

# Professional Conduct Policy

## (appendix to ATP Constitution)

The purpose and scope of this document is to be as an Appendix to the ATP constitution and strengthen the values of the association. It is in line with most other voluntary run organisations to adopt such a code to support the work of the organisation and is seen as good practice.

It is expected that all members and those of the committee will be a good role model with behaviour and an attitude that are in line with our values and comply with all applicable UK laws, codes of professional conduct and guidance.

All committee members will intend to carry out their duties with impunity as duly elected in line with the constitution. Not to make decisions as individuals but collectively. They agree to promote the interest of the ATP as a whole and as such the membership will respect the decisions of the committee as a condition of their individual membership.

The committee aim to create a working environment free from bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination. Promoting dignity and respect where contributions of all member are recognised and valued.

This policy is a working document to ensure no member or volunteer with ATP or persons working with the ATP as an association should suffer disadvantage or receive less favourable treatment on the basis of;

- ethnic origin, nationality (or statelessness) or race
- age
- disability
- religion or belief (including the absence of belief)
- marital or civil partnership status
- sexual orientation
- pregnancy
- gender reassignment
- class or socio-economic status
- gender
- political belief.

This document further covers behaviours deemed unacceptable, in line with UK laws including but not exclusively;

- Harassment as defined in the Equality Act 2010
- Bullying.
- Bringing the ATP into disrepute.
- Bringing other member into disrepute.
- Bringing associated organisations into disrepute
- Slander
- Malicious communications of any kind deemed hurtful or disrespectful.

All members should understand that they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation and unlawful discrimination against fellow members.

Bullying is offensive, intimidating, malicious or insulting behaviour, an abuse or misuse of power which is meant to undermine, humiliate or injure the person on the receiving end.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the person behaving in that way intends to offend. Something intended as a 'joke' may offend another person. Everyone has the right to decide what behaviour is acceptable to him or her and have his or her feelings respected by others.

### **Making an informal or formal complaint**

If a member of the association believes they are being discriminated against, bullied or harassed, they may be able to sort out matters informally. The person may not know that their behaviour is unwelcome or upsetting. The member may feel that they can approach the person themselves, or with the help of someone else within the committee.

The member should tell the person what behaviour they find offensive and unwelcome, and state that they would like it to stop immediately.

If an informal approach does not resolve matters, or the situation is thought to be too serious to be dealt with informally, a formal letter of complaint should be forwarded to the Chair. If the complaint is against the Chair, please forward the letter direct to the Secretary.

The Association will treat all complaints with confidentiality so far as is reasonably possible.

To ensure consistency in the manner and circumstances whereby cases are evaluated, then following will apply:

- The Chair will inform the member in writing of the nature of the complaint or allegation and consider both the professional standards expected by their regulatory body and the ATP Constitution.

- The Chair will investigate the complaint, unless the complaint is against the Chair and then it will fall to the Secretary to initiate the investigation.

- The member will have the opportunity to ask questions, present their case and respond to allegations - Mediation may be offered (as found under Membership 4 (h) of the Constitution).

- Following investigation the Chair/Secretary will complete a report giving full details of the facts and issues in question, including evidence and statements from all parties involved and present it to the committee.

- The committee will make a decision as to whether disciplinary action is appropriate.

In the event of a breach of the policy the committee may take the decision:

1. No action required, if the complaint is found to be unsubstantiated.
2. Provide a written warning
3. Terminate membership. Membership 4 (f) of the Constitution states:

The Committee shall have the power to refuse, terminate or suspend the membership of any member where it is considered such membership would be detrimental to the interests, aims and objectives of the association or is not in line with the professional standards expected by their regulatory bodies

The Chair will subsequently inform the member in writing of the decision.