

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
Criteria for the Recognition of Organizations that Provide Certifications in Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology

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

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

In 2011 APA Council of Representatives approved the inclusion of specialty and proficiency credentials in the APA Membership Directory based on the criteria listed below as established by Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (CRSPPP). Council then charged CRSPPP with the authority to determine which certifying bodies may be included in the membership directory.

The CRSPPP will inform 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 proficiencies that are officially recognized by the APA through the CRSPPP; and (2) only with respect to credentialing organizations recognized by the CRSPPP.

Criteria for the Recognition of Organizations that Provide Certifications in Specialties and Proficiencies 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:
 - o 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 psychology¹; 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 psychology¹. 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.
 - 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.

- o Competence in a recognized specialty shall be demonstrated using instruments such as an oral and written exam and may also include a work sample, making reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.
 - o Competence in a recognized proficiency shall be demonstrated using instruments such as an oral exam, written exam, and/or work sample, making reasonable accommodations for persons with disabilities.
 - o These assessment instruments must be appropriate, securely kept, and demonstrate validity for the specialty being certified.
 - o Validity of the instruments must meet the appropriate standards from the 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing, as summarized in the CRSPPP document Application of 2014 Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing to the Evaluation of Applications for Certifying Organizations to CRSPPP (Standards). The Standards document is incorporated into this policy by reference.
 - They 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.
 - Passing criteria must be designated.
 - The validity of the assessment must be established in accordance with the Standards for Educational and Psychological Testing (AERA, APA, and NCME, 2014).
 - o 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 proficiency.
 6. Credentialing organizations recognized by CRSPPP shall only use the following language to represent said recognition: "[Insert Organization Name] is recognized by CRSPPP to permit those credentialed by [Insert Organization Name] to list said credential in the APA membership directory."

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