

# **The Institute of Trichologists**

## **Complaints Policy**

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## Part 1 Introduction

The Institute of Trichologists will always attempt to find a speedy and amicable resolution to any concern or complaint raised before invoking formal processes.

### 1.1 Statement of Purpose

- To support the complainant in making their complaint
- To monitor compliance with the complaints process
- To provide 3rd party investigation and review if satisfactory/fair resolution not achieved
- To identify areas for improvement and make recommendations
- To monitor implementation of service improvements, when recommended
- To include complaints made and process of resolution in Registered Members annual audit
- To identify areas of risk and take appropriate steps to prevent harm to the public and protect the reputation and credibility of the register and those on it.
- To gather data on the nature of complaints in Trichological practice to inform best practice standards and continual improvement.

### 1.2 Exclusion Criteria

1. 1.2.1 If the complaint does not concern a registered member, information will be retained for audit and if appropriate, general advice and support may be provided in the interests of public education.
2. 1.2.2 Unless the Ethics Committee considers that there are exceptional circumstances, information received by the Institute of Trichologists about a registrant will not be considered under these procedures if the individual was not on the register at the time or over two years have elapsed since the conduct occurred or since the date on which the Complainant became aware of the conduct, whichever is the latest.
3. 1.2.3 If the complaint is based on hearsay, without supporting evidence.
4. 1.2.4 If the complainant wishes to remain anonymous and anonymity would prevent proper investigation and/or the ability of the registrant to respond and address.
5. 1.2.5 If the complaint has already been addressed and closed.
6. 1.2.6 Where the Chair of the Ethics Committee has received information about a Registrant and that Registrant is already the subject of an inquiry by the police or other body, or there are on-going criminal or civil proceedings, the investigation or referral may be deferred until the inquiry or proceedings have concluded.

### 1.3 Complaints Concerning Registrants

1. 1.3.1 For complaints concerning registrants, in the first instance registrants should be provided with an opportunity to resolve the complaint as per complaints policy.
2. 1.3.2 On receipt of a written complaint (completion of online form) about a registrant, the Chair of the Ethics Committee shall first consider whether the nature of the complaint is such that it should be accepted.
3. 1.3.3 If a complaint is accepted, the Chair of the Ethics Committee will acknowledge receipt of the complaint, within 4 working day, and will respond within 20 Working days.
4. 1.3.4 If it is not appropriate to seek for the complaint to be resolved informally or by mediation, or if informal resolution or mediation has not been successful, the Chair of the Ethics Committee shall request information and evidence to enable the complaint to be processed.

## **Part 2 Ethics Committee**

### **2.1 Personnel engaged with the management of complaints**

1. 2.1.1 The Institute of Trichologists recognizes the need to separate the investigation, adjudication and appeals stages of the process in order to prevent bias or conflict, and to make the process transparent and fair. The Institute of Trichologists has separated the stages and detailed the process for each stage
2. 2.1.2 Stage 1 is to submit the complaint in writing, using the claim form on the website to the Chair of the Ethics Committee, for investigation and response to endeavour to resolve the complaint to the satisfaction of all parties.
3. 2.1.3 Stage 2 If the complainant is not satisfied with the initial response to the complaint they can write to the Chair of the Ethics Committee stating why they are unhappy. The Chair of the Ethics committee will convene a meeting with the full committee to further review the complaint, initial response and respond to the Complainant within 20 Working days.
4. 2.1.4 Stage 3 is the final stage, if the complainant is not happy with the response from the Ethics Committee Review they can write to the Chairman of The Institute of Trichologists, stating the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. The Chairman will respond within 15 working days to inform you of the action being taken to investigate our complaint further, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation. In the event that the complaint is about the Chairman of The Institute of Trichologists, the Vice Chairman will manage and respond to the Final Stage of investigation.

### **2. 2.2 The Ethics Committee**

- ● Chair of Ethics, Shirley McDonald
- ● Lorraine Turvey
- ● Anita Ashcroft

### **3. 2.3 The Institute of Trichologists Board**

- ● Chairman, Eva Proudman
- ● Vice Chairman, Liam Byrne
- ● Director of Processes, Liam Byrne

## Part 3 Complaints Procedure

### 3.1 Stage 1

The Chair of the Ethics Committee will ensure receipt of the complaint is acknowledged in writing, within 48 hours. The acknowledgement will include an explanation of how we intend to proceed according to the nature of the complaint and a time frame for subsequent communication.

The Chair of the Ethics Committee will notify the registrant that a complaint has been received and provide a copy of that complaint, requesting information and evidence as appropriate, to be provided within 7 working days.

Within 7 working days, the Chair of the Ethics Committee will review the evidence with reference to the complaint and compile a summary report and conclusion which shall be provided to the registrant.

The report shall include;

- The key elements of the complaint that were investigated with reference to The Standards
  - The evidence provided
  - Any breaches or lapses of standards identified
  - Any recommendations to improve standards
  - Any actions taken by the registrant to prevent further complaints of this nature
- Any follow up and time frame

The complainant will receive, in writing a response to their complaint.

The response shall include;

- An expression of regret for the harm/distress suffered
- An objective summary of the concerns raised by the consumer and an acknowledgement of any subjective information
- An explanation of what and how the complaint has been investigated
- Details of any findings with reference to The Institute of Trichology standards
- If relevant, a summary of the factors contributing to the adverse event and

information on what has been done and will be provided to avoid repetition of the adverse event, and how this will be monitored.

If a complaint is not resolved parties should have a clear understanding of what the next steps might be;

### 3.2 Stage 2

If the complainant is not happy with the response from the Chair of the Ethics Committee, then you can inform the Chair of Ethics of this and they will follow Stage 2 of the complaints process:

- The Chair of the Ethics Committee will acknowledge your letter within 48 hours of receipt.

- A Full Meeting of the Ethics Committee will be convened for all Members to review the complaint and resolution and to provide a majority voted decision on the action or resolution to be taken.
- The Chair of the Ethics Committee will respond within 20 Working days with the outcome of the Committees review.
- If the complainant is still unhappy then the next step would be to move to Stage 3 of the Complaints Process.

### 3.3 Stage 3

If the complainant is not happy with the response from the Ethics Committee Review, they can write to the Chairman of The Institute of Trichologists, stating the reasons why you are dissatisfied with the outcome. The Chairman will respond within 15 working days to inform the Claimant of the action being taken to investigate the complaint further, and when you can expect to hear the outcome of the investigation. In the event that the complaint is about the Chairman of The Institute of Trichologists, the Vice Chairman will manage and respond to the Final Stage of investigation.

- The Chairman of The Institute of Trichologists will convene a meeting with The Vice Chairman and Director of Processes to review all elements of the complaint.
- A decision will be made by the meeting and documented. This will be communicated to the Complainant within 10 working days of the meeting taking place, the decision will be final and without further appeal.

### 3.4 Audit for governance

- 3.4.1 The Chair of the Ethics Committee will keep a full record of complaints received for audit purposes.
- 3.4.2 The Audit Report shall include;
  - A summary of the complaint made (anonymized)
  - A summary of the investigation
  - A summary of the findings
  - A copy of the report to the registrant (anonymized).

To submit a complaint, please complete this [online form](#).

Complaints Procedure Change Log:

<b>Issue No.</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Reason for change</b>
1	15/06/2020	
2	27/01/2021	To amend the Ethics committee to LT and AA, removing PB and DH