



# Code of Practice

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS



Supporting the hair, beauty  
and barbering industries

## Code of practice

INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

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# 1 - Introduction

The Trust My Salon Code of Practice aims to ensure clients of hair salons, beauty salons and barbershops (all referred to as 'salons' in this document) receive a consistently high-quality and professional service. This applies whether they receive services or treatments from employees of the salon or independent contractors who work in the salon.

## A) INDEPENDENT CONTRACTORS

An independent contractor is a person who is self-employed and running their own business from a chair, room or space they rent from the salon owner.

## B) WHO CAN BE AN IC CODE MEMBER?

Independent contractors can only apply to be an IC (independent contractor) Code member of the Trust My Salon scheme if the salon they work in is already a Code member or is applying to become one.

A salon can only be a Code member if all the independent contractors who work there are IC Code members or applying to become members. Salons must declare how many independent contractors they have.

To become an IC Code member, the salon they work in must be an NHBF Member. New independent contractors must apply to become an IC Code member within three months of their start date at the accredited salon.

To apply to become an IC Code member, independent contractors should complete the [self-assessment checklist](#) to see if they are ready to apply. If they are ready, they should fill in the [application form](#). The salon the independent contractor works in should then submit the form to the NHBF.

Accredited salons and independent contractors must renew their accreditation online every year.

## C) THE TRUST MY SALON SCHEME

The scheme is administered by the National Hair & Beauty Federation (NHBF). It is approved and externally audited by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute (CTSI).

Accredited salons and independent contractors working within the salon will put the welfare of clients above any other considerations and complete all treatments and services to a high standard.

Salons (known as Code members) who belong to the Trust My Salon scheme are entitled to display the Chartered Trading Standards Institute Approved Code logo. (This logo is subject to copyright.) A salon can only use this logo while all the independent contractors working within it are accredited or in the process of applying for accreditation. As Trust My Salon is an accreditation scheme for salons, independent contractors cannot use the logo.

## D) HOW TO GAIN ACCREDITATION

To gain accreditation, independent contractors must pass the NHBF's rigorous application and inspection process.

All new IC Code members receive a mystery shopping visit within their first year and at random intervals in subsequent years. The mystery shopper will select a service or treatment at random, regardless of whether it is provided by a salon employee or an independent contractor. [See more below.](#)

IC Code members must comply with the [Trust My Salon Code of Practice](#).

Accreditation can be withdrawn from IC Code members who do not comply.

If accreditation is withdrawn from an independent contractor, the salon they work in also loses its accreditation. If accreditation is withdrawn from a salon, any independent contractors who work there will also lose their accreditation.

A list of accredited salons and barbershops can be found on the [NHBF website](#).

This Code of Practice does not affect a client's statutory rights under law but does provide further protection.

This document includes only those sections of the Code of Practice that apply to independent contractors.





## 2 - Code of Practice

The Code of Practice sets out industry-recognised standards for:

- Insurance and licences.
- Qualifications and training.
- Health and safety.
- Age restrictions.
- Vulnerable clients.
- Allergy alert testing and skin sensitivity testing.
- Consultation.
- Professional salon standards.
- Advertising, promotion and pricing.
- Sale of products.
- Contracts and credit.
- Record keeping.
- Complaints.

This Code applies only to the UK.

IC Code members must fully accept this Code of Practice and work to the professional standards it sets out. IC Code members must also:

- Be aware of their responsibilities under the Code, and any legal and trading responsibilities which apply to them.
- Provide clients with information about the Code of Practice, either as a hard copy or on their website.
- Have a complaints policy which they will follow. If they are unable to resolve a complaint to a client's satisfaction, they will provide information about alternative dispute resolution as required by the Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulations 2015.

## 3 - INSURANCE AND LICENCES

IC Code members will have:

- Public liability insurance.
- Professional indemnity insurance covering all the treatments and/or services they provide.
- Relevant local authority licences or registration (if required) to provide certain beauty treatments, for example, electrolysis or sunbeds.

## 4 - QUALIFICATIONS AND TRAINING

IC Code members will have:

- Qualifications from a recognised UK qualifications body\* in a relevant subject and at an appropriate level for the service or treatment being offered, or equivalent industry-recognised training and experience.
- Industry-recognised training on the tools or equipment they use.

\*Listed on the [Ofqual register](#) (searchable by qualifications or organisations).

## 5 - HEALTH AND SAFETY

IC Code members will ensure:

Tools and equipment are regularly safety tested and maintained to ensure the health and safety of clients.

- Rigorous hygiene and cleanliness is observed.
- Uniforms, other clothing, towels, gowns and linen are clean.
- Equipment such as clippers, tweezers, brushes and combs are sterilised as necessary.
- Clinical waste (eg razors and needles) is disposed of in specially marked containers.
- Appropriate personal protective equipment is worn, for example, gloves (nitrile or vinyl, not latex) when providing services such as hair colour, shaving, pedicures or intimate waxing.
- Appropriate protective equipment, such as gowns, is provided for use while services or treatments are being carried out.
- Instructions and guidance for the safe use of equipment, materials and products are followed.



## 6 - AGE RESTRICTIONS

IC Code members will work to NHBF guidelines on age restrictions and will refuse services or treatments to minors as follows:

| SERVICE OR TREATMENT   | MINIMUM AGE  |
|--|--------------|
| Hair colour containing PPD or similar chemicals (including eyebrow and eyelash tints)  | 16 years old |
| Piercing (except earlobes using stud and gun, one hole)  | 16 years old |
| Anti-wrinkle treatments (eg Botox)<br>Dermal fillers<br>UV tanning<br>Intimate waxing<br>IPL (intense pulsed light) treatments<br>Micropigmentation (semi-permanent make-up)<br>Microblading | 18 years old |

Beauty treatments are not recommended for under-16s with the following exceptions:

- Earlobe piercing (stud and gun method, one hole).
- Waxing (not intimate waxing).
- Facials.
- Manicures.
- Pedicures.

Treatments must only be carried out on under-16s with written consent from a parent or legal guardian. A parent or responsible adult (eg carer) must be present.

## 7 - VULNERABLE CLIENTS

IC Code members will make sure:

- The welfare of vulnerable adults is protected.
- They understand the different ways in which clients may be vulnerable, including emotional vulnerability, mental health conditions (including body dysmorphia), learning difficulties, physical disability, ageing and those whose first language isn't English.
- Extra time and effort is taken to make sure vulnerable clients understand the treatments or services they have requested and how much they will cost.
- Treatments or services the IC Code member considers inappropriate, unethical or potentially unsafe are not provided.





## 8 - ALLERGY ALERT TESTING AND SENSITIVITY TESTING

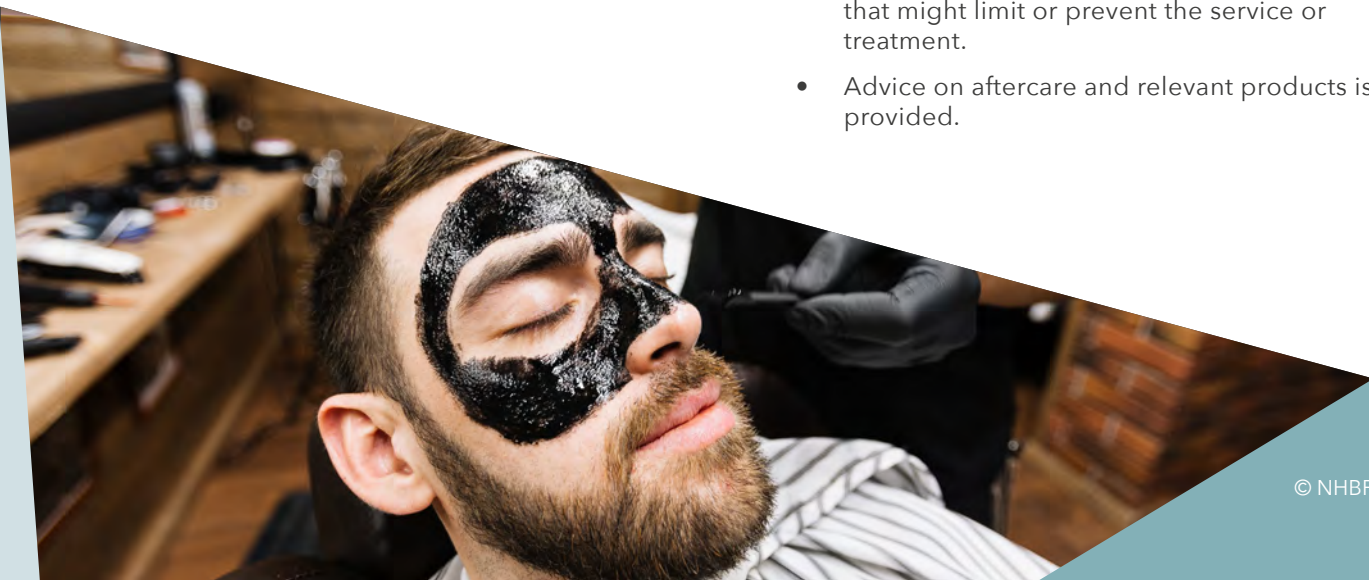
IC Code members will make sure:

- New clients are given an allergy alert test at least 48 hours before an appointment for the following treatments:
  - Hair colour.
  - Eyebrow tints.
  - Eyelash tints.
  - Colouring facial or body hair.
- They check the information provided by the client to decide whether an allergy alert test is needed. (Allergy alert tests are not needed for every appointment. They may be needed if there are changes to the product used or if a test hasn't been done for 12 months or more.)
- New clients are offered a sensitivity test (sometimes called a 'patch test') at least 24 hours in advance of certain beauty treatments including:
  - Eyelash perming.
  - Eyelash extensions.
  - Self-tanning.
  - Waxing (depending on the manufacturer and the ingredients used).
  - Lasers and IPL.
  - Semi-permanent make-up (microblading, micropigmentation).
  - Chemical peels.
  - Aesthetics (these treatments vary considerably so the IC Code member must advise on any sensitivity testing required).

## 9 - CONSULTATION

IC Code members will make sure:

- A thorough consultation is carried out, including a health questionnaire for beauty clients (especially for new clients), to discuss requirements before agreeing on the service or treatment to be provided.
- Client consent to a beauty treatment is recorded.
- A 'cooling-off' period is provided after the consultation and before treatment for anti-wrinkle treatments, dermal fillers, laser, intense pulsed light, and light emitting diode (LIPLLED) unless the client has had the same treatment before with the same IC Code member.
- Services or treatments are clearly explained in advance, for example, what is involved, its purpose, potential benefits, any possible side effects or after-effects, any treatment limitations and any contra-indications (eg medical conditions, medications, pregnancy, changes to health) which may suggest a service or treatment is not suitable.
- Clients are told how long a treatment or service is likely to take.
- Clients are told the total cost of the service or treatment, including any commitment to multiple bookings or further appointments that may be needed to get the desired effect.
- Where a service or treatment involves multiple visits, the service or treatment is reviewed to check if it has been effective and the client is satisfied with the results. If not, alternative treatments or services will be discussed.
- Clients are referred to a healthcare professional such as a GP, trichologist, dermatologist or chiropodist when a contra-indication is identified that might limit or prevent the service or treatment.
- Advice on aftercare and relevant products is provided.





## 10 - PROFESSIONAL SALON STANDARDS

IC Code members will make sure:

- Services and treatments are completed to a high standard.
- Clients receive excellent service and care.
- Clients' questions and queries are answered promptly.
- Clients are treated the same regardless of age, race, gender or disability (although it may not be possible to make reasonable adjustments for access to all salon premises).
- Personal and professional boundaries are respected, for example dress or conversation are appropriate to clients.
- Clients are provided with secure storage facilities for clothes or personal items if they need to be removed for beauty treatments.
- There is a private area where clients can undress before beauty treatments.
- Clients are told if their appointment is running late.
- Clients are encouraged to provide feedback on the service they have received, for example, via a feedback form or comment thread on social media.
- Prices for products or equipment and accepted methods of payment are clearly displayed. Products include shampoos, conditioners, skincare products and equipment such as hairdryers or straighteners for sale by the IC Code member (see section 12 for online sales).
- No additional charges are made for payment by credit or debit card, or other payment methods such as PayPal.
- Payments are made via a cash register or electronic point of sale (EPOS) system and a receipt is available.
- Clients are provided with clear information on the IC Code member's policy if they don't turn up for an appointment or cancel at short notice, including any charges to cover the IC Code member's financial loss.
- They display their registered business name on their website (if applicable) and documentation such as receipts, invoices, order forms or letters. Registered companies will also include the company registration number, the registered office address, which part of the UK the company is registered in and that they are a limited company.
- Emails are easily identified as being commercial communications from the IC Code member's business.
- Promotional offers, competitions or games and any conditions are easy to understand.
- Clients know that the IC Code member and the salon they work in are fully signed up to the Code of Practice and information about the Code is prominently displayed on their website or at their workstation.
- The salon displays the Trust My Salon logo and the 'Approved Code' logo from the Chartered Trading Standards Institute on adverts, websites and other marketing material. These must be removed if the IC Code member's or the salon's accreditation lapses or is withdrawn. The salon and all the independent contractors working within it must all be accredited to maintain Trust My Salon status.

## 11 - ADVERTISING, PROMOTION AND PRICING

This section applies if the IC Code member carries out any advertising or promotional activity which is in addition to that done by the accredited salon.

IC Code members will make sure:

- Advertising and promotions are clear, complete and not misleading about price, value, availability, quality or the benefits of the products, services or treatments being offered.
- Clear descriptions of services, treatments and what's included in the price are provided, including any additional costs associated with the main service or treatment such as a conditioning treatment.
- Prices for services or treatments and the accepted methods of payment are clearly displayed, including on the IC Code member's website (if relevant).



## 12 - SALE OF GOODS

This section applies to IC Code members who sell goods or equipment such as hairdryers or hair straighteners, independently of the salon. This includes online sales.

IC Code members will make sure:

- Any items such as electrical equipment or cosmetic products offered for sale are safe and meet all legal requirements.
- Clients can return goods which are faulty, damaged, don't do what they are supposed to do, or are not as described within 30 days of buying the product (or receiving it if the product was bought online) for a full refund, including the cost of postage.
- After the 30-day period, faulty or damaged goods are repaired or replaced (see 'our advice to you' below).
- Clients have the right to cancel an online order for goods within 14 days of receiving the product. (Your client will have to pay the return postage cost but this must be clearly explained to the buyer before they confirm their online order.)
- Clear and accurate information is provided about the goods or equipment they are selling, if the price stated includes VAT and the cost of delivery.
- If orders are taken via the Code member's website, prompt confirmation will be provided, with information about how to correct any errors.

## 13 - CONTRACTS AND CREDIT

This section applies to IC Code members who provide contracts (for example, any which commit clients to a series of treatments) or credit arrangements, independently of the salon they work in.

IC Code members will make sure:

- They provide accurate information verbally or in writing before clients enter into a contract. If a sale or transaction is completed during a phone call, the client is made aware of any additional terms and conditions and where they can be found (eg their website).

- Contracts include an easily understood description of the treatments to be provided, any contract 'cooling-off' periods, the rights and responsibilities of each party, the payment terms, VAT, any additional fees or charges and what these are for, any cancellation or postponement rights and charges, limits of liability and the time limit for making claims.
- Clients, especially vulnerable clients, have fully understood any contract or credit arrangement they are entering into.
- High-pressure selling techniques are not used.
- Adverts offering credit are clear and easily understood, include the IC Code member's postal address, a representative example of the credit being offered, the cash price, interest rate, the number of payments and the full amount to be paid.

## 14 - RECORD KEEPING

As required by the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR), IC Code members will maintain accurate and up-to-date client records. Client information will be kept confidential, securely stored and only used for the purpose for which it was given.

Client information may include:

- Personal details.
- Health information relevant to the service or treatment to be provided.
- History of previous services or treatments.
- Recommendations made.
- Client lifestyle requirements.
- Allergy alert and sensitivity test records and any contra-indications which suggest a service or treatment is not suitable.
- Consent to health information records being maintained for four years.
- Parental or carer consent for services or treatments provided to under-16s (where relevant).
- Any letters of consent from GPs or other healthcare professionals.







## 15 - COMPLAINTS

IC Code members will:

- Have a complaints policy which is available for clients to see.
- Take immediate action to make sure clients receive a quick and fair response to any complaint and aim to resolve it within no more than eight weeks.
- Learn from complaints and identify opportunities to improve services to clients.
- Refer clients to Hair & Beauty Mediation, or another certified alternative dispute resolution (ADR) provider, for any complaints which cannot be resolved using the IC Code member's complaints policy.
- Fully participate if the client wishes to use ADR and accept the decisions made by Hair & Beauty Mediation.

Please note: someone else can complain on the client's behalf (for example, if the client is vulnerable). A consumer advisory body can also make complaints on behalf of a client.

## 16 - MONITORING

### Mystery shopping

All new salon applicants receive a mystery shopping visit within their first year and at random intervals in subsequent years.

The mystery shopper will provide a report which may include relevant photographic evidence. The report will identify good practice, non-compliances or breaches of the Code, with a score of 1 (poor) to 4 (excellent) awarded for each section of the Code. An overall score of 1-4 will also be given. If required, an action plan will be provided.

The NHBF's director of quality & standards may arrange further mystery shops to monitor progress against the action plan.

### Non-compliance

The accreditation and renewal processes for Trust My Salon are likely to reveal minor 'non-compliance' issues which need to be addressed. We will provide support, advice and guidance to help address non-compliances.

### Breaches

Breaches are serious issues which the independent contractor or salon has failed to address. These may have been reported to Trust My Salon by a member of the public; identified through Trust My Salon's monitoring procedures, or revealed during ADR.

If there are serious breaches or persistent breaches, the NHBF's director of quality & standards may refer the independent contractor or salon to the Disciplinary and Sanctions Panel ([see appendix two](#))

### Breaches could include:

- Major breaches of health and safety regulations or other practices which risk causing harm to clients.
- Conviction for an offence against the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
- Other criminal convictions affecting the client's trust in the independent contractor or salon as a reputable business.
- A salon's failure to declare any independent contractors.



## Appendices

### APPENDIX ONE: RELEVANT CODES AND LEGISLATION

- The Advertising Standards Authority's non-broadcast and broadcast advertising codes.
- Alternative Dispute Resolution for Consumer Disputes (Competent Authorities and Information) Regulation 2015.
- Arbitration Act 1996.
- Business Protection from Misleading Marketing Regulations 2008.
- Company, Limited Liability Partnership and Business (Names and Trading Disclosures) Regulations 2015.
- Consumer Contracts (Information, Cancellation and Additional Charges) Regulations 2013.
- Consumer Credit (EU Directive) Regulations 2010.
- Consumer Protection Act 1987.
- Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008.
- Consumer Rights Act 2015.
- Electrical Equipment Safety Regulations 2016.
- Electronic Commerce (EC Directive) Regulations 2002/2013.
- Equality Act 2010.
- EU Regulation 1223/2009 on cosmetic products.
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018.
- Health & Safety at Work Act 1974.
- Misrepresentation Act 1967.
- Ofcom Broadcasting Code (TV/Radio Advertising).
- Payment Services Regulations 2017.
- Price Marking Order 2004.
- Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 and Sunbeds (Regulation) Act 2010 (Wales) Regulations 2011.

### APPENDIX TWO: DISCIPLINARY AND SANCTIONS PANEL

#### Purpose

The panel deals with serious or persistent breaches of the Trust My Salon Consumer Code of Practice effectively, impartially and as quickly as possible.

The panel consists of five individuals:

- Two Code members (or IC Code members)
- Two salon or barbershop owners who are not Code members.
- An independent chair who will have a casting vote if needed.

The chair will normally be the NHBF president or vice president or an NHBF board member (who may or may not be a Code member). In the absence of the chair, panel members may nominate one of themselves to act as chair.

The panel will be able to take decisions as long as any three members are present.

#### Panel members should:

- Work within the scope of the terms of reference for the Disciplinary and Sanctions Panel.
- Have current first-hand experience of running or working in a salon.
- Be able to analyse information and draw logical conclusions.
- Be impartial.
- Observe strict confidentiality.
- Be able to make difficult decisions.

The panel may co-opt an additional specialist adviser such as an adviser on consumer law, but any such adviser will not have voting rights.



### **Conflicts of interest**

Panel members must declare any potential conflict of interest, including any connection with the parties involved in the alleged breach. In these circumstances they will be required to step down and a replacement panel member will be appointed for that case.

### **Panel meetings**

The NHBF's director of quality & standards will attend the panel meeting to:

- Present the facts of the case.
- Advise on Trust My Salon procedures.
- Record the findings and any sanctions applied.

If the director of quality & standards cannot attend, the NHBF's chief executive or director of membership will attend. None will have voting rights.

### **Process**

The NHBF's director of quality & standards will refer the case to the panel and arrange a panel meeting to take place within 28 days of the breach being discovered or reported. Meetings may be held face to face or by teleconferencing.

The IC Code member will be invited to attend the panel meeting. They will have the opportunity to comment on the findings presented. If they are unable to attend, the meeting will go ahead in their absence. The IC Code member may be accompanied by one other person who will act only as an observer.

The IC Code member or panel members may ask for a break at any point in the proceedings.

The panel chair will close the meeting when he/she considers that all relevant information has been presented. The IC Code member will then leave the meeting.

The panel will reach a decision on their findings and any sanctions, by a majority vote if necessary. In the event of a tie, the chair has the casting vote.

### **Sanctions**

Sanctions may include:

- Advice on future conduct, training or other recommended action.
- A formal warning.
- A requirement to implement an action plan within a specified timeframe as a condition of continued IC Code membership.
- Temporary suspension of IC Code membership.
- Permanent expulsion from IC Code membership.

The panel may also recommend suspension or removal from NHBF membership. If the panel considers that a matter should be reported to the police or another authority, they must refer it to the relevant authority as soon as possible.

The panel will not award any financial penalties or compensation to clients. This is a matter to be addressed through court action or an insurance claim.





### **Expulsion**

If an IC Code member is permanently expelled, they and the salon they work in must remove all references to Code membership and the CTSI logo from their advertising and marketing materials, including their website, within 28 days.

### **Findings**

The panel's decision, a brief summary of the reasons for the decision will be provided within ten days of the meeting. The outcomes of the panel's decision will be published on the Trust My Salon website, unless there are exceptional circumstances not to do so, such as it being against the public's interest.

### **Appeals**

There is no right of appeal and the panel's decision is final.

### **Re-application**

An IC Code member whose Code membership is temporarily suspended may not re-apply until the NHBF's director of quality and standards is satisfied that the breaches have been fully addressed.

### **Notices**

Any notice required to be given to an individual shall be deemed to be properly served if sent by registered or recorded delivery post to the IC Code member's address.

## **APPENDIX THREE: TRUST MY SALON RECORDS**

Trust My Salon will keep records of:

- Accredited and re-accredited salons.
- Accredited and re-accredited independent contractors.
- Salons and independent contractors visited.
- The results of mystery shopping reports and action plans.
- The number of complaints against Code members and IC Code members.
- ADR cases involving Code members and IC Code members.
- Referrals to the Disciplinary & Sanctions Panel.

These will be reviewed by the Chartered Trading Standards Institute which will audit the Trust My Salon Code of Practice. Audit reports will be published on the Trust My Salon section of the NHBF website.



**THE  
NHBF IS  
HERE FOR  
YOU:**

As a Member you'll always have someone to turn to for help, information and advice. This includes free practical support and guidance for managing people and running your business, crucial 24/7 legal lifeline, free chair, space and room renting agreements, valuable discounts on business essentials including insurance and free 24/7 commercial law support.

Find out more: [www.nhbf.co.uk](http://www.nhbf.co.uk)

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