



Employee Assistance Professionals Association UK Ltd

EAPA UK Complaints

Introduction

Employee Assistance Professionals Association UK Limited (EAPA UK) is a not-for-profit organisation that represents the interests of individuals and organisations concerned with employee assistance, psychological health and wellbeing in the UK. Members include external and internal EAP providers, purchasers, counsellors, consultants and trainers working in the field of employee health and wellbeing.

Our mission, as per the UK EAPA Branch Bylaws, is to promote the highest standards of practice and the continuing development of employee assistance programmes (EAPs) in the UK.

We take complaints relating to our Members very seriously and will take the necessary steps to ensure any complaints received by EAPA UK are investigated and responded to.

Aims

This policy details how EAPA UK will manage feedback or complaints relating to Members of EAPA UK, including:

- How a complaint can be made to EAPA UK
- How EAPA UK will respond to a complaint received regarding a Member

Every Member of EAPA UK gives EAPA UK the authority to deal with a complaint made against any Member in respect of any breach of the provisions of the UK Employee Assistance Professionals Association Standards of Practice & Professional Guidelines for EAPs or the EAPA UK Code of Ethics.

What is a Complaint?

A complaint is:

- a) A written expression of dissatisfaction from, or on behalf of, a person or organisation about the provision of, or failure to provide, EAP services.
- b) An identification by a member/s of the Board of EAPA UK of activities or actions undertaken by a member of EAPA that may be in potential contravention of EAPA UK's standards, code of ethics, bylaws and any EAPA policies.

In all cases, the complaint must pertain to actions undertaken by the respondent or any associated organisation that falls within the jurisdiction of EAPA UK.

Making a Complaint

All complaints submitted by external complainants must be made in writing, addressed to EAPA UK, and sent to info@eapa.org.uk. Complaints submitted via social media or similar informal channels will not be accepted.

Where a potential complaint is initiated by EAPA UK itself, it must also be submitted in writing and directed to the Chair of EAPA UK, or raised in open board and minuted as a complaint.

Where an individual or organisation raises a concern about a Member of EAPA UK, the Association always recommends that, in the first instance, both parties should attempt to resolve the issue between themselves before

contacting EAPA UK. If you decide to make a complaint, it is important that you have already made reasonable endeavours to resolve the issue or can explain why this has not been possible. If no attempt has been made to resolve matters, it is unlikely that EAPA UK will be able to progress your complaint until you have first attempted to resolve matters directly with the EAPA UK Member.

The complaint must clearly outline what and who the complaint refers to, and why the complaint is being made. Please note that anything you write to us may be disclosed to the respondent. You should also note that your complaint will need to be discussed with our board members and other relevant third parties to investigate the complaint effectively.

Consent and Data Handling

The complainant must provide written consent to enable EAPA UK to fully investigate any complaint. Without this consent, EAPA UK will be unable to proceed.

Please note that any evidence submitted will be handled on the understanding that it may be shared with the relevant EAPA UK Member who is the subject of the complaint, in accordance with principles of fairness and transparency.

All complaints and associated documentation will be processed in compliance with the UK Data Protection Act 2018 and UK GDPR legislation

Complaint criteria and timelines

EAPA UK reserves the right to decide how to process the complaint. This may include allowing another organisation's complaints process to be concluded first. We may also wish to talk to the other organisation about how best to proceed. If a complaint has been, or should be made to a statutory authority, then we will await the outcome of that process prior to commencing an EAPA UK investigation.

Please note that complaints relating to professional conduct and/or ethics that have been submitted to other professional bodies will take precedence over EAPA UK complaints. EAPA UK reserve the right to decide if we will proceed with a complaint following the conclusions drawn by other professional bodies. Please note that repeated complaints for the same, or similar issues may not be accepted by EAPA UK.

EAPA UK will consider complaints relating to ex-Members, providing the incident took place within their membership period, however EAPA UK reserve the right to determine whether it is in the public interest to pursue the complaint and whether there is sufficient evidence in the case where the respondent is no longer a Member.

The investigation process

- EAPA UK will acknowledge the complaint within 10 working days.
- When a complaint is received, it will be directed to the Complaints Committee for initial review.
- Following initial review, the complainant will be contacted by EAPA UK. The complainant will be given the outcome from the initial review, together with expected timescales for investigation. Requests for further information or evidence may be made at this time.
- If the Complaints Committee decides, after initial review, that the complaint falls outside of the scope of EAPA UK's complaints process, the complaint will be closed, and the complainant will be notified of this in writing. Whilst there is no appeal against this decision, should we receive new evidence from the complainant, EAPA UK may review the decision.
- Once our investigation is completed, EAPA UK will issue a written response to the complainant and the respondent. As a result of any investigation, EAPA UK reserve the right to decide what actions or sanctions to apply, this may include the exclusion of a respondent from membership of EAPA UK for any period that EAPA UK decides.

- If a provider or person has received several improvement notifications, EAPA UK may decide to take further actions or sanctions against the respondent.
- EAPA UK's interpretation of its rules, standards and ethics shall remain final.

Can I appeal the outcome of a complaint?

- The respondent may appeal any investigation decision outcome made by EAPA UK; however, this must be made in writing within 10 working days of receipt of the written decision.
- EAPA UK shall decide who shall review the appeal, however this will not involve any person directly involved during the original complaint investigation.