



**Association of
Tongue-tie Practitioners[®]**

Educate • Support • Care

March 2024

ATP Code of Conduct Policy

(Appendix 1 to ATP Constitution)

Version	Date	Reason	Review Date
1.0	March 2020	To establish a policy detailing acceptable and unacceptable conduct of members of the ATP	March 2022
1.1	March 2022	Bi-annual review. No change to policy	March 2024
1.2	March 2024	Bi-annual review	March 2026

Introduction

The purpose and scope of this document is to be as an Appendix to the ATP constitution and strengthen the values and integrity of the association. It is underpinned by UK laws such as the Equality Act 2010 as well as regulatory body codes of professional conduct and guidance.

One of the aims of ATP, as mentioned within the constitution, is to provide help and support for its members to provide safe and effective care for clients through sharing knowledge and experience. Our mission statement is to educate, support and care for each other.

Respect, honest and open communication and toleration of differing views is essential to ensure that ATP remains a supportive and safe space for members without any detriment to others or themselves. This is particularly important within our Facebook pages, forums, WhatsApp groups and face-to-face meetings.

It is therefore important for ATP to have a code of conduct that members adhere to and to adopt a 'zero tolerance' approach to unacceptable behaviours.

What is a Code of Conduct?

A Code of Conduct is an overarching policy and working document that clarifies how ATP members are expected to behave towards each other and those outside of the organisation. All members will be expected to adhere to this code as a condition of their membership.

The code also gives guidance as to how to manage unacceptable behaviours.

What does this code mean for ATP members?

As ATP members we are expected to demonstrate respectful and professional behaviours such as

- communicating in a constructive and positive manner
- recognising and valuing the contribution of all members by ensuring all are given the opportunity to be listened to in meetings
- engendering an atmosphere of trust and maintaining confidentiality
- treating others as they would want to be treated
- being honest
- being reliable and trustworthy

ATP members should expect environments to be free from bullying, harassment, victimisation, intimidation and unlawful discrimination.

This policy aims 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), Heritage 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.

Unacceptable behaviours / definitions

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 – 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
- Bringing the ATP into disrepute
- Bringing other members into disrepute
- Bringing associated organisations into disrepute
- Malicious communications of any kind deemed hurtful or disrespectful – use of offensive language, making personal attacks or engaging in behaviour that disrupts
- Defamation - spoken or written statement by an individual or business that is incorrect but still may be harmful to one's reputation. There are 2 types of defamation:
 - a) Slander: spoken words or comments
 - b) Libel or written defamation: words that are published in writing or broadcast. The ATP includes the use of social media platforms in this acknowledgement.

All members should understand that they can be held liable for acts of bullying, harassment, victimisation, intimidation and unlawful discrimination against fellow members and this includes written and verbal communications.

Conduct may be harassment whether or not the other 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.

The use of Facebook

Facebook is a public platform and so when members join the ATP Facebook pages they agree to adhere to the rules set out which are

- Be kind and courteous
- No hate speech or bullying
- Respect everyone's privacy
- Using your professional name unless agreed with membership secretary (see constitution)
- No promotions or spam without permission

The written word can often be misinterpreted so it is important to seek further clarification if a comment is seen to be negative.

Members need to be aware that if a comment breaches the rules the moderators of our Facebook pages reserve the right to remove comments.

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 other 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 ATP 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 /email of complaint should be forwarded to the Chair. If the complaint is against the Chair, please forward the letter / email direct to the Secretary.

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

Process

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

1. Complaints should be presented to the Chairperson / secretary as soon as reasonably possible.

2. The Chairperson/Secretary will acknowledge the complaint via an email within 10 working days of receipt, and will request a statement of event(s).

The Chairperson/Secretary will also inform the (accused) 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 / Code of Conduct within 10 working days of receipt), and will request a statement of event(s).

Both members are entitled to consider union representation, a PMA or equivalent.

3. The Chairperson will investigate the complaint, unless the complaint is against the Chairperson and then it will fall to the Secretary to initiate the investigation. (see below for contact details of the committee).
4. 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) as well as the right to appeal any formal decisions.
5. The Chairperson/Secretary may call a Special meeting with committee members if deemed appropriate to discuss the case within the Association.
6. 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.
7. The committee will make a decision as to whether disciplinary action is appropriate. This may include suspension of membership without reimbursement.
8. All parties will be informed in writing of the final outcome of the investigation.

All parties have the right to appeal the decision in writing to the Chairperson/Secretary.

The Chair or secretary will be expected to keep a written record of complaints

Outcomes

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 ATP or is not in line with the professional standards expected by their regulatory bodies.”

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

Useful links:

www.tongue-tie.org.uk/meet-the-committee

www.tongue-tie.org.uk/constitution

<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/contents>

Committee contact details:

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