and to the best of his ability;
2. receive authorization from his immediate superior prior to reassigning any task first assigned to him;
3. complete assigned tasks in a manner consistent with their scientific and technical requirements, including strict attention to regulations and/or instructions governing their accomplishment;
4. arrive at work at the official start time per standard regulations or the stipulations of particular projects assigned, and likewise remain for the duration of the working hours;
5. complete assigned tasks, even if outside standard duties and responsibilities, provided they do not infringe upon the terms of the contract;

6. complete all work assignments according to their established time limits, or, in the absence of a specified time limit, as quickly as possible.
7. carry out any duty assigned to him even if it is beyond the usual duties and not to decline any order from his immediate superior.
8. take initiative in the development of his work, and likewise provide his immediate superior with proposals for development;
9. exploit all available resources to ensure smooth workflow and maximize the achievement of objectives assigned.

## **B) Ethics and responsibilities of test writers and reviewers**

In addition to satisfaction of all job requirements of Qiyas employees, a test writer and/or reviewer must:

1. expand his knowledge on the subject matter of the test in order to attain a broad understanding of all its aspects;
2. have expertise and experience in curriculum components and evaluation, and be acquainted with the subject matter, including its teaching and evaluation methodologies;
3. have knowledge of international assessment methods and educational guidelines for assessment;
4. be familiar with Qiyas guidelines for writing and reviewing test items, and attend the training workshops held by Qiyas for test writers and reviewers under the supervision of its experts;
5. sign a written pledge of commitment to adhere to Qiyas guidelines for writers and reviewers of test questions prior to any assignment.

## **C) Obligations toward superiors:**

A Qiyas employee must:

1. respect the orders of superiors and implement their directives and instructions in accordance with the law;
2. carry out the orders of his superior, who shall bear the responsibility for such orders. If a directive is issued to an employee by an official higher in rank than his immediate superior, said employee must inform his immediate superior of such directive;
3. implement the instructions of his superiors. Should an employee be issued instructions that are to the best of his knowledge in violation of the law, he must request his superior to provide a written confirmation of said instructions;



4. treat superiors with respect and not attempt to gain preferential treatment through flattery or deception;
5. disclose work-related information to his immediate superior and notify relevant superiors of any information that may influence their decisions or hinder workflow;
6. notify his immediate superior of any transgression, violation or difficulty that impedes the performance of job duties or affect workflow;
7. provide superiors with sincere and objective advice or opinion if so requested; otherwise, cooperate with coworkers to ensure smooth workflow;
8. take the initiative to provide superiors with proposals and ideas for development and enhancement of work procedures.

## **D) Obligations toward colleagues**

A Qiyas employee must:

1. cooperate with colleagues to carry out urgent tasks and discharge responsibilities entrusted to their department in a manner that ensures smooth flow of work;
2. maintain a congenial attitude, behave with decency and respect, eschew prejudice, and honor the privacy of colleagues;
3. refrain from harassment, including the assignment of nicknames, the use of vulgar or offensive language, or any communication or action that may be perceived to mock, discriminate or disturb, or otherwise be indecent;
4. have trust in the skills of colleagues and give them the benefit of the doubt when questions arise; make no accusations unless faced with clear and indisputable evidence;
5. share knowledge, ideas and experience with colleagues freely and without bias in a professional manner that facilitates the development of their skills and assists them in solving problems encountered in the workplace;
6. seek to spread positive values among colleagues, including devotion and dedication to help improve work performance and enhance the work environment.

## **E) Obligations toward subordinates**

Superiors should comport themselves as follows:

1. Set a good example for subordinates through adherence to the law and work regulations within their respective departments.
2. Respect the rights of department staff, always treating them fairly and professionally.
3. Assure employees that any evaluative differentiation between them is based solely on the nature and quality of their work.
4. Develop the capacities of department staff, helping them and motivating them to improve their performance.
5. Share knowledge and experience with subordinates and likewise encourage them to exchange information and experience with each other.
6. Supervise subordinates' work attentively, holding them accountable for their actions and evaluating their performance objectively.
7. Adhere to core ethical principles such as justness and impartiality in consideration of the rights and responsibilities of their staff.
8. Encourage entrepreneurship and innovation among employees, and create mechanisms that motivate them to provide proposals concerning the development and advancement of work within the department.
9. Foster a team spirit among department staff.
10. Assign no work beyond the scope of agreed upon duties and responsibilities, except in cases of professional necessity, never exceeding the contract terms.

## **F) Obligations toward beneficiaries**

When dealing with government or private third parties, an employee shall conduct himself as follows:

1. Respect the rights and interests of Qiyas' client and partner organizations, and deal with their staff tactfully, neutrally, and impartially.
2. Treat Qiyas clients with the utmost respect and make every effort to ensure a close relationship with them.
3. Ensure client satisfaction through strict adherence to Qiyas standards of precision and objectivity in all professional endeavors.
4. Test site managers shall choose invigilators based on their competence and credibility, and shall distribute assignments among them in a fair manner.



5. Adhere to applicable laws and regulations when dealing with government agencies and institutions within the Kingdom or with international entities.
6. Honor existing agreements between Qiyas and any third party seeking to benefit from Qiyas services.
7. Establish and maintain trust in all professional relationships through the consistent, reliable and timely fulfillment of agreements in accordance with applicable laws and instructions.
8. Respond to client inquiries or complaints thoroughly and objectively, either by utilization of accurate information available or consultation of the concerned parties within Qiyas.
9. Provide information to clients in accordance with Qiyas' disclosure regulations.
10. Maintain the confidentiality of documents and personal information of individuals dealing with Qiyas in accordance with applicable regulations and not use such information for personal purposes.
11. Refrain from any action that may undermine public confidence in Qiyas, directly or otherwise.
12. Treat item writers, reviewers and researchers in a professional manner, with courtesy and respect.
13. Obtain requisite approvals for field applications of tests and the assignment of members of the test application committees.
14. Ensure that committees and task forces execute assigned tasks with accuracy and precision as per Qiyas established test protocols.

## **G) Obligations toward self-development**

A Qiyas employee must seek to develop his capabilities through deliberate practices, including the following:

1. Improving his professional knowledge and skills via the mindful fulfillment of his job duties.
2. Committing to assist subordinates, colleagues and other staff in contribution to a professional community that fosters the continuous development and exchange of knowledge, skills and competencies of its members.
3. Maintaining competency in the use of modern technologies to better complete, organize and develop his work.
4. Taking advantage of opportunities offered by Qiyas to obtain new academic

- qualifications that hone his skills and improve the overall quality of his work.
5. Understanding and fulfilling the many and varied requirements of his position and working to expand his expertise in his field through personal initiative.
  6. Working in an organized, methodical fashion that would be easy for colleagues to follow and continue in his absence should the need arise, thus helping to ensure the achievement and accuracy of work.

## **Second: Confidentiality of information and tests**

The NCA owns priceless intellectual and informational property. Its great treasure is the vast proprietary knowledge it has gathered, created and organized in its minutiae. It is of foremost importance that this invaluable resource be maintained in complete confidentiality so that its value as an objective assessment tool may be preserved. To achieve this, Qiyas has developed strict measures of safety and confidentiality for its tests and results. It further ensures the confidentiality of the personal and professional data of its staff, partners, clients or any party with whom it has dealings of any nature. In so doing, Qiyas employs regulatory tools and methodologies to classify the level of confidentiality of every document or datum in its care, and specify the mechanisms of disclosure of information to authorized persons. Thus, the NCA confirms the following:

1. Senior management personnel must issue accurate regulations in regard to the monitoring of data, including test items, test results and other information, and develop precautions to which all persons involved must adhere, preventing unauthorized access to such information.
2. Non-disclosure agreements must be established between Qiyas and all parties concerned.
3. Data relating to current or former employees or collaborators, including item writers, consultants and reviewers may not be disclosed by any means. Any request for disclosure of information shall be referred to the legal department to decide thereon.
4. No employee, test writer, reviewer or any person with access to tests results may discuss or otherwise disclose confidential information they are privy to in the course of their work.
5. Item writers must destroy any drafts containing test materials that remain following the submission of their finished work.



6. Item writers must submit exclusively handwritten work to Qiyas, and under no circumstances otherwise print or copy this work. No copy of this work should remain in any form in addition to the submitted draft.
7. Reviewers are not to write any notes regarding questions anywhere other than on the test paper. In the event that additional paper should be required for commentary, it must be destroyed upon the conclusion of the work session.
8. Items are not to be shared with anyone without express authorization from the relevant authority, be they Qiyas employees, collaborators, workplace coordinators or members of external committees.
9. Collaborators on external committees may not answer any questions raised by test takers. Should a question be asked repeatedly, it must be referred to the sector responsible for the assessment and application of tests for further study.
10. Senior Qiyas officers may not disclose confidential information they are privy to in the course of their employment under any circumstances.
11. Test-related materials, information or personal data shall be handled with utmost care and caution, whether electronically or by means of hard copy. The transfer of such information in hard copy must be limited to authorized officials via the use of sealed envelopes marked "SECRET". If transferred electronically, the sensitivity level of the information must be specified in subject lines and file names with the word "SECRET". Electronic transfer shall be carried out only within Qiyas intranet.
12. Employees who have access to personnel information or data may not use such information or data for other than the designated purposes.
13. When updating the computer system or collecting empirical data, Qiyas systems staff must use anonymous credentials and maintain the confidentiality of all data.
14. Employees may not provide information or comments regarding matters that are still under study or deliberation.
15. Employees may not publish, disseminate, or otherwise disclose any document, datum or test items they become aware of in the course of their work. Compliance with such confidentiality shall remain valid even after the end of service.
16. Confidential materials may not be taken out of Qiyas premises without the prior approval of Qiyas.
17. Printing of test materials shall be carried out only by individuals officially assigned the task. No other person may participate in such task.

## Third: Integrity

The NCA emphasizes honesty and truthfulness in its every endeavor. Without these defining characteristics, the safety, effectiveness and reliability of work within NCA could not be guaranteed. In an effort to ensure the impartiality of its personnel, Qiyas remains vigilant against bribery, abuse of authority, money laundering or any interaction or dealing of dubious integrity. Thus, all employees are obliged to heed the following precautions:

1. Employees should approach their careers with honesty, transparency and general good intentions, eschewing dubious interactions or dealings of any kind.
2. Employees of the financial affairs department are not to withhold entitlements of any person or entities dealing with Qiyas in order to use them directly or indirectly for their own benefit. All departments must ensure that consultants and collaborators receive their due entitlements in a timely manner.
3. NCA's funds may not be used for personal purposes or disposed of without an explicit written approval from the competent authority.
4. Accounting staff must comply with all standards and regulations for internal and external accounting.
5. Financial management must comply with the procedure for distribution and delegation of power in all financial transactions.
6. All payment and collection orders shall be subject to internal audit and any suspicious transaction must be reported to the competent authority.
7. The finance department shall ensure the integrity and validity of financial documents, and verify that they are free from tampering or alteration.
8. Employees and collaborators are only to accept compensation from NCA; they may not accept gratuity or gifts of any kind from external stakeholders.
9. Employees may not accept or solicit unregulated gifts of any kind.
10. The aforementioned prohibitions do not include courtesy gifts that could not be reasonably described as a bribe, i.e. gifts of limited value, such as cups, calendars, pens, etc.



11. Employees may not, directly or indirectly, exploit their job positions for personal gain of tangible or intangible value for their own benefit or the benefit of any other persons on their behalf.
12. The NCA, as a policy, does not ask its employees to collect cash fees or in-kind funds from any person or establishment; a request for such payment would constitute solicitation of bribery.
13. The NCA, as a matter of policy, does not accept cash payment for its services. The insistence of any person or entity upon cash payment should be considered with great suspicion, as it may represent an attempt at money laundering or some similar illicit transaction, and shall be immediately reported to Qiyas management, so that they may cut ties with said entity.
14. To protect the NCA from being associated with money laundering or suspicious financial transactions of any kind, the provenance of large payments for products and/or services must be verified, as must the need for high volumes of service if not otherwise indicated.
15. The NCA implements the “know your customer” practices and thus seeks to identify and verify the identity of its clients, the nature of their business and the extent of their integrity. It wants no part of funds from illegal or suspicious sources, and makes a concerted effort to prevent their ingress.

## Fourth: Conflict of interest and abuse of position

Conflict of interest is among the most complex issues in the field of professional ethics, particularly in regard to earnings (both material and intangible). The NCA works to enhance the public interest of society. To this end, it is of exceeding importance that employees not use their position or authority (or allow the use thereof) in any way that might besmirch its mission, or otherwise compromise its integrity. Qiyas expects its staff to put public interest over personal interests. Conflict of interest may arise in any instance in which staff or management take professional action for personal gain, or otherwise pursue personal interest in such a way that their ability to conduct their work objectively and/or effectively may be compromised. In an effort to eliminate this possibility, the NCA obliges its staff to abide by the following:

1. An employee may not use Qiyas' intellectual or material property for private interest or personal gain.
2. An employee may not use his official position to achieve material benefit for himself or any of his relatives.
3. An employee shall avoid the establishment of relationships of private interest with persons or organizations whose interests are dependent upon NCA decisions, whether such decisions are taken by said employee or not.
4. An employee whose nature of work allows him intimate knowledge of Qiyas' clients and/or any of the NCA's trade secrets must sign a non-compete clause (NCC) valid for two years following the end of his tenure. During this period, he may not work for a competitor in any capacity.
5. An employee may not exploit information acquired in the course of his work for his own interest or the interest of a third party, either directly or indirectly.
6. An employee may not participate in external activities that may undermine the neutrality and objectivity of his work with Qiyas, or otherwise impede the discharge of his job duties.
7. An employee must report to his immediate superior any actual or potential instance of conflict of interest.
8. An employee, regardless of his rank, must notify his immediate superior of any pressure he is subjected to that may compromise his objectivity or otherwise hinder his ability to fulfill his job obligations, providing an explanation of the nature of such pressure.



9. An employee must notify his immediate superior of any interest pertaining to himself or any of his relatives that may compromise his ability to deal objectively and impartially with Qiyas suppliers of goods or services.
10. An employee with expertise may not provide consultative services to other entities without approval from Qiyas.
11. An employee may not use his job position directly or indirectly for personal gain, financial or otherwise.
12. An employee may not use information he is privy to in the course of his employment for his own interest or the interest of any third party. This provision shall remain in effect following the end of the employee's tenure with Qiyas.
13. An employee may not engage in business activities similar to those of Qiyas while in office. He may perform no gratuitous service in any way related to his work at Qiyas, nor may he engage in other business activities except with the NCA's official approval.
14. An employee may not use his position for promotion of any product or service other than those performed by the NCA or its affiliates.
15. An employee may not engage in mediation, directly or via a third party, between the NCA and its suppliers .

## Fifth: Maintaining dignity

The NCA is reputed in the scientific community and society as a whole as a reliable authority in the assessment of educational outcomes. The important role it occupies in assessment makes it integral to the educational process itself. Qiyas honors its status as a trusted leader in its field and works very hard to maintain such status. Qiyas' employees are representative of its ideals and thus are obliged to present themselves in appearance and action in a manner befitting its dignity and high esteem. They are beholden to preserve the integrity of Qiyas as follows:

1. Maintain compliance with the requirements of Islam, performing its duties and rituals such as prayer and fasting, and shunning the illicit and forbidden.
2. Refrain from engaging in any work, with or without pay, that may comprise the dignity of work at Qiyas.
3. Behave at all times in a manner that promotes the values, integrity and good reputation of Qiyas.
4. Maintain proper dress and general appearance in line with prevailing social norms. While Saudi employees are required to abide by the national dress, employees of other nationalities may dress in any style appropriate for work.
5. Refrain from any acts or practices that violate good manners, public decency, traditions or social norms.
6. Respect Islamic customs, traditions and rituals and refrain from any act that may disparage them, regardless of personal religious background.
7. Maintain high standards of conduct at the NCA or any other professional venue inside or outside the Kingdom, acting as an ambassador, embodying Qiyas' principles and values.
8. Comply with Qiyas' ethical values and principles and serve as an example for subordinates.

## Sixth: Criteria for recruitment of employees

The NCA strives for distinction in its work and products. Such distinction depends upon a policy of employee selection based on merit only. Work at Qiyas requires scientific rigor, seriousness and total engagement. Employees are hired and promoted according to objective and transparent standards of judgment. The NCA's meritocratic employment practices keep it staffed with experts highly capable in their fields, and thus help to ensure its regional and global distinction in the field of education. The selection process is meticulous and uncompromising. Those entrusted with hiring are guided by the following set of obligations:

1. Eligibility for employment at the NCA is determined by merit alone. There is no discrimination in recruitment, hiring, training or promotion due to skin color, ethnic origin, city, region or any consideration independent of ability to meet the demands of the job.
2. Staff is recruited based upon distinctive scientific competencies commensurate with the NCA's needs, demonstrated by work produced and qualifications earned.
3. Individuals with certain expertise may sometimes be hired without going through typical vetting procedures, provided such hiring is based on the recommendation of a renowned scholar whose objectivity and ethics are beyond doubt.
4. Procedures of selection, appointment, promotion and training of employees shall be undertaken with absolute integrity and transparency, devoid of the consideration of kinship, friendship or any such personal relationship. Preference shall be based solely on scientific, functional merit as applicable to the demands of the job.
5. Each department within Qiyas must develop specific descriptions of each of its positions with clear criteria for recruitment, appointment and promotion. These criteria are to be based on merit and departmental need. The selection process is to be meticulous, objective and accurate.

## Seventh: Maintenance of NCA's resources as well as physical and intellectual property

The NCA owns a great variety of intellectual resources, including its library, bank of test items, and other data repositories. It further possesses substantial material assets, including the premises, furniture, equipment, and supplies therein. Qiyas actively maintains its assets, as they aid its employees in their work and are thus central to the achievement of its goals. To this end, it has codified a set of procedural obligations that employees must observe in the maintenance of its physical and intellectual resources. They are as follows:

1. Employees must care for the office equipment and supplies provided to them, from plain stationary to sophisticated electronic devices. They should use these tools for the execution of their job duties to the best of their ability.
2. Office devices and equipment shall be used for their intended purposes and they may not be used for personal purposes.
3. The NCA's communications infrastructure – e.g. telephone, facsimile machine, computing devices, Internet, etc. – shall be used for work purposes only. Personal use shall be strictly limited to cases of pressing need.
4. The name "Qiyas", NCA's logo and programs are among its most important intellectual property and may not be used on private books, pamphlets or other publications. Unauthorized use of such material is strictly prohibited.
5. NCA publications of scientific and intellectual value may not be sold or distributed except in accordance with applicable regulations. All sale proceeds shall be collected by the department of financial affairs.
6. Materials may not be taken out of the library except according to the official borrowing policies and procedures.
7. NCA's physical or intellectual property, including test items and instructions booklets may only be obtained upon payment of or a pledge to pay their prices to the department of financial affairs.
8. NCA funds may not be disbursed except upon official approval from Qiyas competent authorities and in accordance with applicable procedures.
9. NCA buildings, equipment and facilities shall be periodically maintained in order to maintain their value and functionality.
10. The NCA adopts a zero tolerance policy against negligence or dereliction that may result in undue financial losses.



## **Eighth: Use of information and communication technology facilities**

Work at the NCA involves the use of technology in all its aspects, beginning with computing devices and communication equipment, and ending with test correction machines. The indispensable nature of such technology in the modern era makes it a double edged sword: it is essential to workflow, but if misused it may become a contaminating element that corrupts its realization. The added burden and responsibility this represents for employees obliges the NCA to provide a set of ethics that govern the use of the information and communication technology facilities. Staff must use such facilities responsibly and according to applicable regulations, including the following:

1. All technical apparatuses used for work must be well cared for. Included are the following: computers, printers, generic devices, automatic correction devices, and any device used for communication. Should any problem arise with said equipment, those responsible for its maintenance must be promptly notified.
2. Staff must be competent in the use of the Internet for professional purposes. They are expected to achieve and/or develop Internet literacy skills and abilities relevant to their work.
3. The information technology (IT) department shall distribute technical tasks among its employees equally and without preference.
4. The IT department shall establish and maintain a well-regulated data encryption system.
5. Employees are fully responsible for use of the computer network and must not abuse their privileges. They must notify the responsible authority immediately upon detection of a security breach or anything of this nature.
6. Users are responsible for backing up data related to their work.
7. Users are responsible for protecting confidential and sensitive data related to their work. They must maintain this information under password protection and under no circumstances disclose it to any unauthorized person.
8. Only official emails may be used to exchange work-related information through the network.
9. The official email may not be used to subscribe to social media platforms or any sites for other than professional purposes.
10. The official email may not be used for any purpose in violation of the laws and regulations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, or which may otherwise bring harm to the NCA.

11. All correspondences via official email shall be the property of the NCA and may be accessed by relevant authorities without prior consent. Employees have no rights to privacy in this regard.
12. The NCA respects the privacy of its employees, but reserves the right to control and monitor the websites they visit.
13. Users shall be responsible for materials issued from their work email or private accounts. Access to these accounts must be strictly secured; they may not be left open, particularly if accessed from shared devices.
14. NCA computer systems may not be used for any purpose contrary to the teachings of Islam or the laws and regulations of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, including the Anti-Cyber Crime Law, nor may they be used in any manner that violates NCA's IT policy.
15. NCA devices may not be used in violation of government computer- or information-network regulations.
16. NCA computers may not be used for any illegal purpose, or to access any material that may be deemed indecent or immodest.
17. Access or use of the accounts of others is prohibited whether with or without their knowledge.
18. NCA computer systems may not be used in any manner that threatens the security of the internal or external networks.
19. The use of computing devices in any manner that negatively affects the network or its users is strictly prohibited.
20. The installation of any device or program without permission from the competent department is prohibited.
21. Use of the network to threaten, sabotage, inconvenience, harass, or otherwise compromise the security of any of its users is strictly prohibited. Examples of such use include the following: sending repeated, superfluous emails; using email for the purpose of fraud or deception; re-sending emails that may contain viruses or other suspicious files; and attempting to create or expose gaps in network security.
22. Accessing and/or tampering with the private information of others is prohibited.
23. Resources, including computer paper, ink and external storage devices shall be used judiciously.
24. Network devices may not be used to distribute confidential or unauthorized material, nor may they be used to transmit any information with the intent to harass or cause offense.
25. Employees may not use the network to download any material not related to their work.
26. Downloading immoral content of any variety is strictly prohibited.



## Ninth: Protection of intellectual property

Just as Qiyas is vigilant in the protection of its own intellectual property rights, it is careful to preserve the intellectual property rights of others. Intellectual property includes creations of the mind; literary and artistic works; as well as images, models and names. Qiyas respects patent law and all copyright and software licensing laws and regulations. Copying or reproducing any text, file, program or part thereof without permission from the author or copyright owner is strictly prohibited. Qiyas employees, researchers and collaborators are required to comply with its policy on protection of intellectual property; to this end Qiyas has outlined precise guidelines for them to follow, including the following:

1. No text or part thereof from any source may be copied, transferred or disseminated by any means in violation of copyright laws.
2. No person may claim authorship of any source not their own or otherwise use its contents without proper attribution.
3. All references shall be properly cited.
4. Under no circumstances shall there be plagiarism of any kind, whether of ideas, research or results.
5. The IT department is responsible for the installation and maintenance of all computer programs on NCA computers. Said department is responsible for the validity of applicable software licenses.
6. The IT department is responsible for compliance with software license agreements, including installation limits and periods of validity.
7. Unauthorized copying or use of programs represents a breach of software license agreement. The installation and/or use of unlicensed programs may compromise the NCA reputation. Any employee who engages in such behavior does so of his own accord and shall be held liable for his actions. NCA shall not accept responsibility for the action of any employee in violation of this Code.

## Tenth: Work environment safety, security and health

It is understood at Qiyas that the preservation of a healthy and secure work environment is of central importance to its success and essential to the preservation of faith in the organization and its societal mission. All aspects of safety at the NCA are strictly maintained for employees, data and resources as well as the premises. The building is properly constructed to be free from hazards; safety regulations have been established to anticipate and prevent problems that may threaten the security of employees or compromise the physical infrastructure of the building or the wealth of data it houses. Thus, employees in general and safety officials in particular are to abide by the following requirements:

1. All chemical waste must be adequately disposed of to protect the safety of workers and the environment.
2. All batteries and electronics must be disposed of properly to control pollution and protect the environment.
3. Use of paper shall be minimized to avoid the waste of financial and natural resources.
4. All electrical work is to be performed only by trained technicians; all wires are to be kept inside protective tubes for safekeeping against friction and corrosion.
5. Heat-emitting devices must be well ventilated and kept far from combustible materials.
6. Smoking is prohibited in all areas inside the NCA or any of its facilities.
7. Fire safety and protection equipment such as smoke alarms and fire extinguishers must be readily accessible and well maintained. Staff must be trained in the use of fire extinguishers.
8. The fire safety and prevention system must be periodically maintained, as must all accompanying tools.
9. Internal facility control systems shall be established and maintained; all visitors shall be guided to their destinations, or to a Qiyas officer who may address their needs.
10. Visitors shall only be allowed entry to the NCA upon invitation; inviting parties shall be responsible for the guests and liable for their actions.



11. Qiyas intellectual property may not be transferred by any means except upon being properly secured against unauthorized access.
12. The transfer of test materials and answers between NCA premises and test administration locations must be conducted under secure conditions; all such correspondence shall be confidential.
13. NCA computing and/or data storage devices may not be taken outside of the NCA premises, unless they are properly secured against theft or unauthorized access.
14. NCA guests from the general public must be issued identification which indicates the nature of their visit and areas they are authorized to access.
15. Employees who drive NCA vehicles must possess all requisite licenses and certifications and shall comply with traffic laws and regulations at all times. They shall be fully responsible for the consequences of any breach of such laws and regulations.

## Eleventh: Dissemination of NCA's vision and values

The NCA considers it its obligation to the community and its institutions to clarify and disseminate high-level professional and educational standards, to facilitate the fair and equitable selection of qualified individuals in the workforce and education, and contribute to the realization of society's modern and progressive scientific, educational and professional goals. Qiyas aims to disseminate its values in the community by means of both its message and its work; its every endeavor is representative of transparency, integrity, fairness, honesty, and accountability. Qiyas' name, products and services are inseparable from its social responsibility: they define the organization. All Qiyas employees are responsible for the promotion of its values, particularly those in charge of community relations, communications and public information services. They, in coordination with the relevant department, shall:

1. participate actively in local and regional conferences and exhibitions, clarifying Qiyas' goals and objectives, promoting its mission, and distributing informational literature to this effect;
2. attend regional and international academic conferences on testing and measurement, presenting research papers showing Qiyas contributions to the field of testing and measurement;
3. maintain communication with clients regarding their professional- and educational-testing needs, and in so doing ensure their understanding of Qiyas products and services;
4. visit public schools to advocate NCA's mission and values and identify schools' needs, making it clear that NCA's principle goals is to meet such needs, as students constitute the essential element of society which forms the main basis for any future development;
5. hold conferences and seminars that bring to light new research and studies in the field of measurement and evaluation;
6. plan and orchestrate school field trips to Qiyas headquarters to educate students about Qiyas and its objectives and acquaint them with the process of writing and correcting test items;
7. use media events to promote the NCA's message which aims at improving the outcomes of education, whereby students are granted equal opportunities to advance on the basis of merit, ability and potential; The NCA is not meant to constitute an obstacle to students;
8. prepare multimedia releases promoting the NCA's message and approach towards education and career development, and distribute them to all stakeholder as well as the general public via radio, television and social media outlets.



## Twelfth: NCA obligations toward its employees

The NCA is committed to the fair and equitable treatment of its staff. As it requires employees to adhere to specific standards of behavior in the discharge of their job duties, it in turn remains attuned to their needs in order to facilitate their success in this regard. Qiyas offers regular training and professional development opportunities so that staff may remain capable and confident in carrying out their duties and responsibilities. Moreover, the NCA maintains a congenial working environment and provides competitive and fair compensation packages. Qiyas is committed to its staff, and pledges to support them in the successful execution of their tasks as follows:

1. Determine employees' duties and responsibilities, clarify expectations and deal with matters relating to employment conditions fairly in consideration of capacity and merit.
2. Provide good and safe work environment, guaranteeing that no employee is subject to discrimination based on color, tribe, home region or any such factor.
3. Provide appropriate training opportunities and facilitate continuous learning to enhance employees' professional and scientific advancement.
4. Grant each employee the right to challenge any decision issued against him, provided he presents grounds for such appeal.
5. Offer a fair and effective incentive system to reward exceptional efforts and encourage creativity and innovation in the workplace.
6. Never blame or censure an employee for raising doubt or expressing complaint, in good faith, regarding practices he understands to be systematic irregularities, nor reprimand an employee for giving testimony relating to a matter under investigation.

## **Thirteenth: Acknowledgment and compliance statement**

Rules stipulated in this Code affirm the provisions of Labor Law and NCA work regulations. They shall be regarded as complementary and not contradictory to other NCA laws and regulations. Each employee shall, upon perusal of this Code, sign a statement of acknowledgement and compliance, confirming his commitment to NCA work regulations as stated herein. The signed statement shall be deposited in his file, and a copy thereof shall be provided to him.

- “NCA” and “Qiyas” are used interchangeably to refer to the National Center for Assessment.



### Acknowledgment and Compliance Statement

Name of Employee		Employee Number	
Department		Job Title	
Appointment Date			

By signing below, I, \_\_\_\_\_, do hereby acknowledge that I have read and understood the Code of Professional Conduct and Work Ethics and I agree to abide by its provisions.

Name		Signature	
Date			



