

Ethics Risk Factor	Professional Standard Description	Example	AKA	Primary IAE Ethical Principle
1 Opacity of Incentive Structure	The nature or contingency of compensation was not adequately conveyed.	The influencer says "#ad" but doesn't mention commissions, bonuses, or equity.	You don't know what they're really getting.	Principle 9 – Commercial Relationships
2 Manufactured Peer Endorsement	Inauthentic or incentivized peer amplification created a false sense of consensus.	Friends and followers post glowing comments because they were quietly rewarded to do so.	Making it look like everyone loves it.	Principle 6 – Transparency
3 Manipulative Use of Platform Mechanics	Platform features or algorithms were used to reduce transparency or disclosure salience.	Disclosures are placed where the algorithm buries them because "that performs better."	Gaming the system to hide the truth.	Principle 6 – Transparency
4 Erosion of Audience Autonomy	Emotional or time-pressure tactics constrained reflective choice.	"Buy it now or you'll miss out forever," paired with countdown clocks and panic language.	Pushing people before they can think.	Principle 3 – Fairness
5 Inadequate Safeguards for Vulnerable Audiences	Vulnerable audiences were reached without enhanced disclosures or protections.	Weight-loss teas pushed to teens using before-and-after photos.	A hard sell to people who are easy to pressure.	Principle 3 – Fairness
6 Material Misrepresentation by Context	The communication created a misleading takeaway through selective framing, omission of material context, or exaggerated personal testimony, despite no literal falsehood.	An influencer says, "I lost 20 pounds using this," but leaves out that they also had a trainer, a nutritionist, and a personal chef.	Micro Truths and Macro Falsehoods	Principle 1 – Truthful and Non-Misleading Communications
7 Simulated Authenticity	The endorsement used engineered spontaneity, scripted vulnerability, or implied independence that did not reflect the commercial relationship.	"I wasn't even planning to post this..." (It's in the contract.)	Pretending it wasn't an ad when it was.	Principle 6 – Transparency
8 Ineffective Disclosure of Material Connection	Disclosure existed in form but not in clarity, prominence, timing, or modality sufficient for consumer understanding and reduced the audience's ability to recognize the communication as advertising regardless of whether disclosure was technically present.	The influencer flashes "#ad" for half a second at the end of a fast video when everyone has already scrolled.	Technically disclosed, practically hidden.	Principle 5 – Disclosure
9 Obfuscation of Persuasive Intent	The content design or format reduced the audience's ability to recognize the communication as advertising.	The video feels like a personal story but never clearly signals, "This is an ad."	Selling without admitting you're selling.	Principle 6 – Transparency
10 Selective Experience Reporting Without Contextualization	Anecdotal or exceptional outcomes were presented without clarifying typical results or variability.	"This app made me \$5,000 last month," without mentioning most users make little or nothing.	Showing the best case and pretending it's normal.	Principle 2 – Substantiation
11 Disproportionate Exploitation of Trust-Based Influence	Parasocial trust was leveraged in ways that predictably impaired audience judgment.	"I wouldn't tell you this if I didn't care about you," said to millions of strangers.	Using friendship vibes to push a sale.	Principle 3 – Fairness
12 Unbalanced Power or Information Asymmetry	The appeal failed to account for disparities in knowledge, expertise, or risk awareness.	A beauty influencer promotes a treatment without explaining risks they fully understand.	They know a lot more than you do, and use it.	Principle 3 – Fairness
13 Responsibility Misalignment	The sponsor exercised material influence while disclaiming responsibility for outcomes.	The brand approved every word, then says, "That was the influencer's opinion."	The brand steers the ship, then denies the crash.	Principle 8 – Voice and Internal Processes
14 Unauthorized/Undisclosed Delegation of Expression	Material elements of voice, likeness, or judgment were generated or altered without disclosure.	The influencer's face and voice are real, but the script and edits were done by AI without saying so.	It sounds human, but it isn't.	Principle 6 – Transparency
15 Role Confusion Between Experience and Expertise	Personal experience was presented in a way that implied expert authority.	"I'm not a professional, but this cured my anxiety," said to millions who trust them.	Sounding like a doctor when you're not.	Principle 1 – Truthful and Non-Misleading Communications
16 Manufactured Peer Endorsement	Inauthentic or incentivized peer amplification created a false sense of consensus.	Friends and followers post glowing comments because they were quietly rewarded to do so.	Making it look like everyone loves it.	Principle 6 – Transparency
17 Opaque Product Seeding or Incentivized Distribution	Products or benefits were distributed to prompt endorsement without disclosure.	Influencers receive expensive gifts and then rave about them without saying why.	Free stuff that turns into secret ads.	Principle 9 – Commercial Relationships
18 Insufficient Ethical Instruction or Standards	Creators were engaged without reasonable guidance or training.	The brand hires creators but never explains disclosure rules or expectations.	Nobody told them where the lines were.	Principle 8 – Voice and Internal Processes
19 Failure to Exercise Ongoing Oversight	The sponsor failed to monitor or remediate unethical conduct after awareness.	The brand sees misleading posts going viral and says, "It's already out there."	Looking away once it's live.	Principle 8 – Voice and Internal Processes
20 Degradation of Trust at Scale	Repeated practices diminished transparency and public trust in advertising.	After years of sneaky ads, people stop trusting influencers altogether.	It works... until nobody believes anyone anymore.	Principle 4 – Social Responsibility
21 Suppression of Audience Feedback and Counter-Speech	The influencer or sponsoring entity disabled, restricted, filtered, or selectively moderated audience comments or feedback in order to prevent reasonable questions, criticism, or counter-information that could affect consumer understanding or decision-making.	Everyday version: You can talk at people, but they're not allowed to talk back.	"Selling, but not listening."	Principle 3 , Fairness
22 Suppression of Audience Comments and Counter-Speech	The influencer or sponsoring entity disabled, restricted, filtered, or selectively moderated audience comments or feedback in order to prevent reasonable questions, criticism, or counter-information that could affect consumer understanding or decision-making.	You can talk at people, but they're not allowed to talk back	"Selling, but not listening."	Principle 3 , Fairness