



Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology

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Requirements and Criteria for Assessing International Applicants

Academic Requirement

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 teleconferencing 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 competency areas](#): Assessment and Evaluation; Intervention; Research; Ethics and Standards; and Interpersonal Relationships. Course work and experience in these areas must be listed. Below is a link to the Core Competencies in Psychology:
http://nsbep.org/downloads/Core_Competencies.pdf

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. Some more information about the Foundational Knowledge areas is below:
http://nsbep.org/downloads/Foundational_Knowledge.pdf

(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.

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.

If an applicant holds a certificate of registration as a psychologist in another jurisdiction, the standards of which the Board determines to be equivalent to the requirements of Subsections 15 (1) or (2) of the Act, the Board may waive any or all [requirements in Subsection 15\(1\) or \(2\) of the Act](#).

Experience & Registration Requirement

Psychologists with a master's degree in psychology acceptable to the Board must have completed a minimum of four years of full time practice in a psychology position after the awarding of their master's degree and following registration with a regulatory body in psychology.

Psychologists with a doctoral degree in psychology acceptable to the Board must have completed a minimum of two years of full time practice in a psychology position. However, one of the required two years of practice required by the doctoral program may be applied to this two year requirement, provided the internship and supervised experience have been adequately and responsibly supervised in a manner satisfactory to the Board. In all cases, psychologists must have completed a minimum of one year in a psychology position after the awarding of their doctoral degree and following registration with a regulatory body in psychology.

As the quality and years of experience may be a factor in determining the [requirements for registration](#), it is very important to submit a comprehensive record of your experience. If you have progressive, well documented psychological experience, it should be in all of the Core Competencies of Psychology.

The Psychologists Act includes a provision that enables the Board to consider an international applicant as a Transfer Application, and waive its requirements for examinations, where an applicant holds a certificate of registration as a psychologist from another country the standards of which are deemed by the Board to be at least equivalent to the standards required under the Act. In the event that the registration standards of the country are not deemed to be equivalent, the application will be considered using the regular NSBEP registration requirements for initial placement on the Register of Candidates.

The Experience and Registration Requirement is assessed via your application package, by considering the psychology positions you have held and by reviewing the registration requirements in your home jurisdiction.

Language Proficiency

The Psychologists Act requires one to speak and write either English or French with reasonable fluency. As such, one must be reasonably fluent in the English or French Language, depending intended population to be served.

This requirement is considered by the Board's review of the language proficiency results made available in your Application Package.

As well, during the Transfer Interview (if applicable), the committee may consider language proficiency. If there are difficulties noted, you may be required to make arrangements to complete a language proficiency exam.

For more information please see the Board's [Language Proficiency Policy](#).

Evidence of good character

[This requirement](#) is assessed by the responses to relevant background questions in the Application, and specifically via background checks (criminal record check) and information about your registration history in any jurisdictions where you have held registration, and this may be considered during the transfer interview (if applicable).

Demonstrate an understanding of professional practice and ethical issues, and have an understanding of local practices and conditions

This requirement is assessed throughout the completed application specifically via the Ethics and Standards Core Competency, and Transfer Interview (if applicable).

Applicants who qualify for an interview will be notified once their application is reviewed.

However, for information purposes, a document on the process of the transfer interview is directly below.

http://www.nsbep.org/downloads/Transfer_Interview_Information_International_Applicants.pdf

All International Applicants who are approved for registration, will be required to complete at least a six month period of supervised practice in Nova Scotia under the supervision of a psychologist registered in Nova Scotia. The purpose of this supervision is to help connect newly arrived psychologists from another jurisdiction with a mentor and other psychologists in Nova Scotia and to assist them with practice and ethical issues and develop an understanding of local practice and conditions in the province.

Prior to registration with the Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology, applicants are required to attest that they have reviewed the relevant local jurisprudence, standards, and resources. For information purposes, a document on the Attestation Process is accessible directly below.

http://www.nsbep.org/downloads/Information_Attestation.pdf