



## **PACT Member Code of Conduct**

Last updated 16/06/2021

### **Introduction**

The Professional Association of Canine Trainers (PACT) code sets out to establish and maintain the minimum standards for conduct with which members are required to comply with.

Members (PACT-KSAs) must abide by this code and are required to sign a Code of Conduct statement in acceptance of the rules defined in the code.

Members (PACT-KSAs) must comply with all aspects of the Code. Enrolled students must comply with those aspects relevant to their level of study.

Any disciplinary matters of the PACT committee will be guided by the Code of Conduct, but mention or lack of mention in the Code of Conduct of a particular act or other omission will not be taken as conclusive on any question of professional conduct.

### **General**

A member of the Professional Association of Canine Trainers is defined as a PACT-KSA (Professional Association of Canine Trainers-Knowledge and Skills Assessed). A PACT-KSA has expertise in animal and dog training learning theory and the practical application of that learning theory, plus a broad range of knowledge and skills relating to dogs, including: dog breeds, temperament and personality; basic canine husbandry and first aid; canine body language; nutrition; the use of equipment and training aids in dog training; one-on-one training, class organisation and lesson plans; risk assessments; coaching and people skills; and animal law. PACT-KSA(s) will be referred to as member(s) from hereon.

Members have completed training on all aspects of dog training to an appropriate and approved level corresponding with their membership.

Members are expected to keep their professional knowledge, and personal and practical skills up-to-date, by regularly undertaking suitable Continuing Professional Development (CPD), as well as providing evidence of ongoing CPD when required to do so by the committee.

Upon enrolment, students undertaking the PACT Canine Training Instructor course automatically become subject to the PACT Code of Conduct.

## **Ethics**

In all endeavours, members and students working towards their assessment shall conduct themselves professionally, and in a manner that does not bring PACT or the dog training discipline and profession into disrepute. (Students will be required to sign a Student Code of Conduct short statement upon commencing their studies).

Members will act responsibly, and demonstrate integrity, respect and impartiality to their clients, the general public, veterinary personnel, and other canine professionals.

Members will refrain from giving advice and acting in a way that would knowingly cause harm, psychological and/or physical distress, damage, or injury.

Specifically:

- Refrain from acting impolitely or disrespectfully towards persons or dogs in receipt of their services.
- Refrain from using confrontation, force, rough handling, bullying, intimidation or coercion whether verbally or physically, towards persons or dogs in receipt of their services.
- Refrain from using punitive and/or non-scientifically backed and approved methods and techniques.
- Where a technique is non-coercive and positive but experimental, the client, and the referring veterinary surgeon (if applicable), should be made aware of this and given a rationale as to why it is being used as an alternative to a scientifically supported tried and tested technique.
- Refrain from using punitive techniques or any article listed in Appendix 1.

- Any training method and/or equipment recommended, promoted, used or sold by members will be consistent with the principles of positive and force-free training.

Members will practise and uphold the highest professional ethical standards.

Members will comply with their legal obligations; and the interest, welfare and safety of their clients and dog(s), or any other person(s) engaging their services will be paramount at all times.

Members will be proficient and comply with all relevant up-to-date animal welfare legislation.

Members will maintain professional relationships with their clients, and refrain from exploiting such relationships for inappropriate professional, personal, as well as financial or commercial gain.

At all times, members will refrain from imposing their own values on clients.

Members will refrain from attracting business unprofessionally, unethically or unfairly.

Members will not conduct their business and practice in any way likely to negatively affect, harm or discredit the reputation of the PACT.

## **Competency**

Members will refrain from claiming, directly or indirectly, qualifications or affiliations they do not possess and from claiming competence on any aspect of dog training and/or canine behaviour in which they have not established their proficiency.

Members will respect the views, independence and free will of others and refrain from publicly disparaging individuals, opinions, or conduct.

Members will maintain and further develop their professional competence and proficiency and continually work to improve, but also recognise the limit of their intellectual and practical abilities;

Specifically:

Members will recognise the limit of their knowledge and skills, and when faced with an issue beyond the scope of their ability, will refer to a qualified and accredited canine behaviourist where necessary.

Members will be required to undertake, and be responsible for, their continuing personal and professional development, via suitable ongoing theoretical and practical studies.

Members will refrain from making untrue, unrealistic, unjustifiable, exaggerated, and misleading claims likely to encourage unrealistic expectations, about their knowledge, skills, and the effectiveness of their methods or products either personally or via promotion and advertising.

It should be made clear whenever members are expressing a personal opinion and/or unsubstantiated theories that they should be stated as such.

## **Conduct**

Members will conduct themselves in their professional endeavours in a way that does not damage those in receipt of their services, and does not undermine public confidence in their ability or that of other dog trainers and other animal professionals.

Members will not attempt to secure or to accept any significant financial or material benefit beyond that which has been contractually agreed from those in receipt of their services.

Members should not allow their professional responsibilities or standards of practice to be affected or compromised by issues of religion, sex, race, age, nationality, party politics, social standing, class, self-interest or other unrelated factors.

Members will 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.

Members will ensure the safety and well-being of those in receipt of their services at all times during training procedures and while using equipment.

Members will bring allegations of misconduct by a professional colleague to the attention of the PACT committee, without malice and or breaches of confidentiality other than those necessary for the investigatory process.

Members (and students enrolled on the PACT Canine Training Instructor Course) will conduct themselves in a professional manner at all times on all public platforms, with particular reference to social media. Specifically, members will refrain from disparaging, bullying or antagonising other individuals or bringing PACT into disrepute.

Members (and students enrolled on the PACT Canine Training Instructor Course) will conduct themselves in a polite, respectful and professional manner towards members of the PACT faculty at all times. Rudeness, bullying, antagonism or aggressive behaviour towards any member of the PACT faculty will not be tolerated and will result either in a warning or dismissal from the course.

Where there is clear evidence of a member or student found to be disparaging a member of the PACT faculty on a public platform or other, membership will be revoked immediately.

## **Consent**

Members will ensure valid consent had been obtained from those in receipt of their services for all investigations and training interventions, having taken all reasonable steps to ensure that clients or participants have adequately understood what the investigations and interventions entail, and their likely outcome.

Members will recognise and uphold the rights of those in receipt of their services to withdraw consent to training interventions 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.

## **Competency**

Members will maintain adequate records and take reasonable steps to preserve the confidentiality of information acquired through their professional affairs, and to protect the privacy of individuals or organisations whose information is collected or held. In general, and according to the law, will prevent the identity of individuals or organisations being revealed, deliberately or inadvertently, without their expressed permission.

Members will communicate information obtained through their professional affairs while preventing the identification of individuals or organisations at all times.

In exceptional circumstances, when sufficient evidence has raised serious concern about the safety or interests of recipients of services, or about others

who may be threatened by a recipient's behaviour, members may take reasonable steps to inform appropriate third parties without prior consent.

Members will ensure that records in their possession remain personally identifiable only as long as necessary, and to anonymise any records being held that no longer need to be personally identifiable.

Members will only make audio, video, or photographic recordings of recipients of services with the agreement of those being recorded, both to the actual recording and to the subsequent access to it by others.

Members will take all reasonable steps to safeguard the security of any recordings made, including those held on computer or other digital media.

Members will take all necessary steps to ensure that colleagues, staff, trainees and students with whom they work understand and respect the need for confidentiality regarding any information obtained.

## **Membership**

Only those current full members, i.e. those who have successfully undergone PACT's assessment process and successfully passed, are allowed to use the term 'PACT-KSA' (Professional Association of Canine Trainers-Knowledge and Skills Assessed) when representing themselves, and to use those letters after their names.

Only full members, i.e. PACT-KSAs, are entitled to use the PACT logo in conjunction with their name (Trademark application has been submitted to the Intellectual Property Office). The logo may only be used in conjunction with the member's name and/or details.

Any person who is not a full member, i.e. PACT-KSA, found using the term or logo, would lead to the seeking of an injunction or to other legal steps being taken to restrain the person concerned from misleadingly representing themselves.

PACT-KSAs will ensure that PACT membership is exclusively for their individual use and will not be used to endorse the activities of any other club, society or organisation they may belong to, and that promotional and advertising material refrains from suggesting or implying endorsement by the PACT.

PACT-KSAs who employ assistants, helpers or volunteers who are not PACT members, are responsible for their behaviour towards clients and their dog(s), and must ensure they carry themselves responsibly and conform with the Code of Conduct.

PACT-KSA will be subject to random checks, at any given time, which may occur without prior notification.

## **Liability**

PACT-KSAs must maintain a suitable level of professional indemnity insurance to meet any liabilities which may arise as a result of their professional services.

Membership and membership renewal will be dependent on proof of professional indemnity insurance, and will be cancelled if such insurance lapses/is found to have lapsed.

The Professional Association of Canine Trainers will not be liable to members for any claims, losses, damages or other expenses (either direct, special or consequential) arising as a result of any dispute between a member and their client, or a third party in relation to any professional advice or training.

## **Complaints Procedure**

The PACT committee has a procedure for dealing with complaints and issues relating to conduct to enable the investigation of allegations of misconduct against a member. All investigations are conducted in private. The relevant members must provide assistance with the investigation.

The PACT committee will advise on all matters of members conduct and any complaint or dispute will be dealt with by reference to the code of conduct.

Membership will be terminated immediately if a member is found to have caused suffering and/or injury, and/or found guilty of cruelty or other crime(s) towards an animal(s).

## **Confidentiality and Non-disclosure of PACT Dogs Ltd Intellectual Property**

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, agree not to disclose, pass or forward, all or any or part of the course material or external assessment material to any third party.

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, agree not to disclose, share or forward, the content of any PACT email with any third party.

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, will not disclose, share or forward, confidential and private PACT briefings, communicated via the private facebook group or via facebook Messenger, with any third party (shared public resources such as magazine articles, scientific papers, blogs, etc. are exempted from this clause).

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, will not disclose, share or forward, private PACT material contained within the Members Area of the PACT website, to any third party.

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, agree not to copy or reproduce the PACT course, nor any part of the PACT course, for their own personal business endeavours.

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, acknowledge that all PACT course materials and resources remain the Intellectual Property of the PACT.

Members, students and external applicants undergoing assessment, acknowledge that evidence of failure to adhere to any of the above, may result in the following (relevant) action being taken:

- Prevention from being allowed to carry on with the PACT course, undertaking assessments or gaining membership (no refund(s) will be given)
- Permanent membership suspension.
- Legal action.

## **Amendments**

This code may be amended by the PACT committee at any time provided that the proposed alteration is notified to all members, and their comments requested and duly considered by the committee.

## Appendix 1

The use of the following articles and methods/techniques is strictly prohibited by the PACT:

- Prong or spike collars
- Hanging collars
- Check /choke chains or half-check/choke chains
- Electric shock, or high frequency sound or buzzing devices which apply an aversive stimulus such as pain or startle.
- Spray collars of any kind, whether remote-controlled, automatic, and citronella or water-based or other.
- Tightening harnesses, i.e. harnesses that tighten around the chest or abdomen when a dog pulls.
- Cloth or mesh muzzle, or any muzzle that restricts breathing and/or panting (only safe basket muzzles should be used when necessary)
- Any other device, training aid or piece of equipment the PACT deems inappropriate.
- Pet Corrector, Dog Stop or similar devices (sonic devices which release pressurised air, citronella or other).
- Anti-bark collars of any type.
- Training discs, or any similar training item designed to startle and interrupt.
- Any type of water or liquid spray, e.g. citronella.
- Any commercial or home-made device emitting a loud noise e.g. rattle cans or bottles containing stones.
- The throwing of keys, chains, sticks, or any other item.
- Strong olfactory repellent substances, e.g. smelling salts, bite back, chilli (or other capsaicin containing substance), pepper, lemon, etc.

Instructing in class or on a one-to-one basis:

- Shouting, growling, or making a confrontational noise, towards a dog(s).
- Pinching of ears, feet, toes or any other part of a dog's body.
- Hitting, prodding, jabbing a dog.
- Biting a dog.
- Pinning a dog down in an 'alpha roll'.
- Punitive physical contact of any kind, as well as intimidation or coercion or any action that causes fear.
- Any aversive or punitive manhandling causing discomfort, distress and/or pain.