

# **CHARTERED INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTS**

## **DISCIPLINARY FRAMEWORK AND PROCEDURES**

**Framework and Procedures for Enforcing the Code of Professional Conduct for members of the Chartered Institute of Linguists, Chartered Linguists, and Registrants on the National Register of Public Service Interpreters**

**Approved by Council 17 November 2007 – Effective date: 17 November 2007  
Amended by Council 7 February 2009  
Amended by Council 28 November 2009**

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**DEFINITIONS**

*Chartered Institute*

The Chartered Institute of Linguists.

*ITI*

The Institute of Translation and Interpreting.

*AIIC*

The Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence.

*NRPSI*

The National Register of Public Service Interpreters (NRPSI Ltd.), a subsidiary company of the Chartered Institute. "NRPSI" may also denote, according to the context, the register of Public Service Interpreters maintained by the company. A NRPSI registrant (registrant on the NRPSI) is a person on the register.

*Council*

Unless otherwise indicated, the Council means the Council of the Chartered Institute.

*Board*

Unless otherwise indicated, the Board means the Board of NRPSI.

*Charter*

The Charter of the Chartered Institute.

*Chartered Linguist*

A person on the Register of Chartered Linguists maintained by the Chartered Institute.

*Code of Professional Conduct ("the Code")*

The Code of Professional Conduct of the Chartered Institute and NRPSI that is currently in force.

*Complaint*

The utterance or delivery of an allegation of professional misconduct in relation to the Code, or the allegation itself.

*Allegation*

An allegation of professional misconduct in relation to the Code (see also complaint, above).

*Complainant*

A person or other legal entity making a complaint. A Complainant may be an individual, a company or other corporate body or institution or an individual representing a company or other corporate body or institution.

*Defendant*

A person who is the subject of a complaint.

*Friend*

A person nominated by the Complainant or by the Defendant to assist them at a hearing. The context will determine whether reference to Friend of the Complainant or Friend of the Defendant is intended.

*Chief Executive*

The Chief Executive of the Chartered Institute and of NRPSI. When actions have been delegated by the Chief Executive the term “Chief Executive” shall be interpreted as referring to the person delegated to act on behalf of the Chief Executive. In the event that a different person holds the post of Chief Executive in each organisation the interpretation of the term shall be determined by the context.

*Working day*

Any day from Monday to Friday excluding public holidays in England and Wales, and days when the Chartered Institute is closed.

**SECTION A – INTRODUCTION**

- A.1 The Chartered Institute is committed to the highest possible standards of professional conduct. To this end it has adopted a Code of Professional Conduct and the disciplinary framework and procedures set out herein.
- A.2 The Code of Professional Conduct is binding on the members of the Chartered Institute, Chartered Linguists (who may be members of the Chartered Institute and/or of the Institute of Translation and Interpreting and/or of the Association Internationale d'Interprètes de Conférence).
- A.3 The Code of Professional Conduct is, by decision of the Board of NRPSI, binding on registrants on the NRPSI, regardless of whether they are members of the Chartered Institute.
- A.4 All persons subject to the Code are also expected to have due regard to any Guide to Good Practice and further guidelines issued by the Chartered Institute and/or NRPSI, as applicable, from time to time.
- A.5 Any alleged misconduct brought to the attention of the Chartered Institute or NRPSI, by whatever means, will be dealt with through the procedures set out herein.
- A.6 The framework and procedures set out herein will remain in force until further resolution of the Council and/or the Board, as applicable.
- A.7 The framework and procedures may be amended by resolution of the Council and/or the Board, as applicable. Reasonable notice of such amendment shall, other than in very exceptional circumstances (as shall be determined by the Council or the Board), be given to the persons who are subject to the Code of Professional Conduct by means of the website of the Chartered Institute or NRPSI or otherwise, as appropriate.

**SECTION B – FRAMEWORK OF DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES**

- B.1 The disciplinary procedures described herein are applicable to:
- members of the Chartered Institute;
  - Chartered Linguists (who may be members of the Chartered Institute, or of the ITI or of AIC, or of more than one of these, or of such other professional body or bodies that may, under the terms of the Charter, be deemed in the future to satisfy the requirements);
  - registrants on the NRPSI (who may or may not be members of the Chartered Institute and may or may not be Chartered Linguists).
- B.2 When a complaint or allegation of professional misconduct is made against a person who belongs to more than one of the above categories, procedures will be applied as follows.
- (a) For members of the Chartered Institute who are not Chartered Linguists* Committees and panels will reach conclusions, decide on actions and make recommendations in regard to the standards required of a member of the Chartered Institute.
- (b) For Chartered Linguists who are members of the Chartered Institute* Committees and panels will reach conclusions, decide on actions and make recommendations first in regard to the standards required of a Chartered Linguist and then in regard to the standards required of a member of the Chartered Institute.
- (c) For Chartered Linguists who are not members of the Chartered Institute* Committees and panels will reach conclusions, decide on actions and make recommendations in regard to standards required of a Chartered Linguist.
- (d) For NRPSI registrants who are members of the Chartered Institute* Registrants who are members of the Chartered Institute are subject to the disciplinary procedures of both the Chartered Institute and the NRPSI. The NRPSI disciplinary procedures will normally be applied first. When an allegation of misconduct as a result of disciplinary proceedings by the NRPSI is upheld, a report will be forwarded to the Chartered Institute and/or to the ITI, as appropriate. The assessment of the NRPSI Disciplinary Committee will be taken into account by the Chartered Institute and the disciplinary procedures applicable to a member of the Chartered Institute may be invoked.
- (e) For NRPSI registrants who are not members of the Chartered Institute* In the case of NRPSI registrants who are not members of the Chartered Institute the disciplinary procedures of the NRPSI will apply alone.
- B.3 The Chartered Institute will respect and act proportionally in regard to decisions reached through NRPSI disciplinary proceedings concerning NRPSI registrants who are members of the Chartered Institute, or who are Chartered Linguists.
- B.4 When an allegation of misconduct is upheld as a result of disciplinary proceedings by the Chartered Institute, a report may, by agreement of the panel, be forwarded to the ITI and/or AIC as appropriate. A copy of the proposed report shall be sent to the Defendant before it is so forwarded and the Defendant shall be offered the opportunity to comment

on the content and/or the wording within 10 working days. Due note shall be taken of any comment made by the Defendant when forwarding a report to the ITI and/or AIIC.

**SECTION C – PROCEDURAL PRINCIPLES**

- C.1 The procedures set out here shall be followed as far as is practicable. The Chair of a committee or panel may vary these procedures when he or she deems this to be necessary. Such variation shall be recorded in the written record of the proceedings.
- C.2 Disciplinary committees and panels shall consist as far as is practicable of an odd number of members. Decisions shall be by majority of votes; the Chair shall have a second, casting vote in the case of equality of votes.
- C.3 The deputy Chair of a committee may act in place of the Chair when appropriate. In the following, the term Chair shall mean the deputy Chair when that person is acting as Chair.
- C.4 A panel shall act with the authority of the committee from which the panel was constituted in regard to the complaint for which it was convened.
- C.5 No person may serve on more than one committee or panel in regard to a particular complaint.
- C.6 No person may be appointed to panel when that person has a connection with the Defendant or Complainant or a person who is party to the complaint such as would be likely to prejudice fair consideration of the complaint, or when there is any conflict of interest, bias or other factor such as would be likely to prejudice or to appear to prejudice fair treatment of the complaint to be considered.
- C.7 Discretion will rest with the Chair of a Committee when appointing a panel to decide whether conflict of interest or other relevant factor exists in regard to intended panel members. In the case of dispute the Chair of Council shall decide the issue and his or her decision shall be final.
- C.8 Where a lay person is appointed to a committee designated herein, he or she shall be selected by open advertisement or by reference to an appropriate independent organisation. A lay person for these purposes is a person who is not a member of the CIOL, ITI or AIIC, and has no significant connection with any of these.
- C.9 The appointment of lay members is subject to the same conditions of appointment as other committee members except that lay members may be remunerated at the rate determined by Council.
- C.10 In the event that neither the Chair nor the deputy Chair of a committee or panel is able to serve on a particular occasion, the Chair shall delegate the responsibility to another member of the committee or panel. In case of objection to such delegation by any member or members, an alternate Chair shall be appointed by the Chair of Council or the Chair of the Board, as applicable.

- C.11 Disciplinary hearings are conducted in private and are confidential. Hearings will be recorded and the recording will be retained as part of the record of the complaint.
- C.12 The outcome of proceedings in respect of an allegation that is upheld will be made public by the Chartered Institute and/or by NRPSI, as applicable, on their websites or otherwise. A copy of the proposed report shall be sent to the Defendant in advance, and the Defendant shall be offered the opportunity to comment on the content and/or the wording within 10 working days. Due note shall be taken of any comment made by the Defendant. No report will be published in respect of an allegation that is not upheld.
- C.13 The record of an allegation that is upheld will be held on the member's or registrant's file subject to the provisions of the Data Protection Act.
- C.14 The conclusions of a panel or committee shall be written by the Chair or another member of the panel or committee delegated by the Chair. No administrative officer of the Chartered Institute or NRPSI shall be present during the deliberations of a panel or committee or during the writing of its report.
- C.15 Other than as provided for in C.11, the Chief Executive will be responsible for the administration of disciplinary procedures, including the compilation and distribution of statements and other documentation, arrangements for hearings and meetings, note taking, record keeping and correspondence on behalf of panels and committees. The Chief Executive may delegate some or all of these duties to senior staff members as appropriate.
- C.16 Members of disciplinary committees will be reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses at the rate agreed by Council or the NRPSI Board. Other than lay members, as prescribed in C.8 and C.9, members of committees within this framework will not be remunerated.
- C.17 Remuneration may be made to an external person appointed under the provisions of E.12(b) below who is asked, under the provisions of E.16 to take part in the hearing of a complaint. Such remuneration shall be subject to the approval of Council or of the Chair of Council acting on its behalf.
- C.18 The Defendant may appoint a person as Friend to accompany him or her at hearings of the Disciplinary Committee or the Disciplinary Appeals Committee.
- C.19 The Chartered Institute or NRPSI, as applicable, may appoint a lay person to represent it at hearings of the Disciplinary Committee or the Disciplinary Appeals Committee in relation to a particular allegation. This person shall stand in the same relation to the Chartered Institute or NRPSI as the Friend does to the Defendant (C.18). The costs involved will be a matter for the Chartered Institute or NRPSI, as applicable.
- C.20 The Chartered Institute and/or NRPSI will not reimburse either the Complainant or the Defendant in respect of any legal or other costs incurred in preparing or presenting the complaint or defence; nor will the Chartered Institute and/or NRPSI reimburse any costs relating to travel or subsistence in connection with a hearing.
- C.21 Committees and panels may consult external advisers or specialists, and invite external advisers or specialists to attend as witnesses, when this is considered necessary. Such

persons shall not take part in the discussion of the committee's or the panel's findings. The travel and subsistence expenses of external advisers and specialists shall be paid. Reasonable professional fees may be paid, as necessary.

- C.22 A complaint involving a practitioner based overseas may be considered entirely upon the basis of written submissions, at the discretion of the relevant committee.
- C.23 A complaint may be considered entirely upon the basis of written submissions if this is requested by the Defendant and the Complainant agrees.
- C.24 Members of committees are expected, whenever practicable, to undertake such training and briefing on relevant matters as may be organised by the Chartered Institute or NRPSI, as applicable, from time to time.

### **SECTION D – POWERS OF COMMITTEES**

This section defines the powers of disciplinary committees of the Chartered Institute and of NRPSI to be applied as appropriate by each of these as applicable.

- D.1 The Professional Conduct Committee may determine, in regard to a complaint:
  - (a) that there is no evidence, or insufficient evidence of a breach of the Code, such that no further action should be taken and the parties should be so advised; the committee may, if it deems appropriate, offer guidance to one or both parties; or
  - (b) that there is evidence of a breach of the Code but that it is not of sufficient severity to necessitate referral to the Disciplinary Committee; the Committee may at its discretion decide that advice or warning should be given to the practitioner; or
  - (c) that the matter should be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.
- D.2 The Disciplinary Committee may determine, in regard to an allegation:
  - (a) that the allegation is not upheld and the complaint is dismissed; or
  - (b) that the allegation is upheld or partly upheld and that one of the following measures should apply:
    - (ii) that the Defendant be admonished;
    - (iii) that the Defendant be suspended from membership or registration for a period determined by the Committee;
    - (iv) that the Defendant be excluded from membership or registration, with the possibility of application for reinstatement after a period determined by the Committee and subject to conditions determined by the Committee; the minimum period of exclusion under this clause shall normally be two years;
  - (c) that the complaint was malicious; if the Committee so decides it shall determine what action, if any, should be taken against the Complainant.
- D.3 The Disciplinary Appeals Committee may determine:
  - (a) that the conclusion of the Disciplinary Committee be quashed and the allegation be dismissed; the Disciplinary Appeals Committee may, at its discretion, offer advice or guidance to one or both parties; or
  - (b) that the conclusion of the Disciplinary Committee is confirmed, but that the penalty imposed be amended in such manner as the Committee shall determine; or

- (c) that the conclusion of the Disciplinary Committee and the penalty imposed be confirmed.

## **SECTION E – DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES OF THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE**

### **Appointment of Committees (Chartered Institute)**

- E.1 The disciplinary committees of the Chartered Institute are the Professional Conduct Committee, the Disciplinary Committee and the Disciplinary Appeals Committee
- E.2 The Chairs, deputy Chairs and members of the committees are appointed by the Council, normally at its first meeting after the AGM each year, and normally hold office until the corresponding meeting the following year. Chairs and members of disciplinary committees may be re-appointed provided that they continue to satisfy the criteria for appointment.
- E.3 In the case of need to fill a casual vacancy, an appointment may be made by the Council, or by the Chair of Council. An appointment made by the Chair of Council will be reported to Council at its next subsequent meeting and will continue to be valid after that date only if confirmed by Council. An action taken with the involvement of a person appointed to fill a casual vacancy will be valid notwithstanding the subsequent decision by Council not to confirm the appointment.
- E.4 A member of a committee who wishes to resign must notify the Chair of Council in writing, if possible with at least six weeks' notice, through the Chief Executive.

### **Professional Conduct Committee (Chartered Institute)**

#### *Terms of Reference of the Professional Conduct Committee*

- E.5 The Professional Conduct Committee will investigate complaints laid against Chartered Linguists or members of the Chartered Institute to assess whether there is evidence of a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct such as would justify consideration by the Disciplinary Committee.
- E.6 A complaint referred to the committee will be considered by a panel of three persons selected from the members of the committee by the Chair or, in the event that the Chair is unavailable or deems it inappropriate for whatever reason that he/she should act in a particular instance, by the deputy Chair. In selecting and appointing members to a panel the provisions of C.6 and C.7 above shall be observed.
- E.7 The committee may refer its findings to the Disciplinary Committee, or take other appropriate action , as below.

#### *Composition of the Professional Conduct Committee*

- E.8 The committee shall consist of not less than five and not more than seven persons:
  - (a) the Chair, who shall be a member of Council;
  - (b) at least one other member of Council, who shall be deputy Chair;

- (c) one or two Fellows of the Chartered Institute or Chartered Linguists who are members of the Chartered Institute; persons in this category may or may not be members of Council;
- (d) two persons appointed on the proposal of the ITI and/or AIIIC.

E.9 The committee shall be able to act notwithstanding the existence of a vacancy or vacancies in its membership, provided that at least three persons in categories E.7 (a) and (b) are currently members of the committee.

*Procedures of the Professional Conduct Committee*

E.10 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section H.

**Disciplinary Committee (Chartered Institute)**

*Terms of reference of the Disciplinary Committee*

E.11 The Disciplinary Committee will consider allegations of professional misconduct referred to it by the Professional Conduct Committee and make such decisions as fall within its powers.

*Composition of the Disciplinary Committee*

E.12 The committee shall consist of not less than seven persons who are not members of the Professional Conduct Committee:

- (a) the Chair and the deputy Chair who shall both be members of Council, and
- (b) not less than two and not more than three lay members, as defined in C.8; Council may have regard to legal qualifications and experience in appointing a person in this category, and
- (c) not less than three persons who are members of Chartered Institute Divisions, appointed by Council on the proposal of the committees of the Divisions; Council shall endeavour as far as is practicable to ensure that there is representation from each Division, and
- (d) not less than one person from the ITI and/or one person from AIIIC, appointed by Council on the proposal of those bodies.

E.13 The committee shall be able to act notwithstanding the existence of a vacancy or vacancies in its membership, provided that at least three persons in categories E.11 (a) and (c) are currently members of the committee.

E.14 A complaint referred to the committee will be considered by a panel, normally consisting of three persons, selected from its members by the Chair. If the Chair deems this to be necessary a panel of five persons may be convened.

E.15 The Chair shall endeavour to ensure so far as is practicable that an appropriate panel is selected on each occasion, in relation to the complaint and the category of person against whom it is made. A committee member may not serve on a panel when he or she has any connection with the Defendant or a person or body who is party to the complaint, or where there is the possibility of bias or the appearance of bias.

E.16 The following shall be applied as far as is practicable:

- a panel convened to investigate an allegation against a member of the Chartered Institute who is not a Chartered Linguist shall normally consist of the Chair or deputy Chair and two persons from category (c) in E. 11;

- a panel convened to investigate an complaint concerning a Chartered Linguist shall normally consist of the Chair or deputy Chair and one person from each of categories (c) and (d) in E.11; the person from category (d) shall normally be a member of the body (or one of the bodies) of which the person who is the subject of the complaint is a member;
- a panel convened to investigate a complaint brought by the Council shall, so far as is possible, consist of persons who are not members of Council and be chaired by a person who is not a member of Council. When appropriate the Chair of the Committee will, as provided in C.6 above, delegate chairing of the panel to an external person appointed under E.11(b) above.

E.17 The Chair shall endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that a reasonable rotation is maintained among members of the committee.

*Procedures of the Disciplinary Committee*

E.18 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section J.

**Disciplinary Appeals Committee (Chartered Institute)**

*Terms of reference of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee*

E.19 The Disciplinary Appeals Committee will decide on appeals against the decisions and/or actions of the Disciplinary Committee.

*Composition of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee*

E.20 The committee shall consist of five persons:

- (a) the President of the Chartered Institute who shall be Chair of the committee;
- (b) a Vice-President of the Chartered Institute, who shall be deputy Chair;
- (c) the Chair of Council or a Vice-Chair of Council;
- (d) one person who is the chair or an officer of a Chartered Institute Division;
- (e) one person who is either a member of Council of the ITI or an officer of the UK and Northern Ireland Bureau of AIIIC, or the nominee of either of these.

E.21 The committee shall be able to act notwithstanding the existence of a vacancy or vacancies in its membership, provided that at least three persons in categories E.19 (a), (b), (c) or (d) are currently members of the committee.

E.22 A panel of three persons from the above will be appointed by the Chair to consider a particular appeal.

*Procedures of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee*

E.21 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section J.

**SECTION F – DISCIPLINARY COMMITTEES OF NRPSI**

F.1 NRPSI registrants who are members of the Chartered Institute are subject to the disciplinary procedures of both NRPSI and the Chartered Institute.

F.2 In the case of a NRPSI registrant who is also a member of the Chartered Institute or who is a Chartered Linguist, the NRPSI disciplinary procedures will apply first. When a

complaint is upheld against such a practitioner a report will be forwarded to the Chartered Institute.

**Appointment of Committees (NRPSI)**

- F.3 The disciplinary committees of NRPSI are the Professional Conduct Committee, the Disciplinary Committee and the Disciplinary Appeals Committee.
- F.4 The Chairs, deputy Chairs and members of the committees are appointed annually by the Council, in consultation with the Board of NRPSI, normally at the first meeting of the Council and the Board after the AGM of the Chartered Institute, to hold office until the corresponding meeting the following year. Chairs and members of disciplinary committees may be re-appointed provided that they continue to satisfy the criteria for appointment.
- F.5 In the case of need to fill a casual vacancy, an appointment may be made by the Board, or by the Chair of the Board. An appointment made by the Chair of the Board will be reported to the Board at its next subsequent meeting and will continue to be valid after that date only if endorsed by the Board.
- F.6 A member of a committee who wishes to resign must notify the Chair of the Board in writing, if possible with at least six weeks' notice, through the Chief Executive.

**Professional Conduct Committee (NRPSI)**

*Terms of Reference of the Professional Conduct Committee*

- F.7 The NRPSI Professional Conduct Committee will investigate complaints laid against registrants on the NRPSI to assess whether there is evidence of a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct such as would justify consideration by the Disciplinary Committee.
- F.8 A complaint referred to the committee will be considered by a panel of three persons selected from the members of the committee by the Chair or, in the event that the Chair is unavailable or deems it inappropriate for whatever reason that he/she should act in a particular instance, by the deputy Chair. In selecting and appointing members to a panel the provisions of C.6 and C.7 above shall be observed.
- F.9 The committee may refer its findings to the NRPSI Disciplinary Committee, or take other appropriate action, as below.

*Composition of the Professional Conduct Committee*

- F.10 The committee shall consist of five persons:
  - (a) the Chair, who shall be a member of the NRPSI Committee;
  - (b) two persons who are NRPSI registrants, one of whom shall be appointed deputy Chair.
  - (c) two lay members, as defined in C.9 above.
- F.11 The committee shall be able to act notwithstanding the existence of a vacancy or vacancies in its membership, provided that at least three persons are currently members of the committee, including the person appointed in category F.10 (a).

*Procedures of the Professional Conduct Committee*

F.12 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section J.

**Disciplinary Committee (NRPSI)**

*Terms of reference of the Disciplinary Committee*

F.13 The Disciplinary Committee will consider allegations of professional misconduct referred to it by the Professional Conduct Committee and make such decisions as fall within its powers.

*Composition of the Disciplinary Committee*

F.14 The committee shall consist of at least five and not more than seven persons who are not members of the Professional Conduct Committee:

- (a) the Chair of the Board who shall be Chair of the Committee,
- (b) the deputy Chair, who shall be a member of the NRPSI Committee,
- (c) one or two other NRPSI registrants,
- (d) one or two lay members, as defined in C.9 above, and
- (e) one or two representatives of subscribers to the National Register.

F.15 The committee shall be able to act notwithstanding the existence of a vacancy or vacancies in its membership, provided that at least three persons are currently members of the committee including the persons appointed in categories F.13 (a) and (b).

F.16 A complaint referred to the committee will be considered by a panel, normally consisting of three persons, selected from its members by the Chair. If the Chair deems this to be necessary a panel of five persons may be convened.

F.17 The Chair shall endeavour to ensure so far as is practicable that an appropriate panel is selected on each occasion, in relation to the complaint. A committee member may not serve on a panel when he or she has any connection with the Defendant or Complainant or a person party who is to the complaint, or where there is the possibility of bias or the appearance of bias.

F.18 The Chair shall endeavour to ensure, as far as is practicable, that a reasonable rotation is maintained among members of the committee.

*Procedures of the Disciplinary Committee*

F.19 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section J.

**Disciplinary Appeals Committee (NRPSI)**

*Terms of reference of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee*

F.20 The NRPSI Disciplinary Appeals Committee will decide on appeals against the decisions and/or actions of the Disciplinary Committee.

*Composition of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee*

F.21 The committee shall consist of five persons who are not members of the Professional Conduct Committee or the Disciplinary Committee:

- (a) the chair of Council, who shall normally chair the committee;
- (b) a Vice-chair of Council or a Vice-President of the Chartered Institute, who shall be deputy Chair;
- (c) to lay members as defined in C.9 above;

- (d) one practising Public Service Interpreter on the Register.
- F.22 The committee shall be able to act notwithstanding the existence of a vacancy or vacancies in its membership, provided that at least three persons are currently members of the committee, including the persons appointed in categories F.20 (a) and (b).
- F.23 A panel of three persons from the above will be appointed by the Chair to consider a particular appeal.
- Procedures of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee*
- F.24 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section J.

### **SECTION G – MAKING A COMPLAINT**

- G.1 A complaint against a member of the Chartered Institute, a Chartered Linguist or a NRPSI registrant alleging professional misconduct such as might constitute a breach of the Code of Professional Conduct, may be made by an individual, a company or other corporate body or institution or an individual representing a company or other corporate body or institution who believes there are grounds for complaint. This shall include provision for a complaint to be made following a decision of the Council or the Board that a possible breach of the Code be investigated (see G.3) or as a result of relevant concerns coming to the notice of the Chief Executive (G.5).
- G.2 A complaint should be submitted as soon as possible after the alleged misconduct becomes known. A complaint made more than six months after the alleged offence must include an explanation of the delay in its submission and will be admissible only when the reasons for the delay are deemed acceptable by the Chair of the Professional Conduct Committee.
- G.3 If it appears to the Council or to the Board, as applicable, that a breach of the Code may have been committed, the Council or the Board will, other than in exceptional circumstances, require the matter to be investigated and will instruct the Chief Executive accordingly. The decision of the Council or the Board that a possible breach of the Code be investigated shall not prejudice nor be deemed to prejudice the independence of the ensuing procedures nor the conclusions reached.
- G.4 In the case of a complaint arising from a decision of the Council or the Board as above, the Council or the Board will designate one of its number or, if it sees fit, a member of staff of the Chartered Institute or NRPSI to act as Complainant in its behalf in disciplinary proceedings.
- G.5 In the event that a complaint is made against a Chartered Linguist by the Council of the ITI or by an equivalent committee of AIC, the decision by either of these bodies that the complaint be made shall not prejudice nor be deemed to prejudice the independence of the ensuing procedures nor the conclusions reached.
- G.6 In addition to the provisions above, if it comes to the notice of the Chief Executive, by whatever means, that a breach of the Code may have occurred, the Chief Executive shall cause investigations to be made and if after investigation it appears appropriate shall refer the matter to the Professional Conduct Committee of the Chartered Institute

or NRPSI, as applicable. In such circumstances the Chief Executive will, subject to consultation with the Chair of Council or the Board, as applicable, act as Complainant or will delegate this to a member of staff.

- G.7 A complaint other than a complaint arising from a resolution of the Council or from the circumstances described in G.6, must be in writing under confidential cover and addressed to the Chief Executive at the registered office of the Chartered Institute or NRPSI, as applicable.
- G.8 A complaint must include the name and address of the Complainant and set out the matter of the complaint and any relevant circumstances including the relationship, if any, between the Complainant and the Practitioner against whom the complaint is made. A standard complaint form will be available, though use of the form will not be obligatory.
- G.9 The Complainant will be informed of the procedures, including the fact that the complaint will be shown to the subject of the complaint.
- G.10 If in the judgement of the Chief Executive it does not appear appropriate to invoke the discipline procedures to resolve a complaint he or she shall advise the Complainant accordingly. Provision to contest this assessment is set out below (G.14).
- G.11 If it appears to the Chief Executive that mediation as described in Section J may be a satisfactory way of dealing with the complaint, he or she shall offer the Complainant and the Defendant this option.
- G.12 The refusal by the Complainant or the Defendant to enter into mediation shall not prejudice subsequent proceedings as set out herein.
- G.13 If the Chief Executive considers that the complaint may be malicious or vexatious the Chief Executive may, at his or her discretion, refer the matter to the Professional Conduct Committee for possible disciplinary proceedings.
- G.14 If the Complainant does not accept that the response of the Chief Executive is satisfactory he or she may re-submit the complaint. In such circumstances the Chief Executive shall refer the complaint to the Professional Conduct Committee.
- G.15 When, following the above procedures, a complaint is referred to the Professional Conduct Committee, the subject of the complaint will be informed, with full particulars of the complaint, and invited to respond in writing within 20 working days. At the discretion of the Chair of the Professional Conduct Committee a copy of this response may be sent to the Complainant and written comment may be invited.
- G.16 A case file including all correspondence will be prepared by the Chief Executive for the Professional Conduct Committee.
- G.17 The Chief Executive may delegate all or any of the above responsibilities to an appropriate member of staff of the Chartered Institute or of NRPSI, as applicable.
- G.18 The Complainant and the person who is the subject of the complaint are expected to ensure that the complaint or information or correspondence regarding the complaint,

including any report arising from the complaint, are not circulated or publicised other than as permitted in these procedures.

## **SECTION H – PROCEDURES OF COMMITTEES**

The procedures of the Chartered Institute and NRPSI are the same except as indicated.

### **Professional Conduct Committee**

- H.1 A complaint brought to the attention of the committee will be considered by a panel of three of its members, selected by the Chair. The Chair shall endeavour to ensure as far as is practicable that an appropriate panel is selected on each occasion, in relation to the allegation and the category of person against whom it is made.
- H.2 (*This paragraph is not relevant for the procedures of NRPSI.*) In regard to a complaint against a member of the Chartered Institute or against a Chartered Linguist the following shall be applied as far as is practicable:
- a panel convened to investigate an allegation concerning a member of the Chartered Institute who is *not* also a Chartered Linguist shall normally be selected from only the Members and Fellows of the Chartered Institute who are members of the committee;
  - a panel convened to investigate a complaint concerning a Chartered Linguist shall normally consist of the Chair, one other Council member from the membership of the committee and one member from, or able to represent the professional concerns of, the ITI or AIIIC, as appropriate.
- H.3 The Professional Conduct Committee of the Chartered Institute will receive reports from the NRPSI Disciplinary Committee regarding allegations upheld by that committee against NRPSI registrants who are members of the Chartered Institute (see H.17). The Chartered Institute committee will respect the decisions of the NRPSI Disciplinary Committee and will reach its decision on the basis of the report and, if it judges necessary, the documentation from the NRPSI hearing.
- H.4 The panel may conduct its business by correspondence, including e-mail, or meet to consider the complaint as it sees fit.
- H.5 The panel will ensure that the person against whom the complaint is made has been informed of the complaint in due form, and has been given the opportunity to submit a statement in defence or mitigation. The panel will defer its proceedings when it appears to it that it is necessary to do so in order to ensure this.
- H.6 The panel will consider the written and documentary evidence available to it, including the statement setting out the complaint submitted by the Complainant, and any statement submitted by the person against whom the complaint is made.
- H.7 The panel will not hold hearings and will not involve third parties. The panel may, however, seek clarification of any aspect of the complaint or the defence if necessary.
- H.8 The panel will endeavour to reach a conclusion on a complaint within thirty working days of notification of the complaint, or of the failure of mediation as described in Section I.

- H.9 The conclusion of the panel may be that:
- (a) there is no evidence, or insufficient evidence, of a breach of the Code, such that no further action should be taken and the parties should be so advised; the committee may, if it deems appropriate, offer guidance to one or both parties;
  - (b) there is evidence of a breach of the Code but that it is not of sufficient severity to necessitate referral to the Disciplinary Committee; the Committee may at its discretion decide that advice or warning should be given to the practitioner;
  - (c) the matter should be referred to the Disciplinary Committee.
- H.10 The parties concerned will be informed of the conclusion of the panel in writing within ten working days.

### **Disciplinary Committee**

- H.11 A complaint referred to the committee will be considered by a panel of three persons selected from the members of the committee by the Chair or, in the event that the Chair is unavailable or deems it inappropriate for whatever reason that he/she should act in a particular instance, by the deputy Chair. In selecting and appointing members to a panel the provisions of C.6 and C.7 above shall be observed.
- H.12 The committee will proceed by means of a hearing, as described in Section J. As far as is practicable the panel will hear the case within 30-45 working days of its referral.
- H.13 The panel will endeavour to reach a conclusion immediately after the hearing. In the event of unavoidable delay, the panel will normally agree its conclusion and decision within ten working days; a further meeting of the panel may be called if necessary, or the panel may reach its conclusion by correspondence.
- H.14 The panel may decide in respect of an allegation as follows:
- (a) that the allegation is not upheld and the complaint is dismissed; or
  - (b) that the complaint was malicious; in such circumstances the Committee shall determine what action, if any, should be taken against the Complainant; or
  - (c) that the allegation is upheld or partly upheld.
- H.15 In the case that an allegation is upheld or partly upheld the panel may, taking into account the seriousness of the breach of the Code and any associated or mitigating factors, decide that one of the following measures should apply:
- (a) that the Defendant be admonished;
  - (b) that the Defendant be suspended from membership or registration (as applicable) for a period determined by the Committee;
  - (c) that the Defendant be excluded from membership or registration, with the possibility of application for reinstatement after a period determined by the Committee and subject to conditions determined by the Committee; the minimum period of exclusion under this clause shall normally be two years.
- H.16 The Defendant will be informed of the decision of the panel, in writing, normally within five working days.
- H.17 (*This paragraph applies only within the procedures of NRPSI.*) In respect of the decision by the NRPSI Disciplinary Committee that an allegation against a NRPSI registrant who

is a member of the Chartered Institute or who is a Chartered Linguist is upheld, the committee will forward a report of its decision to the Chartered Institute (see H.4).

- H.18 The panel may at its discretion inform the Complainant of its decision, subject to prior notification to the Defendant of its intention to do so and the offer of the opportunity to submit comments on the decision and the wording of the notification. The panel shall take due notice of any comment submitted in any report to the Complainant.
- H.19 The panel shall decide the date on which any penalty imposed shall take effect, subject to the provisions of H.22 below.
- H.20 The Defendant will be advised of the right of appeal and the appeal procedures (Section K). An appeal will be admissible only on the grounds that:
  - (a) there is new evidence that was not available to the Disciplinary Committee; or
  - (b) there was a material flaw in the conduct of the Disciplinary Committee hearing.
- H.21 Any action decided by the Disciplinary Committee shall be held in abeyance pending resolution of an appeal. When the Chair of the panel considers this appropriate, however, the Practitioner may be suspended pending resolution of the appeal.

#### **Disciplinary Appeals Committee**

- H.22 The procedures of the committee are as described in Section K.

### **SECTION I – MEDIATION**

- I.1 As indicated above (G. 11), if it appears to the Chief Executive that this may be a satisfactory way of dealing with the complaint, he or she shall offer the Complainant and the Defendant the opportunity of mediation. The refusal by the Complainant or the Defendant to enter into mediation shall not be prejudicial to subsequent proceedings as set out herein.
- I.2 Mediation is intended to deal with a complaint and reach a conclusion satisfactory to both parties without resort to formal disciplinary proceedings.
- I.3 Mediation will be conducted by a person invited by the Chief Executive to carry out this role. Suitable persons will be, as appropriate, members of the Chartered Institute in a relevant Division or NRPSI registrants of sufficient standing and length of membership or registration.
- I.4 Mediation may be carried out by correspondence or may involve a meeting of the parties with the mediator. If a meeting is deemed necessary this will not be a formal hearing, will not involve witnesses and the parties will not be entitled to be accompanied by a Friend, in contrast to the procedures for hearings set out in Section J.
- I.5 The mediator will be reimbursed travel and subsistence expenses. The Complainant and Defendant will be responsible for their own costs.
- I.6 If an agreement is reached through mediation that is accepted by both the Complainant and Defendant the complaint will be considered to have been resolved.

- I.7 If agreement is not reached through mediation the matter will be referred to the Professional Conduct Committee.

### **SECTION J – HEARINGS**

- J.1 The procedures described in this section shall be followed by the Disciplinary Committees and the Disciplinary Appeals Committees, except as indicated. The Chair of a committee or panel may vary the procedures at his or her discretion where this is judged to be necessary.
- J.2 The Complainant and the Defendant shall be given not less than 30 working days' written notice of the hearing, stating the date, time and place of the hearing, together with a copy of the allegation, and a copy of these procedures.
- J.3 Not less than 10 working days before the date of the hearing the Defendant shall inform the Chief Executive or the designated administrative officer, in writing, whether he or she intends to contest the allegation; whether he or she intends to be present at the hearing; whether he or she will be accompanied by a Friend (see J. 4) and, if so, the name of the Friend.
- J.4 The Defendant may at his or her discretion appoint a Friend to assist him or her in hearings. The Defendant shall be responsible for forwarding relevant information to the Friend.
- J.5 If the Defendant intends to contest the allegation, he or she will be entitled to provide a written statement in defence or mitigation, additional to the statement in response to the original notice of complaint that was considered by the Professional Conduct Committee.
- J.6 A Defendant may choose whether or not to attend a hearing. A hearing may proceed despite the absence of the Defendant. Only in exceptional circumstances and with the agreement of the Chair, however, may a person acting as Friend of the Defendant attend and represent the Defendant at a hearing if the Defendant is not present.
- J.7 The Chartered Institute and NRPSI will normally be represented at hearings by a person appointed as Friend.
- J.8 The Complainant is expected to be present and to be willing to be called as a witness. The hearing may, at the discretion of the Chair, proceed despite the absence of the Complainant. Refusal by the Complainant to attend or to be called as a witness will be taken into account by the panel and may be prejudicial to the cause of the Complainant.
- J.9 Witnesses may be called by or on behalf of the Complainant and the Defendant.
- J.10 The Defendant shall provide the name and address of any witness(es) he or she intends to call. The Defendant is responsible for informing such witnesses of the time and place of the hearing.
- J.11 The Friend of the Chartered Institute or NRPSI and the Friend of the Defendant:  
(a) may present and/or sum up the allegation and the defence respectively;

- (b) may be questioned directly by the panel;
  - (c) may ask questions of and cross-examine witnesses, including the Complainant and the Defendant;
  - (d) may not respond for the Complainant or the Defendant in cross-examination.
- J.12 The Defendant shall have the right to object to any panel member if he or she can demonstrate a clear conflict of interest or any bias that is likely to prejudice the proceedings. If the Chair considers such objection to be reasonable he or she shall adjourn proceedings and take steps to constitute a new panel at the earliest convenient moment.
- J.13 The hearing will proceed as follows:
- (a) introduction by the Chair, outlining the procedures to be followed;
  - (b) oral presentation of the allegation by or on behalf of the Complainant followed by an oral statement by or on behalf of the Defendant;
  - (c) questioning, by the panel, of either or both parties, or the Friend of either party;
  - (d) cross-examination by or on behalf of the Complainant and the Defendant (as noted in J.11, the Complainant and the Defendant are required to respond directly to cross-examination, not through the Friend);
  - (e) further questioning as necessary by the panel of either party or the Friends of either party;
  - (f) summing up by or on behalf of the Complainant and by or on behalf of the Defendant;
  - (g) explanation by the Chair of how the panel will reach a conclusion, how the conclusion and any action decided will be notified to the parties concerned, and the expected timetable.
- J.14 Either party may request an adjournment. A hearing may be adjourned at the discretion of the Chair following such request or for reasons that he or she deems acceptable. The Chair shall determine the date for resumption of the hearing which shall, whenever possible, be within twenty working days.
- J.15 No persons other than the panel members shall be present when the panel discusses its findings and decides what action to take. Decision is by majority vote (the Chair shall have a second, casting vote, in case of equality of votes). In the case of a contrary minority opinion this shall be recorded in the report of the panel's findings.
- J.16 The Chair of the panel, or a member of the panel delegated by the Chair, shall write a report of the panel's conclusions, its decisions as to action to be taken and/or guidance to be offered. The report shall explain briefly the basis for the panel's conclusions, with reference to the part or parts of the Code of Professional Conduct deemed to have been breached.
- J.17 The report should if possible be written at the end of the hearing. When this is not practicable the report must be circulated to all panel members (including any contrary minority opinion) for agreement. The report must normally be signed by all members. Any variation from this must be endorsed by the Chair of the relevant Committee.

**SECTION K – APPEAL**

- K.1 A Defendant will have the right to appeal against a decision of the Disciplinary Committee on the ground either that there is new evidence that was not available to the Disciplinary Committee or that there was a material flaw in the conduct of the Disciplinary Committee hearing. No other ground will be admissible.
- K.2 Notice of intention to appeal must be lodged in writing with the Chief Executive within fifteen working days of notification of the decision of the Disciplinary Committee.
- K.3 Any action decided by the Disciplinary Committee shall be held in abeyance pending resolution of an appeal. When the Chair of the panel conducting the hearing considers this appropriate, however, the Practitioner may be suspended from membership or registration, as applicable, pending resolution of the appeal.
- K.4 There is no prescribed appeal form. The notice of intention to appeal must set out the grounds for the appeal in sufficient detail for the admissibility of an appeal to be assessed.
- K.5 The Chair of the Disciplinary Appeals Committee will decide whether there are grounds for appeal, as defined above, normally within fifteen working days.
- K.6 If the Chair determines that there are not grounds for appeal he or she shall inform the Defendant in writing, and shall give reasons for the decision.
- K.7 If the Chair determines that there are grounds for appeal he or she shall inform the Defendant and the Complainant in writing, and a panel of the Disciplinary Committee will be convened to consider the appeal.
- K.8 Whenever possible an appeal will be heard within 30 working days of the decision that there are grounds for appeal.
- K.9 The Disciplinary Appeals Committee will conduct an appeal through a hearing, as described in Section J.
- K.10 The committee may reach one of the following conclusions:
- that the conclusions of the Disciplinary Committee be quashed and the allegation be dismissed; the committee may, at its discretion, offer advice or guidance to one or both parties;
  - that the conclusions of the Disciplinary Committee be confirmed, but that the penalty or penalties imposed be amended, in such manner as the committee shall determine;
  - that the conclusions of the Disciplinary Committee and the penalty or penalties imposed be confirmed.
- K.11 The Defendant will be informed in writing of the decision of the committee within ten working days.
- K.12 The committee may, at its discretion, inform the Complainant of its decision, subject to prior notification to the Defendant of its intention to do so and the offer of the opportunity to submit comments on the decision and the wording of the notification. The committee

shall take due note of any comment submitted by the Defendant, in any report on its findings that it makes to the Complainant.

- K.13 Subject to the normal remedies available under civil law, the decision of the Appeals Committee is final.

As at 28 November 2009