

POLICY: ETHICS, DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES AND APPEAL PROCESS

1) ETHICS AND CODE OF CONDUCT

The intent of the Code Ethics is to further the stated aims of ISPIE and to build public confidence in the standards of practice that ISPIE supports.

This code is based on the PATOSS principles of:

- Competence and Quality of Practice
- Responsibility to Clients
- Professional Integrity and Independence

Where members have registration with more than one professional body, they are to adhere to the ethical rules of all bodies with whom they are registered.

Competence and Quality of Practice

The practitioner will:

- Only undertake work for which s/he is appropriately qualified and experienced
- Ensure the resources, skills and preparations are sufficient to carry out the service /assignment
- Update skills regularly as required within the learning and legal requirements
- Work collaboratively with relevant stakeholders including but not limited to caregivers, colleagues, the client etc.
- Define clearly to the client and other stakeholders the scope and nature of service, allocation of responsibilities and the basis of remuneration
- Negotiate agreements and charges in an ethical manner
- Exercise good management of all assignments undertaken
- Give reasonable and balanced advice to clients based on best available knowledge and practice
- Practice within the ethical framework of his/her employer

Responsibility to clients

The practitioner will:

- Provide relevant, appropriate and professional services.
- Agree with clients that all programmes, services or changes thereto are discussed prior to being finalized and that they are within the client's best interest
- Consider the needs of the individual as paramount, subject to any legal constraints or ethical consideration
- Respect individual diversity
- Respect the knowledge, experience, views and preferences of the client
- Have high regard for the confidential nature of work undertaken and records kept
- Sub-contract work only with the client's agreement
- Refer clients to another professional or service considered to be in client's best interest and declare any personal interest in such work, if it exists.

Professional independence and integrity

The practitioner will:

- Ensure advice, recommendation and intervention is based on consideration of all pertinent facts, circumstances and opinions derived from reliable and relevant sources
- Declare at first possible opportunity any personal, financial or other interest that might influence his/her judgment or objectivity and withdraw from any assignment where this judgment or objectivity might be compromised
- Refrain from inappropriate relationships with those to whom s/he is offering professional service
- Never use material or data without permission
- Acknowledge sources of any materials used his/her work
- Ensure proper supervision of materials used his /her work
- Ensure that when accepting a joint assignment, it is carried out in accordance with this Code of Ethics
- Give information which is honest, factual and relevant when publicising his/her work or services
- Seek to promote high standards within the field of specific learning difficulties

Use of the Code of Ethics

The practitioner will:

- Inform the client that he/she is guided by these principles
- Respond and collaborate with the client to address any complaints.

2) DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURES

This outlines the Disciplinary Hearing Process to investigate complaints raised against a member:

The purpose of a disciplinary enquiry shall be:

- i. To hear all relevant evidence concerning the matter;
- ii. To reach a just and balanced verdict;
- iii. Once a verdict has been reached, to:
 - a) Attempt to get the member to accept responsibility for improving or rectifying his or her behaviour.
 - b) Evaluate whether any actions taken by either party could prevent a recurrence of the incorrect behaviour.
 - c) Determine the ongoing or termination of membership of the member with ISPIE.
 - d) Make recommendation to the Board of Directors in terms of the above, in relation to the Code of Ethics already determined by the organisation.

The complainant must submit in writing his/her complaints. The onus on proving the member's misconduct lies with the complainant.

A member who is accused of misconduct must be given a chance to account for his or her behaviour.

The member must be given reasonable notice of the time and venue of the hearing (at least five working days).

The notice must also set out the essential details of the misconduct of which he or she is charged and inform the member of his or her rights during the hearing.

These rights are:

- a) to be fully informed of the charges against him/her;
- b) to be represented during the proceedings by a fellow member of ISPIE;
- c) to call witnesses;
- d) to cross examine any witness;
- e) to present evidence in mitigation;
- f) to appeal to a higher authority;
- g) to be assisted by an interpreter if required;

A person designated by the Chairman of ISPIE shall preside over the disciplinary enquiry. On reaching a final decision, the Chairperson shall make known to the member the decision as well as the reasons for having reached such a decision. A written record must be kept of all the proceedings of a disciplinary enquiry. Proceedings at a disciplinary hearing shall take place with due regard to the considerations of justice and fairness.

3) APPEALS PROCESS

A member has the right to appeal against any disciplinary action. The appeal must be made within seven working days to a person so designated who is higher in the hierarchy than the Chairperson of the Enquiry. The appeal shall be in the form of a review of all the evidence.

I _____ have read the guidelines for investigation into any complaints relating to the ethical code laid out by ISPIE and accept that all the above expectations can be achieved by myself exercising my full responsibility as a member of the organisation.

Signed: _____ (Member)

Signed: _____ (Witness)

Date: _____

References

1. Action Plan 2014 – Towards the realization of schooling 2025, Department of Education, South Africa.
2. Education White Paper 6 (July 2001) – Building an Inclusive Education and Training System. Department of Basic Education, South Africa.
3. National Skills Development Strategy III 2011-2016 (NSD III). Department of Higher Education and Training. South Africa
4. The Professional Association of Teachers of Students with Specific Learning Difficulties. www.Patoss-Dyslexia.org.