

British Horological Institute

Code Of Practice



This code applies to the repair, restoration and conservation of clocks, watches and other horological items.

All members of the Institute, qualified and unqualified, are bound by this code.

- 1 a) Issue a receipt for any item taken in, either for assessment or repair. Note on this receipt and in your records the condition of any item before accepting it for work, and point out to your customer any obvious defects or faults.
- b) If the item will need to be dismantled before you can indicate your price, obtain and record your customer's consent, and explain any charge that this may incur.
- c) You are encouraged to photograph all items as you receive them, both to show the state of the item before work was begun and to help in case of disputed identification.
- 2 a) Provide your customer with a written price as soon as possible for all work, except for very minor or "while-you-wait" tasks, and indicate how long the work is likely to take. Make sure that your customer understands whether you have given a quotation (i.e. a firm and fixed price) or an estimate (i.e. an indicative price +/- 15%), and record your customer's acceptance. State whether any applicable taxes are included.
- b) If extra work becomes necessary, obtain and record the customer's consent, before starting the additional work, for the extent, additional cost and any delay involved.
- 3 a) Take good care of your customer's property. Identify each item clearly, including pendulums, weights and other loose parts, using a job card, tag or similar.
- b) Keep records, with dates, of the work you carry out, parts fitted, customer's instructions and authorisations, and any test results.
- c) Submit a detailed invoice, and include relevant test results. It is good practice to return to the customer any broken or replaced parts.
- 4 Consider the need to insure yourself against risk, especially public liability and, where appropriate, employer's liability. If your insurance does not cover objects left for repair you must inform your customer, and obtain and record acknowledgement of this.
- 5 Always work to a professional and responsible standard.
- 6 Respect the original character and property of all artefacts, especially those of historic, rarity or quality value, and advise the customer accordingly. If your customer requests work that, in your opinion, will unduly jeopardise this character, refuse the work politely but firmly and explain to your customer your reasons for doing so.
- 7 Never undertake work beyond your level of competence. If you need to send a job, or part of a job, out of your workshop obtain and record your customer's consent before doing so.
- 8 When repairing modern high-class watches, fit only genuine and exact replacement parts whenever possible. If you are unable to do this, obtain and record your customer's approval before proceeding, and note the non-genuine components in your invoice.
9. Do not use letters of qualification to which you are not entitled. The Institute's Articles of Association forbid the mention of the Institute in any commercial connection by members who do not belong to one of the professional grades.
- 10 Do not bring the Institute into disrepute. Conduct yourself with courtesy and consideration towards all customers.
- 11 Observe the public interest in matters of Health and Safety.
- 12 Observe all laws and regulations within the country in which you operate your business.