



Taunton
Association for
Psychotherapy

Ethics Policy

Summary

Taunton Association for Psychotherapy (TAP) expects every aspect of its business to be in compliance with the highest possible business standards, and will apply these standards to all dealings with professional organisations, members of TAP, non-members, suppliers and other stakeholders.

This Ethics Policy, has been approved by the TAP Council, and is set out in summary, and in detail, below. It has been developed to ensure that the business of TAP is conducted with integrity and adhering to high ethical and legal principles. This policy relates solely to the work of TAP and in no way supercedes ethical policies of professional organisations to which members of TAP might belong.

TAP is a registered charity and company limited by guarantee. It offers an annual programme of talks, workshops and conferences and provides a forum for qualified professionals, students and interested members of the public to achieve a deeper understanding of the human psyche using a number of different therapeutic approaches.

TAP operates within the South West and acts as a channel for networking with people from further afield whose ideas and work are of particular interest.

In summary:

- All members have the right to expect that TAP business is conducted with high ethical standards and legal principles;
- TAP will operate within any applicable law;
- Discrimination or harassment of any kind will not be tolerated;
- As a matter of policy TAP does not endorse or otherwise promote individual therapeutic approaches;
- As a matter of policy, we do not make political donations;
- No inducements including monetary, materialistically or otherwise shall be given or received;
- Conflicts of interest will be addressed and avoided;
- TAP aims to be a responsible partner within our local communities;

- ‘Appropriate ethical behaviour’ will be subject to regular review.

TAP expects all aspects of our business must be based on the highest ethical standards. Members of the TAP Council are elected representatives of the membership, all of whom are free to seek election, and very welcome to do so. All individual members of the Council take responsibility for their own actions and conduct, but the Council also has a collective responsibility to ensure this policy is adhered to.

No one person has authority to require or influence another to violate this policy and any attempt to do so may result in termination of membership.

The TAP Ethics Policy is supported by the whole TAP Council and shall be reviewed from time to time. The policy applies to every member of TAP.

If you have any questions about how these principles affect you or if you observe what you believe to be inappropriate, unethical, or unlawful conditions at any time, please contact the TAP Administrator on taplimited@hotmail.co.uk, marked CONFIDENTIAL, or by letter.

TAP recognises its duty to ensure good health, safety and environmental practices at any venue used for Council meetings, TAP Talks and workshops, and at the annual conference.

All members and attendees at TAP meetings and events, regardless of their colour, race, religion, marital status, gender, disability or age should be treated fairly and honestly with respect and dignity. Harassment (including sexual, physical, mental, use of abusive language or offensive gestures) or bullying, in any shape or form will not be tolerated. Any member who is shown to have acted in a discriminatory manner or to have indulged in bullying or harassment at any TAP event or in activities relating to their TAP membership will have their membership terminated and their behaviour reported to any relevant organisation to which they belong (eg BACP, UKCP).

Conduct and behaviour

Whilst recognising the voluntary nature of service, all members of the TAP Council are expected to contribute to the success of TAP by conducting themselves in a professional manner consistent with TAP’s philosophy, values and standards of conduct. Unacceptable conduct that is considered detrimental to TAP’s best interests may result in immediate termination of membership. Where reference is made to the actions of the TAP Council, the TAP Administrator will also be deemed subject to all aspects of this policy.

Misuse of TAP’s property, including equipment, supplies and e-mail, can constitute unethical conduct.

Any of the following conduct by any member of the Council, including the Chair, Vice Chair, Hon Sec or Treasurer, must be reported immediately to the Council. If the Council as a whole is alleged to be involved in the conduct, then the matter should be reported to The Charities Commission and Companies House.

- Failure to fully, fairly, accurately, understandably and timely disclose the appropriate information relating to TAP's business or financial condition that may need to be reported or disclosed to the appropriate authorities or pursuant to any other applicable governmental law, rule or regulation.
- Misrepresentation, concealment, falsification or destruction of any documents or other information relating to TAP's business or financial condition that may need to be reported or disclosed to the appropriate authorities or pursuant to any other applicable governmental law, rule or regulation.
- Any other activity or conduct that could cause an individual, the company or any of its officers or directors to violate any applicable law, rule or regulation relating to full, fair, accurate, timely and understandable disclosure of information required to be disclosed to any third person.

Ethics in the day to day running of TAP

TAP will not indulge in misrepresentation, exaggerated claims or other forms of false advertising. The TAP offer must stand on its own merits and quality.

Members, suppliers, advisors or other representatives deserve to be treated fairly, honestly and in accordance with any agreed terms, (such as contracts with conference speakers).

Any complaints from customers, suppliers, advisors or representatives should be dealt with promptly and fairly.

Although we should strive to know and understand our competitors so that we can perform in the market, TAP will not take part in any underhand tactics to influence the success of the competition.

It is not TAP policy to knowingly infringe on the copyright, trademarks, patents or other properly registered intellectual property of others.

The Council should have due regard as to how contracts or arrangements with new and existing suppliers, will reflect on the reputation and ethics of TAP. This also applies to those offers made by members, in accordance with their membership benefits, distributed via the TAP Limited email (taplimited@hotmail.co.uk). If the TAP Administrator has any concerns about such messages TAP retains the right to review said message at the next monthly TAP Council meeting before wider distribution.

TAP does not use corporate funds, whether in cash, goods, services, equipment, etc., to make contributions to political candidates, political parties or committees, or political entities.

Gifts

Neither the receipt nor the giving of excessive entertainment, substantial gifts or favours is acceptable.

However, the following are examples of gifts that may be accepted or given by the TAP Council as representatives of the TAP membership:

- Coffee mugs, pens, calendars, paper weights, clothing or items of similar value displaying a company logo.
- Bouquets of flowers, fruit baskets, confectionery.
- Product samples of nominal commercial value.
- Modest refreshments or meals.
- The provision of reasonable travel facilities.
- Modest hospitality, e.g. a conference, workshop
- Modest gifts (such as a bottle of wine, a food hamper, etc.) given to mark an event such as Christmas.

The giving of gifts/entertainment must be properly authorised and accounted for.

If you are in doubt as to whether gifts and entertainment are appropriate, you should raise your concerns with the TAP Council prior to accepting or giving any such gift or entertainment.

Conflict of Interest

Whether it is actual or apparent, conflicts of interest will be avoided. Actions taken by the TAP Council should be objective and based on the best interests of TAP.

Examples where conflict might arise:

- Accepting personal payments from speakers, which may influence your business decision.
- The utilisation of contact lists to market their own or third-party goods and services, even if they are not competing with TAP.

If you do suspect you have a conflict of interest, whether actual or potential, concerns should be raised with the Council immediately.

Data protection and confidentiality

Member lists and financial information must not be disclosed to anyone without proper authorisation. All TAP representatives share a responsibility to members and to each other to prevent information from unauthorised access, use, modification, destruction, theft, or disclosure and must treat such assets in accordance with the TAP Data Protection Policy.

No member of the TAP Council must attempt to obtain or use another company's information for TAP's benefit or otherwise in violation of law or applicable agreement.

Whistle blowing

All representatives and members of TAP have the right and the responsibility to question possible wrongdoings and are encouraged to remain vigilant against such possible actions. If anyone suspects wrongdoing (whether or not the suspected act has actually occurred), he/she should immediately report the matter to the Council or if this is not possible, to the TAP registered address (Monahans Accountants) or to the Charity Commission. Those who report the suspected wrongdoing may do so in confidence and may report the suspected wrongdoing anonymously if they do so via a letter.

Examples of suspected incidences, that may be potential or actual, which employees may feel require reporting include, but are not limited to:

- Violation of health, safety and environmental procedures or legislation.
- Discrimination or other unwarranted detrimental treatment of employees (e.g. bullying, harassment)
- Misappropriation of funds.
- Conflicts of interest.
- Manipulation of accounts.
- The deliberate provision of misleading information or falsification of records.
- Suspected criminal activities
- Misuse of Company property, for example, the use of Company property for personal gain.
- Breach of any guidelines or policies, including this Ethics Policy.

Disciplinary action

Any employee who violates our ethical standards is subject to disciplinary action which can include oral reprimand, written reprimand, suspension or termination of membership.