

Human Givens Institute Ethics and Complaints Committee
Minutes of Annual Review Meeting (ARM) held by Skype conference call, 16.2.14

Present: Sue Cheshire (Chair), Ian Thomson (Vice Chair), Sarah Jeffrey-Gray, Julian Penton, Richard Rowland. Note: ✓ = action completed

ITEM	DISCUSSION AND DECISIONS	ACTION AND WHEN
<p>Approval and review of minutes of last ARM 3.2.13</p>	<p>The minutes of the last year's ARM were approved and reviewed. Action points were: Re membership of ECC, PSA registration and the need for a Registration and Standards Committee: ongoing, see Item 1 below. The member who applied to join May 2012 is now working with Sue Saunders' group. SC ✓ Re support for member who was acting as a witness in a trial – this was provided by IT ✓ Re allowing complaints to be received by email: change website etc. ✓ Re data protection and ECC communications: explore with ISOS: done by IT ✓ (also ongoing – see Item 9 below) Re circulation of urgent protection policy to HGI members: done by IT ✓ Re maintaining records and keeping up with deadlines for requirements imposed on members as a result of complaints etc.: IT currently keeping archives and to share deadlines with all in case of emergency. Done ✓ + ongoing debate see Item 7 below. S J-G to research how other organisations keep and manage such records. C/F Re introduction of revised Code of Ethics, SC to finalise drafts and circulate: done ✓ But further amendments had delayed implementation, see Item 2 below. ✓ Re new Registration and Standards Committee, help of ECC required: ongoing, see Item 1 below. ✓</p>	<p>S J-G to research record keeping. Note Glasscubes secure database adopted in 2015.</p>
<p>1 PSA registration and transition from ECC to HGI Registration and Standards Committee</p>	<p>JP reported that HGI is moving forwards with this. The application is not yet completed and is consuming a lot of time at the moment. The original hope had been to be registered by March 2014, but it is now more likely to be towards the end of the year. Sue Saunders is in a working group on internal training validation with 2 academics from HE; they are likely to recommend some changes in the HGI training to the tutors.</p> <p>On the formation of the new RSC, recruitment is now urgent and JP will take this forward at the next Board meeting. ✓</p> <p>JP asked S J-G to cast a legally-trained eye over the new 'fitness to practise' declaration that</p>	

	<p>members will need to sign, comparing it with those of other organisations. ✓</p> <p>SC asked whether consideration had been given to sharing some of the required functions (e.g. complaints) with other organisations to cut cost to HGI, which, JP stated, would otherwise be £6-8K per year ongoing, over and above the initial joining fee of £12K. Yes, but no decision had been made on this.</p>	S J-G check 'fitness to practice' draft doc for JP ✓
2 Implementation of revised Code of Ethics (formerly item 3 on the Agenda)	<p>IT updated us on progress. He had been adding in the required links, plus the new whistle-blowing policy and online therapy guidelines.</p> <p>We had hoped to implement the new Code at the same time as registration, but since this has not happened yet, it was decided to go ahead with the Code alone when the revisions are completed. (See also Item 8 below – further changes agreed on Clause 5.16 and 5.21 of current code.) ✓</p>	IT completing links ✓
3 Changes in ECC membership and recruitment of new members (formerly Item 2 on Agenda)	<p>There was a discussion about current ECC members' plans: RR originally hoped to stand down by end February in view of the major HG-based schools project he is involved with, but is willing to delay this for another 2 months until new members are found. ✓</p> <p>Equally, SC wanted to take a back seat for personal reasons, but is willing to continue for the time being. ✓</p> <p>JP said that the current need is for suitable lay people who might have time to contribute. If we know of any, we should encourage them to submit an expression of interest and a CV to HGI. An article inviting applications was published in the last edition of the Journal. Recommendations were worth much: JP asked for all to send ideas to him. ✓</p>	All to send any recommendations for lay members to JP. ✓
4 Summary of ECC activities 2013-14	<p>IT presented the annual summary of cases considered.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There had been four formal complaints, three of which were not upheld, and one is ongoing. • The ECC has also dealt with two complaints against members by third parties. • A copied email from a client expressing dissatisfaction with their therapy afforded a useful learning opportunity: see Item 6 below. • ECC members had also provided support for some therapists who were the subject of complaints. (The members in question withdrew completely from the complaint process.) It was noted that this was a valuable role, but that HGI should eventually provide it completely separately from the ECC. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two ‘whistle-blowing’ cases had been investigated and resolved satisfactorily; prior to this a whistle-blowing policy had been adopted by the HGI. • Two ethical queries were dealt with, concerning storage of records and a possible conflict of roles. • In addition, the ECC, or members of it, contributed to the production of HGI online therapy guidelines; assisted the Board in preparing for the PSA application; produced updated advice for HGI members on data protection and the need to register as ‘data controllers’ where necessary; and issued guidance to members on the replacement of the Criminal Records Bureau Disclosure (CRB) by the new Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS). <p>A vote of thanks was made to IT for all his work in maintaining records for the ECC and for producing this Summary of Activities, which will be updated for the HGI AGM in June. ✓</p>	
<p>5 Membership status: graduate and registered membership of HGI</p>	<p>S J-G raised the issue of the status of graduate members. It was agreed that graduate members are subject to the HGI complaints procedure since they have to agree to comply with the Ethics policy as a condition of continuing membership. It is therefore logical that HGI should deal with complaints arising from their activities, and have the option to suspend or terminate membership of those who have breached the policy. ✓</p> <p>The idea of giving those who had passed the Diploma and wished to practise as therapists the designation of ‘trainee’ was mooted and gained some approval, as did the idea of adding an extra ‘Reg’ to the ‘HGI Dip P’ post-nominal qualification letters. A time limit within which the trainee moved on to take Part 3 and register was also discussed.</p> <p>SC also raised the question of those who, like herself, had passed Part 3 but had not registered because they were working for one organisation and had no need for a listing on the HGI website, or a dedicated member’s page. At the moment, the fee is the same for registered and non-registered members, and the benefits of registration for those not wishing to advertise were not apparent.</p> <p>It was agreed that this issue needed clarification: IT and JP agreed to continue to discuss it and take forward with the Board. ✓</p>	<p>IT and JP to refine ideas and ask Board to clarify status of graduate and registered members. ✓</p>

<p>6 Indirect complaints</p>	<p>A recent case had raised the issue of when members should be left to resolve issues between them and their clients, and when the ECC has a duty to intervene. In this case the client e-mailed an expression of dissatisfaction to their therapist, sending a copy to the HGI, who forwarded it to the ECC. The ECC queried matters with the therapist, who undertook to contact the client and try to resolve matters directly, since there was no formal complaint. When nothing further was heard from the client, the ECC decided to write to them, pointing out that there was a formal complaint process if they wished to use it.</p> <p>It was agreed that <i>ipso facto</i> the copy email was an indirect complaint, and that the ECC has a duty to follow up such complaints, if the client does not respond to attempts at resolution by the therapist, and to ascertain if the client is aware of the formal complaint process. (This is not the same as inviting them to complain.)</p> <p>IT to add a clarification on the duty of the ECC to investigate indirect complaints to the complaints procedure.</p>	<p>IT to update complaints procedure re indirect complaints v</p>
<p>7 Sanctions against members – need for a ‘tariff’?</p>	<p>It was agreed that the ECC needs to be consistent in the imposition of sanctions against members who are found to have breached the ethics policy.</p>	<p>Members to research how other bodies approach this issue. v Note: A document entitled <i>Indicative Sanctions Guidance</i> produced and adopted in 2015</p>
<p>8 Changes to Section 5.16 and 5.21 of current ethics code re sexual conduct</p>	<p>In a recent case, the complainant, who is a professional with wide experience in this particular field, had pointed out that HGI’s clauses on the sexual behaviour of therapists towards clients needed some clarification with regard to former clients. IT had compared HGI’s approach with that of other institutes and found a wider clause that will prove more comprehensively useful. IT to circulate for comments.</p>	<p>IT to circulate alternative wording of sexual behaviour clauses for comment. Code of Ethics and Conduct amended accordingly v</p>

<p>9 Data protection and communications update</p>	<p>IT reported that Miles Daffin had tested a google programme that might provide the requisite communications security for the ECC. A pilot was available on 6 months' trial, so it could be tried out. However, this was before the Snowden leaks called the integrity of Google into question!</p> <p>S J-G asked whether a discrete (and discreet) group on the HGI Forum might not be equally secure and a better way forward. This would allow clear chronological threads of postings. IT to ask Jane Tyrell.</p> <p>S J-G also raised the issue of members needing to register as data controllers if they keep records. SJ-G noted that this legal requirement needs reinforcing to members. RR pointed out that anyone keeping paperwork is a data controller, even if they are not registered. IT noted that there is a simple guide available on the Information Commissioner's website at ico.org.uk that allows people to decide whether they need to register. ✓</p>	<p>IT to enquire whether ECC could have a dedicated area on the HGI Forum. ✓</p> <p>Enhanced data protection guidelines issued in 2014 and 15.</p>
--	---	--