

**Division of Clinical Psychology
Hong Kong Psychological Society**

**Guidelines for
Accreditation of Clinical Placement Setting
for Clinical Psychology Training
and
Accreditation of Supervised Clinical Practice
Provided by Clinical Psychology Training Programme**

(Revised after DCP AGM in May 2009)

The present guidelines were prepared by the Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Placement for Clinical Psychology Training (SACP), Division of Clinical Psychology, Hong Kong Psychological Society (DCP, HKPS) and endorsed in the Annual General Meeting of DCP, HKPS in 2009.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Aim of accreditation

The aim of accreditation is to secure a high standard of clinical training for clinical-psychology-trainees.

Objective of accreditation

The objective of accreditation is to work with clinical psychology training programmes and clinical placement settings to ensure that the supervised clinical practice meets the accreditation criteria set by the DCP of HKPS.

Criteria for accreditation

- The criteria for accreditation are drawn up with references to the standards set by a number of well-established professional psychological associations overseas. Views of members of the Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP), Hong Kong Psychological Society (HKPS) were also collected before finalization of these criteria.
- All accreditation criteria will be reviewed on a periodic basis to ensure that they are relevant and representative of an appropriately high standard.

Responsibilities of DCP

- To ensure that all aspects of the accreditation process are carried out in accordance with the requirements set out here;
- To support fully any accreditation subcommittee member who has acted within the accreditation guidelines and HKPS's Code of Professional Conduct; and
- To ensure that the applicant receives an approved report and associated follow-up correspondence at the conclusion of the process;
- To maintain updated lists of (a) all clinical placement settings being accredited by DCP, and (b) all clinical psychology training programmes with supervised clinical practice being accredited by DCP, and ensure that these lists are conveniently accessible by the public.
- To reimburse all accreditation subcommittee members for expenses incurred in accordance with the financial regulations of HKPS;

Responsibilities of the accreditation subcommittee members

- To behave in such a way that they will not bring HKPS and DCP into disrepute;
- To have a commitment to and a perspective relevant to education, training, and the accreditation process; and
- To base their judgments in compliance with the accreditation criteria.

Responsibilities of the applicant(s) for accreditation

- To prepare documentation for the inspection of the Accreditation Subcommittee in compliance with the appropriate accreditation criteria;

- To accept that the accreditation subcommittee as a whole acts as DCP's representative and that, therefore, no member of the accreditation subcommittee will be singled out in any personal way by institution;
- To make available for inspection by the accreditation subcommittee all physical resources underpinning the accreditation.
- To inform the SACP if there is any change in the list of qualified clinical supervisor(s) or any condition that may affect the accreditation status.

Chapter 2

Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Placement for Clinical Psychology Training, Division of Clinical Psychology, HKPS

1. Terms of reference

- 1.1 The Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Placement for Clinical Psychology Training (SACP) is appointed by and accountable to the Executive Committee of the Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP), Hong Kong Psychological Society;
- 1.2 All members of SACP are members of DCP and will be bound by the HKPS's Code of Professional Conduct and all protocols in the public arena;
- 1.3 SACP processes applications and makes recommendation to the Executive Committee (Ex-co) of DCP regarding the following:
 - 1.3.1. Approval of new accreditation
 - 1.3.2. Re-affirmation or change in accreditation status of placement settings and supervised clinical practice of clinical psychology training programmes
- 1.4 SACP makes recommendation to the DCP Ex-co on changes to the accreditation criteria and procedures;
- 1.5 SACP investigates and makes recommendation to the DCP Ex-co should a complaint arises on the standard of a placement setting or supervised clinical practice of a clinical psychology training programme.

2. Composition

- 2.1 SACP shall consist of no less than *five* members, appointed by DCP Ex-co for staggered *two-year* terms. All SACP members must be Full Members of DCP and represent a broad array of clinical settings.
- 2.2 The Chairperson of SACP is appointed by DCP Ex-co.
- 2.3 The Secretary of SACP is a representative from DCP Ex-co.
- 2.4 All SACP members, except the Secretary, should have extensive experience in clinical supervision. They should be qualified clinical supervisors with at least *five years'* experience of providing clinical supervision to trainees of post-graduate CP programmes in local settings.

3. Accreditation Panel

- 3.1 An accreditation panel shall be formed if an accreditation visit is deemed necessary for processing an application. Each panel shall consist of no less than *three* members, at least one of them being a SACP member. The other panel members are invited and appointed by the SACP. They shall have at least three years' experience of providing clinical supervision in local settings. The panel shall elect from among its members a convener for each accreditation visit. None of the panel members should be employee of the placement setting or training programme to be evaluated.

4. Meetings

- 4.1 The SACP shall meet no less than 3 times a year.
- 4.2 *Three* members of SACP shall form the quorum for making any decision.

Chapter 3

Procedures for Accreditation by DCP

I. Application for accreditation of clinical placement

1. Application should be made to the Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP), Hong Kong Psychological Society.
2. The completed application form should be verified and signed by the person in charge of the placement setting seeking accreditation (hereafter referred to as “the applicant”).

Processing of the application

3. New application, re-application or application for renewal of accreditation will be processed at the regular meetings of the SACP.

Formation of Accreditation Panel

4. The SACP will decide whether an accreditation visit is necessary for a particular application. An accreditation panel will be formed in accordance with Section 3 of Chapter 2 if an accreditation visit is deemed necessary.

Accreditation visit

5. The secretary of SACP shall inform the applicant the date and purpose of the accreditation visit no less than *four weeks* prior to the visit.
6. The applicant shall
 - 6.1 Prepare all necessary documentations in compliance with the appropriate accreditation criteria for inspection by the Accreditation Panel;
 - 6.2 Ensure that all personnel or their deputies that the Accreditation Panel requests to see are available during the Accreditation visit ;
 - 6.3 Make available for inspection by the Accreditation Panel all physical resources underpinning the accreditation;
7. During the Accreditation visit, members of the Accreditation Panel shall:
 - 7.1 Conduct an on-site observation of the physical premises, relevant facilities and materials
 - 7.2 Conduct separate interviews with the applicant, clinical supervisor(s) and CP trainee(s) if currently available;
 - 7.3 Examine documents pertaining to placement planning and provision of clinical supervision as specified in the checklist provided.
8. For a setting that is offering clinical supervision for the first time, the applicant should demonstrate to the Accreditation Panel the readiness and capacity of the setting to plan and provide necessary facilities for quality placement. The Accreditation Panel shall examine carefully whether the applicant and the supervisor(s) involved fully understand and demonstrate the competence to meet

the accreditation criteria.

9. The Accreditation Panel shall submit a report to SACP no later than *six weeks* after the accreditation visit. The report shall include the completed accreditation criteria checklist, any relevant documents collected and a brief summary of their views and recommendations.

Result of application

10. A decision will be made on the application by SACP within *six months* after the application is received by DCP.

11. Decision on the application made by SACP will fall into one of the following categories:

11.1 Accredited Placement Setting

The setting that has satisfied the accreditation criteria of DCP will be granted the status of Accredited Placement Setting. The accreditation will be valid for *four years* as long as the criteria for accreditation are fulfilled. Application for renewal is necessary six months before expiry of the accreditation. The applicant is obliged to inform SACP if there is any change of condition that may affect the accreditation status.

11.2 Accredited Placement Setting (Provisional)

When a setting fails to fulfill the accreditation criteria because, either

(a) There are demonstrated deficiencies but has proven to SACP that the identified deficiencies will be made good/further evidence that the criteria are met will be provided within a reasonable period of time; or

(b) There is no available evidence that the accreditation criteria are fulfilled because the setting is providing clinical placement for the first time, but has proven to SACP the capacity to satisfy the accreditation criteria;

The status of Accredited Placement Setting (Provisional) will be granted.

The provisional accreditation will be valid for *two years*. Applicant must submit re-application for accreditation six months before expiry of the provisional accreditation.

11.3 Not Accredited

The setting fails to fulfill the accreditation criteria and fails to demonstrate capacity of doing so.

12. SACP will submit the final accreditation report with its decision and recommendations to DCP ex-co. Under normal circumstances, the decision of SACP is considered as final. DCP will inform applicant of the result and disseminate the accreditation report accordingly.

II. Application for accreditation of supervised clinical practice offered in a clinical psychology training programme

13. Application should be made to the Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP), Hong Kong Psychological Society.
14. The completed application form should be verified and signed by the person in charge of the training programme (hereafter referred to as “the applicant”).

Processing of the application

15. New application, re-application or application for renewal of accreditation will be considered at the regular meetings of the SACP.
16. The SACP will decide whether an accreditation visit is necessary for a particular application. An accreditation panel will be formed in accordance with Section 2.5 of Chapter 2 if an accreditation visit is deemed necessary.

Accreditation visit

17. The secretary of SACP shall inform the applicant the date and purpose of such a visit no less than *four weeks* prior to the visit.
18. The applicant shall prepare all necessary documentations in compliance with the appropriate accreditation criteria for inspection by the Accreditation Panel;
19. During the Accreditation visit, members of the Accreditation Panel shall
 - 19.1 examine documents pertaining to planning and arrangement of supervised clinical practice, these may include lists of DCP accredited clinical placement settings and qualified clinical supervisors, guidelines on clinical supervision, clinical training records or logbooks of individual CP trainees, placement evaluation reports and relevant audit reports;
 - 19.2 conduct on-site meetings with the applicant, faculty members, clinical tutor(s) (or equivalent post) and CP trainees.
20. For a new clinical psychology training programme that is arranging clinical supervision for the first time, the applicant should demonstrate to the Accreditation Panel the readiness and capacity of the programme to plan and provide clinical training that will meet the accreditation standard. The Accreditation Panel shall examine carefully whether the applicant and the programme staff involved fully understand and demonstrate the competence to meet the accreditation criteria.
21. The Accreditation Panel shall submit a report to SACP no later than *six weeks* after the accreditation visit. The report shall include the completed accreditation criteria checklist, any relevant documents collected and a brief summary of their views and recommendations.

Result of application

22. A decision will be made on the application by SACP within *six months* after the

application is received by DCP.

23. Decision on the application made by SACP will fall into one of the following categories:

23.1 Clinical Psychology Training Programme with Accredited Supervised Clinical Practice

The Clinical Psychology Training Programme that has satisfied the accreditation criteria of DCP will be granted the status of Clinical Psychology Training Programme with Accredited Supervised Clinical Practice. The accreditation will be valid for *four years* as long as the criteria set out in this Handbook are fulfilled. Application for renewal is necessary before expiry of the accreditation. Applicant is obliged to inform SACP if there is any change of condition that may affect the accreditation status (e.g. change in structure or contents of the supervised clinical training).

23.2 Clinical Psychology Training Programme with Accredited Supervised Clinical Practice (Provisional)

When a Clinical Psychology Training Programme fails to fulfill the accreditation criteria because, either

(a) there are demonstrated deficiencies but has proven to SACP that the identified deficiencies will be made good/further evidence that the criteria are met will be provided within a reasonable period of time; or

(b) there is no available evidence that the accreditation criteria are fulfilled because the Programme is arranging supervised clinical practice for the first time, but has proven to SACP the capacity to satisfy the accreditation criteria;

the status of Clinical Psychology Training Programme with Accredited Supervised Clinical Practice (Provisional) will be granted.

The provisional accreditation will be valid for *two years*. Applicant must submit re-application for accreditation six months before expiry of the provisional accreditation.

23.3 Not Accredited

The Programme fails to fulfill the accreditation criteria and fails to demonstrate capacity of doing so.

24. SACP will submit the final accreditation report on an application containing its decision and recommendations **to DCP ex-co for endorsement.** DCP will inform the applicant of the result and disseminate the accreditation report accordingly.

III. Appeal and review

25. In case an applicant disagrees with the accreditation status granted by SACP, the applicant may submit in writing within 30 days to the Chairperson of DCP and must specify the grounds on which the appeal is made with a non-refundable appeal fee. Further, the appeal must include the documentation necessary to support the appeal. DCP Ex-co will consider the reasons for the appeal, decide whether it is accepted, and notify the appellant of its decision.
26. An appeal sent to the Chairperson of DCP more than 30 days after receiving SACP decision of accreditation status is invalid and will not be considered.
27. Upon acceptance of the appeal, the DCP Ex-co will form and appoint an ad hoc Appeal Panel which comprises of three members of DCP. They should be qualified clinical supervisors with at least 7 years' experience of providing clinical supervision to trainees of post-graduate CP programmes in local settings. The Appeal Panel may conduct site visit, and/or invite one or more representatives to appear before the Appeal Panel to make oral and/or written presentation. The Appeal Panel will make the final decision on the appeal and submit to DCP Ex-co. DCP will then notify the appellant the outcome of the appeal accordingly.
28. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.
29. The appeal process should be completed in a timely manner. It will be completed within 6 months of the date of SACP decision of accreditation status.
30. Unsuccessful applicant can submit a new application for accreditation at a later time. The time lapse between two applications should at least be one year.

IV. Fees

31. For new applications, re-applications or applications for renewal of accreditation, applicants for accreditation of clinical placement and applicants for accreditation of supervised clinical practice in a clinical psychology training programme shall pay an initial application fee of **HK\$2,000 and HK\$8,000** respectively, together with their applications.
32. Applicant who submits an appeal against an accreditation decision shall pay a fee of **HK\$2,000**.
33. DCP shall have the discretion to waive the fees for application and appeal for placement settings that do not charge supervision fee.
34. All fees paid by applicants are not refundable.

Chapter 4

Criteria for Accreditation of Clinical Placement Setting for Clinical Psychology Training

Aim of clinical placement

1. The aim of clinical placements is to ensure that clinical psychology (CP) trainees develop their core skills through experiences with different client groups and have a full range of psychological work in various settings.

Scope of accreditation

2. The scope of accreditation covers placement settings with qualified supervisors providing supervised clinical practice for CP trainees that fulfill the criteria set out here.

Scope of clinical training

3. Clinical training offered by these placement settings should cover at least one of the following: (i) Adult psychological problems; or (ii) Child & Adolescent psychological problems; or (iii) People with medical conditions, physical/mental disabilities, or criminal offending behaviors.

Qualifications of supervisors

4. The supervisor of a CP trainee shall be a qualified clinical psychologist (i.e. being a full member of DCP or eligible for full membership of DCP) who has at least three years' full-time relevant experience after gaining the qualification eligible for DCP membership. The supervisor should be employed as clinical psychologist in the setting or be able to provide on-site supervision in the unit in which the work is carried out. The supervisor should normally have worked for at least one year in the placement setting.

Setting up the placement

5. The supervisor and trainee must have an opportunity to meet either before, or at the very beginning of a placement to discuss the range of experience which is to be provided, and the expectations of each other. The general aims of the placement should be agreed and a placement contract should be written, with due consideration of the range of learning opportunities available in the placement, and the needs, interests and previous experience of the trainee.
6. The supervisor must plan an induction for the trainee, arrange for cover in the event of annual or other leave and should plan casework well in advance.
7. Trainees should have access to shared office space and facilities. Trainees must be given guidance on the facilities available, including clerical and IT support for placement work and access to psychological tests and instruments.

Quantity and quality of clinical supervision

8. **There should be on average at least one hours of direct contact** with the clinical supervisor for *each full day* of placement. Direct contact should include: i) face-to-face supervision, ii) observation of supervisor performing clinical work, and iii) observation of trainee performing clinical work. Each of these components should not be less than 20% of the direct contact hours.
9. Various forms of team supervision for groups of trainees are acceptable. But each trainee must have a named supervisor who is responsible for the co-ordination of his/her supervision and who formally assesses the trainee in consultation with other supervisor(s) involved (see 10 for the requirement of individual supervision).
10. Where supervision comprises a mix of individual and small group formats, no less than 50% should be individual supervision. During individual supervision, trainees must be provided with opportunities to discuss issues related to professional development, overall workload and organizational difficulties as well as on-going case work. Longer supervision should be arranged whenever needed. In addition, supervisors should try to make themselves available for informal discussion of matters that arise between formal supervision sessions.
11. Supervisors should be prepared to discuss seriously and sympathetically any general issues of relationships with patients or staff that arise in clinical work. They should be sensitive to any issues between the trainee and the client and be prepared to discuss these in a supportive way when they are considered to affect the trainee's work. However, supervisors should not require or coerce trainees to disclose personal information unrelated to the training. Supervisors should respect the right of a trainee to retain reasonable personal privacy and to develop the trainee's individual orientation within the confines of the training programme. (Reference: Code of Professional Conduct, HKPS)
12. Supervisors shall not engage their trainees in psychotherapy or any similar procedure except with the voluntary informed consent of the trainee and when such consent is given for the specific purpose of training in that procedure. (Reference: Code of Professional Conduct, HKPS)
13. Adequate time for relevant reading and documentation must be made available to the trainee on placement.
14. Supervisors have a crucial role in contributing to the integration of the academic and practical aspects of the clinical psychology programme. They should discuss literature relevant to the clinical work in hand and suggest suitable reading to the trainee. In general they should help trainees to develop a scholarly and critical approach to their clinical work.
15. Supervisors should keep abreast of theoretical, research and professional developments in their fields of work, and participate in continuing professional development, including workshops on supervisory skills organized by the clinical psychology training programmes.

Feedback and review

16. There must be a formal interim review of the trainee's progress and experience provided in the placement. The aims of this review are:
 - a) To review progress of the training according to the placement contract.
 - b) To give feedback to the trainee on his/her clinical performance.
 - c) To allow the trainee to comment on the adequacy of the placement.
 - d) To set targets based upon the above for the remainder of the placement.
 - e) To give feedback to the supervisor on his/her performance.
17. Full evaluation and written feedback on the trainee's performance on the placement must be provided at the end of the placement. The trainee must have the opportunity to read and comment on the full report written by the supervisor.
18. Supervisors should be familiar with the continuous assessment requirements for trainees and the specific criteria for passing and failing in the assessment of clinical competence set by the clinical psychology programmes.
19. Trainees must have the opportunity to provide feedback on the adequacy of placement and supervision.
20. The supervisory relationship, supervision and the clinical practice should be bound by Code of Professional Conduct of Hong Kong Psychological Society.

Chapter 5

Criteria for Accreditation of Supervised Clinical Practice provided by Clinical Psychology Training Programme

Scope of accreditation

1. Supervised clinical practice provided by postgraduate training programme in clinical psychology, which should be a full-time master degree programme with at least two-year duration or a full-time doctoral degree programme with at least three-year duration or their equivalent. The programme should have a residence period requirement of at least *18 months*.
2. The minimal requirement for admission of a student is a first degree conferred by a recognized institution for which psychology has been taken as a main subject in the department of psychology or equivalent, and which covers the fundamental areas as stipulated by the HKPS's Membership and Professional Standards Committee.

Standard of clinical placement

3. All local supervised clinical practices have to be carried out in DCP accredited clinical placement settings.

Amount of training

4. At least 220 days of supervised clinical practice should be completed throughout the training programme. 80% of such clinical practice should be in DCP accredited placement settings. The duration, the number of clients seen and the time spent with clients in each placement should be adequate for the trainee to gain experience in developing the skills in assessment, formulation, intervention, evaluation and reporting. At least 25% of the supervised clinical placement time is in providing direct face-to-face psychological services to patients/clients. The trainee should be given the opportunity to see a sufficient number of clients in a placement setting **to enable the acquisition of competence to provide clinical service in that particular setting.**

Scope of training

5. All trainees should obtain core experience from at least 4 different placement settings which cover the following: (i) Adult psychological problems; (ii) Child & Adolescent psychological problems; (iii) People with medical conditions, or physical/mental disabilities. For each of the placements, trainees should have adequate opportunity to experience a broad area of problem categories and treatment demands.
6. Trainees should have experience of direct individual and group service with clients, and of co-operation with multi-disciplinary team and teaching.

Collaboration with supervisors

7. There should be written guidelines on clinical supervision. Other than the qualifications of the clinical supervisors, the guidelines should include the minimum contact hours, the mechanism of evaluation of trainee and that of feedback from trainee. The training programme should ensure that all clinical supervisors should be fully aware of their responsibilities and be ready to fulfill the responsibility.
8. The training institute should have an adequate knowledge of the settings in which trainees are placed. There should be regular liaison between the clinical tutor (or equivalent post) and the clinical placement supervisor in regard to the progress in the clinical training of the trainee. Visit to the placement by the clinical tutor should be made when necessary.
9. There should be a formal process whereby the clinical tutor (or equivalent post) can monitor the clinical experience of trainees and the supervision provided and helps to resolve any problems that may have arisen during the placement.

Audit

10. The Clinical Director of the clinical psychology training programmes, heads of service of placement setting and supervisors should work out an audit process for the clinical placements and supervision.

Chapter 6

References

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British Psychological Society, *Criteria for the Accreditation of Postgraduate Training Programmes in Clinical Psychology (2002)*.

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