

**EQUIVALENCE CRITERIA
FOR FULL MEMBERSHIP OF
THE DIVISION OF COUNSELLING PSYCHOLOGY
Of the Psychological Society of Ireland**

The following criteria for Full Membership of the Division resulted from an initial drafting by a working group on equivalence set up by the Division Committee in February 1998. The criteria were received by the Division Committee in September 1998 and were employed to assess all applicants seeking Full Membership of the Division on an equivalence basis. Following the Society's publication of the Guidelines for Employment of Professional Psychologists in the Health Service in April 1999 minor adjustments were made to the criteria in keeping with the Society's Approved Qualifications in Counselling Psychology. A working group was set up in August 2007 in order to further clarify and refine the equivalence criteria for joining the division. This was done with reference to the Society's documents 'Accreditation Criteria For Postgraduate Professional Training in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy' and 'National Qualifications – Statement of Equivalence Application Form for Scrutiny of Professional Qualifications for the Office of Psychologist in Community Care (Designation: Counselling Psychology).

This document is for use in determining whether or not applicants applying for full membership to the division qualify under the equivalence criteria.

This document will be reviewed by the Division of Counselling Psychology in October 2008 to insure that they are in line with any changes made by the Society to the Accreditation Criteria For Postgraduate Professional Training in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy and with the proposed development of specialist Registers with the Society.

FOR ALL APPLICANTS

Before completing this form please consult the list of essential criteria below to ensure your qualifications and experience match those required.

Essential Requirements

1 Graduate membership of the Psychological Society of Ireland

1.1 University degree or diploma, recognised by the Society, obtained with first or second-class Honours in which psychology is taken as a major subject and Honours obtained in that subject, or an equivalent qualification recognised by the Society.

1.2 Photocopy of Graduate Membership Certificate to be included with application.

1.3 Achievements that lead to the qualification necessary for graduate membership cannot be recounted for further qualification.

2 Postgraduate qualification

2.1 (a) Hold a postgraduate professional qualification in Counselling Psychology accredited by the Psychological Society of Ireland

or

2.1 (b) Hold a post-graduate qualification in counselling psychology / psychotherapy course at least of 2 full calendar years, full time duration or part-time equivalent. which meets the criteria of the Division as outlined below or for which a statement of equivalence has been obtained from the Society

In order to obtain a statement of equivalence, a candidate must demonstrate that they meet all current criteria in relation to depth and breath of knowledge and experience as laid down by the Society. In addition a candidate must demonstrate that they meet all currant criteria in relation to personal development. The onus is on the candidate to provide such evidence to the Society.

or

2.1 (c) Have two years relevant supervised experience in Counselling Psychology provided it was obtained prior to 15th March 1999 and for which a statement of equivalence has been obtained from the Society.

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3. Post Training Experience

3.1 In addition to 1.1, 2.1 (a), 2.1 (b) and 2.1. (c) above, an applicant seeking full membership of the division on an equivalence basis must be able to demonstrate satisfactory post training experience in counselling psychology or psychotherapy supervised in accordance with 7.1 following.

3.2 An applicant seeking Full Membership on an equivalence basis will be required to provide two signatures of two members of the Division in support of his/her application.

4. Essential Criteria in Post-Graduate Training

4.1 Complete postgraduate Master's level research thesis of appropriate scope and length. The dissertation must have been assessed by formally appointed internal and external examiners.

4.2 At least two different supervised placements in Counselling Psychology settings. By 'setting' is meant any institution, agency or unit which provides a counselling psychology or psychotherapy service. The service must be clearly defined and recognised as psychology, counselling or psychotherapy. The placement work should be recorded in a logbook and formally evaluated by the placement supervisor(s).

4.3 Evidence of regular supervision by Senior level Psychologists

- (a) At least 250 hours of supervised direct client contact counselling, in the ratio of 5 hours contact to 1 hour supervision
- (b) At least 50 of these hours must be intensively supervised by an experienced counselling psychologist, i.e. graduate psychologist with at least four years experience working as a counselling psychologist who is eligible for Registered Membership of the Society and Full Membership of the Division of Counselling Psychology.
- (c) The client contact should be supported by substantial case conferences, reviews and discussion

5. Personal Development

5.1 An applicant seeking Full Membership of the Division of Counselling Psychology on an equivalence basis must provide evidence of personal development under the following criteria

- (a) A minimum of 50 hours individual psychotherapy/counselling

and

- (b) A minimum of 24 hours group work which may include group psychotherapy and/or other group work with the aim of personal development.

6. The Integration of Theory and Practice in Professional Training

An applicant seeking Full Membership on an equivalence basis must provide details of a relevant post-graduate professional training.

6.1 For all applicants, the academic programme should account for at least 400 hours of total course time.

6.2 Documentation must be provided to demonstrate that graduates:

- a) Have studied the evolution of counselling/psychotherapy or Counselling Psychology as a profession and the basic constructs and philosophy underlying the counselling process.
- b) Possess a satisfactory knowledge of the major schools of counselling and psychotherapy. (Introduction to the basic concepts and practices of the major schools of counselling/psychotherapy such as humanistic, cognitive, behavioural, analytic, and modalities such as group, couple and family therapy.)

- c) Have completed detailed study of at least two major schools of counselling/psychotherapy, which includes their theoretical foundations, intervention strategies and current developments.
- d) Have participated in an academic programme which covers a broad range of topics with adequate focus on: case management, theoretical issues such as psychopathology, Lifespan development; group process and dynamics; research, assessment and evaluation in counselling/psychotherapy; ethical, organizational, multidisciplinary, legal and professional aspects of the counselling psychologist's or psychotherapist's role.
- e) Show competence in the application of research methods – both qualitative and quantitative – as they apply to psychological counselling and psychotherapy. The academic programme should cover research, assessment and evaluation in counselling/psychotherapy, including an evaluation of outcome, research methodology and familiarisation with the research literature. Practical work to demonstrate understanding of the above is essential. Submission of Abstracts (together with the application) will be required to demonstrate competence.

6.3 Skills development throughout course work and training should be made evident. Practical skills relevant to the role of the counselling psychologist such as: interview skills; assessment skills; written, oral and relational skills; and generally skills where the application of theoretical knowledge in dealing with clients is evident, should all be apparent. It is essential that organised, skills development teaching sessions of a practical and/or workshop nature be provided. These should maximise feedback to the student through the use of videotapes, role-playing and other such methods. Documentation detailing the completion of such training should be included with the application.

6.5. All of the academic and skills development areas must have been formally assessed

6.6. Graduated must be able to demonstrate the ability to engage in skilful therapeutic practice. Supervision Report(s) must be provided, demonstrating that the applicant possesses:

- (a) Experience of both short and long term counselling and psychotherapeutic relationships with a variety of clients.
- (b) Knowledge of and ability to apply assessment procedures within the limits of the specific training and experience.
- (c) Competence in evaluating own abilities and practice
- (d) The capacity to liaise with and refer to other professionals where suitable and work as part of a team where appropriate.

6.6. An applicant seeking Full Membership on an equivalence basis will be expected to agree to be bound by the Psychological Society of Ireland's Code of Professional Ethics and will be required to provide evidence of professional indemnity insurance.

7. Supervised Practice and Experience

7.1 An applicant seeking Full Membership on an equivalence basis must have a minimum of **250 hours** of supervised client contact during training. Such supervision must be on a ratio of 1 hour supervision to 5 hours of client contact (i.e. 50 hours supervision)

7.2 An applicant seeking Full Membership on an equivalence basis must have an additional **400 hours** of supervised client contact after the completion of formal training. Such supervision must be on a ratio of 1 hour supervision to 8 hours of client contact (i.e. 50 hours supervision)

7.3 Supervision must be provided by qualified personnel, deemed suitable by the Council of the Psychological Society of Ireland or in line with the supervision requirements detailed in the PSI document 'Accreditation Criteria For Postgraduate Professional Training in Counselling Psychology and Psychotherapy'. The attention of the applicant is drawn to the PSI guidelines which set out the supervision requirements for registration purposes.

THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTATION IN FULL MUST ACCOMPANY YOUR APPLICATION
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1. Photocopy of Graduate membership cert of PSI
2. A copy of your postgraduate degrees/diplomas, a transcript of all examination results showing subjects studied and grades obtained, duration of course, full/part-time status. A certified statement from the relevant educational institute detailing the syllabus of the postgraduate education and training which you undertook, including details of academic courses taken, details of research expertise, details of each of the core elements, type of practice placements, and supervision arrangements. Please include the course outline booklet.
3. A copy of your Postgraduate Thesis abstract.
4. If qualifications obtained outside Ireland: Evidence (in the form of a license or registration statement) that the qualification you hold entitles you to practice as an equivalent psychologist in the country where your qualification was obtained.

**All documentation must be authenticated as true copies of the originals
Applicants should ensure that all required documentation is attached, as
incomplete applications cannot be processed**