

AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
Criteria for the Recognition of Organizations that Provide Certifications
in Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology:
2011

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 CRSPPP. Council then charged CRSPPP with the authority to determine which certifying bodies may be included in the membership directory.

Further, Council approved that psychologists who wish to have a credential related to a specialty or proficiency in professional psychology beyond the academic degree listed in the APA Membership Directory may do so

1. only in specialties or proficiencies that are officially recognized by the APA through its Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology (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:
 - A review and verification of the individual's training, licensure, and ethical conduct status
 - Competence in a recognized specialty shall be demonstrated using instruments such as an oral and written exam and may also include a work sample
 - Competence in a recognized proficiency shall be demonstrated using instruments such as an oral exam, written exam, and/or work sample.
 - These assessment instruments must be appropriate, securely kept, and demonstrate validity for the specialty being certified.
 - 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 APA's Standards for Educational and Psychological Tests.
 - 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.