

Evaluation of International Doctoral Degree Programs in Psychology: Determining if Program Meets the ASPPB/NR Designation Guidelines for Defining a “Doctoral Degree in Psychology”

Upon request* by a state or provincial psychology board or licensure applicant, the National Register will review an applicant’s doctoral degree that was obtained outside of the U.S. and Canada to determine if it meets the ASPPB/NR Designation Guidelines for Defining a “Doctoral Degree in Psychology” (enclosed). These reviews are ideal for state and provincial psychology boards that may need assistance with evaluating the international psychology degrees of their licensure applicants. Although there are many qualified credential evaluation services that evaluate international education, the services offered by these organizations are general and are not qualified to specifically evaluate education and training in psychology. It is important to note that the National Register’s education review not only compares the international degree to a U.S. degree but also determines whether the program, faculty, and curriculum satisfy the Guidelines for Defining a “Doctoral Degree in Psychology”. Two credentialing specialists, Judy Hall, Ph.D. and Stephanie Jackson Young, M.S. who are knowledgeable of guidelines and issues relating to U.S. and international doctoral programs in psychology, perform these reviews which are based on the following official primary source documentation and resources:

Documents and Resources Reviewed During Evaluations

- **Application:** The licensure applicant completes the International Doctoral Degree in Psychology Evaluation Application which includes the applicant’s current contact information, licensure status, highest psychology degree earned, date degree earned, name and location of educational institution granting the degree, specific program completed, and application attestation.
- **Transcripts:** The applicant must arrange to have their educational institution send an original or school certified official transcript directly to the National Register. The official transcript (or when NOT available, the Academic Credential Verification Form) must bear the official seal of the institution and signature of the Registrar or person charged with such duties. In addition to their doctoral level transcript, applicants must submit transcripts of their post bachelor’s or advanced education.
- **Academic Credential Verification Form:** The Academic Credential Verification Form is intended to supplement the official transcript. The Registrar or person charged with such duties completes this form which can be used in place of a transcript, if there is a policy that prohibits the educational institution from sending an official transcript.
- **Program Director Form:** The program director or the psychologist responsible for the applicant’s psychology program (e.g., Director of Studies) completes the Program Director Form to document how the program complies with the Guidelines for Defining a “Doctoral Degree in Psychology”.
- **Tables to Assist Documenting Guidelines #7 and #10:** The program director completes these tables to document how the applicant’s psychology program complies with guideline #7 concerning faculty and guideline #10 concerning curriculum.
- **Detailed Course Descriptions:** The credentialing specialist uses the course descriptions to determine how/where the program covered the foundational areas of psychology as referenced in guideline #10.
- **Course Syllabi:** The credentialing specialist uses course syllabi to determine how/where the program covered the foundational areas of psychology as referenced in guideline #10.

- **Psychology Program Handbook/Brochure/Web site:** The credentialing specialist uses publicly available information such as the psychology program handbook, brochure, and web site to determine how the program meets each guideline.
- **Educational Institution Catalog/Web site:** The credentialing specialist uses publicly available information such as the educational institution catalog and web site to determine how the program meets each guideline and to verify the existence of the educational institution, its accreditation/recognition status, and the academic programs offered.
- **Translations:** If the educational institution does not issue transcripts and other documents in English, the official documents must be accompanied by a complete translation either by the educational institution itself or by an acceptable translating or credential evaluation service. Any translation not submitted directly from the educational institution must be accompanied by a cover letter printed on the letterhead of the organization providing the translation.
- **Higher Education Authorities:** The credentialing specialist identifies Higher Education Authorities for each country such as the Ministry of Education and contacts them for information on the educational institution. The collected information helps to verify the existence of the educational institution and its accreditation/recognition status.
- **Regulatory Boards:** The credentialing specialist consults the regulatory boards in the country in question, such as the British Psychological Society's Register of Chartered Psychologists, to request information regarding education and training.
- **International Handbook of Universities:** The credentialing specialist uses this publication to verify the existence of the educational institution and its accreditation/recognition status and to identify academic programs offered by the institution.

If there is a need for additional information or clarification during the review process, the National Register will make the contact directly. After the National Register has completed the review of the doctoral program, the results of the review are sent to the applicant, and to any psychology board of their choice. If the result of the review determined that the applicant was deficient in course work and the person is applying for credentialing by the National Register, the National Register will allow applicants who are lacking up to two (2) three semester-hour courses or the equivalent in one or two core areas of psychology to remedy those deficiencies by taking acceptable courses or submitting documentation that they have completed acceptable courses in the deficient areas. Another example is in MD where the State Board of Psychology allows three courses to be made up, if the doctoral program is deficient in basic foundational coursework in psychology and the degree is otherwise acceptable.

The state/provincial psychology board makes the final decision of whether or not the applicant for licensure from the reviewed program 1) meets the requirements for licensure in their jurisdiction and/or 2) is eligible to take the licensing exam.

For additional information on international degree evaluations, please contact Judy E. Hall, Ph.D. at judy@nationalregister.org or Laura Rhymes at laura@nationalregister.org . You can contact us via phone at 202-783-7663.

*The current application fee for this evaluation is \$500 (non-refundable).

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