You need to act quickly when facing an ethical dilemma.

The longer you leave it, the more chance there is for repercussions for the organisation, yourself and the standing of the profession. CIMA’s Code of Ethics can help you identify and deal with situations where professional integrity may not exist.

CIMA is committed to upholding the highest ethical and professional standards and to maintaining public confidence in management accounting. CGMA designation holders and CIMA students are required to comply with the CIMA Code of Ethics and to adopt its five fundamental principles to their working lives.

To find out more, visit cimaglobal.com/ethics
Check all your facts – and document where possible
a. Identify all relevant facts.
b. Do not rely on word of mouth, or assumptions.
   Is it really your problem?
c. Can anybody else help?

Is it ethical – have you considered the ethical issues involved?
a. Does it feel right?
b. How would you feel if you saw it in a newspaper?
c. How would you feel about your peers, friends, family knowing about it?
d. Have you referred to the CIMA Code of Ethics?
e. Have you referred to your internal Code of Ethics/Conduct and other internal policies?

Is it legal?
a. Is the issue in question regulated by the law – national and international?
b. Does it comply with rules, policies, standards and contracts imposed by relevant regulators/bodies and by your employer?

Identify which fundamental principles are affected
a. Integrity
b. Objectivity
c. Professional competence and due care
d. Confidentiality
e. Professional behaviour

See next page for the fundamental principles in more detail.

Identify the affected parties
a. Who are the individuals, organisations and key stakeholders affected?
b. In what way are they affected?
c. Are there conflicts between different stakeholders?
d. Understand the effects of non-action – to the organisation, to yourself and to society.

Possible course of action – internal and external escalation
a. Escalate internally; consider grievance procedures.
b. Document every action you take to resolve the conflict.
c. Escalate externally to auditor, legal advisors, professional body.

Seek professional or legal advice
a. Your internal whistle-blowing or speak up helpline.
b. Legal advisors.
c. CIMA ethics helpline: free to members and students.

Refuse to remain associated with the conflict
a. If resolution seems unlikely, disassociate yourself from the issue – in writing if necessary.
b. Legal advice may be needed if this affects your employment status or if you are implicated in any way with the issue.

Further support is available online, including the Code of Ethics, ethical dilemmas and helplines. CIMA also has an online library of resources articles, blogs, webcasts and links to thought leadership, related to ethics and sustainability. cimaglobal.com/ethics

Practice resolving an ethical dilemma and applying CIMA’s Code of Ethics and Ethical Checklist to a situation with our free Ethics CPD e-resource. cimaglobal.com/ethicstool
Fundamental principles of the CIMA Code of Ethics

100.5 A professional accountant shall comply with the following fundamental principles:

- **Integrity** – to be straightforward and honest in all professional and business relationships.

- **Objectivity** – to not allow bias, conflict of interest or undue influence of others to override professional or business judgments.

- **Professional competence and due care** – to maintain professional knowledge and skill at the level required to ensure that a client or employer receives competent professional services based on current developments in practice, legislation and techniques and act diligently and in accordance with applicable technical and professional standards.

- **Confidentiality** – to respect the confidentiality of information acquired as a result of professional and business relationships and, therefore, not disclose any such information to third parties without proper and specific authority, unless there is a legal or professional right or duty to disclose, nor use the information for the personal advantage of the professional accountant or third parties.

- **Professional behaviour** – to comply with relevant laws and regulations and avoid any action that discredits the profession.