College of Registered Psychotherapists of Ontario

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Program Recognition Policy and Process

Purpose

To establish transparent, objective, impartial and fair standards and procedures for applications for recognition of psychotherapy education programs.

Scope

This policy applies to all recognized programs, and those applying for recognition by CRPO. This includes applications for initial academic recognition, initial clinical experience recognition, academic recognition renewal, and clinical experience recognition renewal.

Policy

Criteria for Academic Recognition

Academic recognition allows a program's graduates to know that they will meet CRPO's education requirements for registration upon completion of the program. The Registration Committee will not approve a program for academic recognition unless the program has demonstrated in their application to CRPO that the characteristics and organizational attributes below are sufficiently met.

Characteristics

The program:

- provides students with at least 360 hours of education and training central to the practice of psychotherapy (not including independent study, direct client contact, clinical supervision, or other hours of clinical experience completed as part of a clinical or field placement or practicum);
- develops in depth all competencies in the Entry-to-Practice Competency Profile for Registered Psychotherapists;
- includes a clinical placement with a minimum of 125 direct client contact hours and 30 clinical supervision hours that meet CRPO's definitions;
- develops competence in performing the controlled act of psychotherapy, including clinical supervision provided by a Registered Psychotherapist that meets CRPO's

clinical supervisor definition if the clinical placement involves performing the controlled act of psychotherapy before the student registers with CRPO;
- is structured and organized;
- is housed in or offered by an institution that purports to train psychotherapists;
- contains evaluative components;
- confers a certificate, diploma, or degree upon successful completion;
- is a minimum of one year in duration;
- is taught at the graduate level; and
- requires completion of a bachelor's degree (or equivalent, as established by a rigorous Prior Learning Assessment process that meets CRPO's guidelines) for admission.

Organizational Attributes

- The training program has no fewer than three core faculty members.
- Faculty members are academically, professionally, and experientially qualified, and sufficient in number to achieve the education and training goals of the program.
- The program's faculty has at least one Registered Psychotherapist, or equivalent.
- The program has a detailed written staffing structure and policies.
- Program faculty has regular meetings and consultations.
- The program shows intent to address objectivity, transparency, and fairness by publishing its policies and procedures related to the training and education of students.
- Program faculty engages in regular review of the program, with input from students and, especially, reference to student competency outcomes.
- Faculty, students and supervisors subscribe to a published code of ethics and professional practice standards.
- The program has established policies and procedures by which it defines and reviews formal student complaints.

Clinical Experience Recognition

A program with academic recognition may voluntarily apply for clinical experience recognition, which facilitates approval by CRPO of clinical experience hours completed by students.[1] Programs without academic recognition are not eligible for clinical experience recognition.

[1] Clinical experience hours submitted by students as part of education programs without clinical experience recognition are assessed on a case-by-case basis.

Effective January 1, 2028, programs with academic recognition must also have clinical experience recognition. If a program with academic recognition does not have clinical experience recognition, or if its clinical experience recognition is not renewed, its academic recognition will end.

The Registration Committee will not approve a program for clinical experience recognition unless the program has demonstrated in their application to CRPO that the criteria below are sufficiently met.

- Placement settings and roles are appropriate for entry-to-practice psychotherapists.
- Techniques and modalities fall within the prescribed categories of psychotherapy.
- Session lengths are long enough to develop a therapeutic relationship with clients.
- Supervisors meet CRPO's definition.
- The ratio or frequency of direct client contact (DCC) hours in relation to clinical supervision hours is sufficient to safeguard clients' well-being and promote the student's professional growth.
- The program has adequate processes for appeals, complaints and dispute resolution between supervisees and supervisors.
- The program tracks the number of supervisees present in group supervision sessions and does not report supervision hours to CRPO where more than eight supervisees are present.
- If the program offers clinical experience opportunities that do not meet CRPO's requirements, the program tracks these separately, and makes clear to students that these hours will not count toward CRPO registration.
- All students wishing to register with CPRO have an opportunity to complete CRPO-acceptable clinical experience.
- Hours reported to CRPO meet the requirements set out in the Clinical Experience for Registration policy.

Recognition Duration and Renewal

Academic and clinical experience recognition are valid for five years, provided all substantive program recognition criteria continue to be met. Recognition may be renewed for additional five-year periods following a successful renewal application. Academic and clinical experience recognition are renewed at the same time, even if clinical experience recognition was granted after academic recognition.

The Registration Committee will not renew recognition of a program unless the program has demonstrated in their application to CRPO the below criteria are sufficiently met.

- Any changes made to the program since initial recognition do not negatively impact the program's ability to deliver entry-to-practice training that meets CRPO's registration requirements.
- The program has adequately addressed any suggestions made by the third-party reviewers or the CRPO Registration Committee since initial recognition.
- The program has adequately incorporated or plans to incorporate into its curriculum training on the current issues identified by the Registration Committee in the renewal form.
- If the program employs a Prior Learning Assessment and Recognition (PLAR) process to determine equivalence for admissions purposes, it is in line with CRPO's PLAR Guidelines.
- The Registration Committee does not have significant concerns about the quality of the training provided by the program or its graduates' ability to practise safely and professionally as Registered Psychotherapists. The Registration Committee may review program graduate pass rates on the CRPO entry-to-practice examination, data on complaints and reports made to CRPO, information provided by students, faculty members, clinical supervisors, members of the public and other stakeholders, and any other sources of information about the program.

Recognized Program Responsibilities

Programs are expected to:

- inform CRPO of changes to program contact information;
- respond to requests for information from CRPO in a timely manner;
- inform CRPO of substantive changes to program delivery that may impact the program's ability to deliver entry-to-practice training that meets CRPO's registration requirements;
- accurately report information about students and graduates (e.g., on transcripts and when reporting clinical experience hours); and
- report concerns about a student or graduate's suitability to practise, in rare cases where these concerns cannot be remediated by the program.

Interim Reports

The Registration Committee or CRPO staff may request an interim report by a program, on agreed-upon timelines, or at any time, regarding any issues identified as areas for development or of concern.

Revocation of Recognition

Where sufficiently serious concerns arise, the Registration Committee may, on prior notice to an education program with the opportunity to attempt to rectify the concerns, revoke the academic and/or clinical experience recognition of a program. The Registration Committee may do this if it finds that the program has ceased to meet the criteria set out in this policy. If recognition is revoked, the Registration Committee will provide written reasons explaining its decision.

Process

Third-party reviewers

CRPO contracts with a third-party review organization to assess applications for academic and clinical experience recognition and renewal.

Submitting an application and payment for recognition

Programs apply for academic and/or clinical experience recognition or renewal by submitting a completed application form, supporting documents, and application fee. Fees are set by and paid directly to the third-party review organization.

Every year the fees may be increased by the percentage increase for that year in the Consumer Price Index for goods and services in Canada as published by Statistics Canada or any successor organization. Should the fees increase by more than the Consumer Price Index percentage increase, programs will be notified at least three months in advance.

Payment is required before the third-party reviewers begin review of the application.

Application fees are non-refundable. If an application is refused, no refunds are issued. If a program re-applies after being refused, the program must pay the full application fee again.

Application Review

CRPO staff perform a brief administrative review of the application to ensure that it is complete. If staff notice any potential errors or omissions, they return the application and allow the program to revise the submissions. Once the revised application is submitted, it is sent directly to the third-party reviewers without further review by CRPO staff.

The third-party reviewers send a written report to the Registration Committee. The report recommends whether to recognize or refuse recognition of the program.

The Registration Committee reviews the report and votes whether to recognize or refuse recognition of the program. The Chair of the Registration Committee notifies the program of the outcome of the application and provides them with the third-party reviewers' report.

Reapplying for recognition after two refusals

If a program has applied and been refused recognition twice, it must demonstrate that it has addressed the areas for growth identified in the third-party reviewers' report before submitting a third application. CRPO staff determine whether the program has provided information on how each area has been addressed. If information has been provided for each area, staff forward the application to the third-party reviewers. If information has not been provided for one or more areas, the program must provide the missing information before staff forward the application to the third-party reviewers. Staff's decision to forward a third or subsequent application to the third-party reviewers does not imply that the program's application for recognition will be successful.

Recognition Renewal

A program must submit a completed application for renewal by July 1 of the calendar year in which its recognition is due to expire. If a program does not apply for renewal by this time, its recognition expires at the end of the calendar year. If the Registration Committee refuses to renew a program's recognition, the Committee informs the program of the end date of its recognition.

If the renewal form indicates that substantive changes have been made to the program since initial recognition or since the last renewal, the program may be asked to submit a new program recognition application for review and pay the full initial application fee.

Programs that meet the renewal requirements are issued a letter confirming that their recognized status has been renewed for another five-year period.