

# **Confederation of Registered Essence Practitioners (COREP) Disciplinary Procedure 2013**

## **1. Introduction**

The Confederation of Registered Essence Practitioners is the UK lead body for essence practitioners who are regulated by the General Regulatory Council for Complementary Therapies (GRCCT). All practitioners registered with COREP are also registered with one or more of the Member Organisations of COREP (see appendix).

The purpose of this complaints procedure is to ensure that any concerns over the conduct or performance of COREP practitioners are handled in a fair, consistent and timely manner, so as to bring about an improvement and protect both the public and the proper operation of COREP.

This procedure may be reviewed and updated from time to time. Any amendments will be notified to COREP Members in writing, following consultation and/or notice where appropriate.

## **2. To whom can you complain?**

Anybody who wishes to make a complaint against a COREP practitioner may:

- contact the practitioner to ask for redress.
- contact the Member Organisation with whom the practitioner is registered.
- contact COREP.
- contact the GRCCT.

In general, complaints about the level or kind of service provided by a practitioner are best raised initially with the practitioner or with the practitioner's registering organisation or with COREP. Complaints about the policies or activities of a Member Organisation should be raised with the Member Organisation or with COREP. Complaints concerning the policies or activities of COREP should be raised with the GRCCT.

Complaints to practitioners, Member Organisations and COREP may be made verbally or in writing. Verbal complaints will be treated as informal complaints and will be dealt with in an informal manner. If a serious complaint is received verbally, the complainant will be advised to register a formal complaint in writing. For the formal procedures of GRCCT, COREP or its Member Organisations to be triggered, complaints must be received in writing.

Member organisations have their own complaints procedures, as does the GRCCT. See the appendix if you want to complain to a Member Organisation or to the GRCCT.

## **3. Complaints to COREP**

All formal complaints must be made in writing to the address in the appendix. Any complaint received will be immediately acknowledged by the COREP Chairs, who will decide whether there are grounds to consider the issue raised. The decision of the Chairs as to whether the disciplinary procedure will be implemented will be sent to the complainant within 14 days of

receipt of the complaint.

Examples of types of conduct that will normally be addressed through implementation of COREP's disciplinary procedure include:

- non-disclosure of information that would prevent COREP membership or practice.
- inappropriate or unsatisfactory professional behaviour.
- breaches of COREP's Code of Conduct, policies or guidelines.
- breaches of regulations, including health and safety regulations, advertising standards and the Data Protection Act.
- breaches of confidentiality.
- abuse, misuse or neglect of COREP property or facilities.

The disciplinary procedure does not apply to situations where there has been:

- voluntary termination of COREP membership.
- termination of COREP membership by mutual consent.

#### 4. **How COREP deals with a formal complaint**

In the event that the complaint is to be taken further, the complainant will be sent the name and contact information of an Investigating Officer who will look into the complaint. The Investigating Officer will be somebody not personally known to either the complainant or the practitioner who is the subject of the complaint.

Where possible, formal complaints relating to minor disciplinary offences and general issues of poor performance will be handled informally in the first instance, through a process of dialogue and agreement between the Investigating Officer and the other parties involved. Where an informal approach fails to resolve the problem, or where the offence is judged to be more serious, the formal disciplinary procedure will be followed (see next section).

All disciplinary matters will be handled with as high a degree of confidentiality as is practicable, particularly when the issue is of a sensitive nature. In particular, COREP will not pass on any information that will identify the complainant to the practitioner under investigation without the complainant's permission. However, non-disclosure may make investigation of a complaint impossible in some instances. The Investigating Officer will advise complainants should this be the case.

COREP reserves the right to suspend a practitioner, normally for no more than three months, while a disciplinary offence is investigated.

#### 5. **The formal disciplinary procedure**

The Investigating Officer will undertake a careful investigation of the alleged offence before any disciplinary action is taken against the practitioner (although the practitioner may be suspended in the case of a serious complaint – see previous section). The investigation may include seeking further evidence from the complainant and from the person under

investigation. The complainant and the practitioner will be advised as soon as is practicable how long the investigation will take.

The Investigating Officer will produce a written report on the investigation including a recommendation for further action. This will be sent to the Executive Committee of COREP, who will use it to inform their decision.

The decision of COREP Chairs will be sent in writing to the complainant and to the practitioner under investigation. The decision may, among others, include the following outcomes:

- that no further action be taken.
- a verbal or written warning.
- temporary suspension of the practitioner for a specified period.
- further training or a period of supervised practice.
- the practitioner's removal from the Register of the Member Organisation.

## **6. Appeals**

If the complainant or the practitioner is not satisfied by the outcome of the investigation, he or she can appeal against the decision. An appeal should be made in writing within fourteen working days. No appeal will be considered after that date.

On receipt of an appeal, the Executive Committee of COREP will appoint an independent person as Appeals Officer to review the appeal. The Appeals Officer will have had no previous involvement in the complaint.

The Appeals Officer will review the evidence to decide whether, on the basis of the information available, the decision reached was reasonable. If the Appeals Officer decides that the decision *was* reasonable, the decision will stand. Where the Appeals Officer rules that the decision was *not* reasonable, the Appeals Officer will recommend appropriate action to the Executive Committee.

In the event that the claimant or practitioner is dissatisfied with the results of the appeal, either may make a formal complaint to the GRCCT.

## **7. Summary action**

Where there is overwhelming evidence of serious malpractice, or where COREP considers that a practitioner represents a risk to the public, or where a practitioner has been disqualified from the practice of any other therapy or caring profession due to serious misconduct, COREP is entitled to instruct the Member Organisation concerned that the practitioner's registration be terminated without notice.