

**Vocal Health Education Disciplinary  
Procedure for qualified Voice  
Rehabilitation Specialist (VRS)  
March 2024**



Whereby their membership of Specialist Member of Vocal Health Education (SMVHE) may be revoked:

for professional misconduct,  
breach of Code of Conduct or  
breach of Fitness to Practice declaration

Professional discipline is the process by which VHE takes action against the registration of their members. VHE may commence an investigation for a variety of reasons including deficient performance, allegations of misconduct, both within and outside of practice, or concerns about the VRS's physical or mental health. These include issues that are directly connected to the VRS's practice such as poor performance, failing to comply with professional obligations, errors leading to significant adverse outcomes to clients and misconduct in the workplace such as dishonesty, sexual misconduct and bullying and harassment. It also includes allegations in the VRS's personal life which may either cast doubt on their suitability to remain a member of that profession or may adversely affect the reputation of the profession – good examples being criminal convictions or misconduct on social media.

VHE will normally consider whether it is necessary to take action against one of its members in order to uphold standards of behaviour, to protect members of the public, or to uphold the reputation of the profession.

### **Investigation and adjudication**

Should any of the Directors of VHE be made aware of an allegation of fitness to practise relating to a Member, the following disciplinary steps will be followed:

1. A letter setting out the issue.
  2. A meeting to discuss the issue.
  3. A disciplinary decision.
  4. A chance to appeal this decision.
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1. The letter setting out the issue. This written warning may be the only step, depending on how serious the misconduct is deemed to be. The member will have the opportunity to defend themselves and to have their reasons logged on their personal records file with VHE. If there is more than one written warning, step 2 will automatically be carried out.

2. A meeting between the Director and the Member to discuss the issue, either in person or online. This may be the end of the process, depending on how serious the misconduct is deemed to be. The member will have the opportunity to defend themselves and to have their reasons logged on their personal records file with VHE. If there is more than one meeting with the Director, step 3 will automatically be carried out.
3. The disciplinary decision will be made in a meeting of the Professionalism Group comprising the following members of staff:
  - a) A representative from the VHE management staff who will undertake the role of Chair;
  - b) At least one registrant from the relevant professional body; and
  - c) An independent consultantDecisions are made by a subgroup of two of any of the above members of staff on a majority basis.

A secretary will be present when the Professionalism Group meets.
4. A chance to appeal this decision. Appeals must be made in writing by email to the VHE Management within ten working days of an Applicant receiving written notice of the decision they wish to challenge.
  - 4.1 An appeal may be made on the following grounds:
    - a) that in making its decision VHE failed to follow its regulations and/or procedures or failed to follow them with due care;
    - b) that VHE has shown bias or prejudice towards the Member in the way that it has made the decision;
    - c) that the terms of any conditions are excessive;
    - d) that the Member does not pose a risk to themselves and/or third parties; and/or
    - e) that relevant new evidence has become available that should be considered and there are good reasons as to why this was not provided earlier.
  - 4.2 Appeal decisions are made within ten working days by an Appeal Panel constituting:
    - a) the Director of VHE who will undertake the role of Chair;
    - b) At least one registrant from the relevant professional body; and
    - c) An independent consultantDecisions are made by a subgroup of two of any of the above members of staff on a majority basis.

A secretary will be present when an appeal decision is made.

Members do not normally attend this meeting (unless any clarifications regarding the information provided is required) but will have the right to receive feedback on the deliberations.
  - 4.3 Possible outcomes arising from successful appeals are: that the matter is considered afresh by a newly constituted Professionalism Group; that the conditions are varied; that the original findings are substituted for that of the Appeal Panel; or, where the unfairness is extreme, the findings of the Professionalism Group (as applicable) are nullified.

If it is decided that the Member has made a significant or serious breach of their Fitness to Practice Declaration, their membership will be permanently revoked.