

# **Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs**

## Evidence Guide

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Australian Psychology  
Accreditation Council



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## INTRODUCTION

The *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs: Evidence Guide* (Evidence Guide) supplements the *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Programs* (Standards) and the *Accreditation Standards: Graduate Competencies* (graduate competencies). The Evidence Guide should be used in conjunction with these documents.

The purpose of the Evidence Guide is to assist providers with preparing evidence to demonstrate that their programs of study are designed and delivered in compliance with the Standards and support their students in achieving the graduate competencies.

The Evidence Guide provides an explanation of the intent of each criterion and in some cases the explanations provide additional detail on the requirements that providers are expected to demonstrate.

It also provides guidance on preparing evidence to demonstrate that programs of study meet the Standards. The evidentiary requirements are expressed in broad terms to allow providers flexibility in both how they present their evidence and the kind of evidence used.

This guidance is provided for each Standard rather than each criterion to encourage a holistic approach to presenting evidence. The move to outcome-focussed Standards allows providers to focus on evidence that demonstrates that outcomes are achieved rather than relying solely on inputs that assume that outcomes can be achieved. This means that the lists of evidence provided are a guide to how the Standards and graduate competencies can be met and innovation is encouraged. Providers are encouraged to provide evidence that they consider relevant to support their application for accreditation, using the lists of evidence as a guide. Nevertheless, sufficient evidence to demonstrate that each criterion has been met is required.

Providers are encouraged to submit evidence in its original format and evidence can be documentation that has been prepared for other purposes, such as a TEQSA audit. Evidence in the form of references to electronic data is encouraged. Evidence for criteria may be applicable to multiple programs of study and providers are not expected to repeat evidence.

Applicants for initial accreditation of new programs will not be able to demonstrate that some criteria are met in full. Instead, providers are expected to provide evidence of their plans to meet the criteria once the programs commence.

A trained APAC assessment team, using the principles of fairness, validity, sufficiency and reliability, review the evidence presented and make a judgment about each program of study in relation to the Standards. The assessment team may consider additional evidence obtained during the accreditation process, including site visits, discussions with the provider and with stakeholders such as students, staff, supervisors, placement providers, graduates and employers. The assessment team may also take account of evidence it acquires from elsewhere, for example, from the Psychology Board of Australia (PsyBA), TEQSA or a government authority that handles complaints from the public. The assessment team may request evidence in addition to that listed in the Evidence Guide if it considers that it is required to satisfy that the criteria have been met.

The *APAC Rules for Accreditation* provides details about the process of accreditation assessment and the *APAC Application Form* provides expectations on preparing and submitting an application for accreditation. These documents further supplement the Evidence Guide.

## PREPARING EVIDENCE FOR ACCREDITATION

### STANDARD 1: PUBLIC SAFETY

Standard 1 addresses the primacy of public safety of psychological services in the delivery of programs of study in psychology in both education and placement environments. Programs of study at Levels 1 and 2 graduate competencies are expected to introduce students to ethical issues and intercultural and interpersonal factors that may impact on the provision of psychological services, while programs at Levels 3 and 4 graduate competencies are expected to have public safety at the forefront at all times in education and placement situations.

#### Explanation of the criteria

##### **Criterion 1.1: Protection of the public is prominent amongst the guiding principles of each program of study in psychology**

The provider demonstrates that its commitment to the protection of the public is evident in program of study information for students, staff, supervisors and clients; in program documentation including curricula and unit profiles/outlines; and in policies and procedures for student placements.

##### **Criterion 1.2: The education provider holds students and staff to high levels of ethical and professional conduct including in relation to applicable code(s) of conduct for the psychology profession**

The provider demonstrates that policies and procedures for the ethical and professional conduct of its staff and students are in place and these take into account the ethical and professional conduct of psychologists as specified in the Australian Psychological Society Code of Ethics.

##### **Criterion 1.3: Effective management processes are in place to ensure that students undertaking placements have the ability to practise competently and safely**

The provider demonstrates that:

- students' competence in consistently practising safely in placements is assessed and recorded, and
- policies and procedures are in place for mandatory reporting of notifiable conduct and impairment as required by the *National Law*.

##### **Criterion 1.4: The education provider ensures that organisations providing direct client activities for students have robust quality and safety policies and processes and meet all relevant regulations and standards**

The provider demonstrates that:

- sufficient education in professional skills and knowledge and ethics both before and during placements is provided to students
- policies and procedures for using appropriately qualified and registered staff are in place
- policies and procedures for placements are in place to ensure that:
  - placements are well organised and supervised and provide a range of student experiences
  - objectives and assessment of all placements are clearly defined and known to both students and supervisors prior to the student embarking on the placement

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- different placement experiences and different supervisors are used to ensure sufficient breadth and depth of education and training for students if multiple placements are undertaken at the same organisation
  - the educational experience in placements and the acquisition of required hours of direct client activities are monitored and evaluated by relevant and appropriately qualified staff
  - selection of supervisors takes into account their knowledge and experience of safe working practices
  - placement coordinators have an active relationship with the practitioners providing supervision, and
  - student progression is actively reviewed and reported by supervisors.

**Criterion 1.5: Where students provide psychological services to clients and organisations, clients' informed consent is obtained prior to provision of the service**

The provider demonstrates that consent forms, or equivalent, are obtained from clients prior to the provision of services by students.

**Criterion 1.6: Before providing psychological services as part of a program, students:**

- i. **Are provided with adequate education and training in professional skills and knowledge, including ethics, within the program prior to beginning their first placement**
- ii. **Where required under the *National Law*, hold the appropriate registration with the relevant regulatory authority**

The provider demonstrates that:

- professional skills education and training takes place before placements commence, and
- students enrolled in programs of study for Level 3 and 4 graduate competencies meet the PsyBA's requirements for provisional or general registration (a guide to PsyBA registration requirements is in Appendix 1 of the Standards).

**Criterion 1.7: Staff are appropriately qualified for teaching, supervision and administrative duties at each level**

The provider demonstrates that:

- the majority of teaching and assessment staff for programs of study for Level 3 graduate competencies are registered psychologists or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided
- the majority of teaching and assessment staff for programs of study for Level 4 graduate competencies have a relevant area of practice endorsement or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided
- staff responsible for coordinating placements are appropriately qualified and registered psychologists
- staff responsible for coordinating the delivery of psychological services in the provider-operated clinic are appropriately qualified and registered psychologists, and
- placement supervisors are registered psychologists and, if supervising placements for Level 4 graduate competencies, have the relevant area of practice endorsement or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided.

**Criterion 1.8: Suitably qualified psychologists supervise psychology students during professional client or organisation contact and provide sufficient hours of supervision to ensure a graduate will be able to practise safely**

The provider demonstrates that:

- placement supervisors have the professional and supervisory skills to supervise students in psychological work and are approved as a supervisor by the PsyBA, and
- supervision of students' first placement, which is a placement of no less than 180 hours, is a minimum of 1 hour per 7.5 placement hours, and supervision in subsequent placements is a minimum of 1 hour per 15 placement hours.

**Criterion 1.9: Placements are sufficient in duration to enable students to demonstrate the graduate competencies at the relevant level**

The provider demonstrates that:

- programs of study for Level 3 graduate competencies leading to eligibility to apply to undertake an internship to gain eligibility to apply for general registration, that is a PsyBA-approved 5th year of study, include at least 300 total hours of practicum and skills training<sup>1</sup> or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided
- Masters Degree (Coursework) programs of study for either Level 3 graduate competencies or for Level 3 and 4 graduate competencies, that is, in both cases, a PsyBA-approved 5th and 6th year of study leading to eligibility to apply for general registration, include at least 1000 hours of placement across a minimum of three placements or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided; if this program of study is combined with a Doctoral Degree (Research), the same placement requirements apply
- Doctoral Degree (Professional) programs of study for Level 3 and 4 graduate competencies, that is, a PsyBA-approved 5th, 6th and 7th year of study leading to eligibility to apply for general registration, include at least 1500 hours of placement across a minimum of four placements or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided, and
- stand-alone area of practice programs of study for Level 4 graduate competencies, leading to eligibility to apply for a registrar program, include at least 750 hours of placement or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided.

**Criterion 1.10: Placement supervision is sufficient to enable students to practise safely**

The provider demonstrates that:

- a minimum of 50% of supervision in any one placement is in the form of individual supervision, with no more than 50% in the form of group supervision
- the supervisor has sufficient oversight of the student's practice and this includes direct observation
- the supervisor and placement coordinator regularly communicate with each other about the student's progress in the placement, and
- students are able to raise concerns about either the placement or the supervision with the placement coordinator.

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<sup>1</sup> Practicum and skills training is a placement that may use simulation and other forms of skills training in place of direct client activities and client-related activities.

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## Guidance on Evidence for this Standard

### For programs of study at all Levels of graduate competencies, evidence may include:

- policies and procedures for ethical and professional conduct for students and staff, including management of misconduct
- a staffing profile for all staff used for each program of study, including numbers of staff and their professional qualifications, areas of expertise, their teaching, assessment and placement supervision responsibilities and, if applicable, their registration status and PsyBA supervision approval status, and
- curricula for each program of study, including the learning outcomes and their alignment to the guiding principle of protection of the public.

### For programs of study for Levels 3 and 4 graduate competences, evidence may include:

- policies and procedures for professional training, practice placements, and supervision for external and provider-operated clinic placements
- a register of agreements between the provider and any supervisors external to the provider and between organisations, placement clinics, practices, or services being used for student placements for the program of study
- a register of supervisors for each program of study, including their qualifications, registration status, PsyBA supervision approval status and their supervision responsibilities
- a course handbook, or equivalent such as a website, showing that students are informed of AHPRA mandatory reporting requirements under the *National Law* and PsyBA registration requirements
- a register of registration status of all students
- professional indemnity insurance arrangements for all students on placements
- a matrix, or equivalent, demonstrating the range of professional placement experiences, types of clients, required direct client activities hours and supervision requirements (hours and type of supervision) for students in each program of study, and
- completed placement supervision logs signed by supervisors or for new programs, supervision logs with the provision for supervisor signatures.

## STANDARD 2: ACADEMIC GOVERNANCE AND QUALITY ASSURANCE

Standard 2 addresses the governance, management and administration support for the delivery of the programs of study and the capability of the provider to produce graduates who meet the graduate competencies for the programs of study.

### Explanation of the criteria

#### **Criterion 2.1: Robust academic governance arrangements that include systematic monitoring, review and improvement are in place for the programs**

The provider demonstrates that:

- the head of the AOU is a senior, experienced academic who has postgraduate qualifications in psychology, publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals, and is appointed at Level D or higher or an equivalent to this university rank
- the head of the AOU has sufficient academic, financial and administrative influence to ensure the relevance and quality of the programs of study offered
- the effectiveness of design and delivery of programs of study is regularly monitored and reviewed and the process includes consulting with and taking into account the views of the profession, staff, students, graduates and employers and other professionals when relevant
- another organisation (a third party) which is engaged to deliver part or all of the provider's accredited programs of study or to deliver them in partnership with the provider:
  - is regularly monitored for compliance with the terms and conditions of the contract
  - meets the applicable health and safety and other statutory obligations for students, clients and staff
  - delivers the programs of study in accordance with the APAC Standards, and
  - does not claim to have APAC accreditation apart from the contractual arrangement with the primary provider (unless it has obtained this independently from APAC).

#### **Criterion 2.2: Quality improvement processes use student evaluations of the programs and internal and external academic and professional peer review, including external benchmarking where programs and assessments may be compared to those offered by other providers**

The provider demonstrates that:

- student evaluation, academic and professional peer review and stakeholder consultation are used as part of its quality improvement processes
- regular benchmarking against other providers is undertaken and acted upon to support quality improvement of programs, and
- benchmarking processes take into account national and/or international standards.

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**Criterion 2.3: There is relevant external and internal input into the design and management of the programs, including from representatives of the psychology profession, academic staff, professional psychology staff, prospective employers and students**

The provider demonstrates that programs of study are designed and delivered, taking into account the views of key internal and external stakeholders.

**Criterion 2.4: Mechanisms exist for responding within each program to contemporary developments in psychology education and related disciplines**

The provider demonstrates that:

- programs of study are designed and revised to meet the changing needs of the profession and the community and to respond to emerging issues, such as current or new legislation that changes the scope of practice of psychology, changes in methods of practice arising from new knowledge or technology and matters that cross disciplinary boundaries, and
- academic staff are actively involved in research and/or scholarship that informs their teaching and/or practice.

**Criterion 2.5: The education provider ensures that academic and professional psychology staff are supported in research, engagement, teaching, and professional development**

The provider demonstrates that policies and procedures are in place to support staff to undertake their teaching responsibilities, undertake research, engage with the profession to enhance their teaching and research, and professional development relevant to their role is available.

**Guidance on Evidence for this Standard**

**For programs of study at all Levels of graduate competencies, evidence may include:**

- details of the governance, management and administrative arrangements, including the processes for quality assurance, review and improvement, that demonstrate sufficient governance and management oversight of and administrative support for each program of study
- evidence of the sufficiency of resources (human, financial and physical) for the program and the flexibility and authority of the AOU to direct them where required
- policies and procedures for program benchmarking and review and examples of benchmarking and review processes conducted showing consultation and the subsequent changes to programs, and
- contract(s) with third party providers of components of the program of study, if applicable.

## **STANDARD 3: PROGRAM OF STUDY**

Standard 3 addresses the program design, teaching and learning approaches and resources required to support students to develop graduate competencies at the relevant level.

### **Explanation of the criteria**

#### **Criterion 3.1: Psychology as a science-based discipline using an evidence-based approach and a coherent educational pedagogy informs the documented program design and delivery**

The provider demonstrates that:

- programs of study are designed to reflect that psychology is a science-based and evidence-based discipline and delivery across the curricula achieves knowledge of the scientific discipline of psychology
- programs of study develop the research skills required for the science-based discipline of psychology (a guide to research requirements at Levels of graduate competencies is in Appendix 1), and
- programs of study are designed and delivered using a coherent pedagogy to support students in gaining the graduate competencies.

#### **Criterion 3.2: Program learning outcomes incorporate all graduate competencies for the relevant level(s) and form a coherent body of learning**

The provider demonstrates that:

- the learning outcomes for each program of study encompass the required graduate competencies for the Level, and
- the structure for each program of study assists students in gaining the required graduate competencies for the Level.

#### **Criterion 3.3: Teaching staff are appropriately qualified, experienced and supported by the HEP to deliver the components of the programs they teach**

The provider demonstrates that teaching staff have the appropriate academic qualifications, experience and, if applicable, the registration and supervision requirements as outlined in criteria 1.7 and 1.8 above to teach the components of the program for which they have been appointed and support for teaching staff in achieving quality outcomes for students is provided.

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**Criterion 3.4: All programs have the sufficient number of staff to support the student cohort in acquiring the relevant graduate competencies**

The provider demonstrates that:

- the head of its AOU has the flexibility and authority to direct its human resources to where they are required
- the following typical student to staff ratios<sup>2</sup> are in place to support each student cohort in acquiring the relevant graduate competencies or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided:
  - 26:1 for programs at graduate competencies Levels 1 and 2
  - 15:1 for programs at graduate competency Level 3 where there is a requirement of 300 hours of placement
  - 10:1 for programs at graduate competencies Levels 3 or 4 where there is a requirement of more than 300 hours of placement, and
  - where two Levels of graduate competencies are packaged in one program, the student:staff ratio for the higher Level graduate competencies (as above) applies.

**Criterion 3.5: All programs have the learning and assessment resources to sustain the quality of education that is required to ensure the achievement of the program learning outcomes across all delivery sites and modalities**

The provider demonstrates that:

- the head of its AOU has the flexibility and authority to direct its financial and physical resources to where they are required
- facilities appropriate to the Level of graduate competencies are available for the delivery its programs of study
- training facilities for the delivery of programs of study for Levels 3 and 4 graduate competencies have sufficient well-equipped consulting rooms, recording facilities, computing facilities, security arrangements, a test library with sufficient tests for student use and a space for students to work with confidential materials to provide an adequate and safe experience for students, and
- professional experience and training undertaken with another organisation meet the same requirements for facilities, resources and staffing.

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<sup>2</sup> Student-to-staff ratio is an indicator retained from previous versions of the APAC Standards. The ratios in the Standards are in line with the Australian Council of Deans of Science guidelines: Dobson, I: *Staffing University Science in the 21st Century*. 2014. A student-to-staff ratio calculator spreadsheet is available at: [https://www.psychologycouncil.org.au/education\\_provider\\_resources](https://www.psychologycouncil.org.au/education_provider_resources)

**Criterion 3.6: Learning and teaching methods and environments are designed and used to enable students to achieve the program learning outcomes when assessed**

The provider demonstrates that:

- effective and contemporary methods of learning and teaching that promote the educational principles of active student participation are used and problem-based learning, evidence-based learning, computer-assisted learning, simulated-learning and student-centred learning methodologies are encouraged, and
- opportunities to undertake research that is supported by the research activities of staff teaching in the program are offered to students.

**Criterion 3.7: The quality and quantity of professional practice education is sufficient to produce graduates competent to practise across a range of settings**

The provider demonstrates that, at Level 2 graduate competencies:

- students encounter sufficient skills training to be able to apply Level 2 competencies with a diversity of clients and situations and within relevant legal frameworks and codes of ethical practice.

The provider demonstrates that, at Level 3 and 4 graduate competencies:

- students encounter a client base with a sufficient diversity of cohorts to gain breadth of experience across age, gender, culture and socioeconomic status
- students encounter sufficient direct client activities across a broad range of psychology services and settings
- student observation, practitioner demonstration, and review of student client management decisions form part of the training
- students achieve the following minimum number of hours for placements and client contact for programs of study at Levels 3 and 4 graduate competencies:
  - for graduate competencies leading to eligibility for general registration after completion of a one-year PsyBA internship, at least 300 hours of practicum and skills training<sup>3</sup> or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided
  - for graduate competencies leading to eligibility for general registration, or combined general registration and endorsement of specialised areas of practice, undertaken as a Masters Degree (Coursework), the 1000 placement hours comprise direct client and client-related activities, with typically a minimum of 400 of those hours being direct client activities, or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided; if this program of study is combined with a Doctoral Degree (Research), the same placement requirements apply
  - for graduate competencies leading to eligibility for general registration and endorsement of specialised areas of practice, undertaken as a Doctoral Degree (Professional), the 1500 placement hours comprise direct client and client-related activities, with typically a minimum of 600 of those hours being direct client activities, or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided, and

<sup>3</sup> See definition in footnote 1.

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- for graduate competencies leading to eligibility for endorsement of specialised areas of practice, undertaken as a stand-alone area of practice program of study, the 750 placement hours comprise direct client and client-related activities, with typically a minimum of 300 of those hours being direct client activities or a sound rationale for any variation can be provided.
  - supervision of placements meets the requirements set out in criteria 1.8 and 1.10 above.

**Criterion 3.8: Cultural responsiveness, including with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures, is appropriately integrated within the program and clearly articulated as a required learning outcome**

The provider demonstrates that:

- students are trained to respond appropriately to the unique attributes of the person, family or community with whom they are working
- teaching staff are trained to be culturally responsive to students in the learning environment, and
- learning methodologies and practices support the development of culturally responsive practice when working with all clients, including, in particular, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples<sup>4</sup>.

**Criterion 3.9: The application of the principles of inter-professional learning and practice is included as a required learning outcome at the appropriate level in the program**

The provider demonstrates that inter-professional learning and practice<sup>5</sup> opportunities are provided in both learning and practice contexts.

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<sup>4</sup> For further information, refer to the Australian Indigenous Psychology Education Project's *Curriculum Framework* available at [www.indigenoupsyched.org.au](http://www.indigenoupsyched.org.au).

<sup>5</sup> For further information, refer to the World Health Organization's *Framework for Action on Interprofessional Education and Collaborative Practice* available at [www.who.int/hrh/resources/framework\\_action/en/](http://www.who.int/hrh/resources/framework_action/en/)

### Guidance on Evidence for this Standard

#### For programs of study at all Levels of graduate competencies, evidence may include:

- a statement of educational philosophy and pedagogical approach for each program of study
- curricula for each program of study, including the learning outcomes and their relationship to the graduate competencies
- unit of study profiles/outlines for each component of each program of study
- a statement addressing integration in the curricula of the development of students' individual cultural responsiveness, in particular in relation to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
- examples of learning and teaching materials, resources and approaches showing a range of delivery methodologies
- staffing profile for all staff used for each program of study, including numbers of staff and their professional qualifications, areas of expertise, teaching, assessment and placement supervision responsibilities and, if applicable, their registration status and PsyBA supervision approval status
- policies and procedures for professional development for full-time, part-time and sessional academic staff and examples of professional development undertaken to support professional practice
- documentation on staff appointments, staff support, workload allocation for academic staff
- examples of staff engagement with learning and teaching initiatives to support effective, contemporary and evidence-based teaching approaches
- a report on research activities within the AOU
- numbers of students enrolled, in any delivery mode, in each program of study, and
- a list of psychological tests held by the provider for student use.

#### For programs of study for Levels 3 and 4 graduate competences, evidence may include:

- a matrix, or equivalent, demonstrating the range of professional placement experiences, types of clients, required direct client activities hours and supervision requirements (hours and type of supervision) for students in each program of study and details of the expected number and types of clients, and
- completed placement supervision logs signed by supervisors showing ongoing monitoring.

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## STANDARD 4: THE STUDENT EXPERIENCE

Standard 4 addresses the provision of a student experience that is supportive, equitable and respectful of all students' academic development needs, personal well-being and rights as enrolled students.

### Explanation of the criteria

#### **Criterion 4.1: Information about learning and assessment processes and requirements is accurate, clear and accessible**

The provider demonstrates that relevant, accurate and timely information on programs of study, including learning outcomes, assessment requirements, placement requirements and pathways to further study and professional employment are provided to students.

#### **Criterion 4.2: Admission and progression requirements and processes are fair, transparent and equitable**

The provider demonstrates that its student selection criteria and processes are intended to select students who are likely to succeed in the program of study.

#### **Criterion 4.3: Each program's APAC accreditation status is accurately and prominently represented and is clearly distinguishable from any program offered that is not APAC-accredited**

The provider demonstrates that:

- the titles of qualifications awarded following successful completion of an APAC-accredited program of study in psychology:
  - accurately represent the content of the program
  - differ from those of any other qualifications offered by the provider for which APAC accreditation of the program has not been obtained, and
  - do not contain terms that could misinform the public as to the capabilities of graduates or could bring graduates or the discipline and profession of psychology into disrepute.
- programs of study information include accurate information on the APAC-accreditation status of the program, and
- the APAC-accreditation status of all programs of study is publicly available, for example, on its website.

#### **Criterion 4.4: The academic learning needs of students are identified and academic support provided**

The provider demonstrates that it identifies and provides support for the academic learning needs of students, offers remediation opportunities and has in place strategies to assist underperforming students.

#### **Criterion 4.5: Students are informed of the availability of personal and professional support services, and are equipped with skills to adequately maintain their own well-being**

The provider demonstrates that students have access to, and are informed of, personal support services to support their physical and mental wellbeing.

**Criterion 4.6: Equity and diversity principles are observed and promoted in the student experience**

The provider demonstrates that equity and diversity principles in all aspects of students' learning and assessments are observed and promoted.

**Criterion 4.7: Students have access to effective grievance and appeals processes**

The provider demonstrates that students are provided with information on and access to the provider's complaint, grievance and appeals procedures.

**Guidance on Evidence for this Standard****For programs of study at all Levels of graduate competencies, evidence may include:**

- policies and procedures for student admission and progression for programs of study and samples of admission and progression decisions
- information for prospective and enrolled students about programs of study, including course handbook or equivalent with details of the curriculum and unit profiles/outlines, credit for prior learning rules and placement requirements, if applicable
- policies and procedures on equity and diversity and examples of implementation and monitoring
- policies and procedures on grievance and appeals, register of grievances and appeals lodged, and examples of the outcome of the procedure, and
- details of the academic and personal support services available to students, including remediation opportunities.

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## STANDARD 5: ASSESSMENT

Standard 5 addresses the assessment approaches required to determine the achievement of the graduate competencies at the relevant Level.

### Explanation of the criteria

#### **Criterion 5.1: The scope of assessment covers all program learning outcomes which include all graduate competencies for the relevant level(s)**

The provider demonstrates that assessments across the full program of study are sufficient for all students to demonstrate the breadth and depth of the each of the graduate competencies for the Level.

#### **Criterion 5.2: There is a clear relationship between program learning outcomes and assessment strategies, which are criterion-based and ensure students demonstrate competence against all program learning outcomes**

The provider demonstrates that:

- assessment strategies are mapped to the learning outcomes of the program of learning and the learning outcomes are mapped to the graduate competencies for the Level, and
- assessments are criterion-based and each student has the opportunity to demonstrate achievement of the learning outcomes.

#### **Criterion 5.3: Multiple assessment tools, modes and techniques are used to assess program learning outcomes, and include where relevant direct observation in professional practice settings**

The provider demonstrates that:

- assessment tools, modes and techniques for formative and summative assessment are fit-for-purpose for assessing the learning outcomes of programs of study
- assessment of practice placements uses a variety of tools, modes and techniques including:
  - case examinations, objective structured clinical examinations or other assessment methods that assess the student's competence in taking a complete history, conducting a full assessment, including psychological testing, and interpreting the findings to develop and implement an intervention plan and monitor its effectiveness
  - observation of the student working with individual clients and groups
  - observation of the student performing tasks, such as complete evaluations, multiple times across the length of the placement
  - role play or simulation of client contact to test specific skills, and
  - feedback from clients, students and supervisors.

**Criterion 5.4: Program management, coordination, and moderation procedures ensure consistent and appropriate assessment and feedback to students**

The provider demonstrates that:

- internal moderation for reliability, validity and consistency of assessment outcomes is undertaken and the findings are used to improve assessment approaches
- external benchmarking is used to improve assessment approaches, and
- feedback on assessment and achievement of the learning outcomes is provided to students.

**Criterion 5.5: Assessors of students are suitably qualified and experienced**

The provider demonstrates that:

- assessors are appropriately qualified for the role and are provided with guidance and support to enable them to fulfil their assessment responsibilities
- assessors of placements leading to eligibility for general registration hold general registration, and
- assessors of placements leading to eligibility for endorsement of a specialised area of practice hold the relevant Area of Practice Endorsement.

**Guidance on Evidence for this Standard**

**For programs of study at all Levels of graduate competencies, evidence may include:**

- a statement or policy on the assessment approach
- an assessment matrix, or equivalent, for each program of study that demonstrates alignment of assessment to the learning outcomes and the graduate competencies
- an assessment strategy that includes details on the formative and summative assessment for each phase or year of programs of study as students' competencies are progressively built
- examples of assessments and marking criteria that demonstrate that the scope of assessment covers all learning outcomes and that assessments are criterion-based
- examples of de-identified student assignments
- processes for and outcomes of assessment moderation
- policies and procedures for management of students' unsatisfactory progress
- a staffing profile for all staff used for each program of study, including numbers of staff and their professional qualifications, areas of expertise, teaching, assessment and placement supervision responsibilities and, if applicable, their registration status and PsyBA supervision approval status, and
- examples of de-identified client work, such as student log books/portfolios, progress notes signed by supervisors.

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## APPENDIX 1: APAC RESEARCH REQUIREMENTS FOR GRADUATE COMPETENCIES

*Where two levels are packaged together into one program, only one research project is required.*

### Program of study leading to a Bachelor Honours Degree

#### Research requirement referenced in Level 2 Pre-professional competency 2.5

A Bachelor Honours Degree involves planning and executing project work and/or a piece of research and scholarship with some degree of independence<sup>6</sup>.

Students will undertake a research project that includes a research question, empirical literature review, data analysis, reporting of results and discussion. The research project should be structured so that students participate in the key steps involved, including the formulation of research questions, the analysis of data to test the research question, the interpretation of the findings and the writing of the report.

### Program of study leading to a Masters Degree (Coursework)

#### Research requirement referenced in Level 3 Professional competency 3.17, and in Level 4 Professional competencies for specialised areas of practice *Content of programs – general*

A Masters Degree (Coursework) requires students to demonstrate the application of knowledge and skills to plan and execute a research-based project that is applicable to the field of work<sup>7</sup>.

As students will have completed a major research project previously, they should be demonstrating greater independence than at the fourth-year Level.

The research project, incorporating a critical review of the literature, may take the form of one or more of the following:

- a program or service evaluation study
- a study based on experimental single case design
- a pilot study and grant application
- a systematic review or meta-analysis
- a qualitative or quantitative study using primary or secondary data analyses
- a traditional empirical research project, and
- a capstone experience in which a question is posed, and evidence is gathered to answer that question.

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<sup>6</sup> For further information, refer to *Australian Qualifications Framework: Second Edition January 2013* at [www.aqf.edu.au/](http://www.aqf.edu.au/)

<sup>7</sup> *ibid*

### **Program of study leading to a Doctoral Degree (Professional)**

**Research requirement referenced in Level 3 Professional Competency 3.17, and in Level 4 Professional competencies for specialised areas of practice *Content of programs - general***

A Doctoral Degree (Professional) involves the application of knowledge and skills:

- with intellectual independence
- with initiative and creativity in new situations and/or for further learning
- with full responsibility and accountability for personal outputs
- to plan and execute original research, and
- with the ongoing capacity to generate new knowledge, including in the context of professional practice<sup>8</sup>.

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<sup>8</sup> ibid



