



Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology

Suite 455, 5991 Spring Garden Road
Halifax, Nova Scotia
B3H 1Y6
www.nsbep.org

Telephone: (902) 423-2238
Fax: (902) 423-0058

Registration Requirements

As per the Psychologists Act (2000), applicants for registration as psychologists are required to show they have obtained a master's, doctoral or equivalent degree in psychology that is acceptable to the Board from an educational institution approved the Board. As noted, the above criteria are required by legislation. The Board does not have discretion to waive these requirements. Furthermore, augmenting an insufficient degree by completing coursework or supervision after one has completed his/her academic degree does not convert an unacceptable degree to one that is acceptable to the Board. This is because the post degree coursework and training was not part of the formal graduate degree.

(1) The degree in psychology obtained by the applicant must meet the following criteria:

- i) The program must be an integrated, organized sequence of study, standing as a recognizable, coherent organizational entity within the institution. Wherever it may be administratively housed, the institution's officers must identify it as a psychology program, and the majority of its faculty as psychologists. For greater clarity, the Board requires the core faculty and majority of program faculty to be comprised of psychologists.
- ii) The program must have required an undergraduate degree in psychology (or equivalent courses in psychology) as part of the entrance requirement. To clarify, this criterion does not simply require the applicant to possess an undergraduate degree in psychology but an undergraduate degree in psychology (or equivalent courses in psychology) must be an admittance requirement of the program.
- iii) The faculty of the program must have clear authority and primary responsibility for the core and specialty areas whether or not the program cuts across administrative lines.
- iv) The program should have a body of resident students who are enrolled in that program. Programs that are primarily based on-line are not acceptable to the Board. For further clarification, the Board has adopted the Section on Residency from the Model Licensing Act recently approved by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards. It states:

“Residency means physical presence, in person, at an educational institution or training facility in a manner that facilitates acculturation in the profession, the full participation and integration of the individual in the educational, and training experience and includes faculty student interaction. Training models that rely exclusively on physical presence for periods of less than one continuous year (e.g. multiple long weekends and/or summer intensive sessions), or that use video conferencing or other electronic means as a substitute for any part of the minimum requirement for physical presence at the institution do not meet this definition of residency.”

Note: The minimum period of one continuous year of residency is in addition to any practica or internship completed as part of the program requirements.

v) Curriculum requirements of the program must include adequate theoretical content in psychology and supervised practicum, internship, field or laboratory training appropriate to psychology. In order to meet these requirements, the master’s level degree must be at least two years in duration.

Applicants are assessed with respect to competency in [five core areas](#): Assessment and Evaluation; Intervention; Research; Ethics and Standards; and Interpersonal Relationships. Course work and experience in these areas must be listed.

The program must include practica and/or internship directly supervised by psychologists. While members of other allied regulated professions may serve as secondary supervisors, the primary supervisor(s) must be a psychologist.

The practica must be an organized and integrated component of the graduate training program in psychology. Supervision outside of one’s program does not count.

The practica must be a minimum of 500 hours.

Coursework titles/descriptions must use clear psychological terminology/abbreviations such as the words “psychology”, “psychological” “psych.”

vi) In addition to the foregoing, the applicant must demonstrate sufficient [foundational knowledge](#) in four general areas: Knowledge of the biological bases of behaviour; Knowledge of the cognitive-affective bases of behaviour; Knowledge of the social bases of behaviour; and Knowledge of the psychology of the individual. This must be demonstrated with at least one full course or two half courses, in each of the four areas. Introductory level courses are not acceptable for meeting this requirement.

(2) The Board will consider whether the educational institution has recognized standing or accreditation.

(3) Degrees in education, counseling, guidance, family studies, mental health studies, child studies, rehabilitation and other such designations, are not normally considered degrees in psychology.

Course/University Information:

To be registered as a psychologist in NS you must have a graduate degree in psychology from a program that meets the above requirements. On-line graduate programs are not acceptable for registration.

The MASP (School Psychology) program at the Mount meets the requirements noted above; the Education Psychology (M.Ed) does not.

At Acadia, the counseling M.Ed is not accepted, but the clinical psychology (M.Sc.) is an acceptable program for registration as a Psychologist. The M.Ed. programs at either of these universities may lead to qualifications as a guidance counselor, school counselor or counselor, but they do not lead to psychology registration or prepare you to take the prerequisite examination for Professional Practice in Psychology.

At times the Board is contacted by individuals who possess a degree in a related field (e.g., counselling); however their degree is not specifically in psychology and/or does not meet the Board's requirements for acceptable degrees in psychology. If applicable, you might consider checking with the [Nova Scotia College of Counselling Therapists](#) for registration eligibility. The College of Counselling Therapists is the provincial governing body for counselling therapy.

NSBEP does not evaluate individual programs until an application for registration is completed.

For graduate programs outside of Nova Scotia, that are not accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association or American Psychological Association:

The Board will need access to information about the graduate program and faculty when you the program was taken by the applicant. For example, determining the professional status of faculty members (e.g., whether the majority and core faculty were comprised of psychologists, etc.), the admission requirements and other elements of the training program. This information could take the form of a program handbook which provides information about the program, course descriptions, and admission requirements.

Generally if your graduate program was taken in the last 5 years then such information may be available online via the university's website. You should determine whether this is the case. If this is the case, then it is sufficient to provide website links (full URL address) for information about your program so the Board can quickly verify programmatic information. This information can be provided in your application materials. However, if such programmatic information is not readily available online, the onus to provide complete evidence rests with the applicant and you should not rely on the Board to obtain this information. In such an instance (where information about the program is not readily available online), you should provide documentation about the graduate program along with your application if you possess such documentation (electronic /scanned copies can be provided). Lastly, you may need to contact the university to request that they obtain programmatic information from their archives and send this information to the Board.

Evaluation of the initial application for registration includes ensuring the requirements of the educational program meet the Board's criteria above, checking declared competencies against transcripts, references and any other documentation submitted.

Plan for Collegial Consultation

In addition to arranging for Board approved supervision, applicants for Candidate Register status will be required to identify psychologists whom they can consult about workplace matters for day-to-day consultation pertinent to the work environment. The requirement of a plan is to ensure adequate regular collegial consultation. If the workplace setting does not provide regular psychological services, consultation, the applicant must demonstrate that arrangements have been made for such consultation outside the work setting.

Examinations

If accepted on the Candidate Register the applicant has a period of time which to fulfill any conditions set out by the Board, to acquire a specified amount of supervised experience and to pass the Examination for Professional Practice in Psychology (EPPP) and the Oral Examination required for acceptance on the Register of Psychologists. The EPPP must be successfully completed, on or before, the end of the candidates second year of candidacy. Successful completion of the Oral Exam is the final step before one is transferred to the Register of Psychologists. However, ethical and professional conduct is required from the beginning, and is specifically assessed at the end of the candidacy period along with the other core competencies as necessary. Failure to demonstrate ethical professional practice during the candidacy period and/or in the oral examination can affect progress to the permanent Register of Psychologists.

Supervision

All Candidates must receive supervision for at least 2 hours per month, regardless of whether they are currently employed, or working full time. Failure to maintain adequate supervision and timely reporting may lead to removal of the Candidate's name from the Register of Candidates.

Candidates with a master's degree in psychology acceptable to the Board must complete 4 years of supervised practice. Candidates with a doctoral degree in psychology acceptable to the Board must complete 2 years of supervised practice. However, one of the required two years of supervised practice required by the doctoral program may be applied to the 2 year requirement, provided the internship and supervised experience have been adequately and responsibly supervised in a manner satisfactory to the Board. (An internship program approved by the CPA or APA would meet the requirements.) In the case of a Candidate Registrant, this will reduce the minimum required period of supervised practice to 1 year on the Candidate Register.

Liability Insurance

A requirement under the Psychologists Act is that all registrants must carry adequate professional liability insurance. The main insurer of psychologists is BMS Group. This is gained through one's affiliation with the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) or the Association of Psychologists of Nova Scotia. The Board's legislation does not mandate the psychologist to obtain coverage through a specific company; however, registrants must ensure that they have purchased adequate coverage. NSBEP requires all registrants to maintain professional liability insurance in an amount not less than \$1,000,000.00 per occurrence. The insurance program from BMS Group is the exclusive and official insurance program endorsed by the Canadian Psychological Association and the Council of Professional Associations of Psychologists (CPAP). Once registered, proof of liability insurance must be provided to the Board within 30 days.

Compliance with the Mutual Recognition Agreement (under Agreement on Internal Trade)

Applicants for registration as psychologists must be able to document and / or otherwise demonstrate an adequate foundation in Psychology and proficiency in at least five core competencies recognized in the MRA. The initial application is evaluated by comparing the applicant's declared competencies with the other documentation submitted (e.g., transcripts, references, supervised work experience).

After being placed on the Candidate Register, the candidate and the supervisor must develop goals for supervision that are specifically designed to enhance the candidate's knowledge and skills in the core competency areas. During the period of supervision the regular reports submitted to the Board should address the goals and be related to the core competencies.

When the candidate has provided documentation of the required supervised work experience and the supervisor has evaluated the candidate's progress in addressing the declared goals and the core competencies, the candidate may take the oral examination for placement on the Register of Psychologists. The oral examination may address any issues arising from the supervision process, as well as assess the candidate's overall readiness for ethical professional practice. A candidate may not be moved forward to the Register of Psychologists without passing the oral exam even when all other expectations have been met.

Submitting an Application

Persons who possess the qualifications for registration may apply to be registered in Nova Scotia. To complete the online application process and for more information about the application process, please visit the Application section of the Board's website.