



# Functions and Role descriptions for The Professional Standards Committee

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## 1. Background

The Professional Standards Committee of the Association of Child Psychotherapists (ACP) is a committee charged by the Board of Directors of the ACP and its Chair with the duty of setting and overseeing the professional standards for the work of child and adolescent psychotherapists. The Director and committee members are accountable in their roles to the ACP Board. There are two aims: to ensure that the public are protected and to support ACP members to achieve and maintain the highest standards of professional practice.

The overarching remit of the ACP Professional Standards Committee consists of:

- Helping members maintain their ACP registration
- Setting Standards of Competence and Conduct
- Communicating Standards
- Monitoring Standards
- Supporting Practice Improvement
- Investigating Complaints
- Taking Action when Standards have been breached, and finally
- Learning and Sharing from Actions while maintaining confidentiality

### 1.1 The Professional Standards Committee has seven key functions:

- 1.1.1 The annual registration (collection of relevant fees) of all members and on-going issues of membership.
- 1.1.2 The collection and monitoring of the annual CPD returns and annual audit.
- 1.1.3 The handling of complaints against members, disciplinary procedures, and sanctions.
- 1.1.4 The presentation and acceptance of newly qualified members for ACP membership.

- 1.1.5 The management of applicants who wish to join the ACP but are not trained in an ACP accredited Training school.
- 1.1.6 The setting of standards for the employment of ACP members and liaison with employers.
- 1.1.7 To maintain a link with the Independent Practice group.

**1.2 The sub-groups of the Professional Standards Committee are:**

- 1.2.1 The Continuing Professional Development (CPD) group. The Lead CPD member will oversee the issues relating to the annual collection of CPD returns and provide an annual audit on the collected returns. She/he and a small group will work closely with the Registrar and ACP Administrative Officer on CPD matters.
- 1.2.2 The Ethical Practice Group. The Lead/Chair will manage all complaints made to the ACP about its members and make decisions on how a complaint is to be handled in collaboration with a screening committee, and other ACP and Lay members of the Ethical Practice group. The Lead/Chair will organise Investigatory and/or Disciplinary panels, if appropriate., and communicate the outcome of complaints/sanctions to the Registrar. Any learning from outcomes are to be shared with the Committee. The Lead/Chair may also bring relevant ethical issues for discussion to the committee.
- 1.2.3 Accreditation of prior learning for membership. This involves the management of applicants who wish to join the ACP but who have not been trained by an ACP accredited training school and may need to undertake further training to qualify for ACP membership. The lead will communicate with the applicant and liaise with the appropriate Training school when necessary.
- 1.2.4 Independent Practice Group. A representative from this group will attend the committee meetings and provide information and feedback about IP issues to the committee and as well as to provide an independent perspective to professional and membership issues.
- 1.2.5 The Employment Standards and Liaison Lead will be responsible for helping to set standards for the employment of ACP members (NHS and other), provide advice and guidance to employers/members and will manage a panel of ACP members who will be available to attend interviews and support members with recruitment.

## **2. The composition of the Professional Standards Committee**

**2.1 The composition of the Professional Standards Committee is as follows:**

- 2.1.1 Director and Registrar; appointed by the ACP Board.
- 2.1.2 Deputy Director; appointed by the ACP Board.
- 2.1.3 Members of the Association to take the lead roles of the Ethical Practice Group, CPD, Employment Standards, Independent Practice, Accreditation of Prior Learning. All to be appointed by the Director of Professional Standards and approved by the ACP Board:

- 2.1.4 Up to 2 lay members; appointed by the Director of Professional Standards
- 2.1.5 Up to 3 child psychotherapist members without portfolio
- 2.1.6 The Committee may co-opt additional Child psychotherapist members for specific tasks.

### **3. Role description for Child and Adolescent Psychotherapy members of the Professional Standards Committee**

- 3.1 Have knowledge of the work role of child and adolescent psychotherapists to aid effective and informed decision-making;
- 3.2 Keep informed as to ACP policies and procedures such as Data Protection, conflict of interest, code of ethics and risk management;
- 3.3 If acting as Lead of a sub-group, to attend and report to the Professional Standards Committee and ACP Annual General Meeting as appropriate;
- 3.4 Together with Director and Deputy-Director, draft changes to professional standards as needed for the approval of the Professional Standards committee;
- 3.5 Attend meetings of the Professional Standards Committee.

### **4. Role description for lay-member(s) of Professional Standards**

- 4.1 Offer an objective appraisal on the professional standards of child and adolescent psychotherapists;
- 4.2 Provide an external perspective on how organisations work;
- 4.3 Provide knowledge and expertise to aid effective decision-making and to promote sound governance;
- 4.4 Provide information of other accreditation and/ or quality assurance processes within the healthcare and/ or other sectors if relevant to background;
- 4.5 Attend meetings of the committee.

### **5. Responsibilities of all members**

- 5.1 A commitment to develop a good working knowledge of the Professional Standards Committees' role and processes.
- 5.2 A willingness to take up a role on behalf of The Professional Standards Committee.
- 5.3 To carry out their duties for the Professional Standards Committee in accordance with the Professional Standards terms of reference.

## 6. Core competencies of all members

### 6.1 Committee members are expected to:

- 6.1.1 contribute to strategic direction;
- 6.1.2 explore accountability of self and others;
- 6.1.3 take an independent, unbiased, and objective view;
- 6.1.4 show awareness of/commitment to diversity and inclusion;
- 6.1.5 listen and communicate effectively;
- 6.1.6 examine evidence/complex documentation;
- 6.1.7 work effectively as part of a team;
- 6.1.8 inspire confidence and support amongst ACP members;
- 6.1.9 understand the priorities of external stakeholders.

## 7. Term of office

- 7.1 The term of office for all members of the Professional Standards committee is no less than two years and no more than 4 years. When a vacancy occurs, the committee role will be advertised to all ACP members and they will be invited to apply by supplying a CV and attending an interview. If appropriate, a member may apply for a further term of office subject to the approval of the Director and ACP Board.

## 8. Frequency of meetings and commitment to the role

- 8.1 Meetings of the Professional Standards Committee are every two months on the third Friday of the month for two hours. (September, November, January, March, May, and July.)
- 8.2 **There is an expectation:**
- 8.2.1 of strong commitment to the role for all members;
  - 8.2.2 of regular attendance at the meetings;
  - 8.2.3 that members will have read meeting papers in advance to be able to enter discussion about them;
  - 8.2.4 that all matters relating to the meetings will be kept confidential;
  - 8.2.5 that any member will become an active member of a sub-committee or working group if needed;
  - 8.2.6 that any member will undertake training if required.
- 8.3 No Professional Standards committee member can act on his or her own on matters relating to the Committee without proper authority from the full committee.
- 8.4 The Professional Standards committee will review its own effectiveness annually. The review to include whether the size and structure is fit for purpose and will be presented to the ACP Board of Directors.

## **9. Role description for the ACP Director of Professional Standards and the Registrar (this can be a combined role with a Deputy, or two separate roles taken up by separate members)**

### **9.1 Key Responsibilities for the role of Director of Professional Standards:**

- 9.1.1 To chair bi-monthly meetings of the Professional Standards committee and deal with all correspondence.
- 9.1.2 To report to the ACP Board on all matters relating to Professional Standards;
- 9.1.3 To draw up a budget with the Treasurer for the Professional Standards Committee work and monitor spending against this during each financial year.
- 9.1.4 To ensure that the Professional Standards committee complies with the requirements of the Professional Standards Authority and lay members of the Board with a scrutiny function, such as risk management, protection of the public and complying with monitoring of ACP's accreditation processes;
- 9.1.5 To attend meetings of the Board of Directors 6 times per year and to participate in Skype discussions as required;
- 9.1.6 To attend the annual conference of the ACP;
- 9.1.7 To provide a report annually to ACP's Annual General Meeting on the work of the Professional Standards committee during the year;
- 9.1.8 To set up working groups as appropriate to address issues of relevance to the remit of the Professional Standards Committee.

### **9.2 Key Responsibilities for the role of ACP Registrar:**

- 9.2.2 To oversee the management of the public register of accredited ACP child psychotherapists and to ensure that protection of the public is a key principle in registering ACP members who must be fit to practice.
- 9.2.3 To oversee the annual registration process of all members (currently between December 1 and January 31<sup>st</sup>) by communicating with members about registration requirements and helping them to complete the process. This also involves close liaison with the ACP operational manager and admin officer.
- 9.2.4 To deal with any enquires that come from outside agencies/Trusts about ACP membership/registration requirements in line with Data Protection rules.
- 9.2.5 To work with the CPD Lead to carry out the collection of Annual CPD returns from Full members (currently between September 1 and November 30<sup>th</sup>) and to also work with the CPD Lead on organizing the annual Audit of CPD returns.
- 9.2.6 To report to the ACP Board on all matters relating to the register and membership.

- 9.2.7 To provide advice to all ACP members about their membership and to work with the Admin officers to ensure that the register is kept up to date with the addition of newly qualified members and the removal of members wishing to resign from the ACP.

## **10. Role description for Deputy Director**

- 10.1.1 Key responsibilities: To support the Director with their responsibilities as laid out above

## **11. Role description for the Lead for ACP Continuing Professional Development (CPD)**

- 11.1 To provide knowledge of the existing guidelines for CPD to be undertaken by all Full, and some Honoured, ACP members.
- 11.2 To provide advice and guidance to members about what CPD activities they need to undertake to be compliant with CPD policy and to be eligible to be named on the public register as fit to practice.
- 11.3 As Lead of the CPD sub-committee, to attend regularly the Professional Standards meetings and report to the Chair of that committee about CPD matters. To attend the yearly ACP AGM as appropriate and report back to the members if required.
- 11.4 To undertake with the help of the sub-committee a yearly audit of the CPD returns and to write a report for the committee and for the accreditation process with the PSA. To be conducted between January and April after the CPD returns have been collected between September and November of the previous year.
- 11.5 To work closely with the Registrar and ACP Admin officers on the website forms and letters to the members concerning CPD.
- 11.6 To take a lead on overseeing and developing the CPD policy document so that it remains a relevant and clear guide for ACP members about CPD activities. It also needs to provide clear information about CPD for outside organizations, Trusts and the accreditation body, the PSA.

## **12. Role description for the Ethical Practice Group Lead/Chair**

### **12.1 Key Responsibilities:**

- 12.1.1 To attend the PSC meetings (six times a year) and report back on activity within the Ethical Practice Group.
- 12.1.2 The Lead/Chair will manage all complaints made to the ACP about its members and make decisions on how a complaint is to be handled in collaboration with a screening committee, and other ACP and Lay members of the Ethical Practice group.
- 12.1.3 The Lead/chair will organise meetings with the EPG at least three times a year to discuss the handling of complaints and other relevant ethical matters.

- 12.1.4 The Lead/Chair will organise Investigatory and/or Disciplinary panels, if appropriate, and communicate the outcome of complaints/sanctions to the Director of Professional standards and the Committee. The Lead/Chair may also bring relevant ethical issues for discussion to the committee.
- 12.1.5 The Lead/chair will provide an annual report which can be included in the PSC annual report.
- 12.1.6 The Lead /chair will liaise closely with the Director of the Professional Standards Committee in relation to membership issues and anticipated and immediate financial costs.
- 12.1.7 The Lead/Chair will seek legal advice when and where appropriate, as agreed by the Director of Professional Standards, in relation to on-going complaints and matters relevant to ethical practice.
- 12.1.8 The Lead/Chair will give guidance and advice to ACP members in relation to any ethical issues concerning the profession of child psychotherapy.
- 12.1.9 The Lead/chair may identify and introduce necessary modifications to the Ethical Code and The Disciplinary Procedures in discussion with the EPG, the Director, and members of the Professional Standards Committee.

**Please see the document on the Roles and Terms of Reference for the Ethical Practice Group for a fuller description of the role of the Lead/Chair within that group.**

### **13. Role description for Accreditation of Prior Learning Lead**

#### **13.1 Key Responsibilities:**

- 13.1.1 To respond to queries about how to become a registered member of the ACP by therapists who have trained in other organizations, often overseas.
- 13.1.2 To ensure that relevant information and application forms for registration with the ACP is current and sent promptly to applicants.
- 13.1.3 To assess the applicants training and experience against ACP training criteria in the Quality Standards document and to identify any gaps in an applicant's training and experience.
- 13.1.4 To advise in writing (and verbally) what training and experience still needs to be undertaken and to discuss and identify which training school might appropriately support the applicant meet the ACP standards.
- 13.1.5 To liaise with the training school as necessary during the additional training period.

- 13.1.6 To be available for consultation and discussion about matters that arise both with applicant and training school during the training period. To report back to the Professional Standards committee about all applications to join the ACP and on the progress of any applicants undertaking new training. To inform the committee on the outcome of any such training and advise on the suitability of a new member onto the ACP register.

## 14. Role description for Setting Employment Standards and Liaison Lead

### 14.1 Key Responsibilities:

- 14.1.1 To attend the PSC meetings (six times a year) and report back on activity within the Employment Standards Group.
- 14.1.2 To organise/chair meetings of the Employment Standards Group at least three times a year to discuss matters related to employment standards.
- 14.1.3 In conjunction with members of the Employment Standards Group (when appropriate), to provide advice and guidance to employers on all matters related to the recruitment and employment of child psychotherapists in the public sector, and in private and third sector organisations.
- 14.1.4 To chair and co-ordinate a group of appropriately experienced and informed child psychotherapists who can act as independent assessors to the recruitment processes for relevant child psychotherapy posts.
- 14.1.5 To provide an annual report on the activity of the Employment Standards Group which can be included in the PSC annual report.
- 14.1.6 To liaise closely with ACP union representatives in relation to NHS employment of child psychotherapists.
- 14.1.7 In conjunction with other appropriate members of the Professional Standards Committee, the Employment Standards Group, and the union, to contribute to training events to assist ACP members to prepare for their roles in public/private and third sector organisations, and the associated recruitment process.
- 14.1.8 To communicate with ACP members about relevant issues around employment, and standards.

## 15. Role Description for Independent Practice Lead - Key Responsibilities

- 15.1 To provide a link/liaison between the work of the Independent Practice Committee and the work of the Professional Standards Committee;
- 15.2 To provide a point of view about issues that might affect members in Independent Practice differently from those in the NHS or other organizations;



15.3 To contribute to the thinking about how professional standards can be maintained and supported for all ACP members.