

Registration Council for Dog Training and Behaviour Practitioners

Policy Document - mission statement (purpose), aims & objectives, management rules & regulations, etc

1. The purpose of the Registration Council for Dog Training and Behaviour Practitioners is:
“To promote humane behaviour towards animals, and dogs in particular, by developing individual understanding of animal welfare, training, behaviour and the canine-human bond in the education of, and for the benefit of, the public through managing the UK Register of Signatories to the Companion Animal Welfare Council Code of Practice, which promotes industry agreed professional standards and best practice for practitioners, to advance canine welfare in particular but not exclusively”.
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2. Activities to achieve the above, the Council will aim to:
 - a) advance canine welfare by
 - raising public awareness on the standards expected of a professional practitioner by promoting those set by the CAWC Code of Practice through the Councils’ website and providing information and advice as required;
 - maintaining and managing the Register of Signatories of those committed, through registration, to uphold the professional and humane standards set by CAWC Code of Practice, in relation to providing any level of Dog Training and Canine Behaviour Service in the UK;
 - promoting appropriate training and behaviour protocols to prevent cruelty and relieve emotional and physical suffering caused through ignorance; and in doing so, promote responsible dog ownership in the education of the public, dog owners, handlers and family members.
 - b) benefit the public by
 - providing a list of Practitioners and Providers with filtered information on the services offered in relation to choosing an appropriate individual / organisation for their particular needs;
 - providing a system of accountability for professional and public use, inviting feedback on services received, and in doing so, manage the CAWC Code of Practice and investigate complaints through the Council’s Support, Disciplinary and Grievance Procedures.
 - c) promote education and raise professional standards by
 - accepting individual Practitioners who on registering, will provide details on any area of canine involvement and complete a personal profile of their knowledge and experience in support of their role(s) and any relevant services offered to the public;
 - providing guidance to Practitioners around aspects of offering and delivering public services according to the CAWC Code of Practice and relevant National Occupational Standards, including advertising claims made by individuals (or related Service Providers) in relation to giving realistic and accurate information on their services;
 - encouraging Signatories to increase personal teaching skills and knowledge through continual professional development (CPD) to advance understanding of welfare, training, behaviour and human / canine relationships;
 - encouraging Signatories to gain formal peer recognition / qualifications / membership by one or more of the professional organisations set up to do so;
 - being the accepted organisation to offer unbiased and impartial advice on the standards applied to all working aspects of dog training and behaviour modification, including career advice and options for active and prospective practitioners;
 - working with and promoting industry related charities, educational and or membership bodies, which set standards for animal welfare and or acceptable standards for their respective members and or individual practitioners, and in doing so, helping regulate companion animal services in the UK in relation to the training and behaviour of dogs.

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3. For the purposes of this Council the following terms shall apply
- a. **Affiliate / Affiliated Organisation** – to all industry related charities, educational and or membership bodies promoting animal welfare and or setting standards for their students and or members, which register to demonstrate their support for the CAWC Code.
 - b. **Code** – to the Companion Animal Welfare Council's industry agreed Dog Behaviour and Training Code of Practice for Practitioners (2010).
 - c. **Council** – to the Registration Council for Dog Training and Behaviour Practitioners (RCDTBP), an organisation consisting of Registered Signatories to the Code (Individuals and related groups).
 - d. **Industry** – to all organisations and services involved with aspect of Dogs and their Welfare, and in particular in regard to Training and Behaviour, whether registered with the RCDTBP or not.
 - e. **Member** – to members of the Executive Committee (EC) only, each of whom shall have a vote on management issues. No membership status or voting rights apply to Signatories.
 - f. **NOS** – to the National Occupational Standards relating to training and behaviour of dog as produced by Lantra (Land-based and Environmental Industries) and available on their website.
 - g. **Practitioner** – to all individuals, be they paid or unpaid, who instruct, teach, advise, counsel or work within any area of dog training and canine behaviour and related care services, and to all those working either directly or indirectly towards gaining proficiency in these skills.
 - h. **Related Organisations / Groups** – to all organisations providing, either directly or indirectly, dog training and behaviour services to the public, be they businesses, charities, voluntary groups and or clubs, wishing to support, adopt, uphold and promote the standards set by the Code.
 - i. **Service Provider** – to all with a working commitment to the Code and listed as a public service.
 - j. **Signatory** – to all those who register with the RCDTBP to support and or commit to the professional and humane standards set by the CAWC Code of Practice as agreed by the industry, be they involved individuals (such as instructors, advisors, trainers, students, assistants, helpers or volunteers), groups, clubs, businesses, charities, related organisations or interested parties.
 - k. **Subscriber** – to all paying an ongoing subscription fee.
 - l. **Supporter** – to signatories not actively or directly involved as a Practitioner, wishing to support, adopt, uphold and or promote the professional and humane standards set by the Code.
4. The Council shall include all those registered as Signatories – be they Subscribers (Individuals, Service and Course Providers) or Non-Subscribers (Related Organisations, Membership Bodies and Charities).

All Signatories may use the logo and may describe themselves in writing as a RCDTBP Registered Signatory to the CAWC Code of Practice. The following conditions apply:

- a) **Subscribers:** Individual Practitioners, Service Providers and Course Providers
 - Individuals: (active practitioners and supporters) will pay an initial registration fee and an annual subscription fee, with confirmation of CPD, insurance, changes etc.
 - Service Providers: (Club / Business / Personal) will be required to set up a standing order to pay half the annual subscription fee every six months to list their services.
 - Service Providers will consist of at least one Individual Signatory, and will encourage each 'staff' member to register individually within one year of joining them, unless they are a member of an affiliated organisation registered with the RCDTBP.
 - Service Providers shall be responsible for all members of 'staff' which help provide their services – be they trainers, advisors or assistants whether employed or working as volunteers.
- b) **Non-Subscribers:** Membership Bodies, Related Organisations and Charities
 - No subscription fee will be required however a 'Memorandum of Understanding' shall apply as a reciprocal agreement of support to promote the Code and related activities.
 - It shall be the responsibility of the Organisation in the first instance to deal with any complaints received under the Code about their members and or their member's services.
 - Reduced subscription fees shall apply to individuals who are members of affiliated organisations.

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5. The Council will be directed by an Executive Committee (EC)
 - a. The EC shall comprise of a minimum of four members acting as Chairman, Secretary, Treasurer and Registrar, with a maximum set by annual review. All appointed members shall have a vote within the EC. Selection of members will be through skills, knowledge and expertise for any defined role.
 - b. Each EC member shall serve for a period of three years. At least two EC members will retire annually by rotation but may offer themselves for re-appointment to a maximum of three terms.
 - c. The EC shall elect a Chairman and Vice-Chairman annually. The election will be by secret ballot of EC members if more than one nomination is received.
 - d. The quorum at any meeting of the EC shall be three members or one third whichever is the greater.
 - e. The EC will be responsible for all areas of policy and discipline that may arise.
 - f. The EC will have the power to co-opt and delegate as required to carry out the work of the Council.
 - g. The EC shall have the power to appoint specialists and experts and or set up working groups as required, to advise, carry out research and or prepare reports, but who shall not have a vote within the EC. All advisory and working groups shall include of a minimum of one active EC member.
 - h. The EC shall deal with routine matters and correspondence by email and remote discussion and shall hold a full Committee meeting a minimum of three per annum, including the AGM.
6. Registration is open to all who wish to commit to the Code and their name and location shall be added to the list of Signatories on a permanent basis, unless notification is received by the Council in writing of their wish to be removed from the Register due to inactivity, or due to an EC ruling under section 10.
7. All Signatories shall provide a personal profile for public access, maintained with an on-going subscription fee. Members of an 'Affiliated Organisation' may claim the 25% reduced fee rate.
8. Signatories will be responsible for maintaining the accuracy of their personal profile. Signatories may, within their profile for public access, register their knowledge and experience any individual activity in which they are, or have been, involved, together with a supporting statement, and or may refer to any Service Provider with which they are involved, providing advertising is accurate.
9. Active Practitioners will be listed as a Registered Signatory for public access; however they will not be automatically listed as a Service Provider. Application for listing as a Service Provider will require a separate and on-going subscription fee.
10. The Code shall apply to all Signatories and the EC will use its authority to investigate complaints and dispose of any complaint in respect of any Signatory, regardless of any Council involvement.
 - a. any individual or organisation, whose behaviour or other actions after investigation are judged to bring discredit upon the Council, and or the Code may have imposed on them any one or more of the following penalties: i) be warned ii) be censured or iii) have their profile access removed and subscription terminated as deemed appropriate
 - b. any complaints received about members of Affiliated Organisations, shall in the first instance, be referred to the Organisation(s) to deal with. The EC will only become involved where no solution has been found with the member's organisation, or, where the action taken / proposed is considered by the Council to be inadequate
 - c. The EC shall have the power to delegate its authority to investigate complaints and thereafter to institute a) disciplinary or b) grievance proceedings or c) to dispose of any complaint if i) it appears trivial or ii) the disciplinary or grievance proceedings should not be brought in for some good reason.
11. Registration, subscription and any other fees shall be such a sum as the EC shall determine over time.
12. The EC will be required to endorse all matters of policy and will be the final authority on all Council matters.

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Grievance Procedure

The Complaint

1. Any person wishing to make a complaint about a registered Signatory or Service, concerning their conduct, method of training or other matter, may do so in writing, using the Complaints Form (downloadable from the website) to the Registered Office with a nominal fee of £25.
2. Any complaint should be lodged within 28 days from the time when the matter, which is the subject of the complaint, arose or was discovered, or such longer period as the EC may at its discretion allow through special circumstances.
3. Upon receipt of the complaint against a Signatory, the Secretary will initially check that the complaint has not been resolved in the meantime by the individual, whether they are a sole trader or a part of an organisation. Where no resolution has been found for the Complainant, the matter will be referred to either the Signatory's affiliated organisation(s) in the first instance or where no affiliation is claimed, to the EC for investigation and resolution under the terms of the Code,
4. If the case is referral to the EC for processing then the following provisional process shall apply:
 - a. A copy of the complaint and any written statement and any supporting statements shall be served on the Signatory concerned with a copy of these regulations; and
 - b. The Signatory will be invited to submit a written statement setting out sufficient particulars to show on what grounds the complaint is denied. Or if admits to the complaint, to submit a written statement setting out any mitigating circumstances.
 - c. Any written statement by the Signatory shall be lodged with the EC within 21 working days of the receipt by them of the Complainant's written statement. The Signatory's written statement shall be accompanied by signed statements from supporting witnesses (if any).
 - d. Following the receipt of the Signatory's written statement, or on failure to submit a written statement within 21 days, the EC may investigate the circumstances of the complaint further and or require either the Complainant or the Signatory to provide further information.
5. The matter shall be determined on the basis of written submissions to the EC in the first instance.
6. Thereafter, the complaint may be progressed or disposed of by
 - a. mediating change through education and increased understanding of both or either party
 - b. discharged if the complaint appears to be trivial
 - c. written warning or censuring the Signatory as considered appropriate
 - d. or listed for a disciplinary hearing by the EC where both parties will be invited to attend, and both parties will receive copies of all supporting statements for their further consideration
7. If the Complaint is listed for hearing before the EC, then the EC shall give all parties not less than 28 days notice of the date fixed for the Hearing of the complaint ('the Hearing').
8. If within 14 days after notification of the Hearing either party requests an adjournment on grounds that are considered reasonable, then there shall be power to postpone the Hearing, giving the parties not less than a 28 day notice of the new date for the Hearing.

The Hearing

9. Both the Complainant and the Signatory may attend or be represented at the Hearing before the Disciplinary Sub-Committee. The EC will not be responsible to pay any fees or expenses to either parties, their representatives or their witnesses.
10. At the hearing The EC may direct that:
 - a. the written statements of witnesses shall be read out or be taken as read; and
 - b. the evidence of witnesses whose statements have not been submitted in accordance with the above Regulations shall not be considered without leave of the EC.
11. The EC shall consider the contents of the complaint statements lodged under the above Regulations and any supporting evidence and make such enquiries of the Complainant and Signatory that it considers appropriate and shall otherwise conduct the Hearing in such a manner as it considers most appropriate for the clarification of the issues before it and generally to the just handling of the proceedings.

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12. The EC shall have the power to
 - a. proceed with the Hearing of any Complaint in the absence of either of the parties.
 - b. at any time and from time to time upon application, or on its own motion, adjourn the date of any Hearing.
 - c. appoint one or more persons who need not be a Signatory to attend the Hearing of the Complaint to assist it on any matters.
13. The EC shall determine the Complaint on the basis of burden of proof, namely, the balance of probabilities. If the EC is satisfied that the complaint is substantiated it may impose upon the Signatory one or more of the penalties below as authorised by the Regulations.
 - a. be warned
 - b. be censured
 - c. have their profile removed and their subscription terminated
 - d. referred to other authorities
14. Written notice of the EC's decision shall be served on the parties.

Appeal

16. Where a complaint is upheld, the Signatory hereafter 'the Appellant' may appeal to the EC. Any notice of appeal must be received by the Registered Office not later than 14 days after the date on which the written notice of the EC's decision was served on the Appellant.
17. A notice of appeal shall:
 - a. State the name and address of the person making the Appeal
 - b. Identify clearly the decision which is disputed and specify whether the appeal is in respect of the whole or in respect of any specified part of such decision
 - c. Set out the grounds of the Appeal; and
 - d. Include any additional evidence upon which the Appellant relies, and set out the reasons why it was not presented to the EC before.
18. The legitimate points upon which an appeal may be considered are as follows:
 - a. The decision was based on a finding of fact that was perverse or irrational
 - b. There was no evidence to support a particular finding of fact
 - c. The decision was made by reference to irrelevant factors
 - d. The decision was made without reference to relevant factors
 - e. New evidence to that considered at the original Hearing has come to light
 - f. The decision was made for improper purpose
 - g. The decision was made in a procedurally unfair manner
 - h. The decision was made in a manner which may breach any governing legislation or regulations
19. An appeal may be determined on the basis of written submissions to the EC. However, if an Appellant requires an oral Hearing then the matter must be determined by way of an oral Hearing. (The procedure for either written or oral Hearings will be determined at that time with the appointment of an Appeals Tribunal being constituted from other EC members and or appointed from experienced Signatories.
20. If the Appeals Tribunal upholds the Appeal then it may revoke or vary the decision made by the EC and / or impose any penalty, which could have been imposed by the EC.

Non Compliance with Regulations

21. Where there has been a clerical error, accidental slip, omission or other failure to comply with the requirements of these Regulations, such failure shall be treated as an irregularity but shall not invalidate the proceedings, or any document or decision in the proceedings.
22. The EC, appointed sub-committees or the Appeals Tribunal, as the case may be, may on the grounds that there has been such a failure and on such terms as it thinks just, allow such amendments (if any) to be made and to make such decision (if any) dealing with the proceedings generally as it thinks fit.