



Code of Conduct for Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists

This Code of Conduct sets out certain minimum standards for conduct with which Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists (CCABs) are required to comply.

Any disciplinary function of CCAB Certification Ltd shall be guided by the Code of Conduct, but mention or lack of mention in the Code of Conduct of a particular act or omission shall not be taken as conclusive on any question of professional conduct.

1. General

A Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist (CCAB) has expertise in dealing with the behaviour of individual animals, which has resulted in one or more of the following: a decrease in the quality of life of the animal, or its owner, or other animals or people; threat or potential threat to human or animal safety; nuisance or perceived nuisance to members of the public.

Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists have completed training to an approved level so that they have an understanding of the principles applicable to all relevant vertebrate species, but are required to indicate on the register those species in which they have acquired particular expertise.

In all their work Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists shall conduct themselves in a manner that does not bring into disrepute the discipline and the profession of animal behaviour. They shall value integrity, impartiality and respect for persons and evidence and shall seek to establish the highest ethical standards in their work. Taking account of their obligations under the law, they shall hold the interest and welfare of those in receipt of their services to be paramount at all times, and ensure that the interests of participants in any research are safeguarded. They must familiarise themselves and comply with all relevant legislation, including that regarding animal welfare and the provision of psychological services, and the codes of practice of the appropriate professional bodies, such as the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons and the British Psychological Society.

2. Competence

Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists shall endeavour to maintain and develop their professional competence, to recognise and work within its limits, and to identify and ameliorate factors which restrict it.

Specifically they shall:

- 2.1 refrain from laying claim, directly or indirectly, to qualifications or affiliations they do not possess, from claiming competence in any particular area of applied animal behaviour in which they have not established their competence, and from claiming characteristics or capabilities for themselves or others which they do not possess.
- 2.2 recognise the boundaries of their own competence and not attempt to practise any form of applied animal behaviour for which they do not have an appropriate preparation or, where applicable, specialist qualification.

- 2.3 take all reasonable steps to ensure that their qualifications, capabilities, or views are not misrepresented by others, and to correct any such misrepresentations.
- 2.4 where the services they judge to be appropriate are outside their personal competence, give every reasonable assistance towards obtaining those services from others who are appropriately qualified to provide them.
- 2.5 take all reasonable steps to ensure that all actual and potential medical causes for problem behaviour in an animal have been identified prior to behavioural treatment.
- 2.6 take all reasonable steps to ensure that diagnosis and treatment of medical disorders in an animal that may be associated with a problem behaviour are carried out by a veterinary surgeon or other person designated as appropriate by relevant legislation.
- 2.7 take all reasonable steps to ensure that those working under their direct supervision comply with each of the foregoing, in particular that they recognise the limits of their competence and do not attempt to practise beyond them.

3. Obtaining consent

Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists shall normally carry out investigations or interventions only with the valid consent of participants, having taken all reasonable steps to ensure that they have adequately understood the nature of the investigation or intervention and its anticipated consequences.

Specifically they shall:

- 3.1 refrain from making exaggerated, sensational and unjustifiable claims for the effectiveness of their methods and products, from advertising services or products in a way likely to encourage unrealistic expectations about the effectiveness of the services or products offered, or from misleading those to whom services are offered about the nature and likely consequences of any interventions to be undertaken.
- 3.2 normally obtain the written consent of those to whom interventions are offered, taking all reasonable steps to ensure that the consent obtained is valid.
- 3.3 recognize and uphold the rights of recipients of services to withdraw consent to interventions or other professional procedures after they have commenced and terminate or recommend alternative services when there is evidence that those in receipt of their services are deriving no benefit from them.

4. Confidentiality

Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists shall maintain adequate records, but they shall take all reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information acquired through their professional practice and to protect the privacy of individuals or organizations about whom information is collected or held. In general, and subject to the requirements of law, they shall take care to prevent the identity of individuals or organizations being revealed, deliberately or inadvertently, without their expressed permission.

Specifically they shall:

- 4.1 endeavour to communicate information obtained through practice in ways which do not permit the identification of individuals or organisations.
- 4.2 convey personally identifiable information obtained in the course of professional work to others, only with the expressed permission of those who would be identified, (subject always to the best interests of recipients of services and subject to the requirements of law and agreed working practices) except that when working in a team or with collaborators, they shall endeavour to make clear to recipients of services or participants in research, the extent to which personally identifiable information may be shared between colleagues or others within a group receiving the services;
- 4.3 in exceptional circumstances, where there is sufficient evidence to raise serious concern about the safety or interests of recipients of services, or about others who may be threatened by the recipient's behaviour, may take such steps as are judged necessary to inform appropriate third parties without prior consent after first consulting an experienced and disinterested colleague, except that where such information has been obtained from a member of another profession, the rules of that profession for such disclosure shall apply;
- 4.4 take all reasonable steps to ensure that records over which they have control remain personally identifiable only as long as is necessary in the interests of those to whom they refer, and to render anonymous any records under their control that no longer need to be personally identifiable for the above purposes.
- 4.5 only make audio, video, or photographic recordings of recipients of services with the expressed agreement of those being recorded both to the recording being made and to the subsequent conditions of access to it.
- 4.6 take all reasonable steps to safeguard the security of any records they make, including those held on computer.
- 4.7 take all reasonable steps to ensure that colleagues, staff, trainees, and students with whom they work understand and respect the need for confidentiality regarding any information obtained.

5. Personal conduct

Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists shall conduct themselves in their professional activities in a way that does not damage the interest of the recipients of their services and does not inappropriately undermine public confidence in their ability or that of other animal behaviourists and members of other professions to carry out their professional duties.

Specifically they shall:

- 5.1 refrain from improper conduct in their work as animal behaviourists that would be likely to be detrimental to the interests of recipients of their services or participants in their research.
- 5.2 neither attempt to secure or to accept from those receiving their service any significant financial or material benefit beyond that which has been contractually agreed, nor to secure directly from them any such benefit for services which are already rewarded by salary.

- 5.3 not exploit any relationship of influence or trust which exists between colleagues, those under their tuition, or those in receipt of their services to further the gratification of their personal desires.
- 5.4 not allow their professional responsibilities or standards of practice to be diminished by considerations of religion, sex, race, age, nationality, party politics, social standing, class, self-interest, or other extraneous factors.
- 5.5 refrain from practice when their physical or psychological condition, as a result of for example alcohol, drugs, illness, or personal stress, is such that abilities or professional judgement are seriously impaired.
- 5.6 value and have respect for all relevant evidence and the limits of such evidence when giving behavioural advice or expressing a professional opinion.
- 5.7 value and have respect for scientific evidence and the limits of such evidence when making public statements that provide information about animal behaviour and animal welfare.
- 5.8 refrain from claiming credit for the research and intellectual property of others and give due credit to the contributions of others in collaborative work.
- 5.9 take steps to maintain adequate standards of safety in the use of all procedures and equipment used in professional practice.
- 5.10 bring allegations of misconduct by a professional colleague to the attention of those charged with the responsibility to investigate them, doing so without malice and with no breaches of confidentiality other than those necessary to the proper investigatory processes and when the subject of allegations themselves, they shall take all reasonable steps to assist those charged with responsibility to investigate them.

6. Complaints and Disciplinary Procedure

CCAB Certification Ltd has a procedure for dealing with complaints and issues relating to conduct to enable us to investigate allegations of misconduct against anyone certified under its accreditation scheme. All our investigations are conducted in private and our members and CCABs must assist with our investigation. Details of how to make a complaint about the conduct of a CCAB can be found below.

Complaints

6.1 Guide To Dealing with Complaints And Issues Relating To Conduct

CCAB Certification Ltd has a procedure for dealing with complaints and issues relating to conduct to enable us to investigate allegations of misconduct against any CCAB. All our investigations are conducted in private and our members and CCABs must assist with our investigation process. There is no charge for our service. This section describes:

- what we can investigate
- how to make a complaint
- how we will deal with your complaint.

We can investigate your complaint if:

- it is about a CCAB and it is about a conduct issue relating to their certification

We cannot investigate complaints about:

- a Clinical Animal Behaviourist who is not a CCAB (Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist)
- the matter does not relate to the specific conditions of the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist's CCAB accreditation
- any matter which is the subject of court proceedings

What is misconduct under the conditions of accreditation?

We publish a Code of Conduct which sets out certain standards of conduct with which CCABs are expected to comply.

Misconduct under the conditions of accreditation will occur if Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists act outside the Code and will include such things as:

- failing to recognise the boundaries of their own competence
- failing to maintain the confidentiality of information acquired through their professional practice
- exploiting any relationship of trust or influence with a recipient of their services
- conducting themselves in a way that damages the interests of recipients of their services
- failing to obtain the consent of participants before undertaking investigations or interventions

*6.2 Complaints procedure***How does one make a complaint?**

All complaints must be in writing. You can use the form below or write a letter. If you have any documents or other evidence which support your complaint, please send us copies of these in the first instance, but retain the originals, which may be required at a later date and will be returned to you.



6.3 Complaints form

CCAB CERTIFICATION LTD COMPLAINTS AND DISCIPLINARY PROCEDURE

Your details:

Full name:

Address:

Your email address (optional):

Your daytime telephone number (optional):

About your complaint:

Name and address of the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist(s) you want to complain about:

Name:

Address:

Please briefly describe what you think the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist has done wrong. If there are documents or other evidence which supports your complaint, please also send copies of them to us.

What would you like CCAB Certification Ltd to do to resolve your complaint?

Important information:

In order to investigate your complaint, we may need to collect information about you and anyone else involved in this matter. We will use this information only to investigate your complaint and decide what action should be taken. If your complaint goes to a hearing, some of the information we have collected may have to be made public.

I consent to CCAB Certification Ltd collecting information about me for the purpose of investigating my complaint

Signature of complainant:

Date:

Updated: Sept 2026

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Please attach any documents which support your complaint and send this complaint form to:

CCAB Certification Ltd
71-75 Shelton Street
Covent Garden
London
WC2H 9JQ

Please mark the envelope '*Strictly confidential*'.

Who deals with complaints?

All complaints are considered by the CCAB Certification Complaints Subcommittee.

What happens next?

When the Subcommittee receives a complaint, it will write to the subject of the complaint to seek their comments on the allegations which have been made.

Once it has received a response, the Subcommittee will consider all the evidence to hand. It may recommend:

- that further investigation is not required because there is no evidence of misconduct, or
- that CCAB Certification Ltd undertakes further enquiries into the allegations on its behalf.
- that it should write to the subject of the complaint to advise them that it has concerns about their conduct. The letter will set out the concerns and will remain as a permanent record on the CCAB's membership records, or
- that a full hearing of the allegations of misconduct should take place.

What happens at Conduct hearings?

Our Conduct Subcommittee has power to take action against any Certified Clinical Animal Behaviourist within the scope of their terms of accreditation.

In addition to one or more CCABs, the Conduct Subcommittee includes "lay" representatives who will normally be invited nominees from other relevant professional bodies such as the British Psychological Society and the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons with experience of the disciplinary processes within their own profession. A CCAB Certification Ltd member will take the chair.

If a Conduct Subcommittee is invoked it is CCAB Certification Ltd, rather than you that acts as the complainant. We may ask you to attend the hearing as a witness, however. Hearings usually last one day.

The subject of the complaint may present his or her own case or be represented by a person of their choice. If the subject wishes to present their own case, they are entitled to be accompanied by another person during the hearing; however, while the accompanying person can liaise with the subject, they are not permitted to answer questions on the subject's behalf.

The Conduct Subcommittee will decide whether the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist is guilty of misconduct under the terms of their accreditation. CCAB Certification Ltd shall be guided by the Code of Conduct but the mention or lack of mention in the Code of Conduct of a particular act or

omission shall not be taken as conclusive on any question of conduct. In the event that it finds an individual guilty of misconduct the Conduct Subcommittee may take one or more of the following courses of action:

- reprimand or severely reprimand the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist.
- require the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist to give written undertakings as deemed appropriate by CCAB Certification Ltd, for a period not exceeding three years. The undertakings, which may include undertakings to refrain from continuing or repeating the offending conduct, may be reviewed no sooner than one year after they commence, by referral to a further Conduct Subcommittee hearing.
- suspend the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist from the Register of Certification, the period of suspension to be determined by the Conduct Subcommittee, but not to exceed three years, and to attach conditions to the suspension as and if deemed necessary by the Conduct Subcommittee.
- remove the Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist from the Register.
- place conditions upon the certification of the individual as deemed appropriate by the Conduct Subcommittee. Those conditions may be appealed, removed or varied by way of a CCAB Certification Ltd Members hearing.
- any breach of conditions imposed by the Conduct Subcommittee will be referred to a further hearing of CCAB Certification Ltd, where CCAB Certification Ltd may remove, amend, or replace the conditions with any penalty available to it.

The subject of the complaint has a right of appeal against any decision of the Conduct Subcommittee. Details of the Appeals Procedure can be found below.

Further information

If after reading this document, you are unsure what to do next please contact CCAB Certification Ltd feedback@ccab.uk. We can advise you (or the subject of your complaint) about the complaints procedure at all stages of the process. They cannot advise on the particular merits of any complaint or potential complaints, however.

7. Liability

CCAB Certification Ltd shall not be liable to Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists for any claims, losses, damages, or other expenses (either direct, special, or consequential) arising as a result of any dispute between a Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist and its client or a third party in relation to any professional advice or treatment given. Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists shall hold professional indemnity insurance at an adequate level and sufficient to meet any liabilities which might arise as a result of their professional practice. Certification and renewal of certification shall be dependent upon the production of proof of such insurance, and shall be deemed to have been withdrawn if such insurance lapses.

8. Descriptions

Only animal behaviourists who have been accredited by us as a Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist, and who have complied with our requirements for maintaining that accreditation, including annual renewal of their registration, may use the title 'Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist' If anyone whose name is not currently on the Register were to use the title 'Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist' CCAB Certification Ltd would seek an injunction or to take other legal measures to restrain the person concerned from wrongly appropriating a title which may be used only

by those whose names are entered on the Register. Possession of the qualifications sufficient for Certification is not adequate in itself, as eligibility for Certification is also dependent on giving assent to this Code of Conduct. Only those who have actually registered and agreed to abide by the Code of Conduct may use the title 'Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourist'.

Once on the Register all Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists are encouraged to use the new title or the abbreviation 'CCAB' (but no other) as often as possible: it is important to note that no variants of the abbreviation of 'CCAB' are permitted. Only if those on the Register routinely use the title in professional contexts, on case reports, on publications, in their advertisements and on their letter paper will the public be able to rely on the title as the means of knowing they are dealing with a bona fide behaviourist who is recognised as properly qualified. Following the convention adopted by other professions it will be usual for the abbreviation 'CCAB' to be placed immediately after the list of a member's degrees and diplomas (e.g. Jo Smith, BSc, PhD, CCAB).

Certificated Clinical Animal Behaviourists may use the CCAB logo.