

Guidelines for the Evaluation of  
Competencies Required for  
Registration as a Psychologist  
with the  
Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The Psychologists' Act (2005) confers authority to the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board (NLPB) regarding the regulation of Registered Psychologists in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. The mandate of the NLPB is to ensure the provision of services to the public by a Registered Psychologist meets acceptable standards of practice. The standards of practice are derived from legislation, national and international guidelines, and the Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists.

The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the process that the NLPB has implemented since September 2006 regarding the approval of applications for registration with NLPB. These standards have been applied since the inception of the *Mutual Recognition Act (2005)*. In addition, the NLPB has recognized the diversity of graduate and post-graduate training since 2005 and the recent implementation of *Agreement on Internal Trade (2009)*.

Registration as a fully registered psychologist in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador requires successful completion of the following:

- a) Undergraduate degree in psychology from a recognized psychology program ( or NLPB approved equivalent) (see *Foundational Knowledge*);
- b) Graduate degree in psychology from a recognized psychology program (or NLPB approved equivalent); (See *Graduate Competencies*)
- c) Two years post-graduate supervised experience ( Master's level) or one year post graduate supervised experience ( Doctoral Level) approved by NLPB;
- d) Successful completion of Examination for the Professional Practice in Psychology;
- e) Professional Liability Insurance;
- f) Certificate of Conduct;
- g) Payment of fees

The following information briefly outlines the knowledge and skills required for each competency in order to meet the standards for Registration in Newfoundland and Labrador. All applications for registration are reviewed using these guidelines to ensure a competency has been met.

Questions relating to this document or Registration as a Psychologist in Newfoundland and Labrador should be directed to the Registrar by telephone (709) 579-6313 or via email [registrar2@nbep.info](mailto:registrar2@nbep.info) .

## 1. DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this document, the following terms are used:

a.) Fully Registered Psychologist

- An individual who can independently practice as a psychologist

b.) Provisionally Registered Psychologist

- A psychologist under supervised practice

c.) Professor of Psychology

- An individual who holds a Doctorate in Psychology and who functions in the capacity of an academic staff member in a program of study that is psychological in nature.

d.) Practicum / Internship

- A semester length, full time placement of which the work is psychological in nature.

## UNDERGRADUATE LEVEL COMPETENCIES

### FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE IN PSYCHOLOGY

Foundational knowledge in psychology forms the underpinning of all professional training in psychology. Applicants must demonstrate acceptable acquisition of this knowledge. This is usually gained through an undergraduate degree in psychology and includes the following four areas:

#### **A. Knowledge of the Biological Bases of Behaviour**

Examples:

- Physiological psychology
- Comparative psychology
- Neuropsychology
- Sensation and perception
- Psychopharmacology

#### **B. Knowledge of the Cognitive-affective Bases of Behaviour**

Examples:

- Learning
- Cognition
- Motivation
- Emotion

#### **C. Knowledge of the Social Bases of Behaviour**

Examples:

- Social psychology
- Group processes
- Community psychology
- Environmental psychology
- Organizational and systems theory
- Cultural issues

## **D. Knowledge of Psychology of the Individual**

Examples:

Personality theory

Human development

Psychopathology

Individual differences

#### 4. GRADUATE LEVEL COMPETENCIES

These competencies are expected to be obtained through a Graduate Level degree program at a program in psychology approved by The Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board.

All competencies listed in the following tables are expected to be met within an approved Graduate Level program. Applicants must have completed a Master's or Doctorate level program of psychology approved by the Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board that has incorporated the following competencies - *Interpersonal Relationships, Assessment and Evaluation, Intervention, Research and Ethics.*

The objectives of these competencies are listed in Table 1a , Table 1b and Table 1c. Following these tables are extended descriptions of each competency.

**Table 1a Competencies Required at Graduate Training Level**

COMPETENCY	ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS	SKILLS TO BE DEMONSTRATED
1. Interpersonal Relationships	<p>Satisfactory completion of a semester length, full-time practicum</p> <p>(On-site direct supervisor must be a fully registered psychologist OR criteria met for CPA accredited Pre-Doctoral Internship site)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Effective Communication</li> <li>- Establishment and maintenance of rapport</li> <li>- Establishment and maintenance of trust and respect in the professional relationship</li> </ul>
2. Assessment and Evaluation	<p>1. Four courses in statistics and design *** of which at least two must be at the graduate level</p> <p>(Only ONE statistics and design course completed on-line will be approved)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">AND</p> <p>2. Two graduate courses in assessment</p> <p>(One assessment course must be taught by a fully registered psychologist, or instructor is eligible for full registration or is a professor of psychology).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Formulation of a referral question</li> <li>- Selection of methods</li> <li>- Information collecting and processing</li> <li>-Formulation of a hypothesis</li> <li>- Making a diagnosis where appropriate</li> <li>-Report Writing</li> <li>-Formulation of an action plan</li> </ul>

**Table 1 b Competencies Required at Graduate Training Level (cont'd)**

COMPETENCY	ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS	SKILLS TO BE DEMONSTRATED
3. Intervention	<p>Two graduate courses in Intervention</p> <p>(One intervention course must be taught by a fully registered psychologist, or instructor is eligible for full registration or is a professor of psychology)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-Establishment and maintenance of professional relationships with clients from all populations served</li> <li>- Establishment and maintenance of interdisciplinary relationships</li> <li>- Gathering of information about the nature and severity of the problem</li> <li>-Formulating hypotheses about the factors that are contributing to the problem through qualitative and quantitative means</li> <li>-Selection of appropriate intervention methods</li> <li>-Analysis of information</li> </ul>

**Table 1c Competencies Required at Graduate Training Level (cont'd)**

COMPETENCY	ACADEMIC REQUIREMENTS	SKILLS TO BE DEMONSTRATED
4. Research	<p>1. Two graduate courses in research design ***</p> <p>AND</p> <p>2. Evidence of research skills by one of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- graduate level thesis/dissertation</li> <li>- graduate research paper/project/ portfolio acceptable to the Board</li> <li>- Publication experience acceptable to the Board</li> </ul> <p>(Research supervisor must be a fully registered psychologist with research experience as defined by # 2 above; or is eligible for full registration as a psychologist with research experience as defined by # 2 above or is a professor of psychology).</p>	See attached
5. Ethics	<p>1. One Graduate course in psychological ethics</p> <p>(Instructor must be a fully registered psychologist)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ethical decision-making process</li> <li>- Proactive identification of potential ethical dilemmas</li> <li>- Resolution of ethical dilemmas</li> </ul>

## 5. EXTENDED DESCRIPTION OF GRADUATE LEVEL COMPETENCIES

### A. Interpersonal Relationships

This basic competency forms part of all the other competencies. Psychologists normally do their work in the context of interpersonal relationships (parent-child, spouses, boss-employee, etc.). They must therefore be able to establish and maintain a constructive working alliance with their clients, and possess adequate cultural competency.

#### Knowledge:

Knowledge of theories and empirical data on the professional relationship, such as:

- Interpersonal relationships
- Power relationships
- Therapeutic alliance
- Interface with social psychology
- More specific knowledge of the fluctuations of the therapeutic/professional relationship as a function of intervention setting

Knowledge of self, such as:

- Motivation
- Resources
- Values
- Personal biases
- Factors that may influence the professional relationship (e.g., boundary issues)

Knowledge of others, such as:

- Macro-environment in which the person functions (work, national norms, etc.)
- Micro-environment (personal differences, family, gender differences, etc.)

#### Skills:

- Effective communication
- Establishment and maintenance of rapport
- Establishment and maintenance of trust and respect in the professional relationship

## **Practicum Site**

Work carried out in all internship / practicum sites must be psychological in nature.

Supervision must include direct observation and provided by a fully registered psychologist.

Direct review of the supervisee's practice through observation, and use of audio or video recording, is defined as follows:

- i. Time spent in direct review shall be evenly distributed throughout the supervision period;
- ii. Direct review must cover a variety of practice activity with a major portion devoted to work with individual cases;
- iii. For supervision to qualify as direct review, the professional activity being observed must involve a client or other relevant third party.
- iv. Any recording or observation must be done with the client's consent;
- v. There should be discussion of the supervisee's performance as well as the relevant clinical issues and, in the case of observation, sufficient time for this discussion should be set aside before and after the activity being observed;
- vi. Documentation for direct review must be identified as such, with the amount of time specified, and they must cover the issues discussed about the supervisee's performance as well as any clinical issues.

Acceptable sites and supervisors are one of the following :

**a) Internship / Practicum at Canadian Psychological Association approved Pre-Doctoral Site ( adopted 2009)**

The Newfoundland and Labrador Psychology Board recognizes the level of professional and academic development and training provided at CPA approved pre-doctoral sites.

An internship completed at a CPA approved pre-doctoral site may be approved when the following conditions are met.

When a Master's level student is supervised by a pre-doctoral intern, the pre-doctoral intern's clinical supervisor must be a registered psychologist. The clinical supervisor

must provide direct review for a minimum of 25% of the Master's level student's clinical practice.

- (1) A minimum of 25% of the clinical supervision of the Master's level student shall involve direct review of the interaction between the Master's level student and the clients.
- (2) The pre-doctoral intern's clinical supervisor must provide documentation attesting to the direct review.
- (3) The final report must be co-signed by the pre-doctoral intern and the supervising registered psychologist.

### **Supervised practice component**

Twenty-five percent (25%) of supervised practiced is determined to be 25% of the time used for supervision during the internship. For example if there is a weekly block of four hours per week for supervision between pre-doctoral intern and Master's student, then 25 % of this , ie. 1 hour, must be between Master's student and clinical supervisor who is a registered psychologist. If the pre-doctoral intern is already a fully registered psychologist then the registered psychologist criteria would have been met without involving the clinical supervisor.

#### **b) Other Practicum Sites (non CPA approved Pre-Doctoral Site)**

On-site supervisors must be Registered Psychologists and must provide all supervision during the internship.

## **B. Assessment**

A competent professional psychologist draws on diverse methods of evaluation, determining which methods are best suited to the task at hand, rather than relying solely or primarily on formalized testing as an automatic response to situations requiring assessment.

The appropriate subject of evaluation in many instances is not an individual person but a couple, family, organization, or system at some other level of organization.

The skills required for assessment can and should be applied to many situations other than initial evaluation, including, for example, treatment outcome, program evaluation, and problems occurring in a broad spectrum of non-clinical settings.

The primary purpose of psychological assessment is to provide an understanding that informs a practical plan of action. It may result in a diagnostic classification or in the identification of strengths or competencies.

### **Knowledge:**

- Assessment methods
- Human development
- Knowledge of populations served
- Diagnosis

### **Skills:**

Formulation of a referral question

Selection of methods

Information collection and processing

Psychometric methods

Formulation of hypotheses and making a diagnosis when appropriate

Report writing

Formulation of an action plan

## **C. Intervention**

The intervention competency is conceptualized as activities that promote, restore, sustain, and/or enhance positive functioning and a sense of well-being in clients through preventive, developmental and/or remedial services. A broad, comprehensive vision of the intervention competency should include explicitly theory as well as the following knowledge and skills:

Knowledge:

The learning of an array of varied intervention with individuals and systems (e.g., couples, families, groups and organizations).

A respect for the positive aspects of all major approaches, which should reflect an openness to varied viewpoints and methods.

Awareness of when to make appropriate referrals and consult.

Awareness of context and diversity.

Knowledge of interventions that promote health and wellness.

Skills:

Establish and maintain professional relationships with clients from all populations served.

Establish and maintain appropriate interdisciplinary relationships with colleagues.

Gather information about the nature and severity of problems and formulate hypotheses about the factors that are contributing to the problem through qualitative and quantitative means.

Select appropriate intervention methods.

Analyze the information, develop a conceptual framework, and communicate this to the client.

## **D. Research**

The research competency requires the completion of four courses in research and design with a minimum of two of these courses at the graduate level as well as the completion of a piece of psychological research under the direction of an approved supervisor. Evidence of psychological research skills will be met through the completion of two graduate research and design courses acceptable to the Board and one of the following formats:

- i) Graduate level thesis/dissertation
- ii) Graduate research paper/project/portfolio acceptable to the Board
- iii) Publication experience acceptable to the Board.

Professional psychology programs should include research training such that it will enable students to develop:

- A. A basic understanding of and respect for the scientific underpinnings of the discipline.
- B. Knowledge of methods so as to be good consumers of the products of scientific knowledge and basic knowledge of research methods and of the applications of scientific research, including:
  - Applied statistics and measurement theory;
  - The logic of different models of scientific research (from laboratory experimentation to quasi-experimental and field research);
  - Qualitative research methods (including observation and interviewing), etc., particularly with respect to the nature of reliability and validity in the gathering and interpretation of qualitative data
  - Sufficient skills in the conduct of research to be able to develop and carry out projects in a professional context and, in certain cases, in an academic context with the aid of specialized consultants (e.g. statisticians).

C. Critical reasoning skills:

- Applications of various research approaches to social systems.
- Ability to write professional reports.

Specifically, approved research must demonstrate:

- a) A basic understanding of and respect for the scientific underpinnings of the discipline.
- b) Knowledge of methods so as to be good consumers of the products of scientific knowledge.
- c) Sufficient skills in the conduct of research to be able to develop and carry out projects in a professional context and, in certain cases, in an academic context with the aid of specialized consultants (e.g. statisticians).
- d) Basic knowledge of research methods and of the applications of scientific research, including:
  - i) Applied statistics and measurement theory;
  - ii) The logic of different models of scientific research (from laboratory experimentation to quasi-experimental and field research);
  - iii) Qualitative research methods (including observation and interviewing), etc., particularly with respect to the nature of reliability and validity in the gathering and interpretation of qualitative data
- iv) Critical reasoning skills.

v) Applications of various research approaches to social systems.

Ability to write professional reports.

### **E. Ethics**

Professionals accept their obligations, are sensitive to others, and conduct themselves in an ethical manner. They establish professional relationships within the applicable constraints and standards. The study of Ethics uses the most recent edition of the Canadian Psychological Association's *Canadian Code of Ethics for Psychologists* and must include:

#### **Knowledge:**

Ethical principles.

Standards of professional conduct.

Responsibilities to clients, society, the profession, and colleagues.

Awareness of potentially conflicting principles.

Standards for psychological tests and measurements.

Standards for conducting psychological research..

Jurisprudence and local knowledge.

#### **Skills:**

Ethical decision-making process.

Proactive identification of potential ethical dilemmas.

Resolution of ethical dilemmas.