

**IRISH ASSOCIATION OF HUMANISTIC AND INTEGRATIVE PSYCHOTHERAPY**

**BYE LAW 7**

**CODE OF ETHICS & PRACTICE FOR PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING**

**1. Introduction**

- 1.1 In the context of this code, the term “trainers” applies to the core trainers of any training course in the practice of Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy. They must be members of IAHIP.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Code of Ethics and Practice is to establish and maintain standards for trainers and to inform and protect members of the public seeking training in Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy.
- 1.3 Trainers in assenting to this Code accept their appropriate responsibilities as trainers to trainees’ clients, employing agencies, colleagues, IAHIP and the wider community.
- 1.4 IAHIP’s role in any complaint should be seen as a role of last resort and exists to support the policy of IAHIP to ensure that the standards of training courses are maintained and not to serve the needs of the parties to any complaint procedure. IAHIP reserves the right to refuse to deal with any complaint in accordance with the provisions herein. IAHIP does not accept any inherent obligation to participate in any trainers complaints procedure.<sup>1</sup>

**2. Responsibility**

- 2.1 Training is at its most effective when there are two or more trainers. Trainers have a responsibility to ensure this. The size of the group must be congruent with the training objectives and the model of working. Decisions about staff student ratios must take account of the learning objectives and methods of assessment and of the importance of being able to give individual attention and recognition to each course member. A minimum core teaching staff to student ratio of 1:8 is recommended best practice.
- 2.2 Trainers deliberately undertake the task of delivering training in Humanistic & Integrative Psychotherapy.
- 2.3 Trainers must observe the principles embodied in this Code and all other IAHIP Codes of Ethics and Practice and introduce trainees to these Codes in the early stages of the training programme.
- 2.4 Trainers have a responsibility to encourage and facilitate the self-development and self-awareness of trainees, so that trainees learn to integrate practice and personal insights.

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<sup>1</sup> As adopted by Governing Body 11.12.2005

- 2.5 Trainers are responsible for modelling the appropriate professional boundaries between trainer and trainee.
- 2.6 Trainers should take all reasonable steps to ensure that any personal and social contacts between them and their trainees are kept to a minimum and do not adversely influence the effectiveness of the training. Ethical boundaries must be maintained at all times.
- 2.7 Trainers must respect the culture, ideologies and values of trainees.
- 2.8 Trainers must not accept current clients as trainees. It is recommended that former trainees do not become clients, nor former clients become trainees, until a considerable period of time has elapsed. It is further recommended that the trainer take supervision on this matter.
- 2.9 Trainers are responsible for ensuring that their emotional needs are met outside the training work and are not dependent on their relationships with trainees.
- 2.10 There should be consistency between the theoretical orientation of the programme, the training methods and the methods of assessment and evaluation.
- 2.11 Trainers must not exploit their trainees financially, sexually, emotionally or in any other way.
- 2.12 Trainers have a responsibility to ensure that appropriate supervision and insurance arrangements are in place for trainees where working with clients is part of the course.
- 2.13 Trainers should ensure that trainees receive regular feedback on their work. It is also good practice for trainers to encourage course feedback to themselves from the trainees.
- 2.14 Visiting trainers on programmes must ensure that they appropriately handle any former or current professional or personal relationship with any member of the trainee group.
- 2.15 Responsibilities under this clause should be regarded as collective as well as individual. Where a trainer has reason to believe that a colleague is not abiding by the responsibilities set out in this Code of Ethics, then they should try in the first instance to resolve or remedy the matter directly with the trainer concerned. If the issue is not then resolved, it should be brought to the attention of all that organisation's core trainers or managers as deemed appropriate, using if necessary the organisation's external consultant as an independent facilitator. If the issue remains unresolved, then all parties may have recourse, subject to clause 1.4 of this Code, to such complaints procedures as IAHIP may from time to time prescribe.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> As adopted by Governing Body 11.12.2005

### 3. **Competence**

- 3.1 It is expected that trainers will be competent psychotherapists as outlined in the section on Competence in the Code of Ethics and Practice for Psychotherapists. However it is essential that trainers also acquire a wide and comprehensive range of knowledge, skills and competencies to equip them in their varied roles and tasks. These include:
- a) Management, organisation, administration and finance.
  - b) Planning, evaluation and research.
  - c) Advertising and marketing skills.
  - d) Teaching, team work, group work and communication.
  - e) Knowledge of personnel, insurance, legal and ethical issues.
  - f) Policy and practical issues.
- 3.2 Trainers shall be working as accredited therapists for at least five years and fulfill the requirements to be a supervisor.
- 3.3 They should commit themselves to continuing professional development as trainers.
- 3.4 Trainers must monitor and evaluate the limits of their competence as trainers by means of regular supervision and consultancy.

### 4. **Confidentiality**

- 4.1 Trainers are responsible for establishing a contract for confidential issues, which makes explicit the responsibilities of both trainer and trainees.
- 4.2 Trainers must not reveal any information concerning trainees, or former trainees, without the permission of the trainee, except:
- (a) In discussion with those on whom trainers rely for professional support and supervision. (These discussions will usually be anonymous and the supervisor is bound by confidentiality.)
  - (b) In order to prevent serious harm to another or to the trainee.
  - (c) When required by a court of law to break confidentiality.
  - (d) Where there are serious concerns in regard to possible breaches of ethical standards.

However, trainees or former trainees should be informed in advance, unless exceptional circumstances apply, when a trainer decides to disclose confidential information not requiring their permission, as outlined in (a) to (d) above.<sup>3</sup>

- 4.3 Detailed information about specific trainees, or former trainees, may be used for publication or in meetings only with the trainees' permission and with anonymity preserved. Where trainers need to use examples from previous work to illustrate a point to trainees, this may be done respectfully, briefly and anonymously.

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<sup>3</sup> As adopted by Governing Body 11.12.2005

4.4 If discussion by trainers of their trainees, or former trainees, with professional colleagues becomes necessary, it must be purposeful and relevant to the training.

5. **Safety**

All reasonable steps shall be taken by trainers to ensure the safety of trainees and clients during training.

6. **Management of the Training Work**

6.1 Training courses should make detailed information available to prospective trainees which should form the basis of the contract. Such a contract ensures a mutual commitment on the part of trainers and trainees to achieving an explicit set of goals and outcomes. This should include:

- (a) the fees to be charged and any other expenses which may be incurred;
- (b) the dates and time commitments;
- (c) information on selection procedures, entry requirements and the process by which decisions are made;
- (d) basic information about the content of the programme, its philosophical and theoretical approach and the training methods to be used;
- (e) the relevant qualifications of the trainers;
- (f) any requirements for supervision or personal psychotherapy which trainees will be expected to comply with during training;
- (g) guidelines for work experience or placements to be undertaken as part of the training;
- (h) evaluation and assessment methods to be used during the programme and the implications of these;
- (i) arrangements for appeals should a dispute arise;
- (j) the right of the training organisation to the following:
  - to refuse applicants places,
  - to fail trainees who do not meet the required standard,
  - to discipline trainees who act unethically,
  - to take action when trainees are unfit to continue on the course.

6.2 The procedure in cases where trainees are unfit to continue on the course must be respectful of them. Trainers should take account of the emotional and financial investment that trainees have made in the course.

7.<sup>4</sup> **Complaints against Trainers**

7.1 Trainers are required to have appropriate procedures in place within their training programmes to handle complaints by trainees. Preferably, such complaints should be handled informally between the people concerned. If not resolved informally, an external consultant, provided by the training organisation, will act as a facilitator to process trainees' complaints.

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<sup>4</sup> As adopted by Governing Body 11.12.2005

- 7.2 It is incumbent on the training organisation to ensure that the external consultant is familiar with this Code and that they will exercise their functions in a truly impartial manner and are otherwise competent to carry out their functions. All expenses incurred in relation to the external consultant will be met by the training organisation.
- 7.3 Where a complaint which has been heard within the procedures of the training programme remains unresolved, the trainee may, subject to clause 1.4 of this Code, have recourse to the IAHIP Complaints Procedure provided the following conditions are met:
- (a) The person being complained against is a currently accredited member of IAHIP.
  - (b) The Complaints Committee of IAHIP ("the Complaints Committee") in their absolute discretion determines that the alleged behaviour is covered by the IAHIP Codes of Ethics in accordance with clauses 6.3 and 6.6 of the IAHIP Complaints Procedure. The Complaints Committee shall not be required in any circumstance to adjudicate on merely technical or administrative matters arising within the training course.
  - (c) The Complaints Committee receives an undertaking from the training organisation concerned to discharge the ongoing expenses of IAHIP in dealing with the complaint, an undertaking the training organisation may not without good cause withhold. This requirement may be waived at the Complaints Committee's discretion.
  - (d) The Complaints Committee fails to determine in its absolute discretion that the complaint has, on the face of it, (i.e. on a prima facie basis), been adequately and competently dealt with by the trainers complaints procedure.
- 7.4 Where a complaint is of sufficient gravity and seriousness as to bring into question the suitability of the person complained against to be an accredited member of IAHIP, the Complaints Committee in their absolute discretion may waive the requirement contained in clause 7.3 above that the complaint be first heard within the complaints procedures of the training programme before being considered as a complaint by IAHIP.
- 7.5 A complaint in accordance with clause 7.3 or clause 7.4 above shall be submitted to the IAHIP Membership Secretary in writing. In the case of a complaint submitted in accordance with clause 7.3 above, it must be set out clearly on the front page thereof that the complaint constitutes an unresolved complaint from a trainee on a training course. The Complaints Committee shall communicate in writing its decision whether or not to accept, in whole or in part, the complaint submitted, and its decision in this regard will be final. Before making this decision, the Complaints Committee is entitled to be supplied by the training organisation with all records and documents pertaining to the hearing of the complaint within the complaints procedures of the training programme.
- 7.6 In the event that the complaint is accepted for consideration, the complaint shall be dealt with in accordance with the IAHIP Complaints Procedure save and except that, if it should emerge that the true nature or substance of the

complaint differs from the nature or substance of the complaint as submitted in writing, or the true nature or substance of the complaint does not meet the conditions set out in clause 7.3 above, where applicable, the Complaints Committee in its absolute discretion may abandon its consideration of the complaint.

- 7.7 In the event, where applicable, that the complaint consists partially of matters meeting the conditions set out in clause 7.3 above, and partially of matters not meeting the conditions set out in clause 7.3 above, the Complaints Committee shall at its discretion only deal with the portion of the complaint meeting the conditions set out in clause 7.3 above.

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