

Professional Conduct Publication Policy

Introduction

The British Acupuncture Council (BAcC) is the UK's largest professional/self-regulatory body for the practice of traditional acupuncture. The BAcC was formed both to support its members and to supervise its members for the benefit and protection of the public. The BAcC's procedures are designed to be fair to all the people involved. In 2013, the BAcC was accredited by the Professional Standards Agency for Health and Social Care under its Accredited Registers programme.

Like the Statutory regulators, the other Accredited Registers and most other regulators, the BAcC will publish their professional conduct decisions. Some of the reasons why regulators publish their decisions are to:

- protect the public
- ensure public confidence in the profession
- ensure transparency in the process

Policy

- 1 When an individual joins the BAcC or renews their membership, they agree to the terms and conditions of membership, which include compliance with our Code of Professional Conduct, Code of Safe Practice, Code of Disciplinary Procedures and Code of Health Committee Procedures.

The Code of Disciplinary Procedures states, at section 9.2.4

- 9.2.4 *Following a Professional Conduct and Competence hearing the panel's determination shall be published on the BAcC website and reflected on the Registrant's entry on the Register. This is to ensure the protection of the public and the public interest.*

And sets out how long this should be published for at section 9.2.5

- 9.2.5 *Determinations and sanctions shall be published on the BAcC website and reflected on the Registrant's entry on the Register for the periods set out in the table below.*

Sanction	Publication period
Caution	Duration of caution
Conditions of Practice	Duration of conditions
Suspension Order	Duration of suspension
Removal	Indefinitely, or until the former member is re-instated after applying successfully to the Restoration Committee

The Code of Disciplinary Procedures also sets out at section 8.3.4

- 8.2 *The decision of the Interim Orders Panel shall be published on the BAaC website unless no interim order is made.*

Section 10.23.1 sets out how the Appeals Panel's determination shall be published

- 10.1.1 *The BAaC shall publish the Appeals Panel's determination, by any such means as it considers appropriate, as soon as is reasonably practicable following any such determination.*
- 2 Usually, the decision of the Panel will not be published if no allegations have been upheld. The written findings of the Panel will be published where at least one allegation has been upheld. If no sanction is imposed, the BAaC will still publish any findings and decision. If no sanction is imposed, the findings and decision shall be published for one year from the date of decision.
 - 3 Usually, the full determination shall be published. However, the BAaC reserves the right to redact sensitive information in exceptional circumstances regarding the Registrant, Complainant, other witnesses or third parties provided that this does not interfere with the public interest. Adjudication panels are independent of the BAaC and therefore the BAaC has no authority to amend or re-draft the determination other than to redact information which may be considered sensitive. Sensitive information may include the physical or mental health issues of the Registrant, Complainant, witness or other third party; material which might lead to the identification of a vulnerable Complainant or witness or any other information which the BAaC considers inappropriate to publish.
 - 4 The Complainant's name should not appear in professional conduct publications. They should be referred to as "Patient A" or a similar anonymised name which the BAaC considers appropriate.
 - 5 Publication will take place as soon as is reasonably practicable after a determination has been made. If an appeal is made against the decision or sanction, the determination shall remain published until the appeal has been heard. Once the appeal has been heard, the outcome of the appeal shall be published.

- 6 Where a case has been dealt with by Consensual Disposal, the decision made at the Consensual Disposal hearing will be published for the duration set out below

Sanction	Publication period
Caution	Duration of caution
Conditions of Practice	Duration of conditions
Suspension Order	Duration of suspension
Removal	Indefinitely, or until the former member is re-instated after applying successfully to the Restoration Committee

- 7 Where an Interim Order has been made, the order will be published for the duration of the order. The full determination will not be published in the case of an Interim Order.
- 8 If a Registrant resigns, retires or lapses their membership before, during or after a professional conduct hearing (including before completing any sanction imposed) the Panel decision and order will still be published for the same period of time as it would have been if the Registrant has remained as a member of the BAAC.
- 9 Information will be removed from the BAAC website in accordance with this policy. However, many internet search engines may “cache” webpages, storing a snapshot of them in a database and periodically refreshing those cached pages. As a result, historic versions of pages from the BAAC website may remain on internet search engines (over which the BAAC has no control) and which contain information which has been removed from the BAAC website.
- 10 The BAAC reserves the right to amend or change this policy when it determines that it is necessary to do so.