



International Federation of Aromatherapists

IFA MEMBER DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

The disciplinary procedure relates to all members of the International Federation of Aromatherapists (IFA). All contents set forth take into account our Code of Ethics, Code of Practice, Code of Conduct and professional standards embraced therein. This will occur during training, induction, supervision of their membership with the Federation. Failure to comply will result in an investigation of the individual as set by our disciplinary procedure.

Investigation

Disciplinary action aims to emphasise and encourage improvements in an individual's conduct or performance as well as impose sanctions if and where necessary. This is necessary for the paper operation of the IFA and the protection of:

- The general public
- Members

The following procedure will be applied fairly in all instances where the disciplinary action is regarded as necessary by the council. All disciplinary action is based on a non-prejudicial investigation which will gather all relevant evidence.

Procedure

1. The individual member will be informed 21 days prior to meeting in writing that he/she will be subject to our disciplinary procedure.
2. The federation will set out in writing the alleged conduct or characteristics, or other circumstances that lead it to contemplate disciplinary action against a member.
3. This will be sent to the member and he/she will be invited to discuss the matter further.
4. If the member is considered to have acted in gross misconduct the International Federation of Aromatherapists (IFA) is required to suspend the member removing details from the IFA's register pending investigation.
5. If the member is considered to have acted in gross misconduct the individual will be asked to attend a disciplinary hearing
6. The member must take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting, and after the meeting the Federation will inform the member of its decision, in writing and of his/her right of appeal.
7. In the case of an appeal hearing the member will be informed of the board's decision within 5 working days. This decision is final and no further appeal can be made.

Misconduct

This is conduct, which constitutes a breach of obligation e.g. failure to carry out the Federation rules and regulations procedures and policies. The misconduct in itself may initially be relatively minor, but may assume graver importance because of a person's insistence in it. Persistent misconduct of different types, demonstrating a pattern of behaviour, will be grounds for disciplinary action.

Gross Misconduct

- The deliberate falsifications of qualifications, documents and information



International Federation of Aromatherapists

- Abusive and threatening behaviour towards fellow members, members of the public, IFA trustees and IFA staff members
- Assault on another person
- Serious negligence (even a single error where the actual or potential consequences are extremely serious), which causes unacceptable loss, damage or injury.
- Sexual misconduct
- Drunkenness or being under the influence of illegal drugs
- Failure to comply with the Care Standards Act, Adult Protection Policy or Child Protection Policy
- Conduct that brings the name of the Federation into disrepute
- Discrimination or harassment of a fellow worker, including, but not restricted on the grounds of sex, sexual orientation, race, age, disability, religion or belief
- Breach of duty regarding non-disclosure of confidential information
- Other acts of misconduct may come within the general definition of gross misconduct.

Appeal Procedure

The formal disciplinary proceedings consist of the following stages:

- An investigatory interview by an independent investigating officer
- Disciplinary panel hearing
- Appeal hearing

All allegations will be thoroughly investigated. The individual will be informed that an investigation is/will be carried out and when it has been concluded. The individual has the right to appeal the suspension and put forward an explanation of his/her conduct and/or mitigating factors. The first stage; an interview may often be a more satisfactory method of resolving problems than a disciplinary hearing. However, the federation reserves the right, dependent on the circumstances of the case, to dispense with the investigatory interview and to proceed directly to a formal disciplinary hearing if and where necessary.

If on completion of an investigation, there are reasonable grounds to believe that a member has committed an act of misconduct; the individual will be invited to attend a disciplinary hearing before a selected panel.

- The member will receive written notice of the hearing date 5 working days in advance
- If the member is unable to attend the disciplinary hearing they must provide a good reason for failing to attend, on receipt the hearing will be adjourned to another day. The Federation will confirm it in writing and rearrange the hearing date.
- Unless there are special circumstances militating against it, if the member is unable to attend the rearranged hearing, the rearranged hearing will take place in the member's absence.
- In such circumstances the member may choose a representative to attend in their stead and represent their case. If you wish to have a representative to present your case you must put in writing who this person will be 3 working days prior to meeting and state their occupational capacity.



International Federation of Aromatherapists

- Members cannot choose a representative who is sighted in the grievance. They can only be called upon as a witness

The disciplinary board will then issue a statement of their findings after the disciplinary panel hearing and tell the member if they have the right of appeal. If this is granted this can be done in writing or the individual may attend an appeal hearing on invitation. After the appeal hearing the board will make a decision. The board's decision is final. No further correspondence will be engaged upon regarding the matter after this date.

NB: In cases where the allegation(s) against a member are subject to third party involvement by the police, social services or CSCI the Federation may be required to delay an internal investigation until such time as the external investigation has been completed.

Lodging an Appeal

When lodging an appeal, the member should state:

- The grounds of appeal and whether he/she is appealing against the findings that he/she has committed the alleged act or acts of misconduct.
- The member must provide written notice of the appeal, within 5 working days of being informed of the disciplinary sanction being imposed against him/her.
- The Chief Executive will normally respond in writing within 3 working days of receiving a letter of appeal.

Guidelines

- Please make sure you are punctual for the hearing time and date and plan travel arrangements in advance to ensure this.
- Please bring all relevant documentation to support your appeal.
- No other issues or complaints will be discussed during the disciplinary procedure of a member.
- At no point throughout the hearing are you to make physical contact with the board.
- All evidence must be provided at the hearing and will not be accepted after the hearing date.
- If you wish to disclose oral conversations with a third party during the hearing, the third party must be present as a witness.
- Please conduct yourself in a calm and precise manner throughout the investigation.

Chairing the Hearing

The disciplinary board will normally be chaired by the Chair or Vice Chair of the Federation together with a panel, comprising of a minimum of two suitably experienced council members and an investigating officer. The investigating officer will be a person drawn from the IFA membership. The member will be entitled to be given a full explanation of the case against him/her and be informed of the content of any statements provided by witnesses. Witnesses may be called by either party. Written notice of witnesses being called by the individual member must be sent 3 days prior to meeting. The investigating officer will present written findings of the investigation after the hearing which will be conveyed to the individual within 5 working days. The federation will disclose if the individual has a right of appeal under this procedure.



International Federation of Aromatherapists

Outcomes

There are 3 different possible outcomes which may be imposed and actioned at the disciplinary hearing or after the appeal hearing, dependent on the offence committed.

1. Full reinstatement. If at the hearing the accusations against the individual member cannot be substantiated or if the individual has substantiated their actions the individual will be reinstated with immediate effect.
2. For minor offence or offences a warning will be issued which will remain on the individual's personal file for 12 months. Whilst this warning is 'live' further misconduct may lead to more severe disciplinary action. The Federation may also impose requirements for re-training. If the member disregards the requirements laid out in the warning letter and a sufficient amount of improvement to a satisfactory standard is not achieved, de-registration will normally result.
3. IFA Membership terminated and the member will not be allowed to rejoin the IFA at any given time in the future.

These sanctions may be imposed in conjunction with other forms of disciplinary actions, or as an alternative to removal of qualification. Warnings and actions may run concurrently for different reasons, for example, one for misconduct and one for poor performance.

Details of Action

Details of any disciplinary action will be given in writing to the member as soon as the decision is made. A copy of any notification will be retained and placed on his/her personal file. The letter will contain:

- The nature of the misconduct
- The disciplinary penalty and where appropriate, how long it will last and any given period of time given for improvement and the expectations
- The support recommended to enable the required improvements e.g. specific training, increased supervision, time given to re visit relevant policies/procedures and/or working practices etc.
- The likely consequences of further misconduct
- The timescale for lodging an appeal is 5 working days
- Who they appeal to and how it should be made.
- The member is required to acknowledge receipt of the written notification.

Termination of Membership

- 1) If at your hearing you are found to be in violation of any or all of the Code of Ethic, Code of Practice, Code of Conduct, Misconduct or Gross Misconduct your membership will be permanently terminated and you will not be able to join the IFA at any given time in the future.
- 2) You must remove all IFA material from your public forum networks and any presentation of yourself as an IFA member in the public domain.
- 3) In severe cases you will have your qualifications removed.