



AUCKLAND TRAINING CENTRE FOR PSYCHODRAMA (ATCP)

COMPLAINTS POLICY AND PROCEDURES

POLICY

INTRODUCTION

The ATCP aims to offer high quality training and supervision, which generates valuable learning for trainees. To this end all ATCP staff members are committed to continuous learning and transparency in our relationships with trainees, trainers and in other matters. Our complaints policy and complaints procedures reflect this commitment.

WHO DO THESE POLICIES & PROCEDURES APPLY TO?

All trainees of the Institutes or those seeking to enroll in a course of study with institutes in New Zealand are entitled to access the Complaints Procedures set out in this policy.

NATURE OF THE COMPLAINT

The Institute recognizes that complaints can be of an academic or non-academic nature.

Academic-related complaints may involve issues such as:

- Admissions
- Credit for prior training
- Trainee assessment
- Curriculum and other programme-related matters

Non-academic complaints may involve the following:

- Administrative matters such as institutional practices, financial issues, resources, marketing and access
- Issues of public behaviour and the relationships that develop between and among colleagues, trainees, and members of the public which may be covered by the AANZPA's Code of Ethics (<http://aanzpa.org/ethics>)
- Professional practice and other ethical or practice issues covered by the AANZPA's Code of Ethics.

VICTIMISATION OR DISCRIMINATION

The complainant and the respondent will not be victimised or discriminated against at any stage of addressing a complaint.

SUPPORT FROM A THIRD PARTY

The complainant and/or the respondent in a complaints process may be accompanied and assisted by a third party such as a family member, friend, counsellor or other professional

support person if they so desire at any stage throughout the process.

COSTS

ATCP expects that each party take responsibility for their own costs incurred in carrying out the complaints procedure and that no charge will be made against the other party to recoup these costs.

RECORDS

A record of a complaint and its outcome, will be kept by the Training Institute involved. It will be strictly confidential, filed separately i.e. not kept on the trainee or staff file) and stored for a period of five years. Parties to the complaint will be allowed supervised access to the record.

COMMUNICATION OF THE POLICY

This policy is communicated to teaching staff and support staff of each Training Institute. The Director of an Institute is responsible for the training of staff in the application of the policy. Each member of staff has been informed of the ATCP complaints procedures in writing. In the event of a trainee or potential trainee expressing a complaint about any element of the programme or their treatment within the programme, Institutes have been directed to inform the trainee or potential trainee of the ATCP complaints procedures.

LEGAL RESPONSIBILITIES

The procedures set out in this document do not replace or modify procedures or any other responsibilities which may arise under statute or any other law.

STATEMENT REGARDING COMPLAINTS RELATING TO THE TRAINER/DIRECTOR-TRAINEE RELATIONSHIP

In a Training Institute, the most common form of complaint may result from a breakdown in the relationship between the trainer/Institute Director and the trainee. The Institute acknowledges that such a relationship breakdown needs to be addressed in a sensitive and comprehensive manner and that resolution strategies recognise power issues that are inherent in the trainer – trainee relationship.

The Director of Training and the training staff have a position of authority within the training programme, in that they observe, assess and give feedback to trainees on their progress within the training. They support and give guidance in a variety of ways. They also make recommendations as to a trainee's suitability for entry to and progress within the programme.

Accordingly the Institute makes known to its trainees its willingness to address trainees' concerns in a supportive and professional manner. It does this verbally when working with trainees and in written form and is available on each Institute's website. Each Institute also makes public the trainee's right to take their complaint to the Institute's formal complaints procedure.

Firstly, the Institute works towards the resolution of conflict through an informal resolution of difference process. Trainees are invited to bring their complaint to the person involved or if this is difficult to another trainer or the Institute's Director of

Training.

When a trainee has approached a trainer/Director of Training with a complaint the trainer/Director of Training encourages the trainee to voice his or her complaint. When this is difficult for the trainee, a trainer/Director of Training other than the person to whom the complaint is directed, may assist the trainee to voice the complaint.

A trainer/ Director of Training who is involved in a breakdown of relationship with a trainee is supported by another trainer and/or the Director of Training in order that this trainer/Director of Training may work appropriately towards conflict resolution and not become isolated or defensive or over-protective.

Appropriate time will be put aside for the communication and resolution of the conflict. Resolution of the conflict may involve a process of facilitation of communication between the persons involved by another trainer/Director of Training. The person chosen must be an agreeable person to both persons involved in the conflict.

The trainee and trainer may bring a third party with them to the resolution process. If the breakdown in relationship between the trainer/Director of Training and trainee cannot be resolved through the above informal resolution process the trainee and/or trainer will be asked if they wish to enter into the formal Complaints Procedure and both will be given a copy of the Institute's Complaints Policy and Procedure and information as to how to activate a formal Complaints Procedure.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE

OVERVIEW

The complaints procedure has three stages at which a complaint may be addressed. Complainants and/or respondents will also be provided with reasons and full explanations in writing for decisions and actions taken at every stage of the complaints process if they request this.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURE IN DETAIL

Stage 1 - Informal Resolution of Difference

- If a person has a complaint about any aspect of the training or how he or she has been treated, they are encouraged to talk directly with the person involved.
- However, if this is impracticable, the complainant should communicate his/her concerns with a trainer who is delivering the programme or the Institute's Director of Training.
- The Director of Training, trainer or staff member is to listen to the complaint from the person and to respond using the tools of conflict resolution. The Director of Training, trainer and staff member are requested to work towards a resolution of the process. They may need to draw on further resources to do this. Towards the end of this informal process, the Director of Training, trainer or staff member will ask the person who has made the complaint if he or she is satisfied with the resolution. If the person expresses that they are not satisfied then the Director of Training, trainer or staff member will invite the person into the formal complaints process as described below.
- Every effort will be made to make a decision within fourteen days.
- A person may wish to bypass this Informal process and move immediately into the formal complaints process.

Stage 2 - Formal Complaint managed by the Institute

- The complainant communicates his/her concern in writing to a staff member, trainer or the Director of Training, stating that he or she has entered into a formal complaints process. The complainant will describe the nature of the complaint in writing.
- The Director of Training (or the staff member(s)) is/are informed that a complaint has been made formally. The Director of Training, or their appointed person, will

meet with the complainant and staff member separately and will recommend an intervention to resolve the complaint. The complainant and the staff member, trainer or Director of Training work towards a resolution of the complaint. They may need to draw on further resources to do this.

- The Director of Training will make every effort to initiate a process within fourteen days. This decision will be communicated to the complainant together with an invitation to take the next step.

Stage 3 - Formal Complaint managed by ATCP Board Chair

If, following discussion with the Director of Training, the complainant remains unwilling to enter into stage 2, the following process will be implemented:

- The complainant submits their complaint in writing to the Training Institute's Board Chair requesting that the matter be dealt with.
- On receiving such a letter the Training Institute's Board Chair informs the Institute of the complaint and the nature of the complaint, and invites the trainer(s) to submit their record of the matter in writing including action taken to resolve the complaint.
- The Training Institute's Board Chair makes a ruling to resolve the complaint. They may do this with or without consultation with a person of standing within AANZPA, or individual(s) who specialise in handling complaints and mediation. If a further consultation is being made with the complainant and the staff concerned, the choice of person(s) must be acceptable to both parties.
- The Training Institute's Board Chair communicates the decision to the institute and the complainant within 30 days.
- The Director of Training will ensure that the recommendation(s) are implemented within 30 days.