



Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology

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Registration Requirements and Criteria for Assessing Applicants Psychologists Licensed in the US

For greater clarity, this document is intended for applicants who are fully licensed as a psychologist in a US state or territory.

This document is **not meant** for those holding licensure in a category that does not represent full registration, e.g. retired registration, non-practising registration, provisional registration, etc.

Finally, this pathway **is not** intended for applicants who hold registration/licensure exclusively with another profession, e.g., counselling, marriage and family therapy. Such persons are instead referred to the [NS College of Counselling Therapists](#).

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.

The Board has adopted the Position of the Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organizations (ACPRO) that the National Standard for registration as a Psychologist is graduation from a doctoral program in Psychology accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA). Consequently, a doctoral program in Psychology accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association (CPA) automatically constitutes a degree in psychology that is acceptable to the Board from an educational institution approved the Board. The full document containing the National Standard is available from the following URL:

<http://www.nsbep.org/downloads/ACPRONationalStandard.pdf>

The following qualifications of psychologists fully licensed in the US, would typically lead to registration to NS, possession of: a CPA/APA accredited degree; Certificate of Professional Qualification in Psychology (CPQ); Registration with the National Register of Health Service Psychologists; possession of a degree meeting the below criteria:

(1) In the absence of graduation from a CPA accredited doctoral program in psychology, the degree in psychology obtained by the applicant will be reviewed by the Board to determine whether it must meets 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. As an alternative pathway for registration and employment in Nova Scotia, one may 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](#).

Psychological work experience

The Board's academic requirements include completion of a **minimum** period of supervised work in the form of a practicum or internship as part of the academic training program. In addition, psychologists with a doctoral degree in psychology must have a

year of post-doctoral supervised work experience acceptable to the Board.

As per the standards of practice in Nova Scotia, psychologists shall limit their delivery of services to those areas of competence as defined by verifiable training and experience

As such, applicants would typically be authorized for the same area(s) of practice, activities, and populations that they possess in their home jurisdiction. The Board will review the Confirmation of Standing Form completed by the home jurisdiction and compare this to the areas of practice and populations that the applicant has declared on the Declaration of Psychological Practice with their application in Nova Scotia.

If licensure is generic in the home jurisdiction, and the applicant feels there could be a discrepancy between licensure in the home jurisdiction and their intentions for practice in Nova Scotia, they are encouraged to submit to the Board documentation of their training and experience working with the particular populations or activities. A good starting point would be for applicants to provide a copy of their CV that fully documents all relevant work experience. If the declared practice area(s) and/or population(s) are not consistent with those possessed by the applicant in their home jurisdiction, and not consistent with their experience and training, the Board may decline to approve the area of practice or population that is not supported by the application. The Board has the ability to [restrict the practice](#) of a psychologist where appropriate.

Some applicants have been under the impression that during the application they should declare activities and populations for which they are unfamiliar with because they might like to pursue such work in future. The intention of the Declaration of Psychological Practice, which is part of the Online Application for Registration, is meant to realistically consider what one would be carrying out in the immediate future.

It is understood that one's employment may change over time. Following placement on the Register, it is possible to expand one's populations or activities within one's overall area of practice, provided this is carried out in a manner consistent with professional standards.

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 on the language spoken by the intended population to be served. This requirement is informally considered throughout the Board's review of the Application. As well, if one's first language is not English or French, he/she may be required to make arrangements to complete a language proficiency exam, depending on the population to be served.

Evidence of good character

[This requirement](#) is assessed throughout the Application, and specifically via background checks (criminal and child abuse), a background questionnaire, references, and reviewing information about any registration history in other jurisdictions, and may be considered during the transfer interview.

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

This requirement is assessed during the transfer interview with the applicant, following the Board's review of the application and initial response to the applicant. For information purposes, a document on the process of the transfer interview is directly below.

http://nsbep.org/downloads/Transfer_Interview_Information_Licensed_USA.pdf

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/Transfer_Information_Attestation.pdf