

UK Dog Behaviour and Training Charter

A - Organisational Code of Ethics/Practice/Conduct.

1. All Signatory Organisations that sign the Charter are expected to have their own Code of Ethics/Practice/Conduct (now known as codes) in line with the standards of the Charter. Current editions of these codes will be presented to the Charter co-ordinator ahead of being allowed as a signatory.
2. The Signatory Organisation Codes must be transparent and easily available to the public via the Signatory Organisation website. There will also be links to the documents on the Charter website.
3. Signatory Organisations must be seen to promote good professional conduct towards other professionals, clients and organisations. This should be referenced in their codes with clear guidance to members.
4. Signatory Organisations must have a robust and clearly defined complaints and grievance procedure. This must be clearly accessible on the Signatory Organisation website.
5. Signatory Organisations are responsible, for their own accredited members in relation to their Codes and Complaints and Grievance Procedure.
6. Signatory Organisations will deal with all complaints and grievances in a thorough, transparent and systematic way. Evidence-based records should be kept and presented to the Charter Oversight Committee in the cases of arbitration or appeal.
7. Signatory organisations have the right to refuse membership or remove a member who does not comply with that organisation's Codes and/or has gone through a complaints procedure that has been upheld.
8. For those Signatory Organisations that cover multi-species the directives outlined in this Charter only apply to those who work with dogs as full or part of their workload.
9. For overseas members. The Charter applies to all UK accredited members of the signatory organisations. It is at the discretion of the signatory organisation as to whether overseas members will be held to these standards and are to inform the Charter Co-Ordinator if that is the case.

B - Assessment, support and monitoring of accredited members

1. Membership to the Charter is via Organisation only therefore no individual personal membership is permitted to the charter.
2. Organisations have the responsibility to ensure members keep their knowledge and skill set current and up to date with the latest methods and understanding.
3. Organisations must ensure all members are aware of relevant legislation with regards to Animal Welfare and other laws relating to dogs (such as, but not restricted to the Animal Welfare Act 2006)
4. Organisations must make sure all members know of need for professional insurance to gain and retain membership.

C - Accepted methodologies

1. Signatory Organisations must use compassionate, holistic, non-punitive and science-led methods which are not designed to deliberately cause pain or psychological damage to the dog.
2. There is an expectation that Signatory Organisations should ensure members avoid using deliberate fear and intimidation, but with recognition that this can be a difficult area to quantify. To this end the Charter accepts the basic principal of L.I.M.A (least intrusive, minimally aversive) with reference to the Hierarchy of Procedures for Humane and Effective Practice - Dr. Susan Friedman, whilst being underpinned by the Animal Welfare Act 2006-

Special reference to Section 4 – unnecessary suffering. It recognises the prohibited tools in section D of this charter. The Charter also recognises any directives given from the devolved powers in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland.

3. Signatory Organisations should instruct practitioners to ensure that the physical, mental and emotional needs of the dog are central to all training plans.

D - Expected and prohibited tools and equipment

1. Signatory Organisations publicly pledge not to endorse correction-based remote training devices or aversive stimuli that work through eliciting a withdraw reflex/response and/or an alarm reaction, and/or that cause pain and/or fear. This includes shock collars and citronella collars and Anti-Bark Collars. This should be referenced in their codes with clear guidance to members.
2. Signatory Organisations must also not endorse the following tools; choke chains and prong collars. This should be referenced in their codes with clear guidance to members.

E - Charter Organisation

1. This Charter will be overseen by an independent Charter Oversight Committee. This committee will have sole responsibility to ensure signatory organisations are fulfilling their obligations to both their own Codes and the commitments detailed in the Charter.
2. The Charter Group will be responsible for choosing members of the Charter Oversight Committee.
3. Oversight Committee members can be removed from the Charter Group, with a minimum of 75% in favour.
4. Signatory Organisations will have representation in the Charter Group. The Charter Group will have responsibility for any future changes or additions to the Charter.
5. The Charter Group will convene for an in-person meeting at least once yearly, to discuss industry related issues and to re-evaluate the Charter Document, making changes and additions as agreed by a minimum of 75% of casted votes in favour. A minimum of 50% of signatory organisations need to be in attendance to render the vote valid.

F - Charter Oversight

1. Complaints/grievances should initially be passed to member organisations for action by their own procedures. Should those procedures need extra arbitration or if appealed, the evidence will be provided to the Oversight Committee. They will give guidance based on the evidence submitted with reference to the Member Organisations own Codes and the text of the Charter and inform the organisation of any actions to be taken. Failure to comply to the judgement of the Oversight Committee may lead to private advisory notice from the Oversight Committee, followed by a public advisory and finally a temporary removal as a charter signatory until the matter is resolved, upon which the organisation can be re-instated into the charter.