



ACC Membership

Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions

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Association of
Christians in Counselling
and Linked Professions



CONTENTS

3	<u>Introduction</u>
4	<u>About ACC</u>
6	<u>Our History</u>
7	<u>Membership Categories</u>
9	<u>Registered Counsellor Membership</u>
13	<u>Student Counsellor Membership</u>
16	<u>Counselling Affiliate Membership</u>
20	<u>Pastoral Carer Membership</u>
22	<u>Pastoral Care Affiliate Membership</u>
26	<u>Fellowship & Honorary Fellowship</u>
29	<u>Appendix: Frequently Asked Questions for Counselling Membership</u>

INTRODUCTION

This document contains summary information about ACC and our different membership categories for existing and prospective members.

It sets out the benefits of belonging as well as the terms and conditions of each membership type.

It also includes some frequently asked questions relating to counselling membership.



ABOUT ACC

The Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions (ACC) is a UK charity that provides membership services for people and organisations involved in professional counselling, psychotherapy and the ministry of pastoral care in the UK and overseas.

ACC is an ecumenical membership organisation, welcoming members from Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox Christian churches and traditions.

Counselling/Psychotherapy Membership

We are a professional membership body for trainee and qualified counsellors and psychotherapists who are Christian. We hold an accredited register of counsellors and psychotherapists under the [Professional Standards Authority](#).

We also support and equip organisations who are developing and delivering counselling/psychotherapy training with a Christian worldview and those setting up and managing counselling and related support services underpinned by a Christian ministry.

Our counsellors and psychotherapists and affiliated organisations work with people of all faiths and none within ACC's [Ethics and Practice](#).

The term counselling and counsellor will be used in the remainder of this document to represent counselling and psychotherapy and counsellors and psychotherapists for ease of reference.



Pastoral Care Membership

Support for those in the ministry of Pastoral Care is open to pastoral care members and organisations who are committed to good practice and willing to operate within ACC's [Guidelines for Good Practice in Pastoral Care](#).

ACTIVITIES AND FOCUS

We represent a substantial membership of individuals and organisations delivering professional and accountable services in the UK and elsewhere relating to counselling, psychotherapy and pastoral care.

Our key aim is to support and promote our members and encourage them in safe practice, in professional and personal development, and in their wider formation as practitioners who are Christian.

We seek to serve clients who are looking for Christian counsellors. By joining ACC, members are willing to be open about their Christian faith in service of these clients. We also support counsellors who wish to find Christian supervisors, and trainees seeking Christian trainers and colleges.

We give space for the formation of a community of Christian therapists to engage with colleagues working at the intersection of Christian faith/spirituality and counselling practice.

We work in active collaboration with other counselling/psychological professional membership bodies in the field to work for the overall good of the counselling profession, including clients, trainees, counsellors, supervisors, trainers, employers and policy makers.

We work with churches and Christian charities in the field of mental health and wellbeing to bring psychological insights into the ministry of pastoral care.

We have a particular interest in the intersection of psychological and religious insights into mental and spiritual health and wellbeing, and developing effective and safe practice in counselling, psychotherapy and pastoral care. We aim to promote the value of education, skills and knowledge about religious faith and spirituality and its relationship to counselling and psychotherapy, contributing especially from a Christian basis of understanding.

OUR HISTORY

1992

The Association of Christian Counsellors (ACC) was set up as a professional membership body for counsellors to establish standards for education and practice and a code of ethics for Christians in counselling.

2013

[Pastoral Care UK \(PCUK\)](#) was launched as part of ACC to further the aims of developing training and support for pastoral carers throughout the UK and beyond.

2014

Accredited by the Professional Standards Authority to hold a [Register of Counsellors](#)

2015

Became and continues as a signatory of the [Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy](#) in the UK

2018

Member of the Diversity and Inclusion in Counselling Collaborative founded by Place2Be and involving main counselling membership bodies and support groups

2019

ACC Accredited Members eligible for [training and employment in NHS Improving Access to Psychological Therapy \(IAPT\)](#)

2020

Member of the [National NHS Psychological Professions Workforce Stakeholder Group](#)

ACC partly funded by NHS England and NHS Improvement's National Health & Wellbeing Team to continue to run a crisis counselling service for frontline staff impacted by Covid-19

Became a partner in Scope of Practice and Education (SCoPEd) project

2022

Changed name to the Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions

COUNSELLING MEMBERSHIP

Register Membership	Registered Counsellor Member	Entry to ACC's register of counsellors is subject to eligibility criteria which includes a minimum level 4 diploma in counselling.
	Registered Counsellor Member, Accredited Counsellor*	Becoming an accredited counsellor and progression to senior levels is subject to gaining further training and experience and undertaking an application process and essay/ case study style submissions.
	Senior Levels: Registered Counsellor Member, Accredited Supervisor	
	Registered Counsellor Member, Accredited Counselling Manager	Registered members of other comparable bodies can apply to transfer their registration and accreditation.
Student Membership	Student on a Certificate Course (Level 2 or 3)	Students are trainee counsellors on qualifying counselling courses. Those studying with an ACC affiliate organisation benefit from further reductions on their student membership fees.
	Student on a Qualifying Training Course (Level 4 or above, e.g. HE/FE Levels 5, 6, 7 and plus) **	
Affiliate Membership	Affiliated Counselling Organisation	For organisations that provide counselling to the public and/ or hybrid services which have trained listeners and counsellors
	Affiliated Counselling and Training Organisation	For organisations that provide counselling and/or counselling training

* Accreditation as an Accredited Practitioner (AP) is no longer available as an intermediate option for professional development towards accreditation. Members who have achieved accreditation at the AP level can retain this title whilst they maintain membership with ACC.

** Student membership does not apply to counsellors who are already qualified and able to practice and who are doing further studies at degree or master levels.

PASTORAL CARE MEMBERSHIP

Individual Membership	Pastoral Care Member	For those involved in the wider aspects of pastoral care and who may use counselling skills, whilst not being a counsellor
Affiliate Membership	Pastoral Care Affiliate	For a church or organisation belonging and responsible to a wider community such as a denomination or central organisation
	Pastoral Care Sole Affiliate (currently under review)	For any single church or organisation which does not belong to or is not accountable to a wider grouping

FRIEND OF ACC

This membership is open to anyone who supports the work of ACC. Benefits include receipt of the *accord* journal, discount on ACC events and free attendance at Members Open Forums.

FELLOWSHIP/HONORARY FELLOWSHIP

(GIFTED MEMBERSHIPS ONLY)

Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship are awarded in recognition of the contributions that individuals have made towards the vision, mission, strategy of ACC either through direct service to the charity, or by contributions in the wider world of counselling and pastoral care.

* ACC accept membership applications from overseas subject to eligibility criteria.



Qualified Counsellors (Registered, Accredited & Overseas)

BENEFITS

- Being part of a Christian professional counselling and psychotherapy body that works with other professional bodies and stakeholders to enhance the safety of members of the public seeking counselling services, to reduce the stigma relating to mental health, and to promote the value of access to counsellors and psychotherapists who identify as Christian.
- A code of ethics and practice that takes into account working with a client's religious and spiritual issues in counselling and psychotherapy practice.
- Being subject to a complaints process which, where possible, resolves complaints through processes that encourage mutual understanding, reparation and professional growth and development.
- Warm, timely, individual support, with help and advice from a team with professional knowledge and expertise.
- Receipt of the *accord* journal, including articles on counselling, psychotherapy and pastoral care/ministry, covering the interrelation between Christian faith, counselling/psychotherapy, and mental and spiritual health and wellbeing.
- Discount on ACC events.
- News and professional updates via emails.
- Free attendance at Members Open Forums on different topics relating to counselling and psychotherapy and the Christian faith.
- Access to members-only resources on ACC's website.
- Entry on ACC's Find a Counsellor directory and access to a client base who are seeking counsellors and psychotherapists that are Christians.
- Membership of an Accredited Register under the Professional Standards Authority.
- Parity with the BACP, UKCP and NCS accredited members as set out in the SCoPEd framework, January 2022 version (columns A & B) and eligibility for NHS's Improving Access to Psychological Therapies High Intensity Roles.
- Professional development and progression through accreditation, including the ability to transfer accreditation gained from other professional bodies.



Qualified Counsellors (Registered, Accredited & Overseas)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The counsellor will:

1. Self-identify as a Christian and maintain commitment to a Christian way of life/way of being and accept ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).
2. Adhere to our ethical codes, by having knowledge and understanding of:
 - ACC's [Ethics and Practice](#);
 - [Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy](#);
 - [The Churchill Framework](#) as a guide to integrating the religious faith and spirituality in counselling practice.
3. Adhere to our practice standards which means:
 - undertake all counselling under a professional contract which also sets out your privacy policy in relation to record keeping and data protection/GDPR;
 - have in place an assessment process;
 - keep records of your counselling and where applicable your supervision practice;
 - be in regular supervision;
 - keep records of supervision of your counselling practice and where applicable records of the supervision of your supervision practice;
 - undertake and keep records of the required amount of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) activities;
 - be covered by professional indemnity insurance.
4. Take due account of ACC's general guidance notes and communications relating to counselling and/or supervision practice.
5. Keep us informed by notifying us of:
 - practice breaks (guidelines available on ACC's website);
 - any complaints and sanctions arising from a professional membership or employment;



Qualified Counsellors (Registered, Accredited & Overseas)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- any civil or criminal proceedings relevant to your practice and/or that risk bringing the profession into disrepute.
 - any event such as a significant health diagnosis that might affect your fitness to practice.
6. Ensure that you use the approved ACC logo and Professional Standards Authority (PSA) accredited register quality mark. **Please note the PSA's accredited register quality mark is not to be used if you are based overseas and working with overseas clients. For further guidance contact office@acc-uk.org.**
7. Ensure that directory entries and other public content describing your practice do not mislead the public about your professional membership(s), training, skills and competence, nor make unproven claims about the services you offer; ensure that they adhere to the [Advertising Standards Authority CAP Code](#). In line with counselling ethics you should have distinct and sufficient training to work in specialist areas, such as with children and young people, couples and families etc. This also applies to any publicly advertised adjunct therapies¹ to which your profession as a counsellor may be seen to add legitimacy (for example, coaching or spiritual direction). Also ensure that you maintain your professional integrity on any social media sites.²
8. Where applicable:
- register with the [Information Commissioner Office](#) for holding client information;
 - have in place arrangements for clients to be informed in case of sudden incapacity, illness or death (sometimes called a professional will);
 - ensure that premises you are responsible for comply with relevant health and safety

¹ An adjunct therapy is a defined practice undertaken by a member in addition to their counselling practice. Typically this will be a paid or voluntary contracted service by that individual offered to members of the public which is intended to have a therapeutic objective or outcome. For ACC counselling members, an adjunct therapy may be in coaching or spiritual direction. Involvement in general pastoral care and/or prayer ministry or retreat leading in churches or other places of worship does not equate to an adjunct therapy.

² Please note that we are required by the Professional Standards Authority to check a proportion of our members' directory entries, websites, and any social media presence to ensure that they are upholding counselling ethics and standards, and not bringing the profession into disrepute. We would advise that all members keep the settings on their personal social media accounts set to private.



Qualified Counsellors (Registered, Accredited & Overseas)

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

legislation.

9. Have good business and financial processes in relation to counselling and supervision practice and/or the delivery of counselling training that are appropriate and required for the organisational structure or individual practice, i.e. self-employed, professional partnership, limited company, charity, etc.
10. Agree to be subject to ACC's practice review (audit) when invited.
11. Agree to be subject to ACC complaints process, which may involve ACC contacting your supervisor, manager and/or other appropriate people. ACC also reserve the right to contact members to raise matters of concern that have been notified to us and that we consider present a medium or high risk to members of the public, even in the event that no formal complaint is submitted.
13. Be responsible for keeping your membership record accurate, recording changes in contact details, supervision and insurance, and for processing your annual renewal in good time to ensure that your practice is covered.
14. Keep abreast of changes in practice standards and organisational policy by reading ACC emails and *accord* journal. Please note this means that you must stay subscribed to MailChimp.



- Being part of a Christian professional counselling and psychotherapy body that works with other professional bodies and stakeholders to enhance the safety of members of the public seeking counselling services, to reduce the stigma relating to mental health, and to promote the value of access to counsellors and psychotherapists who identify as Christian.
- A code of ethics and practice that takes into account working with a client's religious and spiritual issues in counselling and psychotherapy practice.
- Being subject to a complaints process which, where possible, resolves complaints through processes that encourage mutual understanding, reparation and professional growth and development.
- Warm, timely, individual support, with help and advice from a team with professional knowledge and expertise.
- Receipt of the *accord* journal, including articles on counselling, psychotherapy and pastoral care/ministry, covering the interrelation between Christian faith, counselling/psychotherapy, and mental and spiritual health and wellbeing.
- Discount on ACC events.
- News and professional updates via emails.
- Free attendance at Members Open Forums on different topics relating to counselling and psychotherapy and the Christian faith.
- Access to members-only resources on ACC's website.



Student Counsellors

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The student counsellor will:

1. Self-identify as a Christian and maintain commitment to a Christian way of life/way of being and accept ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).
2. Be registered with a course that meets ACC's counselling education standards.
3. Adhere to our ethical codes, by having knowledge and understanding of
 - ACC's [Ethics and Practice](#);
 - [Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy](#);
 - [The Churchill Framework](#) as a guide to integrating the religious faith and spirituality in counselling practice.
4. Adhere to practice standards in placement settings as set out by the student's training organisation.
5. Agree to be subject to ACC complaints process for counselling work that is carried out whilst on placement, which may involve us contacting your supervisor and/or counselling manager and/or training manager.
6. Be responsible for keeping your membership record accurate, recording changes in contact details, supervision and insurance, and for processing your annual renewal in good time to ensure that your practice is covered.
7. Keep abreast of changes in practice standards and organisational policy by reading ACC emails and *Accord* journal. Please note this means that you must stay subscribed to MailChimp.

Christian Identity

Christian identity is important because one of ACC's key purposes is to hold a register of counsellors who are Christians. With regards to membership of ACC, being Christian means being in agreement with the foundation of Christian faith and belief as expressed in our [Statement of Faith](#); we believe this is acceptable to Christian denominations situated within Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox churches and communities. We also believe that being a Christian involves the desire to be in community with other Christians, but we fully accept that sometimes people are between churches or fellowships because they have moved to a new area or because they are in a time of faith shift or transition.

Practice Standards

Guidelines are available on our website, and on request from the office, which cover in detail practice standards and policies on the following:

- Supervision
- Continuous Professional Development
- Practice Breaks
- Professional Duty of Candour
- Templates for Record Keeping



Counselling and Counselling Training Affiliates

BENEFITS

- Belonging to a national Christian professional membership body which holds an accredited register of counsellors under the Professional Standards Authority. When membership is in date, affiliates can display “Affiliated with the Association of Christians in Counselling and Linked Professions” and ACC’s logo on their website.
- Access to timely help and advice when needed.
- Having an accountable professional membership, including an external complaints process, under which valid concerns and complaints in relation to ACC’s [Ethics and Practice](#) can be reported.
- Free entry on Find A Counsellor/Organisation directory for counselling centres.
- Access to members-only resources on ACC’s website for articles, policies and information, and quarterly *accord* journal.
- Discount on ACC events for staff and volunteers.
- Free access for staff and volunteers to Members Open Forums.
- Free advertising in the In Touch section of *accord* journal on a first come, first served basis.
- Free advertising of up to 5 CPD events per calendar year on ACC website.
- Free advertising on ACC website for courses that lead students to qualify as counsellors and/or psychotherapists from certificate and diploma level through to BA/MA programmes in counselling and psychotherapy.
- Free advertising of paid roles on ACC website and via email to members.
- Reduced rate student membership for anyone studying in an affiliated training organisation.



Counselling and Counselling Training Affiliates

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The affiliate will:

1. Have a Christian ethos and/or Christian distinctiveness¹. The governing body or steering group of the organisation is informed by Christian values and ethics, whether or not everyone involved in the affiliate is a practising Christian.
2. Adhere to our ethical codes and relevant competency framework, by having knowledge and understanding of:
 - ACC's [Ethics and Practice](#);
 - [Memorandum of Understanding on Conversion Therapy](#);
 - [The Churchill Framework](#) as a guide to integrating the religious faith and spirituality in counselling practice.
3. Ensure that all employed, contracted and voluntary staff, who are providing counselling services, have sufficient foundational training and support and/or professional supervision appropriate to their roles.
4. Ensure that all employed, contracted and voluntary staff, i.e. counsellors, psychotherapists, art therapists and/or clinical and counselling psychologists, clinical supervisors and, where relevant, trainers, are on a Professional Standards Authority accredited register or the HCPC register and maintain their registered membership(s).
5. Ensure that all student counsellors are training on a qualifying counselling course that meets ACC's educational standards (at least a level 4 diploma, appropriately accredited within OFQUAL framework, with a core curriculum and at least 75% of the course delivered in person).
6. Adhere to good practice standards by:
 - offering a safe place for employed, contracted and voluntary staff and members of the public to work from and/or receive services from.

¹ACC is an ecumenical Christian charity which recognises membership from those who identify with Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches' beliefs and faith expressions.



Counselling and Counselling Training Affiliates

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- offering services to members of the public without discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 defines and describes various forms of discrimination in relation to nine protected characteristics. Good equality practice encourages consideration of other groups of people who may be marginalised or disadvantaged.
- having open and fair recruitment policies which follow the letter and the spirit of the law in relation to protected characteristics (see above) for staff and volunteers.
- where applicable, having open and fair enrolment policy to accept students onto a training course, providing appropriate support for students and adhering to the policies, standards and requirements of the awarding bodies.
- having open and fair means of responding appropriately when a service user needs to raise a concern or a complaint.
- having good governance processes and procedures which ensure that the affiliate operates within the UK and relevant devolved government legislations, maintains appropriate insurance cover for its areas of work, has appropriate financial management in place, treats employed and voluntary staff fairly in line with standard HR processes, and provides means of redress for employed, contracted and voluntary staff if they want to raise a grievance.
- when advertising services, including adjunct services (for example prayer ministry, spiritual direction), refrain from misleading members of the public about the services on offer.
- where applicable, providing sufficient support to students on placement on an ongoing basis, ensuring that there is an agreement in place clearly setting out the responsibilities of the affiliate in relation to the student, and that the risk to clients in assigning them student counsellors is sufficiently managed.
- where applicable, supporting qualified counsellors in maintaining practice standards, encouraging ongoing training and development and selfcare activities.
- where possible, gathering outcome measures and/or feedback and actively monitoring the effectiveness of the service on offer.



Counselling and Counselling Training Affiliates

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

7. Encourage student and qualified counsellors, and pastoral carers to become individual members of ACC where appropriate.
8. Refrain from any activity that brings ACC, the wider counselling profession and/or the ministry of pastoral care into disrepute.
9. Notify ACC of any complaints received by the affiliate, or any criminal or civil proceedings against any person associated with the affiliate which could bring the profession into disrepute or otherwise present a risk to staff and/or members of the public.
10. Nominate a named individual as the contact person for ACC who will circulate email communications and keep the membership record up to date.

Organisations who cannot currently meet all these standards, are accepted into membership provided that they can demonstrate that they are 'working towards' having these in place or have a valid reason for an exemption.



Pastoral Care Members

BENEFITS

- Being a member of a UK wide ecumenical organisation committed to good practice in pastoral care, sharing collective wisdom and supporting and encouraging one another.
- Receipt of the *accord* journal with articles relevant to counselling and psychotherapy and the ministry of pastoral care in a Christian context.
- Access to members-only resources on ACC's website.
- Free attendance at Members Open Forums for discussion of issues relevant to the ministry of pastoral care.
- Discount on ACC events which include events designed for those in the ministry of pastoral care.
- Access to specific preparation training and facilitated support/supervision groups for pastoral carers (subject to an additional charge).



Pastoral Care Members

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The pastoral carer will:

1. Identify as a Christian belonging to a Christian church or fellowship, or in another ministry setting, for example in pastoral support role or an outreach community service or similar.
2. Be accountable to the church or organisation that you offer pastoral care within.
3. Be aware and supportive of ACC's vision and the principles enshrined in ACC's [Ethics and Practice](#), and accept ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).
4. Be committed to the ministry of pastoral care, undertaking training as required and following the [Guidelines for Good Practice in Pastoral Care](#).
5. Be sensitive, respectful and act with integrity, avoiding any activity that brings ACC and/or the ministry of pastoral care into disrepute .
6. Be committed to developing and caring for self in order to care well for others, ensuring that your ministry of care is appropriately supported by yourself and others to avoid personal overload and burnout.
7. Be committed to remaining in communication with ACC by reading emails and the *accord* journal, and stay subscribed to MailChimp.
8. Be committed to keeping your membership record accurate and notify us of any changes in contact details.



Pastoral Care Affiliates

BENEFITS

- Belonging to a UK wide ecumenical organisation committed to good practice in pastoral care, sharing collective wisdom and supporting and encouraging one another.
- When membership is in date, affiliates can display “Affiliated with ACC” and ACC’s logo on their website.
- Access to help and advice when needed.
- Where offering services to members of the public can advertise on ACC’s Find an Organisation directory.
- Access to members-only resources on ACC’s website.
- Access to the *accord* journal and access to members only area of the website for further articles, policies and information.
- Access to facilitated online pastoral support groups for pastoral carers (subject to an additional charge), with specific preparatory training available.
- Discount on ACC events (for one named person per event).
- Free access for staff and volunteers to Members Open Forums.
- Free advertising of up to 5 events per calendar year where they are relevant for ACC memberships (for example, training, retreats).
- Free advertising of paid roles on ACC website and via email to members.



Pastoral Care Affiliates

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

A church affiliate needs to belong to a church denomination with a recognised Christian tradition¹ and accept ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).

An organisational affiliate needs to have a Christian foundation and accept ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).

The affiliate will:

1. Be aware and supportive of ACC's vision.
2. Hold the [Guidelines for Good Practice in Pastoral Care](#) for their pastoral workers.
3. Be accountable for their pastoral work and organisational practices to their denomination or central organisation and refrain from any activity that brings ACC or the wider ministry of pastoral care into disrepute.
4. Uphold the principle and practice of equipping pastoral workers through training.
5. Uphold the principle and practice of supporting its pastoral workers through clear systems, caring for one another and establishing practices of self-reflection and self-care.
6. Nominate a named individual as the contact person who will circulate communications from ACC to others in the affiliate.
7. Keep their membership record and contact details up to date.

¹ACC is an ecumenical Christian charity which recognises membership from those who identify with Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches' beliefs and faith expressions.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

The sole affiliate membership is for churches or organisations that are not part of a denomination or wider organisation.

The affiliate will:

1. Have a recognised Christian tradition that can identify with Protestant, Catholic and Orthodox churches' beliefs and faith expressions and accept ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).
2. Be aware and supportive of ACC's vision.
3. Be accountable for their pastoral work as a single body to ACC and refrain from any activity that brings ACC or the wider ministry of pastoral care into disrepute.
4. Hold the [Guidelines for Good Practice in Pastoral Care](#) for their pastoral workers.
5. Uphold the principle and practice of equipping pastoral workers through training.
6. Uphold the principle and practice of supporting its pastoral workers through clear systems, caring for one another and establishing practices of self-reflection and self-care.
7. Not offer services beyond the affiliate's ability to deliver safely and as appropriate to any members training, skill and competence.
8. Adhere to good practice standards by:
 - offering a safe place for employed, contracted and voluntary staff and members of the public to work from and/or receive services from.
 - offering services to members of the public without discrimination. The Equality Act 2010 defines and describes various forms of discrimination in relation to nine protected characteristics. Good equality practice encourages consideration of other groups of people who may be marginalised or disadvantaged.
 - having open and fair recruitment policies which follow the letter and the spirit of the law in relation to protected characteristics (see above) for staff, contractors and volunteers.
 - having open and fair means of responding appropriately when a service user needs to raise a concern or a complaint.



TERMS AND CONDITIONS

- having good governance processes and procedures which ensure that the affiliate operates within the UK and relevant devolved government legislations, maintains appropriate insurance cover for its areas of work, has appropriate financial management in place, treats employed, contractor and voluntary staff fairly in line with standard HR processes, and provides means of redress for employed and voluntary staff if they want to raise a grievance.
 - when advertising services, refrain from misleading members of the public about the services on offer.
 - where applicable, supporting staff and volunteers, encouraging ongoing training and development and selfcare activities.
 - where possible, gathering outcome measures and/or feedback and actively monitoring the effectiveness of the service on offer.
9. Nominate a named individual as the contact person who will circulate communications from ACC to others in the affiliate.
10. Keep their membership record and contact details up to date.



Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship

ACC has a long-established way of recognising the contributions that individuals have made towards the work of ACC and the wider world of counselling and pastoral care through the awarding of Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship.

Fellows

Fellows are current or former members of ACC. The award is in recognition of their contribution to the work of ACC.

A Fellow will have demonstrated their eligibility for the award by having made a significant contribution to the work of ACC through, for example:

- Direct service to ACC. Voluntary or semi voluntary service that is sustained over an extended period of time (5 years +) in support of ACC as an organisation. This could be as a trustee, committee member, or in an administrative or ancillary capacity.
- Service in the wider community of Christian counsellors and pastoral carers. Exceptional service in the establishment or leadership of an ACC affiliated organisation over a sustained period of time (3+ years).
- Achievements. An individual member who demonstrates a portfolio of significant achievements that have contributed to developments in the field of counselling or pastoral care over a period of time.

Benefits and Rights

If a Fellow is continuing to practice in any of ACC membership categories, they will continue to pay full fees and be required to follow the annual renewal process appropriate for that membership category. Once a Fellow has ceased practicing and no longer needs a professional membership, they will be provided with the equivalent of free lifetime Friend membership. This means that they are kept in touch with ACC through emails, entitled to discounts at ACC events and the *accord* journal.

Fellows do not have voting rights as a member of ACC, i.e. at AGMs or Extraordinary General Meetings. However, if they hold another ACC professional membership, they will have the voting rights appropriate to that membership.



Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship

Honorary Fellows

Honorary Fellows are not and do not have to be past members of ACC. The award is in recognition of their contribution to the fields of counselling and pastoral care, not necessarily directly towards the work of ACC.

An Honorary Fellow will have demonstrated their eligibility for the award by having made a significant contribution to the field through:

- academic research, teaching and writing on the subject of Christianity and mental health and wellbeing in relation to the ministry of counselling or pastoral care;
- professional teaching and writing on the subject of Christianity and counselling or pastoral care;
- exceptional provision of pastoral care and/or counselling services, for example the setting up and running of a charity with a Christian foundation, which delivers counselling and/or pastoral care services on a significant scale;
- advocating or advancing the broader profession of counselling and psychotherapy and/or forms of pastoral care or the wider promotion of mental wellbeing;
- service which advances the cause of under-represented people or groups, especially within an inclusion and diversity context.

Benefits and Rights

Honorary Fellows will be provided with the equivalent of free lifetime Friend membership. This means that they are kept in touch with ACC through emails, entitled to discounts at ACC events and the *accord* journal. They do not have voting rights as a member of ACC, i.e. at AGMs or Extraordinary General Meetings.

Awarding Fellowships

Individuals can be nominated by ACC members, staff and officers. All nominations should include details of how the individual meets the criteria for the award and will be considered by ACC Board in the autumn of each year with awards being made in December.



Fellowship and Honorary Fellowship

Fellows and Honorary Fellows are sent a letter by the Chair informing them of their award.

Nominations for Awards

If you would like to recommend an individual for either a Fellow or Honorary Fellow award, then please email office@acc-uk.org providing:

- your name and contact details;
- the name and contact details of the person who you are nominating;
- details of their work that you believe makes them eligible for such a reward in line with the above criteria.

All nominations must be received by 31 October each year.

Retaining and Removing Fellowships

The status and benefits of Honorary Fellow and Fellow are awarded for life and do not have to be renewed each year like other ACC memberships.

An individual would cease to be an Honorary Fellow or Fellow if they:

- requested it to be ceased; or
- behaved in such a way as to bring ACC into serious disrepute such that ACC Board deemed it necessary to remove the status, in which case the individual would be notified of the decision.

Publication of Awards

With the permission of the recipient ACC will:

- publish a list in *accord* each year of new Honorary Fellows and Fellows, including the name of the recipient, the award given and a short citation about their work.
- maintain on the website a list of all current Honorary Fellows and Fellows, including the name of the recipient, the award given and a short citation about their work.

Appendix: Frequently Asked Questions for Counselling Membership

Is ACC's counsellor membership only for counsellors who practice 'Christian counselling'?

No, ACC's counsellor membership is for professional counsellors, psychotherapists and trainees who identify as Christians. ACC counsellors practice a range of therapeutic modalities and approaches in various settings (for example the NHS, schools, counselling services and private practice), and with people of all faiths and none.

Our expectation is that where members integrate religious and spiritual interventions in their counselling practice they do so (as with any other areas of competency), having sufficient training, under appropriate supervision and take account of [The Churchill Framework](#).

I am a counsellor with at least a level 4 diploma in counselling about to embark on additional further training at degree or postgraduate level - can I stay as a student member or if already practising revert to being a student member?

Students are trainee counsellors on qualifying training courses. As soon as you are qualified and want to work as a counsellor outside of a placement which is integrated with your training course - then you need to join the register. This is because you are working with clients not as a 'student in training' but as a qualified counsellor.

Do you accept members who are on other Accredited Registers and the HCPC register?

We accept members of other comparable accredited registers onto our register (there is a list on the website of comparable registers). We also accept into membership Art Therapists and Counselling and Clinical Psychologists on the HCPC register. We ask that members describe their qualifications on the 'Find a Counsellor' directory so that members of the public looking for a variety of Christian therapists are able to make informed choices.

Can I be on the Register if I live and practice overseas?

Yes, you can be on the register if you live and practice overseas if you meet the eligibility criteria. However, you cannot use the Professional Standards Authority logo outside of the UK.

ACC accept that the training in other parts of the world does not always match established UK standards and norms, and we have an equivalence decision route for registered membership.

What checks do you make about a member's Christian identity?

For counsellors we check that someone accountable, normally a church leader, tutor, supervisor, spiritual director etc, can confirm that you are someone who identifies as a Christian. This is your Christian Sponsor. We don't ask your Sponsor to make any comment on

the strength of your faith and/or your adherence to particular doctrines. Each year on renewal we ask you in good faith to confirm that you are someone who continues to identify as a Christian and is in support of ACC's [Statement of Faith](#).

We recognise that the Christian faith is a living faith, subject to change and development, to crisis and new awakenings, and whilst it always finds expression in community, there are times in peoples lives where they are between fellowships. We no longer ask for a Christian sponsors reference for professional practice related activities such as practice reviews (audit) and accreditation applications. Please contact us if this presents an issue.

When can I set up in private practice?

Counsellors who are on ACC's Register can work in private practice provided that they have a supervisor who supports their decision to do so and are fully prepared.

Setting up in private practice brings risks as well as opportunities and is a matter for careful discernment as to when a counsellor is ready to do so.

Can I retain my status as a counsellor/psychotherapist if I need to take a break from practice?

Yes, for two years. Breaks for longer than two years may need a more involved phased return to practice. We will work with you and your supervisor to work out the best route to return provided that you maintain membership of ACC through the interim time.

If you leave ACC's membership, you will need to re-apply to join the register (eligibility criteria may change over time) and we will also need to agree a phased return to practice for breaks of two years or more.

Returning from any practice break needs planning and reflection and we have issued guidelines on practice breaks (available on ACC's website) which will guide you through the process.

We are an organisation that offers more than just counselling services - what is the most suitable membership for us?

Many of our affiliated organisations are hybrid affiliates in that they provide pastoral care services (listening, signposting and practical help) as well as professional counselling. Affiliates offering these mixed services should join as a counselling affiliate as this will offer the more comprehensive accountable membership which is critical when offering counselling services.

Document history

Version	Date	Summary of changes
0.1	7 September 2021	First draft
1.0	5 December 2021	Reviewed; first version
1.1	10 February 2022	Reviewed pastoral care affiliates T&C; updated fee table
1.2	7 July 2022	Included newly qualified registered counsellor in fee table
2.0	22 December 2022	Updated layout with new name & logo; took out fee table; replaced PCUK with ACC Pastoral Care
2.1	22 March 2023	Added "professional integrity on social media" to point 7 under qualified counsellor member T&C
2.2	19 September 2023	Added "employment" & "any event such as a significant health diagnosis that might affect your fitness to practice" to point 5 under qualified counsellor member T&C
