

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

**Guidelines for  
Accreditation of Clinical Placement Setting  
for Clinical Psychology Training**

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The present guidelines were prepared by the Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Psychology Training (SACP, formerly known as Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Placement for Clinical Psychology Training), Division of Clinical Psychology, Hong Kong Psychological Society (DCP, HKPS) and endorsed in the Annual General Meeting of DCP, HKPS held on 26 May 2012.

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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 in local settings.

### Objective of accreditation

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

### Criteria for accreditation

1. 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.
2. 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

1. To ensure that all aspects of the accreditation process are carried out in accordance with the requirements set out here;
2. To support fully any Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Psychology Training (SACP) member who has acted within the accreditation guidelines and HKPS's Code of Professional Conduct;
3. To ensure that the applicant receives an approved report and associated follow-up correspondence at the conclusion of the process;
4. To maintain an updated list of all clinical placement settings being accredited by DCP, and ensure that the list is conveniently accessible by the public; and
5. To reimburse all SACP and accreditation panel members for expenses incurred in accordance with the financial regulations of HKPS;

### **Responsibilities of SACP members**

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

### **Responsibilities of the applicant(s) for accreditation**

1. To prepare documentation for inspection by SACP or accreditation panel in compliance with the appropriate accreditation criteria;
2. To accept that SACP or accreditation panel as a whole acts as DCP's representative and that, therefore, no member of SACP or panel will be singled out in any personal way by institution;
3. To make available for inspection by the accreditation panel all physical resources underpinning the accreditation; and
4. To inform 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 Psychology Training Division of Clinical Psychology, HKPS

#### Terms of reference

1. The Subcommittee for Accreditation of Clinical Psychology Training (SACP) is appointed by and accountable to the Executive Committee of the Division of Clinical Psychology (DCP), Hong Kong Psychological Society;
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;
3. SACP processes applications and makes recommendation to the Executive Committee (Ex-co) of DCP regarding the following:
  - 3.1 Approval of new recognition and re-affirmation or change in recognition status of clinical psychology training programmes;
  - 3.2 Approval of new accreditation and re-affirmation or change in accreditation status of clinical placement settings;
4. SACP makes recommendation to the DCP Ex-co on changes to the:
  - 4.1 recognition criteria and procedures for recognition of clinical psychology training programmes;
  - 4.2 accreditation criteria and procedures for accreditation of clinical placement settings;
5. SACP investigates and makes recommendation to the DCP Ex-co should a complaint arise on the standard of a clinical psychology training programme or a clinical placement setting.

#### Composition

6. 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.
7. The Chairperson of SACP is appointed by DCP Ex-co.
8. The Secretary of SACP is a representative from DCP Ex-co.
9. All SACP members, except the Secretary, should have extensive experience in clinical psychology. They should be qualified clinical psychologists with, (a) at

least *ten years*' experience practicing as a clinical psychologist, and (b) at least five years' experience of providing clinical supervision to trainees of post-graduate clinical psychology programmes in local settings.

### **Accreditation Panel**

10. An accreditation panel shall be formed to conduct site visit to clinical placement setting applying for accreditation, if necessary. Each panel shall consist of no less than three members, one of them being a SACP member who shall also become the convenor of the panel. The other panel members are invited and appointed by SACP. They shall be qualified clinical psychologists with at least three years' experience of providing clinical supervision in local settings.
11. All members should declare all relevant interests which may or may be seen to conflict with their duties in the Recognition Panel. (Please see Appendix 1 for the prescribed form for the declaration.)

### **Meetings**

12. The sub-committee shall meet at such time and for such number of times as the sub-committee shall decide and require to deliberate on accreditation related matters.
13. *Three* members of SACP shall form the quorum for making any decision.

## Chapter 3

### Procedures for Accreditation by DCP

#### Application for accreditation of clinical placement setting

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

#### Site visit

5. The secretary of SACP shall arrange with the applicant the date and agenda of the site 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 site visit; and
  - 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; and
  - 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 site 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 or 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 on an application containing its decision and recommendations **to DCP ex-co for endorsement**. Under normal circumstances, the decision of SACP is considered as final. DCP will inform applicant of the result and disseminate the accreditation report accordingly.

### Appeal and review

13. 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 applicant of its decision.
14. An appeal sent to the Chairperson of DCP more than 30 days after receiving formal notice from DCP about decision of accreditation status is invalid and will not be considered.
15. 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 clinical psychology 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 applicant the outcome of the appeal accordingly.
16. The decision of the Appeal Panel is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.
17. The appeal process should be completed in a timely manner. It will be completed within 6 months of the date of DCP formal notice decision of accreditation status.
18. 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

19. For new applications, re-applications or applications for renewal of accreditation, applicants shall pay an initial application fee of **HK\$2,000** together with their applications.
20. Applicant who submits an appeal against an accreditation decision shall pay a fee of **HK\$2,000**.

21. DCP shall have the discretion to waive the fees for application and appeal for placement settings that do not charge supervision fee.
22. 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 placement 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 and be able to provide on-site supervision in the unit in which the work is carried out.
5. When the supervisor provides supervision in a particular setting, he/she should normally have worked for at least one year in the placement setting.

#### **Setting up the placement**

6. 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.
7. 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.
8. 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**

9. **There should be on average at least one hour 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.
10. 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 11 for the requirement of individual supervision).
11. 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.
12. 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)
13. 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)
14. Adequate time for relevant reading and documentation must be made available to the trainee on placement.
15. 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.
16. 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**

17. There must be a formal interim review of the trainee's progress and experience provided in the placement. The aims of this review are:
  - 17.1 To review progress of the training according to the placement contract;
  - 17.2 To give feedback to the trainee on his/her clinical performance;
  - 17.3 To allow the trainee to comment on the adequacy of the placement;
  - 17.4 To set targets based upon the above for the remainder of the placement; and
  - 17.5 To give feedback to the supervisor on his/her performance.
18. 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.
19. 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.
20. Trainees must have the opportunity to provide feedback on the adequacy of placement and supervision.
21. The supervisory relationship, supervision and the clinical practice should be bound by Code of Professional Conduct of Hong Kong Psychological Society.

## Chapter 5

### References

Australian Psychological Society, College of Clinical Psychologist, *Course Approval Guidelines (April 2003)*.

British Psychological Society, *Accreditation through Partnership Handbook: Guidance for clinical psychology programmes (September 2010)*.

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

British Psychological Society, Committee on Training in Clinical Psychology, *Guidelines on Clinical Supervision (2002)*.

British Psychological Society, *Information Pack for Institutions Preparing for Full Accreditation Visit (2003)*

British Psychological Society, *Procedures for New Programmes Seeking Accreditation from the CTC (2005)*.

Canadian Psychological Association, *Accreditation Standards and Procedures for Doctoral Programmes and Internships in Professional Psychology – Fourth Revision (2002)*.

Benchmarking Subcommittee of the Division of Clinical Psychology, The Hong Kong Psychological Society, *Benchmark Criteria for Clinical Psychology Training Programmes (Amendment under progress) 6<sup>th</sup> September 2007*.

The Hong Kong Psychological Society, *Code of Professional Conduct (1998)*.





<b>Non-personal pecuniary interest</b>
Description (if you have no interests in this category, state 'None')
<b>Personal non-pecuniary interest</b>
Description (if you have no interests in this category, state 'None')

**Consent to disclosure:** The SACP will assume that you consent to the disclosure of any relevant conflicts to other panel members and in the resulting report, unless you check "No" in the space provided here. If you check "No", the SACP will not disclose the information without your prior approval, although this may result in your not being able to participate in the panel. **No** [  ]

I hereby declare that the disclosed information is true and complete to the best of my knowledge. I shall provide further information on the particulars contained in this declaration if so required by the SACP. Should there be any change to the above information, I will notify the SACP and complete a new declaration of interests detailing the changes.

*Signature* : \_\_\_\_\_

*Name* : \_\_\_\_\_

*Date* : \_\_\_\_\_

Note :

- (a) Please put a "✓" in the appropriate box
- (b) Please continue on supplementary sheet if necessary