

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

Glossary of Terms

ABPP: The [American Board of Professional Psychology](#) (ABPP) serves the public by promoting the provision of quality psychological services through the examination and certification of professional psychologists engaged in specialty practice.

APAGS: The [American Psychological Association of Graduate Students](#) (APAGS) is the voice of student concerns within the APA. The APAGS group develops, endorses and disseminates information to students about relevant education and training issues, legislative positions and developments, and future directions or changes in the field, through printed resources and the website; and APAGS creates and supports opportunities for students in the form of scholarships and awards, association advocacy work and a host of development activities.

APA Recognition: APA recognizes specialties and subspecialties that are both related to the direct provision of health service and those that involve other aspects of applied professional service.

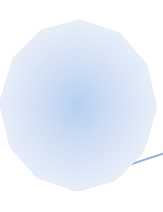
APPIC: The [Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers](#) (APPIC) exists to provide a service to members who are interested in the training of doctoral and postdoctoral psychologists as well as working with the National Match Program that places psychology doctoral students in internships. The APPIC is made up of a board of directors elected by the membership to represent training directors in doctoral and postdoctoral psychology training programs.

CE: APA defines [Continuing Education](#) (CE) as an ongoing process consisting of formal learning activities that 1) are relevant to psychological practice, education, and science; 2) enable psychologists to keep pace with emerging issues and technologies; and 3) allow psychologists to maintain, develop, and increase competencies in order to improve services to the public and enhance contributions to the profession.

CoR: The [APA Council of Representatives](#) (CoR) is the legislative body of APA and has full power and authority over the affairs and funds of the association within the limitations set by the certificate of incorporation and the Bylaws, including the power to review, upon its own initiative, the actions of any board, committee, division or affiliated organization. Council is composed of representatives of divisions, representatives of state, provincial and territorial psychological associations (SPTAs) and the members of the Board of Directors.

CoS: The [Council of Specialties in Professional Psychology](#) (CoS) is composed of representatives from each of the specialty councils in professional psychology. These specialty councils comprise a process of governance through joint sovereignty, and each specialty council consists of the professional groups and organizations that represent the major educational, training, and professional constituencies and stakeholders relevant to the particular specialty in professional psychology.

CPA: The [Canadian Psychological Association](#) (CPA) is the national association for the science, practice and education of psychology in Canada. With over 7,000 members and affiliates, CPA is Canada's largest association for psychology.



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CPD: Continuing Professional Development (CPD) represents a variety of professional interactions, activities, roles, and responsibilities that allow for opportunities for psychologists to engage in learning, to become aware of changes in the field of psychological science, and enhance interdisciplinary understanding; formal continuing education is an integral part of continuing professional development.

CRSSPP: The Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology (CRSSPP; formerly Commission for the Recognition of Specialties and Proficiencies in Professional Psychology) primarily facilitates policy development and petition review related to recognition of specialties and subspecialties in professional psychology. The Commission reports to CoR through the APA Board of Directors.

Faculty: A term broadly understood to reflect education, training, and teaching staff/individuals.

Health Service Psychology (HSP): A Health Service Psychologist is a licensed/certified psychologist at the independent practice level in his/her state, province, territory, or country, who is trained and experienced in the delivery of preventive and consultative services, assessment, and treatment.

Levels of Education and Training Opportunities:

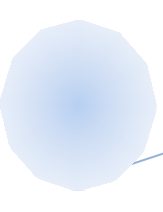
Major Area of Study: The highest level of education and training opportunity with respect to the types of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that would be developed, and to the intensity and amount of involvement in training to acquire those competencies. This includes expectations for acquisition of knowledge through didactics, practical training and direct service expectations (hours, number of cases, and competencies), and research and scholarly expectations.

Emphasis: Just below the ‘major area of study’, with distinctly different expectations for the type and intensity of the education and training experience. A programmatic emphasis permits a structured, in-depth opportunity for knowledge acquisition, practical experience, and scientific study in a given specialty or subspecialty area.

Experience: Between ‘emphasis’ and ‘exposure’, this classification reflects the type and intensity of the opportunity for learning that the program offers which will be clearly distinct from the other levels, with the specific parameters of knowledge acquisition, practical experience, and scientific study defined by that specialty. A programmatic “experience” would go beyond simply acquainting a student with a specialty or subspecialty but would allow more acquisition of knowledge and experience than an exposure to that area.

Exposure: An education and training opportunity that is limited in type and intensity. An exposure is identified by the program as a structured learning activity and would be seen as an opportunity to acquaint an individual with that specialty area.

Parent(s): The term ‘parent’ refers to a subspecialty’s sponsoring specialty/ies. Subspecialties will have at least one parent and may have more than one parent, with the latter instance generally requiring additional or subsequent petition submissions following the initial subspecialty petition and approval.



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Petition: The application which specialty/subspecialty councils submit to CRSSPP, containing information necessary for a formal decision on recognition of a specialty/subspecialty to be reached based on the Recognition Principles.

Types of Commission Actions: Upon review of a petition or application, CRSSPP may recommend that the Board of Directors recommends that CoR: a) approves; b) defers; or c) denies recognition.

Proficiency: A circumscribed activity in the general practice of professional psychology or one or more of its specialties that is represented by a distinct procedure, technique, or applied skill set used in psychological assessment, treatment and/or intervention within which one develops competence. Proficiency recognition has been archived by APA Council of Representatives (August 2020). Currently recognized proficiencies will remain as such until their specified year of renewal of recognition.

Recognition Principles: Twelve criteria must be met to be recognized as a specialty or subspecialty in professional psychology. Principles are aimed at those areas of practice in psychology that have a history of primarily providing services to the public. Other areas, traditionally identified with the academic and scientific aspects of psychology, are not addressed.

ROPSSPP: The [Recognition of Organizations that Provide Certifications in Specialties and Subspecialties in Professional Psychology](#) (ROPSSPP) is a process whereby organizations that provide certifications in APA-recognized specialties and subspecialties apply to be recognized by APA so that individuals with a certification from the organization can have that credential listed in the APA membership directory.

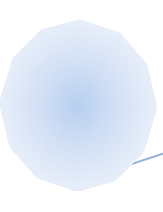
Specialty: A defined area of professional psychology practice characterized by a distinctive configuration of competent services for specified problems and populations. Practice in a specialty requires advanced knowledge and skills acquired through an organized sequence of formal education, training, and experience in addition to the broad and general education and core scientific and professional foundations acquired through an APA or CPA accredited doctoral program.*,**

*Except where APA or CPA program accreditation does not exist for that area of professional psychology.

**For those training in health service psychology areas, this is in addition to the broad and general education and core scientific and professional foundations acquired through an APA or CPA accredited doctoral program or programs accredited by an accrediting body that is recognized by the U.S. Secretary of Education for the accreditation of professional psychology education and training in preparation for entry to practice.

Subspecialty: A concentrated area of knowledge, skills, and attitudes that:

- (a) exists within at least one recognized {parent} specialty;
- (b) requires additional education, training, and/or professional experiences; and,
- (c) involves specific (1) problems, (2) populations, and/or (3) circumscribed approaches.



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The Taxonomy: The [Education and Training Guidelines: A Taxonomy for Education and Training in Professional Psychology Health Service Specialties and Subspecialties](#) provides a framework for creating consistent descriptions of specific program offerings in education and training programs in health service psychology. These guidelines are frequently and often interchangeably referred to as ‘the Taxonomy’.