

## Record of Disciplinary Panel Process and Hearing

Complaint Code: 202201

Registrant: Jon Mason

### Complaint Summary

The complaint investigation into concerns about Mr Mason was intricate and complex. The evidence gathered by ACC was substantial, as was the correspondence provided by Mr Mason in his defence. In establishing ACC's case against Mr Mason ACC produced a matrix of connections between a number of individual items of evidence which linked them to Mr Mason, and in turn linked Mr Mason to a person and organisations (including companies in his and the person's name). Mr Mason denied most of the evidence and connections, and the investigation was impacted by the removal of websites and directory entries from the internet.

There are three main areas that the complaint investigation was concerned with.

#### **1. Mr Mason failed to co-operate with ACC in establishing whether he was the Jonathan Mason that had been removal from the HCPC register as a social worker.**

A member of the public contacted ACC with a concern that Mr Mason was on ACC's Register as he had been removed from the HCPC Social Work Register in April 2019.

Applicants for registered membership of ACC, and renewing registrants are required to declare whether they have had any complaints in process or upheld and whether they have been removed from any professional membership bodies.

ACC found details of the case in a pay to view online publication [courtroomnews.co.uk](http://courtroomnews.co.uk), which stated that:

*"The Health and Care Professions tribunal heard Mason's line manager became concerned when she noticed a 'glitch' in Mosaic regarding his cases on 12 April 2017.*

*A lot of them appeared to have been closed without her required approval. An investigation revealed that the listed addresses were either not real, not in the area or belonged to people not using the service.*

*It revealed that 11 of his 19 allocated cases were entirely made up.*

*He also ignored actual cases of vulnerable young people who had been referred to the service.*

*His persistent lying also extended to booking himself into a conference he wasn't authorised to attend, bragging about a non-existent promotion and claiming he worked part-time for another organisation."*

The Court Room News article is no longer available on their website.

Given the content of this report, concerning falsification of records and dishonesty, ACC had a public safety duty to try to establish if the Jon Mason, ACC registered member, was the same person.

ACC established that there was a decision to remove a Mr Jonathan Mason from the Social Work Register, but we could not without Mr Mason's permission establish if it was the same Jonathan Mason as the ACC's registrant. Mr Mason did not give consent for ACC to establish this directly with Social Work England (SWE). He presented in evidence an email from SWE that confirmed that there was no record to match the details he had provided to them. However, the details provided to SWE were omitted so could not be substantiated.

Mr Mason provided in his defence an email from a person who claimed that Mr Mason had worked for him during that time in an unrelated field (matrimonial investigation). When the email was received the company mentioned had a website. This website is no longer available to view. Mr Mason could provide no further evidence of being in this employment.

**2. Mr Mason made different claims about his professional membership, training and experience in adverts, counselling directories and personal websites. ACC presented this information to him asking him to verify the claims he made about his professional training and experience. As with all registrants there is an ethical requirement to be honest about these matters to avoid misleading members of the public who contract for psychotherapy services and/or training. Mr Mason variously denied knowledge of, or responsibility for, these different online advertisements, listings and websites.**

In investigating the initial concern as set out above, ACC became aware of a number of adverts, directory entries and websites for Jon, John and Jonathan Mason, that had inconsistent information about Mr Mason's membership, training and experience. Some referenced his experience as a social worker and working in a children's service. ACC presented a matrix of evidence linking all the many and various online entries for Mr Mason through shared emails, contact addresses, public Facebook posts and company house listings.

Mr Mason in his defence claimed that he did not write the adverts, nor did he have a website, and acknowledged only one directory entry as one that he had set up himself. All the websites and directory entries were taken down during the investigation, and Mr Mason denied having any involvement in the removal of these. In his defence Mr Mason said that there was someone who "looked a little like him" who may have been the person that ACC were investigating. Mr Mason

supplied a picture of the person who bore a resemblance not only to the Jon/John and Jonathan Mason on the many websites, but also appeared to be the same person in a YouTube video of a Mr Mason talking about another business that ACC allege he is associated with through records in company house and shared email/website addresses.

### **3. Dishonesty and lack of integrity**

ACC presented evidence of Mr Mason's dishonesty about other matters, for example the relationship he had with his Christian Sponsor, his attempts to distract and disrupt the complaint investigation process, and a series of threats that he had made to members of ACC and the complaint investigator.

#### **Meeting date**

Friday 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023

10am - 3pm

#### **Panel Members:**

[...] Lay Chair

[...] Counsellor (Non ACC member)

[...] Counsellor (Non ACC member)

**Panel Clerk:** Kathy Spooner

**ACC Presenter:** Sue Monckton-Rickett

#### **Hearing submissions**

*From ACC*

- *ACC Submission for Disciplinary Hearing 30 June 2023 + 65 documents of evidence*
- *Pre-Assessment Panel Bundle: 2022.01 Complaint - Investigators Report FINAL + 38 documents of evidence*

*From registrant*

- *Representations for ACC hearing JM + 31 documents of evidence*
- *Feedback on (Investigators) Interim report PRIVATE + 23 documents*

#### **Panel decisions made prior to meeting**

1. Request from registrant for questions to be sent in advance as a reasonable adjustment for [...]

Rejected because the Panel members felt

a) that no preparation was needed for answering questions at the Hearing as all that was required of the registrant was that he make a full and honest account of himself,

and that

b) the Panel would need to have the ability to ask supplementary questions during the Hearing and it would not be possible to identify what these would be in advance, nor to adjourn the process so that the registrant could prepare further answers.

## 2. Request to accept additional submissions from ACC

a) made on 17/07/23 from Sue Monckton-Rickett relevant to claims made in *Representations for ACC hearing JM* about a YELL.com entry in the name of Sue Monckton-Rickett.

The Panel Chair accepted this as additional evidence on 25/07/23.

b) made on 25/07/23 to consider further evidence relevant to inaccuracies and inconsistencies made in *Representations for ACC hearing JM* concerning the PSA, his Christian sponsor, claims about ACC and its staff, and claims about his recent counselling practice [6 documents submitted].

The Panel Chair accepted this additional evidence on 25/07/23.

## 3. Request to accept additional submissions from the registrant

a) made on the 25/07/23 to consider further evidence in support of his submission. Two of the four documents had already been made available to the Panel in the earlier submissions by ACC and the registrant; one was deemed irrelevant.

The Panel Chair accepted one document, an email exchange, which related to claims of a data breach by the registrant on 26/07/23.

b) made on the 27/07/23 and received on the 28/07/23 at 9.34am, a further submission from the registrant in response to issues raised in section 5 of document ACC's Submission for the Disciplinary Panel. *Written responses to ACC disciplinary process.*

The Panel Chair accepted the admission of this document for the Panel's consideration during the Disciplinary Hearing.

4. To accept apologies from registrant who due to [...] was only able to attend for the first few minutes of the hearing in order to make a request that he not be disadvantaged by the Panel in any way due to his inability to attend the entire meeting.

## **Submissions during the meeting**

1. At request of the Panel Chair, Sue Monckton-Rickett's report ACC *Disciplinary Panel Presentation*
2. Submitted by Panel Clerk, two forms completed by the Registrant to ACC when registering with the NHS service where he has recorded his ethnicity firstly as [... X...] and then as [...slight variation of X ... ]

---

## Notes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> July 2023

---

### Present

Panel Chair  
Panel Members  
Panel Clerk

### By invitation

ACC Presenter (available throughout the hearing)

Registrant (available for first few minutes of the hearing, and willing to answer written questions submitted before 3pm)

The Panel met briefly prior to the 10am start time and agreed that they would use initials and first names only during the Hearing due to the evidence of Mr Mason's behaviour towards ACC and the investigator during the course of the complaint process. The Panel are satisfied that they are independent and have already stated that they have no prior knowledge of the registrant, nor the person who raised the original concern about Mr Mason to ACC.

At 10am the ACC Presenter and a 'Mr Mason' joined the meeting. The person who said he was Mr Mason explained that as set out in recent emails he was too [...] to attend the panel, and this was of regret to him. He wanted however to meet the Panel for a short period to gain assurance that he would not be victimised because he was [...] and unable to attend.

The Panel Chair reassured Mr Mason that the Panel was an independent Panel and they understood that Mr Mason's welfare was paramount. He said that the intention of the Panel is to discharge its duty in examining the case and the evidence presented to it, and the Panel would accept the additional submission received at 9.34am that morning from Mr Mason. The registrant in that document, *Written responses to ACC disciplinary process*, said that he would be willing to attempt to answer questions if he received them prior to 3pm.

Mr Mason left the meeting.

### 1. Purpose of the meeting

The Panel Chair set out for the record that the purpose of the meeting was to deal with a series of allegations that have been made against Mr Jon, John and Jonathan Mason. The Panel had a series of questions and areas to focus on based on the evidence submitted by ACC and Mr Mason, including that which was submitted by email this morning.

The Panel Chair summarised the reasons for meeting as

- wanting to seek clarity where clarity is lacking;
- ensuring public protection is maintained;
- did want and will still endeavour to give Mr Mason, through the submissions received from him, the best possible opportunity to provide answers to the allegations made.

The Panel Chair stated that also Mr Mason, if he were present at the meeting, would have had the opportunity of seeking clarity for himself as needed/desired.

## **2. ACC presentation of the case**

The Panel Chair invited the ACC Presenter to present ACC's case against the registrant. The ACC Presenter read from a report which she subsequently made available to the meeting attendees [*ACC Disciplinary Panel Presentation*].

The Panel Chair thanked the ACC Presenter for the comprehensive presentation of her report and asked her to submit it to the panel.

## **3. Registrant identity**

The Panel Chair asked the ACC Presenter if she recognised the person who joined the zoom meeting this morning as the Jon Mason who is subject to the complaint. The ACC Presenter said that the photos that had been on [counselling directory 1] and various other websites, and the person in the YouTube video all looked very similar. However, the man who attended the start of the meeting as Jon Mason did not look like the Jon Mason from photos on these listings and websites and the YouTube video for [company 1].

## **4. Questions that had been prepared for the registrant**

The Panel Chair read out for the record the questions that the Panel had prepared to ask Mr Mason. Numbers in brackets refer to numbered items of evidence from the bundles.

1. Tell us about your experience in counselling/psychotherapy, training and social care?

2. Tell us about some of your communications with ACC. Given your experience of counselling how do you explain your approach to ACC and specific members of staff throughout this process, specifically
  - Tone of language in correspondence
  - Accusations about staff/investigator
  - Making a phone call and sending emails to individuals working on behalf of ACC
  - Intimidating texts/calls/emails:
    - text that was sent to the investigator,
    - the email to the investigator stating your belief that she would be subject to a £4K fine,
    - the statement that would report the Chair to their Accountancy body,
    - the statement that you would report the investigator to her professional body,
    - the statement that you would report ACC to the charity commission,
    - the fake Daily Mail reporter?
4. What has prevented you from providing further evidence of employment from March 2015 - August 2017?
5. Do you have any comment on how the many and various online references to Jon Mason as a counsellor have disappeared and why names were changed on Companies House records?
6. What is your involvement in [company 1]?
  - Why is your date of birth different on the director information for '[company 1]' to the one disclosed to the ACC? (70B, 60C)
  - To explain (71,71a) photo and video of JM [associated with company 1].
  - To explain why mobile number, landline and the email address for [counselling support service A] (14) was provided to ACC by you for the Covid service (44).
7. Please clarify your relationship with [counselling directory entry 1], in the light of
  - (11b) statement: "I do not have a website, I am not married, I am not on [counselling directory entry 1]"
  - (4) profile with [counselling directory entry 1]
  - (12) email from [counselling directory 1] confirming JM was receiving referrals and had not contacted them about removing incorrect information as JM had stated he had in (1.1b), + overview of this found in 16D
8. Do you or did you ever own a website called Jon Mason Counselling? In the light of
  - profile and counselling (6) profile linked to this website
  - (10) [counselling directory entry 2] linked to this website

9. To ask the ACC Presenter: to the best of her knowledge or remembrance to tell the Panel if the picture she saw on the website 'jonmasoncounselling', [psychotherapy and training institute B] and on [counselling directory entry 1] matches the likeness of JM (if he had attended the meeting)
- 

The Panel then adjourned to consider the submission given by Mr Mason *Written responses to ACC disciplinary process*. They were provided with the report delivered by the ACC Presenter at the meeting, *ACC Disciplinary Panel Presentation* and two further pieces of evidence from ACC which were submitted by Mr Mason when he was registered with ACC's the NHS Counselling Service. On one he had declared himself as being "[..X ethnicity..], and on the other as "[... slight variation of X ethnicity.. ] The person who attended the beginning of the meeting was [...Y ethnicity...] and in Mr Mason's submission received on the morning the 28<sup>th</sup> of July, just prior to the meeting start time, he described himself as [... Y ethnicity...] *ACC Disciplinary Panel Presentation*.

---

## **5. Identity of the person attending the meeting as 'Mr Mason'**

The Panel Chair wanted to state for the record that the Jonathan Mason, who appeared on the screen earlier did not from evidence received elsewhere resemble the Jonathan Mason whose pictures the Panel had from [organisation 1] and other media, and ACC had seen from other websites. Within Mr. Mason's submission received just prior to the meeting, he declared himself as [...Y .] race. However, ACC had also presented the Panel with evidence that Mr. Mason has actually categorised himself as [...X..] and [...slight variation of X.. ] ethnicity. The Panel found Mr Mason's deception completely unacceptable.

## **6. First consideration**

### Section 5 Principles of Ethical Work by members of ACC

5.1 Members should be trustworthy.

5.2.1 supplying accurate information about the service they are offering the client. 5.2.4 avoiding conflicts of interest (for example line manager/supervisor, trainer/counsellor)

Issues of trustworthiness and accuracy that were raised in the Panel discussion, based on prior evidence submitted by both the registrant and ACC and ACC's presentation of evidence at the Hearing, included:

- Issue of removal from the Social Work Register  
The Panel concluded that on the balance of probabilities that ACC registrant Jon Mason was the same Jonathon Mason that was struck off the Social Work Register. The documents that Mr Mason had provided in his



defence, can't be substantiated and are at best inconclusive. The Panel specifically referenced documents 4, 6, and 8.

- Issue of accuracy of advertisements having different qualifications, specialisms experience, professional body registrations etc (summarised in *ACC Submission for Disciplinary Hearing* pages 3-5) - that also link him to [person A] and to the [counselling support service A]/Mr Mason's submissions that "he knew nothing about the adverts", was in the panel's view 'inconceivable' as was alleged by ACC, given the links between Mr Mason and [person A] and her links to the [counselling support service A]. Nor had his personal or business relationship with [person A] in relation to [organisation 3], [organisation 4] and her public Facebook picture and posts, ever been addressed and explained by the registrant despite him being linked with [person A] in two Companies House submissions. The Panel specifically referenced documents 2, 3, 10a, 27, 40, 67, 68, 70, 70a, 70b, 70c, 70d.
- The Panel were unclear about how 5.2.4 (conflict of interest) related to the evidence as set out and invited the ACC Presenter to re-join the meeting to get clarity on that point.
- the ACC Presenter said that it referred to [company 1] recommending Birmingham Psychotherapy, which is alleged to be a website owned by Mr Mason, recommending him as a child counsellor/psychotherapist, without declaring that Mr Mason was involved in both enterprises. The ACC Presenter then left the main meeting.

The Panel considered their findings and came to a unanimous decision beyond reasonable doubt that:

**Mr Mason had breached the following codes:**

5.1 Members should be trustworthy.

5.2.1 supplying accurate information about the service they are offering the client.

**However, no breach was evidenced for**

5.2.4 avoiding conflicts of interest (for example line manager/supervisor, trainer/counsellor)

## 7. Second consideration

### Section 6 Personal qualities

Section 6.1.2 Honesty: they (members) must be straightforward and avoid all forms of deception.

- The Panel acknowledged that issues of honesty and straightforwardness has been highlighted in evidence in support of the breaches in 5.1 and 5.2.1.
- Building on this the Panel referred to all the listings and connections set out in pages 3-5 of *ACC Submission for Disciplinary Hearing* (the matrix) which had not been adequately addressed by Mr Mason.
- An example given in addition to those cited in section 5 above, was document 11b where Mr Mason made various claims which are contradicted in document 12, e.g. that he wasn't on the [Directory 1] when he clearly had been.
- The Panel found that there was evidence of deception, and in looking at everything in the round Mr Mason had not been straightforward in what he has said, how he has said it, and even who he has said it to.
- The Panel acknowledged that Mr Mason had reflected on the appropriateness of using the title Dr in a counselling context as it was in an unrelated field.

The Panel considered their findings and came to a unanimous decision beyond reasonable doubt that:

**Mr Mason had breached the following code:**

Section 6.1.2 Honesty: they (members) must be straightforward and avoid all forms of deception.

## 8. Third consideration

### Good practice in Christian counselling & related fields

2.3 In this document 'related services' refers to training, teaching, research, and provision of services including counselling skills.

7.1.1 Those who provide supervision and management should have appropriate training so that they are able to monitor and improve practice by members with the aim of protecting clients from incompetent practice.

11. Fundamental premise: Members have a role in maintaining professional standards generally.

11.1.4 All members of this Association share a responsibility to take part in its Complaints Procedures whether as the person complained against or as the provider of relevant information.

16. Fundamental premise: Financial arrangements must be clear and open.

17 Fundamental premise: The care of the client should not be compromised by other interests.

17.1.1 members should avoid conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest does occur, the member's first concerns should be to safeguard the client's interests and to maintain the standing of the counselling profession.

The Panel asked the ACC Presenter to re-join the main meeting to provide the following points of clarity:

- The Panel observed that 2.3; 7.1.1. & 16 did not appear in the summary of breaches at the end of *ACC Disciplinary Panel Presentation*, was that intentional? The ACC Presenter confirmed that 16 is not directly relevant as there is no evidence of financial impropriety. Also 7.1.1 had not been included in the summary as ACC had not received any complaints or become aware of any concerns with Mr Mason's training or supervision practice. The ACC Presenter explained that 2.3 was intended for context, in that the standards we expect of registrants apply to them also as supervisors and trainers not just for their counselling practice. Therefore 2.3 does apply to Mr Mason's case and should have been listed with the ethical breaches for the Panel to consider at the end of the document.

The Panel asked the ACC Presenter with regard to 11, 11.1.4 to explain how this applies in Mr Mason's case.

- The ACC Presenter explained that to maintain professional standards members need not just to take part in complaints process, but to do this with the right spirit, to be constructive and co-operative. However, it is ACC's case that although Mr Mason has engaged with the process itself, the manner in which he has done so has been obstructive. He has tried to disrupt, deflect and frustrate the process. The Panel commented that the requirement for registrants to co-operate with the complaints process was for the safety of the public, and the ACC Presenter concurred. The ACC Presenter confirmed the Panel's observation that 17.1.1 was in essence the same as or very similar to 5.2.4 on conflicts of interest. In this it was reflecting the way that ACC's code of ethics is written, where fundamental principles are repeated in different sections.

The Panel Chair confirmed that the Panel needed to make decisions on 2.3, 11, 11.1.4, 17, 17.1.1.

- The Panel asked for a further point of clarification from the ACC Presenter in relation to 17 and the case against Mr Mason - what was the concern with regard to clients? The ACC Presenter explained that the behaviours displayed by Mr Mason during the complaint process, for example a level of dishonesty, reaction and language used against ACC, give rise to concerns in relation to how he might behave with a client who, for whatever reason was raising a concern or making a complaint directly to Mr Mason. The concern is whether he would act in the same way if challenged by a client.

- The Panel also wanted the ACC Presenter to consider whether in her view there is also a conflict of interest/compromise of interest in relation to the need by Mr Mason to make money and therefore mislead clients as to training and experience? The ACC Presenter felt that this was less a conflict of interest and more about deception and dishonesty.

The ACC Presenter left the main meeting.

- Under **2.3** the Panel Chair sought clarity in relation to the intention of the premise and how it applies to Mr Mason's case. He asked the Panel Clerk to confirm his understanding that the task here was to assess whether Mr Mason has proved that he is practicing well. The Clerk confirmed that this was a straightforward way of understanding the ethical requirement.

The Panel Clerk confirmed that no complaints or concerns had been received about Mr Mason's counselling practice and the Panel recognised that there had been no evidence submitted relating to his actual practice. The concern was misleading clients and trainees as to his training and experience.

- Under **11** the Panel believed that Mr Mason had not maintained professional standards. In his communication, for which he had subsequently apologised for his tone, and also in the threats made, and distress he has caused to ACC staff, he has behaved in an unprofessional manner. The Panel Chair reminded the Panel to consider in mitigation the various illnesses and conditions that Mr Mason had put forward for consideration. The Panel acknowledged this but also questioned whether this would have affected the tone of communication.

The Panel felt that some of the most disturbing things in the documents, for example the threats of civil action, had not been conducted in a professional manner. Also, that his challenges about the investigator showed that he was not respecting the process that he had signed up for.

- Under **11.1.4** and following the ACC Presenter's clarification, the Panel questioned Mr Mason's willingness to undergo the spirit of the process as well as the procedural mechanisms of the process. The Panel felt that Mr Mason had not embraced the process with a spirit of co-operation, and in his submissions, including the one this morning he has been evasive and repeatedly not addressed the allegations. Another recurring pattern in his evidence and submissions is his focus on trying to put ACC in a bad light. The Panel felt there were multiple deflections as a tactic to avoid addressing the allegations and to frustrate the process. Although the Panel acknowledged that at the outset Mr Mason may not have fully understood the serious nature of the complaint, subsequently he had been deflective, defensive, and attacking rather than professional.

- Under **17 & 17.1.1** the Panel believed that this section points to a wider understanding of conflict of interest than in 5.5.2 because here it is situated in the context of safeguarding the client's interests and to maintain the standing of the counselling profession. Panel members believed that there is a conflict of interests with clients in the way Mr Mason had listed and presented himself and in this he had not maintained the standards of the profession.

The Panel considered their findings and came to a unanimous decision beyond reasonable doubt that:

**Mr Mason had breached the following codes:**

2.3 In this document 'related services' refers to training, teaching, research, and provision of services including counselling skills.

11 Fundamental premise: members have a role in maintaining professional standards generally. 11.2.4 All members of this Association share a responsibility to take part in its Complaints Procedures whether as the person complained against or as the provider of relevant information.

17 Fundamental premise: The care of the client should not be compromised by other interests. 17.1.1 members should avoid conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest does occur, the member's first concerns should be to safeguard the client's interests and to maintain the standing of the counselling profession.

**9. Fourth consideration**

Principles taken from ACC Terms and Conditions of Membership - 2022

Counsellor Membership:

Point 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
- any civil or criminal proceedings relevant to your practice and/or that risk bringing the profession into disrepute

Point 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 therapies to which

your profession as a counsellor may be seen to add legitimacy (for example coaching or spiritual direction)

The Panel Chair asked the Panel Clerk to confirm whether the Terms and Conditions of Membership were active during Mr Mason's Membership of ACC. The Panel Clerk confirmed that the Terms and Conditions of Membership document was published in September 2021 and is reviewed each year.

### **Point 5.1 Practice Break**

- The Panel Chair requested that the ACC Presenter be brought into the meeting to clarify the situation with practice breaks. The ACC Presenter explained that there were some contradictory statements in Mr Mason's communication with ACC, some suggesting that he had remained practising (for example his submission to the disciplinary panel where he referred to clients in the present tense, and his correspondence about registering with the ICO because he was practising in [...]), set against other statements that said he had not been able to work or was too [...] to work because of [...]. However, Mr Mason had not asked for a practice break when he claimed he was not practising.

The ACC Presenter left the main meeting.

- The Panel felt that the situation was ambiguous and also could be explained by Mr Mason being unwell but not knowing how long he might need to be off for, and therefore not formally wanting to take a practice break.

### **Point 5.2 Complaints and sanctions arising from a professional membership**

- The Panel had already found that Mr Mason had not informed ACC of his removal from the Social Work Register.

### **Point 5.3 Civil or criminal charges**

- The Panel Clerk advised the Panel that this was not applicable as ACC are not aware of any civil or criminal charges against Mr Mason.

### **Point 7 Advertising and training**

- The Panel Chair suggested that for the purposes of discussion the Panel should consider point 7 in 2 distinct but related parts. The first part of point 7 refers to public advertising and directory listings and can be referred to in their discussion as 7A. The second part of point 7 refers to having sufficient training to cover the counsellor's areas of practice and can be referred to as 7B.

- With regard to 7A, the Panel found that Mr Mason had made various claims in relation to training and qualifications in online postings, however in evidence submitted he had only supplied his PhD certificate in an unrelated subject. ACC have on their system a copy of his counselling diploma certificate. He has said that he trained with Relate but no certificates were provided. He claimed he had not trained in children's work - but his advertisements mentioned his background in children's work. He has claimed to have an MA in social work and an MA in Psychotherapy, but these qualifications have not been provided by Mr Mason to ACC. With regard to 7B the risk is that Mr Mason will have attracted clients due to claims made in his online profiles that he had not had sufficient training to counsel.

The Panel considered their findings and came to a unanimous decision beyond reasonable doubt that:

**Mr Mason had breached the following terms and conditions of membership:**

Point 5.2

Point 7

**Mr Mason had not breached:**

Point 5.1

## 10. Conclusion - summary of findings

The Panel Chair summarised the Panel's findings on all of which the Panel had been unanimous.

### Ethical Code

#### Section 5 Principles of Ethical Work by members of ACC

5.1. Members should be trustworthy. **BREACH**

5.2.1 Supplying accurate information about the service they are offering the client.

**BREACH**

5.2.4 Avoiding conflicts of interest (for example line manager/supervisor, trainer/counsellor) **NO BREACH**

#### Section 6 Personal qualities

Section 6.1.2 Honesty: they (members) must be straightforward and avoid all forms of deception. **BREACH**

2.3 In this document 'related services' refers to training, teaching, research, and provision of services including counselling skills. **BREACH (in context of training and counselling services)**

11 Fundamental premise: members have a role in maintaining professional standards generally. 11.1.4 all members of this Association share a responsibility to take part in its Complaints Procedures whether as the person complained against or as the provider of relevant information. **BREACH**

17 Fundamental premise: the care of the client should not be compromised by other interests. 17.1.1 members should avoid conflicts of interest. If a conflict of interest does occur, the member's first concerns should be to safeguard the client's interests and to maintain the standing of the counselling profession. **BREACH**

### **Terms and Conditions of Membership**

Point 5 Keep us informed by notifying us of:

- practice breaks (guidelines available on ACC's website) **NO BREACH**
- any complaints and sanctions arising from a professional membership **BREACH**

Point 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 therapies to which your profession as a counsellor may be seen to add legitimacy (for example coaching or spiritual direction). **BREACH**

### **Confirmed as not applicable to the case/evidence presented:**

7.1.1 those who provide supervision and management should have appropriate training so that they are able to monitor and improve practice by members with the aim of protecting clients from incompetent practice.

16 Fundamental premise: Financial arrangements must be clear and open.

Counsellor Membership:

Point 5 Keep us informed by notifying us of:

- any civil or criminal proceedings relevant to your practice and/or that risk bringing the profession into disrepute

### **11 Conclusion - no further questions for Mr Mason**



The Panel Chair reported that Mr Mason had offered earlier today in his submission to answer further questions from the panel in writing. The Panel unanimously agreed that there were no questions that they wished to ask him. The Panel were confident that the evidence that they had from Mr Mason was more than sufficient for them to have been able to make the determinations about breaches listed above and no further written or other submissions were required from Mr Mason.

---

The Panel adjourned to consider the appropriate sanction.

---

## 11. Sanction


The Panel Chair reported that the Panel had come to a unanimous agreement about the proposed sanction.

They had taken various factors into consideration and had been mindful that Mr Mason had sought to give some insight into what has been going on from his perspective including in submissions received right until that morning.

The Panel had determined that the sanction that they would be recommending be imposed is that of Mr Mason's removal from the register. This decision is based on protection of the public and wider public interest. The Panel in their deliberations had given appropriate weight to areas such as the deterrent effect to other registrants, the reputation of the profession of counselling and public confidence itself in the regulatory process.

The Panel Chair thanked the members of the Panel and drew the meeting to a close.

### Signed as a record of the process and meeting by

Panel Chair Signature	
Date	01 August 2023

Updated 30/10/23 with further redactions made at the request of Mr Mason