AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology (CRSSPP)

Criteria for the Recognition of Organizations that Provide Certifications in Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology

Approved by the APA Council of Representatives in February 2011
Amended by APA Council of Representatives in February 2016, August 2017, and August 2020

APA believes that the public and those engaged in the professional practice of psychology would benefit from guidance regarding those specialty and subspecialty credentials to be listed in the APA membership directory.

The inclusion of specialty and subspecialty credentials in the APA Membership Directory are approved by the APA Council of Representatives based on the criteria listed below as established by the Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology (CRSSPP). Further, CRSSPP is charged by Council with the authority to determine which certifying bodies may be included in the membership directory.

CRSSPP informs organizations to advise their certificate holders that, if they wish to have their credentials listed along with their academic degrees in the APA Membership Directory, then they may do so: (1) only for specialties or subspecialties that are officially recognized by the APA through CRSSPP; and (2) only with respect to credentialing organizations recognized by CRSSPP.

Criteria for the Recognition of Organizations that Provide Certifications in Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology:

1. The certifying body is a non-profit organization that has published bylaws, standards, and procedures and is governed by an independent board of directors, with specified procedures for selection and tenure of board members such that control does not rest with one individual or group of individuals indefinitely.

2. The credential awarded by the certifying body is based on:

    - A review and verification of the individual's training, licensure, and ethical conduct status.
        - In accordance with APA Policy, after 1/1/2018, certifying bodies seeking recognition will have policies that permit certification only of candidates who have completed, after 1/1/2018, APA/CPA accredited doctoral degrees in health service psychology[1]; and after 1/1/2020, certifying bodies will have policies that permit certification only of candidates who have completed, after 1/1/2020, APA/CPA accredited internships in health service psychology.[1] The

same timelines apply for doctoral programs and internships accredited by an accrediting body other than APA, only if that accrediting body is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education for the accreditation of health service psychology education and training in preparation for entry to practice.[2]

- A certifying body seeking recognition will have policies that incorporate any APA policies regarding doctoral degree granting programs and internships located in foreign universities. If the degrees are from Canadian doctoral programs, or the internships are in Canada, the certifying body will have policies consistent with the First Street Accord and other APA policies regarding accreditation in Canada.

- Competence in a recognized specialty shall be demonstrated using instruments such as an oral exam, written exam, and/or a work sample. Procedures for establishing competence shall incorporate reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities and responsiveness towards diversity issues.
- Competence in a recognized subspecialty shall be demonstrated using instruments such as an oral exam, written exam, and/or work sample. Procedures for establishing competence shall incorporate reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities and responsiveness towards diversity issues.
- These assessment instruments must be appropriate, securely kept, and demonstrate validity for the specialty being certified.
- Fairness and validity of the assessment process must meet the appropriate standards from the 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, as summarized in the CRSSPP document Application of 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing to the Evaluation of Applications for Certifying Organizations to CRSSPP (Standards). The Standards document is incorporated into this policy by reference.
    - Assessments of competence must cover clearly delineated performance domains and tasks relevant to specialty practice, associated knowledge and/or skills, and specify content covered by items and/or questions as outlined in the *Education and Training Guidelines: A Taxonomy for Education and Training in Professional Psychology Health Service Specialties and Subspecialties* (APA, 2020).
    - Passing criteria must be designated.
    - The fairness and validity of the assessment must be established in accordance with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, and NCME, 2014).
- Information regarding specialty credentialing must be made available in candidate handbooks, brochures about the certification program, and other public documents.

3. The certifying body maintains a database from which the public can easily verify the current status of a certificate holder.

4. The certifying body makes publicly available information on the certifying

body's functions, standards, and procedures, as well as any substantive changes in these or in the status of individual certificate holders.

5. The certifying body provides evidence of the application of process improvement procedures, credential review, and competency assessment specific to the specialty or subspecialty.

6. Credentialing organizations recognized by CRSSPP shall only use the following language to represent said recognition: "[Insert Organization Name] is recognized by CRSSPP to permit those credentialed by [Insert Organization Name] to list said credential in the APA membership directory."

[1]Refers to accreditation for doctoral and internship training that occurs in health service areas of psychology.

[2]To the extent that groups are not currently meeting this criterion, they must show in their application the efforts that they will undertake to do so.