

**CANZ Stance on Terminology used for Animal Behaviour Professionals**

Persons working in the animal training and behaviour industry may use a variety of terms to describe themselves. These terms include trainer, instructor, consultant, coach, educator, behaviourist and more. The use of this terminology is not legally regulated, however CANZ believes it is essential that such terminology is used in a way which provides a truthful representation of the professional’s skills and experience and is not misleading to the public.

Behaviour professionals must not purport to have skills, experience, or qualifications that they do not have. To do so is not only ethically unacceptable, but also opens the professional up to allegations of false advertising under the Fair Trading Act 1986.

We recommend all animal behaviour professionals follow these guidelines:

* Clearly state in advertising material your experience, qualifications, and professional memberships.
* Do not claim to have qualifications, experience, or expertise that you do not have.
* If asked to advise on an animal behaviour issue that you do not have the experience, qualification or expertise to advise on you should refer the issue to a more appropriately qualified professional.
* Ensure the terminology you use accurately represents the nature of your work. The term “behaviour consultant” should only be used by those who have the appropriate qualification or experience to provide comprehensive behavioural consultation services. Such services include the collection of a thorough medical and behavioural history, initial evaluation and setting of realistic goals, creation of an appropriate behaviour modification plan, regular follow-up consultations, revision of the behaviour modification plan as required, and a plan for maintenance once the desired outcome has been achieved. We recommend trainers who only provide ad hoc advice on behavioural issues do not use the term “behaviour consultant” as they are not truly offering a consultancy service.
* Unless you have a recognised qualification allowing use of the title, avoid using the suffix
“-ist” e.g. behaviorist, as in common public perception this suffix is associated with being a specialist so can be misleading.