

Fitness to Practise



Membership Guide

Updated August 2014

1.Introduction

As a Graduate or Allied Health Professional member of The British Association of Sport Rehabilitators and Trainers (BASRaT) individuals are entitled to refer to themselves as Graduate Sport Rehabilitators (GSRs). All registered members are required to meet and maintain the BASRaT standards of education, skill and conduct as stated in the BASRaT Standards of Ethical Conduct and Behaviour (SECB) and Role Delineation documents (RD).

2.What is fitness to practise?

An individual is considered 'fit to practise' if they possess the appropriate skills, knowledge, health and character to practise safely and effectively. In addition, this also includes acts and/or behavior which may affect:

- Protection of the public,
- Public confidence in the profession and the regulatory process.

3.Reporting of fitness to practise issues/concerns

Any issues/concerns can be brought to the attention of BASRaT in a number of ways:

- Declaration by Accredited Institution (AI)*
- Self declaration at initial registration.
- Self regulation of active member.
- Concern/allegation raised by member of the public/employer (complainant)**

*Please refer to BASRaT Fitness to Practise- Guide for Accredited Institutions.

**Please refer to BASRaT Complaints Procedure- Guide for the public and employers.

4.Regulation of fitness to practise (registration)

BASRaT have a responsibility to monitor professional standards of it's membership, protect the public and public confidence in the profession

On initial registration or re-registration with BASRaT an individual will be required to complete a Declaration of Health and Good Character in Relation to Fitness to Practise (DHGC) stating their ability to practise safely and effectively. If any concerns are disclosed then this will require further investigation by BASRaT.

In addition, confirmation of the individual's ability to practise safely and effectively by the AI will also be required (see DHGC) before the individual would be considered for initial registration with the organisation. This declaration can be signed by the AI Programme Lead or Head of Department.

BASRaT can also take action if a member's health and character raises concerns about their ability to practise safely and effectively.

Self declaration of concerns/issues related to fitness to practise is based on trust (by the organisation and the individual) and should be seen as a positive action, demonstrating good professional judgement and responsibility as an autonomous health professional. In many cases this gives the organisation the opportunity to help and support an individual and gain a better understanding of the practise of sport rehabilitation.

Individuals should complete the DHGC honestly and if BASRaT later find out that an issue has not been declared then this will be investigated and may affect registration with the

organisation. Individuals who are unsure whether any particular aspects/issues should be declared should contact the organisation at the soonest possible opportunity.

Any concerns will be considered on an individual basis as to best support the individual as well as is to reduce risk of harm to the public and support the public's confidence in the profession.

5.Regulation of fitness to practise (self regulation)

It is the responsibility of active members to maintain and manage their own health and character in relation to fitness to practise and also to inform the organisation of any changes to their health and/or character.

Active members should contact the organisation as soon as possible if it is felt that any issue(s) may impact on their ability to practise safely and effectively. As with the point of initial registration, any declaration during active membership should be seen as a positive action, demonstrating good professional judgement and responsibility as an autonomous health professional.

6.Health related to fitness to practise

It is important to note that an individual's health and/or disability will be considered in direct relation to their ability to practise safely and effectively. This means that BASRaT does not require information regarding someone's health and/or disability unless it affects their ability to practise safely and effectively.

If the particular condition is stable and managed appropriately then this should not affect an individual's application/practise. Being able to manage a condition appropriately also includes adapting, limiting and stopping practise if required.

7.Character related to fitness to practise

It is important to note that an individual's 'good character' will be considered in direct relation to their ability to practise safely and effectively. Consideration will be given to current and past actions which may suggest that an individual is not of 'good character'.

'Good character' will be considered in relation to whether the individual has acted, or are likely to act in the future:

- In a way that puts the health, safety and well-being of clients or members of the public at risk.
- In a way that would reduce public confidence in the profession.
- In a way that shows an unwillingness to conduct one's self in accordance with BASRaT professional standards (SECB, RD).
- In a dishonest way.

Non-exhaustive examples when an individual may not be deemed of 'good character' include:

- Inconsistent, unreliable and inappropriate behaviour.
- Improper relationship with client.
- Aggressive or threatening behaviour.
- Unlawful discrimination on the grounds of age, gender, race, ethnic origin, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief, socio-economic background.
- Criminal conviction/cautions (consideration will be given if the offence involves):

- Violence.
- Abuse.
- Sexual misconduct.
- Illegal supply of drugs.
- Child pornography.
- Dishonesty (theft or fraud).
- Conduct that would bring the profession into disrepute or damage the credibility of the profession,

Examples of the above would include:

- Dishonesty (theft or fraud)
- Trustworthiness (non-disclosure or criminal conviction or health/disability issue which may impair safe and effective practise without supervision)
- Abuse (child, physical, sexual, racial, emotional)
- Substance abuse or misuse problem

Consideration will be given to:

- The number and nature of offences or events.
- The seriousness of the offences or events.
- When and where the offences or events took place.
- Any information given by the individual to explain the circumstances.
- An individual's character and conduct since such offences or events.

8. The fitness to practise process (registration and self regulation)

A general overview of the process is given below (figure 1). Any concerns raised/ will initially be considered by the BASRaT Registrar in conjunction with another member of the BASRaT Executive Committee (stage 1). If it is deemed not to be a fitness to practise issue or not involving a registered member then it is likely that no formal fitness to practise investigation will proceed. Any decision made at stage 1 will be based upon the presence of prima facie evidence in relation to fitness to practise. At stage 1 the Registrar may also proceed with informal communication aimed at facilitating an appropriate resolution. This may involve mediation between the parties concerned through the BASRaT Ethics Committee. The nature of some complaints may result in mediation not being an appropriate route. Examples would include complaints involving sexual assault/abuse.

Any decision made at stage 1 will be confirmed in writing within 5 working days. This decision may include interim suspension of membership if the allegation is judged to be of such a nature as to involve a risk or potential risk to protection of the public or public confidence in the profession. The interim suspension would be for a period of up to 28 days to allow time for the concern/complaint to be considered by the Investigating Committee (stage 2).

If the practitioner is a BASRaT member and the concern/complaint is deemed to be related to his/her fitness to practise the Registrar will delegate to an Investigating Committee (stage 2). This committee will comprise of the following:

- Chair, health professional (not active member of BASRaT) selected from a pool of qualified individuals held by BASRaT
- At least one member of the BASRaT executive committee (not the same member involved in stage 1 above)
- One lay executive committee member

The Investigating Committee will gather additional information regarding the issue/allegation from relevant sources (complainant, member, any others concerned). Information related to medical details and/or criminal convictions will only be pursued with written consent of the member. It must be noted that if an individual declines to give written consent then this will be considered during any decision making process

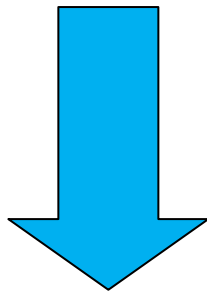
The Investigating Committee will independently consider the case presented and make a judgment on whether the case should be considered by a fitness to practise panel based upon the balance of probabilities using the evidence available. Alternatively, if there is no further 'case to answer' then no further action will be taken. The outcome (decision), reasons behind the decision and also relevant contact details of the Investigating Committee will also be confirmed in writing within 5 working days. Please note that at stage 2 the Investigating Committee may also recommend informal communication aimed at facilitating an appropriate resolution. This may involve mediation between the parties concerned through the BASRaT Ethics Committee. If mediation is recommended but does not resolve the concern/complaint then the case will be referred back to the Investigating Committee.

If the Investigating Committee decides that there is a 'case to answer' and that an individual's fitness to practise may be impaired then the case will be heard by a Fitness to Practise Panel (stage 3). The Fitness to Practise Panel and its responsibility, process and procedure is described in more detail in the next section (7). The Fitness to Practise process is subject to appeal at stages 2 and 3. More information about the appeals process may be found under section 9.

The Investigating Committee can also consider further interim suspension of membership if the allegation is judged to be of such a nature as to involve a risk or potential risk to protection of the public or public confidence in the profession. Any further suspension would cover the period of time necessary for the concern/complaint to be considered by the Fitness to Practise Panel (stage 3).

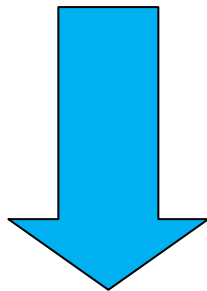
Please note that the BASRaT fitness to practise process will not be discontinued should a member choose to leave the organisation.

Figure 1



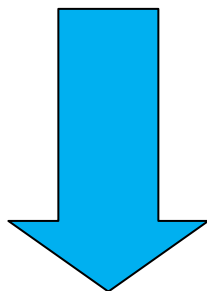
Stage 1

An initial decision as to whether an issue declared/allegation made should be investigated



Stage 2

An investigation is carried out, and a decision made as to whether the issue/allegation should be heard by a Fitness to Practise Panel**



Stage 3

A Fitness to Practise Panel hearing to consider the evidence and determine whether an individual's fitness to practise is impaired and, if so, which sanction (if any) should be applied**

**Fitness to Practise Panel hearings only applies to active or previously registered members of the organisation.

9. Fitness to Practise Panel (self regulation)

All parties will be informed, in writing of the date of the panel hearing, at least 30 working days in advance. All parties will also be sent a copy of the information that the panel will look at. All parties will have 10 working days to respond to anything that has not been seen before and will also be given the opportunity to supply any further information to be considered by the panel.

Fitness to Practise panels should consist of the following:

- Chair, health professional (not active member of BASRaT) selected from a pool of qualified individuals held by BASRaT.
- One member of the executive committee
- One active BASRaT member (not executive committee member)
- One lay executive committee member

Also in attendance will be a BASRaT administrator to transcribe the panel hearing.

- Members of the Investigating Committee will not be permitted to sit on the Fitness to Practise Panel.

BASRaT cannot provide legal advice to any complainant but will ensure equal legal counsel. BASRaT will ensure that all parties concerned are treated fairly and with respect, providing reasonable support as required by the specific case (for example, accessibility arrangements, separate waiting rooms during hearing, etc). Please contact the BASRaT administration office if you require any special arrangements.

Fitness to Practise cases are heard by the panel in private with any decision and reasons behind the decision confirmed in writing within 10 working days. A transcript of the hearing and decisions made will also be made available to the public via the BASRaT website, <http://www.basrat.org/disciplinaryproceedings.asp>

10. Sanctions made by the Fitness to Practise Panel

The panel will carefully consider the circumstances and evidence for each case. Actions taken by the panel will be to:

- Protect the public.
- Maintain public confidence in the profession and the regulatory process.

Decisions by the panel will be made considering the balance of probabilities using the evidence provided. The following will be considered by the panel:

- Whether the facts set out in the issue/allegation are proven;
- Whether those facts amount to the statutory ground set out in the allegation (e.g. misconduct or lack of competence)
- Whether (and to what extent) the member's fitness to practise is impaired.

Sanctions imposed by the panel may include:

- Taking no further action.
- Cautioning the individual using a note placed upon the members register entry which highlights the area of concern and recommendations for future training/education. This note will remain in place for a given period of time or until further training/education is evidenced.
- Imposing conditions on the individual's practice such as clinical supervision or scope of practice restrictions.

- Suspending the individual from practice for a given period of time (up to one year) or until further training/education is evidenced.
- Striking the individual from the membership register.

For further information regarding the Fitness to Practise Panel, please refer to BASRaT Fitness to Practise Panel- Sanctions Guidance (2014)

In any case the decision and reasons behind the decision will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days. A transcript of the hearing and decisions made will also be made available to the public via the BASRaT website, <http://www.basrat.org/disciplinaryproceedings.asp>

11.Appeals

As outlined previously all individuals concerned will be informed of any decision and reasons behind any decision in writing at each of the stages outlined. Appeals against any decision made at stage 2 i.e. by the Investigating Committee must be filed within 10 working days from the written confirmation letter. Appeals against any decision made at stage 3 i.e. by the Fitness to Practise Panel must be filed within 20 working days from the written confirmation letter.

An Appeal panel constructed using the same criterion as the Fitness to Practise panel will consider the appeal lodged. Members of the Investigating Committee and the Fitness to Practise panel will not be permitted to sit on the Appeal Panel. The Appeal panel decision and reasons behind the decision will be confirmed in writing within 10 working days. A transcript of the hearing and decisions made will also be made available to the public via the BASRaT website, <http://www.basrat.org/disciplinaryproceedings.asp>