



SHERWOOD PSYCHOTHERAPY TRAINING INSTITUTE

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Codes for Graduate Members

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Code of Ethics & Professional Practice

The Code of Ethics & Professional Practice is open to review and may be revised periodically.

The Code of Ethics and Professional Practice will be open to periodic review by the Ethics and Professional Practice Advisory Committee of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute (hereafter SPTI). Counsellors/Therapists are responsible for the observation of the principles inherent in the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice and are to use the Code as the basis of good practice rather than a set of minimal requirements. The Code of Ethics and Professional Practice may be revised periodically to ensure compatibility with the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (hereafter UKCP).

1. Jurisdiction

- 1.1 The Code applies to all categories of membership of SPTI - Trainee, Graduate, Associate Teaching Member, Teaching Member - in the management of their professional responsibilities to clients, colleagues within SPTI and the wider professions of Counselling and Psychotherapy.

2. Intention

The Code of Ethics and Professional Practice is intended to:

- 2.1 Protect and inform members of the general public who are inquiring about, or receiving, the clinical services of Members of SPTI.
- 2.2 Make clear and explicit the standards of professional practice of Members of SPTI and promote good practice.
- 2.3 In the event of a breach of Ethics and Professional Practice the

Complaints Procedure may be invoked and appropriate sanctions may include suspension or termination of membership.

- 2.4 SPTI is a Full Training Member Organisation of UKCP and is required to report to the UKCP the names of Members whose membership has been suspended or terminated.

3. Client-Therapist Relationship

- 3.1 The client-therapist relationship is a professional relationship within which the welfare of the client is the Member's primary concern.
- 3.2 The dignity, worth and uniqueness of the client is to be respected at all times.
- 3.3 It is the Member's aim to promote increased awareness, encourage self support, and facilitate the self development and autonomy of clients with a view to increasing the range of choices available to them, together with their ability/willingness to accept responsibility for the decisions they make.
 - 3.3.1 Members are responsible for working in ways which enhance their client's sense of empowerment, their capacity to become self supporting, their ability to make creative choices and changes in response to their evolving needs, circumstances, values and beliefs.
 - 3.3.2 Members should be respectful of their client's age, health, gender, sexuality, religion, ethnic group, social context and any other significant aspects of their life.
 - 3.3.3 Members should provide regular opportunities to review the terms of the therapeutic contract and the progress of therapy.
 - 3.3.4 Decisions regarding the termination of therapy are the joint responsibility of client and Member. Should a Member's professional assessment not accord with a client's decision to terminate, a Member should facilitate termination in a manner which is respectful of the client's autonomy. Termination of therapy or facilitation of a change of therapist should be managed with care and consideration for the client's dignity and well-being.
- 3.4 Members must recognise the importance of a good relationship for effective therapy and be cognisant of the power and influence this responsibility gives them. The Member must act in a manner consistent with this recognition and not exploit client financially, sexually or emotionally for their own personal advantage or their own needs.
 - 3.4.1 Members should not take money under false pretences - knowingly

retaining a client after therapy has ceased to be effective or increasing fees without prior negotiation with the client.

- 3.4.2 A physical, sexual relationship with a client is exploitative.
- 3.4.3 Sexual harassment in the form of deliberate or repeated comments, gestures, or physical contacts of a sexual nature that are, or could be, considered offensive by the client, are unethical.
- 3.5 Members need to be aware when other relationships or external commitments conflict with the interests of the client. When such a conflict of interest exists it is the Member's responsibility to declare it and be prepared to work through the issues with the client.
- 3.6 Members need to recognise that dual relationships - where the client is also an employee, close friend, relative, or partner - will likely impair their professional judgement and cause undue stress to clients and themselves.

4. Confidentiality

- 4.1 Confidentiality is intrinsic to good practice. All exchanges between Members and client must be regarded as confidential. Where a Member has any doubts about the limits of confidentiality she/he should seek supervision.
- 4.2 A client should be informed at the outset of therapy (as part of the therapist-client contract) that in extreme circumstances where the client is a danger to themselves or others, a Member may break confidentiality and take appropriate action.
- 4.3 When a Member wishes to use specific information gained during work with a client - in a lecture or publication, the client's permission should be obtained and anonymity preserved. Clients should be informed that they have a right to withdraw consent at any time.
- 4.4 Members should provide a working environment which ensures privacy.
- 4.5 Members should not make trivialising comments about clients.
- 4.6 Members must maintain confidentiality after the completion of therapy.

5. Client Safety

- 5.1 Members must take all reasonable steps to protect clients from physical or psychological harm during therapy.
- 5.2 When a client develops a medical condition, Members should encourage the client to obtain advice from their doctor or other

suitably qualified person. Members should obtain clients` permission before contacting other professionals, unless there are overriding ethical or legal considerations.

- 5.3 Members should consider what provisions may be made for clients to be informed in the event of the Members serious incapacity or death. Responsibilities will include management of confidential files and audio/video recordings.

6. Initial Contracting

- 6.1 Contracts with clients, whether written or verbal, should be explicit regarding fees, payment schedule, holidays, cancellation of sessions by client or Member. The length of therapy, transfer of clients and termination's, are discussed with clients and mutual agreement sought. This should be done at the outset before any commitment is made to ongoing therapy. Subsequent changes to the contract must be negotiated and agreed with the client.
- 6.2 If requested by a client Members should provide information about their qualifications and experience.
- 6.3 If requested by a client Members should provide information about SPTI Codes of Ethics and Professional Practice and SPTI Complaints Procedure.
- 6.4 Members must inform clients if they become aware of any relevant conflict of interest at the initial interview or at any subsequent stage of therapy.
- 6.5 Members are responsible for setting and monitoring the boundaries between a professional relationship and a social one, and for making explicit such boundaries to the client.

7. Competence

- 7.1 Members accept clients commensurate with their training, skill and supervision arrangements.
- 7.2 Members should pay attention to the limits of their competence. Where a Member recognises they are reaching their limit then consultation with a colleague and/or supervisor is essential. It may be appropriate to refer the client to someone else.
- 7.3 Members have a responsibility to maintain their own effectiveness and ability to practice. Members should not work with clients when their

capacity is impaired because of emotional problems, illness, alcohol or any other reason.

- 7.4 Members should protect their own physical safety when engaged in therapy.
- 7.5 Members should secure professional indemnity and public liability insurance to protect themselves in the event of legal action being taken against them or against the owners of premises in which they work.
- 7.6 Members should have appropriate therapeutic and supervisory support to maintain ethical and professional practice.

8. Supervision

- 8.1 Supervision provides a challenging and supportive context for Members to share their work, enhance their effectiveness, and protect the client. Members should not practice without appropriate levels of supervision.
- 8.2 A Member's supervisor should not be their therapist.
- 8.3 Members together with their supervisors share responsibility for maintaining a focus on supervision which is purposeful and relevant to the Member's clinical practice.

9. Continued Development

- 9.1 Members have a particular responsibility to continue their personal and professional development through any or all of the following; personal therapy, regular supervision, further training, research, publication.

10. Records

- 10.1 Members should keep adequate client records which must be kept safely under secure conditions.
- 10.2 As a minimum records should include client's:
 - name, address and telephone number
 - name and telephone number of general practitioner

- details of any current involvement with other members of the caring professions
 - information regarding significant medical problems
 - ongoing case recordings
- 10.3 Members must ensure that computer based records comply with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1984.

11. Advertising

- 11.1 Advertising should be confined to descriptive statements about the services available, and the qualifications of the person providing them. Advertising should not include testimonials, make comparative statements, or in any way imply that the services concerned are more effective than those provided by other schools of therapy or organisations. Members should refrain from claiming qualifications they do not possess.
- 11.2 Trainee Members should not describe themselves as a psychotherapist.
- 11.3 Members should not describe themselves as affiliated to any organisation in such a manner that inaccurately and improperly implies or suggests authorisation or sponsorship by that organisation.

12. Research

- 12.1 Members are obliged to conduct any research in counselling and/or psychotherapy with ethical endeavour.

13. Legal Proceedings

- 13.1 Members should be reasonably conversant with the legal implications of their work as counsellors/psychotherapists and have access to legal advice.
- 13.2 A member of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute Limited who is convicted in a Court of Law for any criminal offence, or is the subject of a successful civil action by a client should inform the Institute.

- 13.3 Members who become aware of a specific crime in the course of their clinical practice, whether current or past, should seek supervisory and legal advice immediately.

14. Responsibilities To The Counselling/ Psychotherapy Profession

- 14.1 Members should not accept anyone as a client if they are already the client of another counsellor/psychotherapist.
- 14.2 It is considered good practice to acknowledge the source of a referral of a client.
- 14.3 Members should conduct themselves personally and professional in ways which promote the confidence of the general public in the professions of counselling and psychotherapy.
- 14.4 A Member who is concerned about the professional conduct of another Member, should discuss their concerns with this person. In the event that the matter cannot be resolved satisfactorily, then the Complaints Procedure of SPTI may be implemented.

Codes of Ethics for Trainers and Trainees

This document should be read in conjunction with the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute and the requirements of the course programme in which a trainee and a trainer are engaged.

1. Jurisdiction

- 1.1 Trainer refers to all Teaching Members, Associate Teaching Members and Tutors of SPTI and any other person engaged by the Institute to teach theory and practice on any of the Institute's courses. Trainee refers to trainee Members of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute who are engaged in learning on one or more of the Institute's courses and have signed an agreement to abide by the Institute's Code of Ethics and Professional Practice.

2. Intention

- 2.1 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute endeavours to conduct its training in such a way as to address the needs and best interests of its trainees. Trainees are in turn required to act in the best interests of their clients and abide by the training and ethical requirements of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute.

3. Pre-Course Information

- 3.1 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will inform all prospective trainees of the nature and requirements of the course/s for which they may make application. This information will include course philosophy, objectives, assessment criteria and requirements for satisfactory completion.

4. Personal And Financial Involvement

- 4.1 All prospective trainees will be clearly informed of the financial requirements of the course.
- 4.2 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will exercise responsibility and demonstrate a reasonable respect for existing arrangements when introducing changes to its course requirements.
- 4.3 All responsibilities of cost and fees will be explicit at the outset of training.

5. Teaching

- 5.1 The detailed syllabus, objectives, methodology and assessment criteria for each of the Institute's validated courses will be clearly set out and given to all trainees at commencement of the course.
- 5.2 All tutors/ trainers will be governed by the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute.
- 5.3 Tutors/trainers will respect the diversity of trainees and not discriminate on any grounds of difference such as gender, race, culture, age, disability, social background, political or religious beliefs.
 - 5.3.1 Trainees must be aware of their own internalised oppression and pay particular attention to how this may affect their training practice.
- 5.4 Tutors/trainers will not exploit their students sexually or financially.
- 5.5 Dismissive or arrogant remarks or any derogation by innuendo by a trainer about another trainer is unprofessional. A trainer should not collude through silence or evasion, with the abusive behaviour of a fellow trainer.

6. Clinical Practice

- 6.1 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will consider the interests of clients and trainees in establishing the clinical requirements of the training course/s, which will be clearly set out at the outset of the training.
- 6.2 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will help and assist trainees to make client's interest paramount and to maintain appropriate confidentiality.
- 6.3 Trainees` work with clients presented for training purposes will be clinically supervised.

7. Supervision

- 7.1 All Supervisors approved by the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will have completed a creditable training course in clinical supervision or be recognised as competent by virtue of reputation and standing within the professional community of Counsellors and Psychotherapists.
- 7.2 All Supervisors approved by the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will adhere to a Code of Ethics compatible with the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute.
- 7.3 A Course Leader or Primary Tutor who has a responsibility for the trainee's ongoing training and clinical practice must be satisfied that supervision is established when the trainee begins work with clients. Trainees are responsible for arranging their supervision.
- 7.4 It is the responsibility of the Course Assessment Board to determine, after due consideration, the ability and suitability of a trainee to continue on one of the Institute's training courses.

8. Assessment

- 8.1 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will publish the criteria and process of assessment for all its validated training courses, including its examination procedures.
- 8.2 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute will endeavour to keep the examination processes as clear as possible. Specifically, all assessors/examiners must complete a written evaluation of the candidate's work which will be made available to the candidate.

9. Boundaries

- 9.1 Trainers are responsible for establishing and maintaining the boundaries between a professional relationship with a trainee and other relationships that may pre-date the trainee's commencement of training.
- 9.2 Trainers who are centrally involved in Institute's training programme should not assume the additional role of therapist to any trainee enrolled on that programme.
- 9.3 Trainers should not be dependant on their relationships with trainees for their emotional well-being.

- 9.4 Any new relationship arising as a result of a workshop facilitated by a visiting external trainer, must respect those relationships which are already in place, and should clearly be judged by the Course Leader to be helpful to the trainees' professional development.
- 9.5 Sexual relationships between members of a training group may adversely affect the training group. Trainees are required to monitor their relationships with each other with due regard to the heightened emotional vulnerability that is likely to occur during training workshops.
- 9.6 Trainers should explain to new trainees that personal therapy and work on personal issues unrelated to the training group are not the primary purpose of training.

10. Confidentiality

- 10.1 SPTI Trainers will protect the confidentiality of trainees' personal material by keeping records in a locked metal filing cabinet.
- 10.2 Trainer and trainees will establish a clear contract about their mutual responsibilities with regard to confidentiality. Such a contract will be compatible with the Code of Ethics and Professional Practice of SPTI.
- 10.3 Trainers should make explicit to trainees the circumstances when confidentiality may be broken.

11. Competence

- 11.1 Trainees should be committed to their own personal and professional development.
- 11.2 Trainers should work within the limits of their knowledge, skills and health.
- 11.3 Trainers should monitor their work via appropriate levels of supervision and consultation.
- 11.4 Trainers should develop their cultural education and their capacity for self awareness, especially with regard to prejudices, so that they become increasingly able to value difference and diversity.

12. Complaints

- 12.1 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute has a published Complaints Procedure, that is subject to periodic review by the Ethics and Professional Practice Advisory Committee.

13. Appeals

- 13.1 All courses provided by the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute which are validated by the University of Derby are subject to the procedures and regulations governing appeals of the University of Derby.
- 13.2 The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute a published Appeals Procedure for courses accredited/validated by other than a University/Institute of Higher Education, which is subject to periodic review by the Training Committee.

Complaints Procedure

(In cases of alleged breach of professional ethics)

1. Introduction

- 1.1 The Complaints Procedure is intended to provide a means of examining a complaint against a Member of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute (hereafter SPTI), to determine whether a breach of the SPTI Code of Ethics & Professional Practice has taken place, and to recommend further action. Such action may include sanctions against the SPTI Member.
- 1.2 `Members` refers to all categories of membership of SPTI - Trainees, Graduate, Associate Teaching Members and Teaching Members.
- 1.3 A complaint can be brought against a Member of SPTI:
 - 1.3(i) By a member of the public using the services of the SPTI Member,
 - 1.3(ii) By another Member of SPTI in a third party capacity.
- 1.4 The Member complained against should have been a Member of SPTI at the time of the alleged breach of the Code of Ethics & Professional Practice.
- 1.5 SPTI is not responsible for expenses incurred by either party to the complaint.

2. Procedures

- 2.1 The following procedure will only become operational on receipt of a written complaint.
- 2.2 The written complaint should be sent to the Chairperson of SPTI Ethics & Professional Practice Advisory Committee (hereafter E&PPAC) and should include information specifying the clause or clauses of the Code of Ethics & Professional Practice which the complainant alleges have been

breached. The Chairperson of the E&PPAC will forward a copy of the complaint to the SPTI Director.

- 2.3 The Chairperson of the E&PPAC plus one other senior practitioner member of the E&PPAC will determine whether the complainant has demonstrated reasonable grounds for believing a breach of professional ethics may have taken place, which requires the following conditions to be met:
 - 2.3(i) The allegation is about a breach of a specific clause or clauses of the SPTI Code of Ethics & Professional Practice.
 - 2.3(ii) The person named in the complaint was a Member of SPTI at the time of the breach.
- 2.4 If the above conditions (2.3(i); 2.3(ii)) are not met then the Chairperson of the E&PPAC will inform the complainant and advise them that, if they wish to dispute this decision, they may pursue the matter with the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy (hereafter UKCP) through the Chairperson of UKCP. Grounds for appeal against a decision of the SPTI Complaints Procedure are contained in Section 6 (6.1 to 6.5) of this document.
- 2.5 If conditions 2.3(i) and 2.3(ii) are met the complainant proceeds in the following stages:
- 2.6 The Chairperson of the E&PPAC will forward a copy of the written complaint to the Member complained against and request a written response within 28 days of receiving the written complaint, a copy of which will be forwarded to the complainant.
- 2.7 If the Member complained against fails to provide the written response without satisfactory reason, action will be taken by the Chairperson of E&PPAC as if the alleged breach of Ethics and/or Professional Practice had indeed taken place.
- 2.8 Upon receipt of a written response the matter will be dealt with in accordance with the following three stage procedure. However, no inference as to the justification of the complaint made is to be drawn from reference of a complaint for consideration in this way.

3. Stage I

- 3.1 The Chairperson of the E&PPAC will forward a copy of the written complaint to the Member complained against and request a written response within 28 days of receiving the written complaint, a copy of which will be forwarded to the complainant.

- 3.2 If the Member complained against fails to provide the written response without a satisfactory reason, action will be taken by the Chairperson of E&PPAC as if the alleged breach of Ethics and/or Professional Practice had indeed taken place.

4. Stage II

- 4.1 The Chairperson of the E&PPAC will offer both the Complainant and the Member complained against an opportunity to meet together, at a time and place convenient to both parties, and in the presence of a Senior Member of SPTI acceptable to both parties. The Senior Member of SPTI will act as a mediator to facilitate resolution.

5. Stage III

- 5.1 If a satisfactory resolution is not achieved at Stage II or the Complainant or Member complained against decline the Stage II meeting, then the Chairperson of the E&PPAC will appoint a Panel of Enquiry.
- 5.2 The Panel of Enquiry will comprise of two Senior Members of SPTI, plus one person external to SPTI who will be a person of standing in the profession of Counselling/Psychotherapy/Medicine, in the United Kingdom.
- 5.3 The composition of the Panel of Enquiry will be sensitive to issues of race and gender.
- 5.4 The Members of the Panel of Enquiry will elect one of the Panel to act as Chairperson.
- 5.5 The formal Panel of Enquiry will convene:
 - 5.5(i) Within sixty (60) days of the appointment of the Panel of Enquiry. The date of the Enquiry will whenever possible, be determined in co-operation with all parties, first by telephone and subsequently confirmed in writing. If the parties to the complaint are unable to agree a date, then the Panel of Enquiry will determine a date. The sixty day time-scale will only be waived under extreme circumstances and at the discretion of the Chairperson of the Panel of Enquiry. The Panel of Enquiry must take place not later than ninety (90) days from the appointment of the Panel of Enquiry.
 - 5.5(ii) The complainant and the Member complained against may be accompanied by a friend/advocate who may represent them.
- 5.6 All written evidence and submissions must be submitted to the Chairperson of the Panel of Enquiry not less than fifteen days before the date of the Panel of Enquiry. All parties to the complaint will be circulated copies of all written evidence and submissions.

- 5.7 New evidence will not be admitted on the day of the Enquiry except at the discretion of the Panel and will be confined to short oral or written submissions.
- 5.8 The Panel of Enquiry may invite witnesses to attend to answer questions about their written submissions.
- 5.9 The Chairperson of the Panel of Enquiry will, in the presence of all parties to the complaint, present:
- 5.9(i) A summary of the complainant's case.
- 5.9(ii) A summary of the case of the person complained against.
- 5.9(iii) The complainant and/or their friend/advocate puts questions, through the Chair, to the person complained against.
- 5.9(iv) The person complained against or their friend/advocate puts questions, through the Chair, to the complainant.
- 5.9(v) The Panel of Enquiry members then seek clarification through questions to the complainant, the person complained against, and any witnesses present.
- 5.9(vi) When the Chairperson is satisfied that the Panel of Enquiry has gained all the clarification required or possible, all parties to the complaint, except the Panel, will withdraw.
- 5.9(vii) The proceedings of the Panel of Enquiry will be tape-recorded.
- 5.10 The Panel of Enquiry then determines whether or not a breach of the specific clause or clauses of the Code of Ethics & Professional Practice of SPTI has occurred or whether it is probable that a breach has occurred. In the event that unanimity is not achieved, a split decision can be handed down.
- 5.11 Within fifteen (15) days of the Panel of Enquiry, the Chairperson of the Panel of Enquiry advises the complainant and the person complained against of its conclusions in writing. At the same time it passes its conclusions on to the Chairperson of the E&PPAC. The Chairperson of the E&PPAC informs the Director of SPTI, in writing, of the outcomes of each Stage of the procedure (namely Stage I, Stage II and Stage III), together with its recommendations as to sanctions that might be applied.
- 5.12 Where a complaint against a Member is upheld by the Panel of Enquiry then the said Member may be required to either:
- 5.12(i) Provide the panel with a written statement of acceptance to the adjudication and an apology to the complainant.

- 5.12(ii) Provide the above together with a written undertaking that they will take issues arising from the complaint to their own personal therapy and fully inform the clinical supervisor of the complaint and outcome.
- 5.12(iii) Satisfy both 5.12(i) and 5.12(ii) above and cease to practice as a counsellor/psychotherapist for a specified period of time whilst working through the issue/s in therapy.
- 5.12(iv) Suspension of membership of the Institute with or without a requirement to comply with 5.12(i) and 5.12(ii) above.
- 5.12(v) Termination of membership of the Institute with or without a recommendation to comply with 5.12(i) and 5.12(ii) above.

A member of the panel will be nominated to monitor any sanctions imposed.

The consequence of non-compliance to 5.12(i); 5.12(ii); 5.12(iii); 5.12(iv); above will be termination of membership of the Institute after a second written warning.

6. Appeals Procedure

- 6.1 The complainant or person being complained against may appeal against the sanction and/or decision on one or more of the following grounds:

Where relevant new information has come to the attention of any party and could not have been presented previously.

Where the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute's Complaints Procedures were not followed or were incorrectly followed.

Where a sanction is considered to be unreasonable/unjust.

Where a decision is considered to be unreasonable/unjust.

Notification of an appeal and the grounds of the appeal should be made in writing to the Director of SPTI within twenty-one (21) days of receiving notice of the findings.

- 6.2 The Director of SPTI directs the appellant to an External Moderator of SPTI who reviews the case and reports back to all concerned as to whether the appeal is upheld or not.
- 6.3 Where the Member complained against is a UKCP registered psychotherapist then, after completion of SPTI Complaints Procedure and appeal to the External Moderator of SPTI, a further appeal may be made to the Governing Board of the United Kingdom Council for Psychotherapy on one or more of the grounds contained in 6.1 above.

- 6.4 Appeals to the Governing Board of the UKCP may be made only once the Complaints & Appeals Procedures of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute have been exhausted. Either party or parties to those proceedings may appeal to the Governing Board of UKCP within 28 days of the decision of the External Moderator of SPTI.
- 6.5 Notification of appeal stating the ground or grounds on which it is being made should be sent formally in writing to the Chair of UKCP Governing Board at 167-169 Great Portland Street, London, W1N 5FB.

7. Protocols Governing Complaints Procedure

- 7.1 If the Complainant fails to attend the Panel of Enquiry without good reason or due notice then the complaint is regarded as withdrawn and the person complained against is automatically exonerated with regard to that complaint. In this event the complainant loses his/her right to appeal.
- 7.2 If the Member complained against fails to attend the Panel of Enquiry without good reason or due notice then the Panel of Enquiry may recommend the termination of membership of that SPTI Member. In this event the Member complained against loses his/her right of appeal.
- 7.3 Findings of complaints procedures are notified to the complainant, the person complained against, the Director of SPTI, the HIPS section of the UKCP (in the case of UKCP-registered psychotherapists) and to other parties directly involved.
- 7.4 In the event that the Member complained against has their membership terminated, this fact is published:
 - 7.4(i) via advertisement in the "Psychotherapy and Counselling" magazine of SPTI and in the leading circulation local newspaper in that (ex) member's area.
 - 7.4(ii) if they are UKCP registered Members, also by notification to the UKCP Registration Board.
 - 7.4(iii) by notification to any relevant professional bodies, at the discretion of the Ethics & Professional Practice Advisory Committee of SPTI.

The Chairperson of E&PPAC will action 7.4(i); 7.4(ii); 7.4(iii); jointly with the Director of SPTI.

- 7.5 All persons involved in the SPTI Complaints Procedure should act in a manner that does not breach confidentiality.
- 7.6 At any point in the Complaints Procedure but after the receipt of the formal complaint the Director of SPTI acting with the Chair of E&PPAC and with the consent of the Board of Directors can suspend SPTI

membership of the Member complained against with immediate effect. Such suspension is considered if:

- 7.6(i) Physical or emotional harm has allegedly been caused.
- 7.6(ii) The complaint if upheld could result in termination from membership.
- 7.7 The resignation of a Member complained against will not be accepted by the Board of Directors until the SPTI Complaints Procedure has been completed.
- 7.8 Names of SPTI Members complained against are kept confidential from everyone other than the SPTI Director, SPTI Administrator, Chairperson of the E&PPAC and members directly investigating the complaint until such a time as a recommended course of action or sanction is to be implemented.
- 7.9 Complaints made anonymously are rejected.
- 7.10 A complainant can withdraw their complaint in writing at any time but in this event the complaint cannot be resubmitted at some later date.
- 7.11 SPTI reports annually to the Registration Board of the UKCP regarding the number of complaints received, their nature and disposition.
- 7.12 The UKCP is informed of the outcome when any complaint is sustained against a UKCP registered psychotherapist.
- 7.13 All correspondence regarding the complaint must be sent by Recorded Delivery. Correspondence that is alleged to be lost will be assumed not to have been sent unless evidence of dispatch of the correspondence can be produced. A claim of lost correspondence is not grounds for changing the timetable of the procedures.
- 7.14 Powers of attorney will not be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances that must be advised by the Chairperson of the E&PPAC and approved by the Board of Directors of SPTI. Complainants and Members complained against must therefore appear in person.
- 7.15 All documentation and tape recordings that have been pertinent to the formal complaints procedures will be archived for seven (7) years from the date of the formal complaint.

Advertising Guidelines

(see also: SPTI Code of Ethics & Professional Practice)

An advertisement may:

- A. State the availability of goods or person for a particular use or service.
- B. Claim that a service is carried out well.
- C. Advocate one product as superior or preferable to another.

The Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute requires all its members to restrict advertising to A., above.

Increasingly, professionals are using the Internet for discussions and statements about professional services offered. Individuals setting up their own websites should observe principle A above. If a particular type of counselling or psychotherapy is offered it should be described according to the relevant UKCP section flag statement or a paraphrase or expansion of it (in the case of psychotherapy).

Some websites contain lists of therapists in a local area and/or a particular type of counselling/therapy. If an SPTI member wishes to join such a list he or she will need to ensure that no claims are being made for the list itself which are unjustified or which might not be true for all the individuals on it.

Counsellors and psychotherapists must not allow their names to be included in any listing which includes advertising or conveys a value judgement. The guidelines on advertising above cover all websites and electronic communication.

The UKCP is working to establish its register as the national register linking psychotherapists of various disciplines who have undertaken to maintain high professional and ethical standards. We therefore ask that registered psychotherapists regard the UKCP register as the major listing to use and promote it as such.

Ethical Guidelines for Research in Counselling & Psychotherapy

1. Introduction

The three psychotherapy training programmes at the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute all promote the notion of a psychotherapist as a 'scientific practitioner'. All three Masters programmes - in Gestalt Psychotherapy, Transactional Analysis Psychotherapy and Integrative Psychotherapy - include a research-driven dissertation in the final year. Thus, SPTI places an increasingly important emphasis on the evaluation of the process and outcome of psychotherapy. In other words, the evaluation of the effectiveness of what we do as psychotherapists. Research in psychotherapy raises many ethical issues and dilemmas. These guidelines are an attempt to meet the need for guidance in this area and are intended to be used for guidance and direction. They are not meant to be read as mandatory. As this is a relatively new area in the field of psychotherapy then it will be necessary to develop these guidelines as a result of continuing practice and experience in research.

2. Guiding Principles

There is a duty to measure and assess the effectiveness of psychotherapy. This duty extends to clients, fellow professionals and the wider society. Research can help to establish the relative benefit of psychotherapy to clients and help to determine which therapy might be most effective for particular needs. Our obligation to the wider society includes a professional commitment to be engaged in an activity which can be shown to be worthwhile.

Any research activity undertaken within SPTI (within a specific training programme or independent of a training programme) must be supervised from the commencement of the research to its conclusion. The supervisor should be knowledgeable of research issues and psychotherapeutic practice. Specifically, the supervisor will ensure that:

1. Ethical approvals for the programme have been secured.

2. Informed consent has been secured.
3. All reasonable steps have been taken to safeguard confidentiality.
4. Potential risks to research subjects/research participants are identified, assessed and recorded together with any specific measures taken to reduce potential risks.
5. Appropriate support systems are established.

The supervisor has a responsibility to ensure that any significant changes to a research programme have been properly approved.

3. Definitions

Research

Research refers to both process and outcome studies, for example which form of therapy might be most beneficial for which type of person or problem? The significance of the therapeutic relationship to outcome? Outcome studies of different therapeutic modalities. Ethical considerations may differ, to a greater or lesser extent, between different types of research activity. Generally speaking, research will refer to the detailed investigation of therapeutic practice with a particular purpose or goal.

Primary Consideration

1. Is the purpose of the research clearly articulated?
2. Has a hypothesis been clearly formulated or an exploratory question clearly formulated?
3. Has the data required been defined?
4. Has the methodology been identified together with its possibilities and limitations?
5. Have the methods of analysing the data been identified?
6. Has the possible impact on the client been carefully considered and potential risks identified?

Qualitative and quantitative approaches need to be critiqued and with specific reference to the limits of their validity.

Cultural Context

Those engaged in research are encouraged to check out the draft protocol of any research investigation, the questions to be asked or other instruments, with members of relevant groups in order to ensure that they have sufficient knowledge of what may or may not be acceptable to others. Relevant groups may be

considered with regard to gender, sexuality, age, race, ethnic origin, religion etc. Specifically it may be useful to check out what could be overtly or covertly judgmental of others.

Informed Consent

In order for consent to be considered informed and freely given a client should be informed of:

1. The purpose of the research.
2. How they will be involved, i.e. filling in a questionnaire, interview, tape/video tape.
3. What steps will be taken to protect their identity?
4. Will their identity be known to any one other than the therapist and if so, whom?
5. Will any other person have access to personal information other than the therapist? If so, whom?
6. Arrangements to secure all records relating to the client and information as to what will happen to all records.
7. Procedures for withdrawing consent and for making complaints against the researcher.
8. Any possible negative impact upon them, for example re-living past traumas.

It is important to recognise that there is an inequality in the therapeutic relationship and that a client may feel obliged to adapt to the requests of the therapist by giving consent. The client should always be given adequate time to consider whether or not to be involved in any research investigation.

Clients should be informed clearly that if they decline to give consent to a research investigation the service they receive will not be adversely affected.

If a client is unlikely to be able to exercise consent freely then they should not be included in any investigation.

It is the responsibility of the research investigator to ensure that the client has enough understanding of the information required from an investigation before including the client in the investigation.

Where a research investigation continues for some time, then it may be appropriate to update client consent periodically.

Any research investigation involving children must consider their ability to give consent and the research investigator should familiarise themselves with any relevant legislation, for example the Children's Act.

Withdrawal of Consent

At the outset of any research investigation clients should be informed that they have an absolute right to withdraw their consent at any time and that they also have the right to require that data about them is destroyed. It is unethical to exert pressure to persuade a client to change their mind should they withdraw consent during the course of the research investigation. It is permissible to give additional information or explanation so long as this does not constitute pressure.

A client has a right to withdraw consent retrospectively and should be informed of their right to require that data regarding them is destroyed.

Ownership of Information

Whatever the legal situation, moral ownership of personal information about any person belongs with that person.

Generally speaking it should be normal practice that clients are able to have access to research records about them.

When questionnaires are used to provide scores a client has a right to have the scores, and the significance of them, explained in an appropriate way.

Confidentiality applies to all investigations into the psychotherapy process and if confidentiality cannot be guaranteed then clients need to be informed of this prior to being asked to give consent.

The Data Protection Registrar has made it clear that information stored on computers is not to be used for any purpose other than that for which it was originally obtained. If the holder of such information requires it to be used for anything else or to impart such information to a third person, they must secure the client's written consent. This is a legal requirement.

A client who has taken part in a research investigation should be provided with the opportunity to be informed of the outcome of such investigation. Case notes used for the purposes of research without the client's specific consent is unethical.

Explanations

All explanations of the nature of a research investigation (individual data, scores, results) given to clients involved in the investigation must be straight forward, be jargon free and not assume particular levels of knowledge. Simplicity of explanation must not be used to lead to a person's understanding of the significance of the information being distorted. Explanations given after the event do not justify any unethical aspects of the research investigation.

Use of Random Allocation Methods

External advice should be secured as to whether to use any research investigation involving random assignment of clients to particular types of treatment.

Colleagues

A psychotherapist who believes that a fellow research investigator is conducting investigations which are unethical should confront that person and encourage them to re-evaluate their research investigation. Such re-evaluation should involve external assessment.

Professional Collaboration

Research investigators must not claim authorship for work not undertaken by them or for ideas not originating with them. All sources must be properly acknowledged. Any help given by other professionals to a research investigation should be *acknowledged*.

Monitoring, Evaluation & Complaints

Occasionally data about clients may be used for the routine compilation of statistics regarding the provision of the service. Routine monitoring of this nature, while not strictly speaking 'research', nevertheless constitutes information provided by a client in connection with their therapy that is being used for purposes outside therapy. As such the client has the right to know that such statistics are being compiled. Clients have a right to know that in advance of entering into the therapeutic contract statistics may be so compiled.

As with monitoring, if a service is to be evaluated by requesting all or selected clients to complete questionnaires at the beginning or end of therapy, then a client should be aware that such questionnaires are being used for research and consent should be obtained.

Clients should be provided with an effective avenue of complaint if they believe that the research investigation has infringed their individual liberties or personal dignity. The person nominated to facilitate complaints must be independent of the research investigation.

Code of Ethics for Supervisors

Purpose:

The purpose of the Code of Ethics for Supervisors is to ensure high standards of ethical practice for Supervisors and to inform and protect both Supervisees and their clients.

- 1.1 Supervisors are required to conduct themselves in a manner that does not undermine the confidence of the general public in themselves, the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute and other professional and academic institutions to which the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute is accountable.
- 1.2 The primary concern of supervision is to ensure that the Supervisee is addressing the needs of the client.
- 2.1 Supervisors must recognise the value, worth and dignity of Supervisees regardless of race, gender, religious or political beliefs, sexual orientation, age or disability.
- 2.2 Supervisors should be cognisant of their own internalised oppression such that anti-discriminatory practice should underpin the fundamental values of their clinical practice.
- 3.1 A Supervisor is responsible for maintaining appropriate professional boundaries with Supervisees. A Supervisor should not also be a client's therapist.
- 4.1 A Supervisor will commit themselves to continued professional development and regularly monitor and evaluate the limits of their competence.
- 4.2 Supervisors are responsible for maintaining their own professional effectiveness, and ability to work. They should monitor their own personal level of functioning and be able to seek help where appropriate. A Supervisor should withdraw from their role as Supervisor, for an appropriate period of time, when their personal resources are inadequate to the task.

- 5.1 Supervisors will not exploit Supervisees financially, emotionally, sexually or in any other way.
- 6.1 Supervisors will maintain confidentiality with regard to information supplied to them about themselves and their clients.
- 6.2 Supervisors will indicate clearly at the commencement of the supervision contract those situations where confidentiality may be breached, i.e. issues of client safety, ethical or legal concerns.
- 6.3 When a Supervisor believes it is necessary to breach confidentiality they will discuss this in advance with a Supervisee, whenever possible.
- 7.1 Supervisors who wish to undertake research involving SPTI Supervisees, clients referred by SPTI or SPTI colleagues should read carefully and adhere to the SPTI Codes of Ethics for Research. Furthermore, Supervisors wishing to engage in research with the foregoing people should first submit their research outline to the Chair of the SPTI Ethics Committee. *The SPTI Ethics Committee retains the right to refuse to sanction a research endeavour if it is in conflict with the Codes of Ethics for Research of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute.*
- 8.1 Supervisors who are members of the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute are required to adhere to the Sherwood Psychotherapy Training Institute's Complaints Procedures in cases of alleged ethical misconduct. If a client or Supervisee of a SPTI Supervisor requests a copy of the SPTI Complaints Procedure then the Supervisor concerned should respond positively to this request.

Grievance Procedure

1. Purpose

The purpose of this grievance procedure is to provide a means by which a member of SPTI can bring a grievance against another member of SPTI. A grievance may be brought to SPTI by any of the following:

- Graduates or graduate members of SPTI
- Tutors, supervisors or consultants who are also members of SPTI
- Staff of SPTI
- Trainee members of SPTI
- Grievance procedures may also be invoked by SPTI or by a group within SPTI against an individual member of SPTI

1.1 Grievances will normally be dealt with through the SPTI Ethics & Professional Practice Committee and addressed to the Chair who is a senior member of SPTI. Advisors external to SPTI may be co-opted to the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee from time to time.

1.2 The Ethics & Professional Practice Committee may decide that a matter may be more appropriately dealt with by a senior member of another UKCP member organisation.

1.2.1 If the matter is referred to a senior member of another UKCP organisation, then the Chair of the SPTI Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will approach a suitable person. The selected person must have no connection with the aggrieved person. The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will inform the aggrieved person of this decision at the earliest opportunity, and will advise them of the name of the senior person who will manage the grievance procedure.

1.3 All individuals involved in the grievance procedures must act in a manner that does not breach confidentiality. Written material relevant to the grievance should be dated, and all verbal communications relevantly recorded and dated.

- 1.4 The grievance procedure is investigative and with the guiding principle of establishing truth, justice and fairness. Section 3.1 below sets out the informal procedures which may be followed initially to see if there are grounds for resolution. Formal procedures are set out in 3.2 below and may be followed by adjudication and the use of disciplinary procedures.
- 1.5 A formal grievance must be lodged within one year of the alleged event(s) which form the substance of the grievance. Normally procedures are completed within six months of the receipt of the formal grievance. Time boundaries must be clearly established at the outset and strictly adhered to throughout. Where time boundaries cannot reasonably be maintained then all parties involved in the grievance should be informed and provided with a clear written explanation.

2. Initiating a Grievance

- 2.1 A person wishing to raise a grievance may have initial and confidential discussions on matters of procedure with the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee. If the grievance concerns a SPTI tutor, the aggrieved person is recommended to first speak with the relevant Programme Leader.
- 2.2 The purpose of the initial discussions is to inform the aggrieved person of the procedures. A copy of the relevant Code of Ethics & Professional Practice and Grievance Procedure will be made available to the aggrieved person.
- 2.3 After this initial meeting, the aggrieved person may wish to pursue the grievance through the informal or formal procedure. In either case the aggrieved person will make a written statement of their grievance and send it to the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee. This written statement from the aggrieved person will be acknowledged in writing by the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee within 10 working days.
- 2.4 All written communications between the aggrieved person and the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will be photocopied and made available to the person against whom the grievance is expressed.

3. Informal Procedures

- 3.1 SPTI is not responsible for travel or any other expenses incurred either by the aggrieved person or by the person against whom the grievance is expressed in connection with any stage of the grievance procedure.

- 3.2 When a grievance is received by the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee, informal procedures may be suggested in the first instance. A grievance may be brought on the following grounds:
 - 3.1.1 Offensive or destructive behaviour.
 - 3.1.2 Behaviour which goes against natural justice.
 - 3.1.3 Unfairness.
 - 3.1.4 Discrimination.
- 3.2 Informal procedures are not normally considered appropriate when a grievance alleges:
 - 3.2.1 Professional misconduct.
 - 3.2.2 Failure to comply with the Codes of Ethics & Professional Practice.
 - 3.2.3 A breach of criminal law.
 - 3.2.4 Behaviour which might bring SPTI, UKCP, BAC, UKATC and the professions of counselling and psychotherapy into disrepute.
- 3.3 The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will appoint a mediator, who should have no connection with the aggrieved person, or with the person against whom the grievance has been expressed. The mediator will normally be a senior member of SPTI. In the interests of natural justice, the person against whom the grievance is expressed will be informed of the grievance. The mediator may arrange either separate or joint meetings with the aggrieved person and the person against whom the grievance is expressed. The mediator will report the outcome to the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee in writing. Having completed their report to the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee the mediator will take no further part in any subsequent procedures.
- 3.4 This informal procedure should normally take place within 28 working days of the receipt of the written grievance.

4. Formal Procedure

- 4.1 If an aggrieved person wishes to pursue a formal grievance then he/she must write to the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee. The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee must acknowledge receipt of the formal grievance within 10 working days and invite the aggrieved person to submit any documentary evidence in support of the grievance. The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will appoint an Adjudication Panel consisting of three people,

at least one of whom will not be a member of SPTI. One of the three people will be appointed Chair of the Adjudication Panel. All members of the SPTI Panel should be impartial to either party in the grievance, and one of them should practice similar therapeutic modality to the person against whom the grievance has been expressed, as far as is possible. Members of the Adjudication Panel must declare any interest which may cast doubt on their impartiality in the operation of the formal grievance procedures.

- 4.2 The Adjudication Panel will be provided with the written formal grievance, and all documentary evidence supplied by the aggrieved person and any written responses or documentation supplied by the person against whom the grievance is being expressed.
- 4.3 The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will ensure that the aggrieved person has received a copy of the Grievance Procedure.
- 4.4 The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will ensure that the person against whom the grievance is expressed is notified of the formal grievance, and that the grievance procedure has been invoked. At the same time, a copy of the Grievance Procedure should be sent to the person against whom the grievance has been expressed.
- 4.5 The Adjudication Panel will scrutinise all the evidence and will then arrange to meet the aggrieved person and the person against whom the grievance has been expressed. Written notice of the meeting of the Adjudication Panel will be sent to the parties concerned within 14 days of the Panel being appointed.

5. Adjudication Panel Procedure

- 5.1 The Adjudication Panel will examine the grievance(s) in a formal manner to decide on its validity.
- 5.2 Both the aggrieved person and the person against whom the grievance is expressed may be accompanied by a colleague or friend who may speak on their behalf.
- 5.3 *Conduct of Adjudication Panel:*
 - 5.3.1 A summary of the grievance is put forward by the aggrieved person or their colleague/friend.
 - 5.3.2 A summary of the case of the person against whom the grievance is expressed is put by themselves or their colleague or friend.
 - 5.3.3 The aggrieved person puts questions through the Chair of the Adjudication Panel to the person against whom the grievance is expressed.

- 5.3.4 The person against whom the grievance is expressed puts questions through the Chair of the Adjudication Panel to the aggrieved person.
- 5.3.5 Adjudication Panel members may seek clarification from either or both parties.
- 5.3.6 When the Chair of the Adjudication Panel is satisfied that the Panel has gained all the clarification requested, the Chair informs all parties that the decision of the Adjudication Panel will be forwarded in writing to both parties within the next 10 working days. The Chair of the Adjudication Panel then asks all parties to withdraw.
- 5.4 Adjudication
- When all parties have withdrawn under 5.3.6 above the Adjudication Panel continues to meet to determine whether a resolution of the grievance is possible and if so, to make recommendations as to how this might be brought about. The Adjudication Panel may determine that there is no basis for the grievance.
- 5.5 Following completion of the discussion the Chair of the Adjudication Panel will write a report, together with any recommendations, to be submitted to the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee within 10 working days of the completion of the adjudication procedure. The Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will then decide what action should be taken, and will inform both parties of the outcome of the adjudication and the action to be taken.
- 5.6 If the investigation takes longer than originally expected then the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will write to the aggrieved person, and the person against whom the grievance is being expressed, explaining the delay and providing a new date by which the report will be completed.
- 5.7 Should the aggrieved person fail to attend the adjudication meeting without good reason or due notice, then the grievance will be dismissed, and the Chair of the Adjudication Panel will notify the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee in writing.
- 5.8 If the person against whom the grievance is expressed fails to attend the adjudication meeting without good reason or due notice, the Chair of the Adjudication Panel will inform the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee. A meeting of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will be convened as soon as is possible. This meeting will then act as a Disciplinary Committee and make a formal recommendation to the SPTI Board of Directors as to what action is to be taken and the form of appropriate sanctions.

5.9 *Sanctions*

If the grievance is upheld by the Adjudication Panel then the person against whom the grievance has been expressed may be required to either:

- 5.9.1 Provide the Adjudication Panel with a written statement of acceptance to the adjudication and an apology to the aggrieved person.
- 5.9.2 Provide the above together with a written undertaking that they will take issues arising from the grievance to their own personal therapy and fully inform their clinical supervisor of the grievance and outcome.
- 5.9.3 Satisfy both 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 above and cease to practice as a counsellor/ psychotherapist for a specified period of time whilst working through the issue/s in therapy.
- 5.9.4 Suspension of membership of the Institute with or without a requirement to comply with 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 above.
- 5.9.5 Termination of membership of the Institute with or without a recommendation to comply with 5.9.1 and 5.9.2 above.
- 5.10 A member of the Adjudication Panel will be nominated to monitor any sanctions imposed.

The consequence of non-compliance to 5.9.1, 5.9.2, 5.9.3, 5.9.4 above will be termination of membership of the Institute after a second written warning.

6. Appeals

- 6.1 Either party to the grievance may appeal against the decision of the Adjudication Panel by writing to the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee within 21 days of notification of the decision on grounds of procedural irregularity or, if substantial new evidence has arisen then if available at the time of the adjudication would have substantially influenced the decision of the Adjudication Panel.
- 6.2 In the event of an appeal the Chair of the Ethics & Professional Practice Committee will forward to the SPTI External Moderator all documentation concerning the grievance. The External Moderator will then review the case and will report to all parties concerned and to the SPTI Board of Directors.
- 6.3 The External Moderator will report their conclusions and recommendations to the SPTI Board of Directors.
- 6.4 The decision of the External Moderator will be final.