



## IACAT complaints procedure

- A. The IACAT Council has the overall responsibility in dealing with complaints
- B. The IACAT Council may appoint Examiners to process the initial stages of the investigation.
- C. The IACAT Council may appointment external Examiners if deemed necessary.

(Incorporating 5 Rights of Natural Justice and Adaptation of Health and Social Care Professionals Act 2005 Complaints Procedure)

The purpose of this procedure is to provide a means of processing any complaint about an infringement of the code of ethics and practice where possible or appropriate, an amicable solution will be sought.

### STAGE ONE

#### 1. RIGHT TO KNOW THE ALLEGED OFFENCE

Only written and signed complaints will be considered. Anonymous written complaints have no validity and will be destroyed. Only complaints made within seven years of the event(s) complained of, will be considered.

The Secretary will seek written authorisation from the complainant to show the letter of complaint to the Therapist in all cases. If, after a further two weeks, the necessary authorisation to show the letter to the therapist is not forthcoming, the Complainant will be informed in writing that the complaint cannot be considered further.

The Council of IACAT shall appoint two members of the Complaints Committee as Examiners to investigate the matter. Members of the Complaints Committee must declare any interest they may have in relation to any complainant, and shall be ineligible to be appointed Examiner in that case.

The Examiners shall conclude their investigation as quickly as possible and inform the Therapist of the complaint.

#### 2. RIGHT TO REPLY

At the discretion of the Examiners, exploratory meetings involving either or both parties may be held. The complainant may be accompanied to such meetings by a support person, and the therapist concerned by his/her supervisor.

The Therapist shall be invited to respond in writing, and shall be informed that this letter will be made available to the Complainant. This will be done either by registered post or at a meeting convened for the purpose.

If the Complainant is satisfied with the exploratory meeting, or with the written reply, the procedure may be completed at this stage, if the Examiners think fit.

The IACAT Council will be informed of the resolution and will duly communicate the outcome to both Therapist and Complainant.

If the Examiners decide that a case remains to be answered, may determine sanctions or move on to Stage 2 may determine sanctions.



## STAGE TWO

The Examiners will consider the issues raised, and will have the discretion to arrange to meet both parties, together or separately, as they see fit. The meeting(s) will be chaired by one of the Examiners, will last for one hour maximum, and will allow statement of complaint, response, and questions by all present. Minutes of the meeting will be recorded.

If the Complainant does not attend this meeting, an explanation will be sought. If a reasonable explanation is forthcoming, the procedure will be re-activated once more. If not, the complaint will lapse.

The Examiners shall make a written report and recommendations to the IACAT Council who will consider this report, make a decision based on it, or will proceed to Stage 3.

Both the Therapist and the Complainant will be informed if the procedure is thus completed. If the IACAT Council decides that a case remains to be answered, then the procedure will either move on to Stage 3, a formal stage

## STAGE THREE

### 3. RIGHT TO REPRESENTATION

Both the Complainant and the Therapist are at liberty to engage their own legal advisors at this stage, provided that the Secretary will have been given prior notification thereof, in writing, as to the name of such representatives, and details of the dates and times of meetings.

The IACAT Council reserves the right to engage its own legal advisor to attend any formal meeting(s), for the purposes of assisting in examining and interviewing the person(s) appearing before it and with a view to considering all or any material produced.

### 4. RIGHT TO DUE CONSIDERATION

A Complainant explains the nature of the complaint and may subsequently be questioned by members of the Panel, consisting of the Complainant, the Therapist, their Legal Representatives and IACAT Council Representatives.

The Therapist will be given an opportunity to respond to the complaint, and may be questioned by members of the Panel.

The Complainant and the Therapist may add further comments, or put questions to the other through the Chairperson.

The Complainant and the Therapist are given equal time to summaries their position to the Chairperson.

The Panel will prepare a report and recommendations for the IACAT Council, which will meet to consider the matter within four weeks.

The IACAT Council will make a decision for appropriate action, which may include withdrawal of membership of IACAT.

The IACAT Council will communicate in writing with the parties concerned.



## CONCLUSION

The IACAT Council may find that no breach of the Code of Ethics and Practice has occurred, and no action need be taken.

Where action is required, this may include sanctions to be imposed on the therapist, which may be one or more of the following: -

- A. Requirement to change in a specific way by a specific date, which may include further training.
- B. Requirement to work under a nominated supervisor for a specified period of time.
- C. Withdrawal of accreditation and/or membership for a specified period and/or until specific changes have been undertaken.
- D. Permanent withdrawal of accreditation and membership.

## 5. RIGHT TO APPEAL

The Complainant or the Therapist has the right to appeal.

