



RULES FOR ACCREDITATION AND ACCREDITATION
STANDARDS FOR PSYCHOLOGY COURSES

Australian Psychology
Accreditation Council



**JUNE
2010**
Version 10

Rules for Accreditation & Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses

PREFACE

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) was formed in 2003 and its primary purpose is to set national standards for the education and training of psychologists and to accredit programs which meet those standards. In December 2008, under arrangements set down in the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*, the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council assigned to APAC the accreditation functions for the psychology profession for the triennium commencing in July 2010.

Only education and training which is accredited by APAC will be recognized by psychologist registration boards as suitable training for the purposes of registration, and by the Australian Psychological Society as suitable for meeting its membership requirements.

APAC assesses psychology education and training programs offered by higher education providers on application. APAC also works cooperatively with higher education providers to assist and advise regarding the design of education programs for which they are seeking to achieve accreditation. APAC publishes accreditation standards and rules, primarily the *Rules for Accreditation and Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses* (this document).

This edition of the *Rules for Accreditation and Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses* (version 10) came into force in June 2010 and replaces the August 2009 version. More information about APAC Rules and Standards and about the process of applying for accreditation can be obtained by contacting the APAC Secretariat at the following address:

APAC Secretariat

PO Box 38, Flinders Lane, VIC 8009 Australia

Phone +61 3 8662 6625 Fax +61 3 9663 6177

Email: apac@psychology.org.au

Website: <http://www.apac.psychology.org.au>

OVERVIEW OF THE ACCREDITATION PROCESS

APAC's Purpose

The Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) is the national professional accrediting authority for psychology education and training programs in Australia. In December 2008, under arrangements set down in the *Health Practitioner Regulation (Administrative Arrangements) National Law Act 2008*, the Australian Health Workforce Ministerial Council assigned to the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) the accreditation functions for the psychology profession for the triennium commencing in July 2010. APAC's objects are:

- (a) provide a collaborative, coordinating body to develop standards of education and training for psychologists throughout Australia and internationally;
- (b) develop standards and implement the process of accreditation for the education and training of psychologists for the purpose of registration;
- (c) assess overseas qualifications;
- (d) develop, review and manage the framework within which national accreditation operates;
- (e) maintain a register of accredited courses, training and internships and other services related to the accreditation of programs of education and training;
- (f) ensure that the accreditation process:
 - (i) is rigorous
 - (ii) is open to external scrutiny;
 - (iii) is conducted in a consultative and consensus-building fashion;
 - (iv) is collegial, transparent and fair;
 - (v) balances academic priorities with those of regulating authorities and the profession; and
 - (vi) complies with government policy;
- (g) provide an internal merits and process review of decisions made by the Company in relation to the accreditation of education courses and institutions;
- (h) provide advice to Australian governments and statutory authorities about the training and practical requirements which need to be met by overseas persons to become registered psychologists in Australia;
- (i) develop and review the standards for the accreditation of psychologist training and internships; and
- (j) consult and liaise with other relevant bodies.

Accreditation as a Quality Assurance Mechanism

External accreditation is an important mechanism for ensuring the quality of graduates of psychology education and training programs, and for safeguarding the interests of:

- consumers of psychological services;
- psychology students and trainees;
- employers;
- government including registration authorities;
- the wider community and

- the discipline and profession

(International Network for Quality Assurance Agencies in Higher Education Policy Statement, 2004).

Accreditation is instrumental in preventing the educational standards of any psychology education and training program from falling below acceptable standards, ensuring that graduates are suitable for registration and for the workforce, and hence providing a measure of protection for consumers of psychological services.

Accreditation assessment is also a valuable tool for promoting a culture of quality improvement in institutions where psychologists are educated and trained, since regular external reviews provide a periodic stimulus to undertake a systematic process of self-examination and self-directed improvement (Australian Medical Council, 2002). Additionally, the accreditation process promotes an emphasis on key issues such as the selection of suitable trainees, communication and other professional skills, the fostering of professional attributes, and the development of a philosophy of lifelong learning.

For these reasons the accreditation of psychology training programs, based on a process of regular review by an independent external agency, has been chosen as the preferred means of providing quality assurance of the undergraduate and postgraduate phases of education and training in psychology.

Assessment Teams

APAC appoints an assessment team to assess both the School of Psychology itself (hereafter referred to as the “academic organisational unit” or AOU) as well as each of those courses offered by the AOU for which an accreditation application has been made or which already hold a grade of APAC accreditation. Assessment teams work within the APAC *Rules for Accreditation and Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses* (this document).

APAC assessment teams are responsible for:

- assessing the AOU and its courses against the APAC *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses*;
- conducting a program of meetings and interviews during site visits appropriate to the institution’s structure, size, range of activities, and its mix of education and training programs;
- validating the information provided by the institution and other stakeholders in support of its application for accreditation, through a program of interviews, site visits and investigations; and
- preparing a report which reflects a rigorous assessment of the AOU and its courses against the Accreditation Standards and identifies strengths, problems and areas for improvement.

More detailed information about the operation of assessment teams can be found in the APAC *Accreditation Assessment Handbook*, in particular Sections 2.3, 2.4 and 2.5, which is available for download from the APAC website.

APAC Secretariat

APAC conducts the assessment of psychology AOU’s and their courses using the process described in the APAC *Accreditation Assessment Handbook* and according to the APAC *Rules for Accreditation and Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses* (this document). The APAC Secretariat implements the accreditation process, managing the accreditation work program; implementing APAC policy and procedures; supporting accreditation working parties and teams; and advising AOU’s and other stakeholder groups on accreditation policy and procedures.

Institutions undergoing accreditation assessment should correspond with the APAC Secretariat and not directly with the assessment team members (except during the site visit). It is also important to be aware that although Secretariat staff will provide as much assistance and advice as possible on the assessment process, institutions are solely responsible for their preparation for accreditation and the APAC Board is responsible for all determinations regarding accreditation status.

APAC's Assessment Principles

In the course of conducting its assessments, APAC seeks to:

- (a) gather and analyse detailed information and ideas from multiple sources and viewpoints, ensuring rigorous analysis;
- (b) use clear guidelines and procedures, and implement them in an open, transparent, objective and fair manner;
- (c) adopt mechanisms to ensure that members of assessment teams, committees and staff apply standards and procedures in a consistent, collaborative and appropriate fashion; and
- (d) review its codes, processes and guidelines on a regular basis, and in so doing ensure wide consultation with stakeholders.

APAC considers accreditation as a collegial process based on self- and peer-assessment for the purpose of publicly and openly assuring adequate standards of education and training of psychologists and the constant improvement of quality in psychologist training. The APAC accreditation process is intended to be constructive and to respect the expertise and academic autonomy of institutions which provide education and training in psychology.

In its accreditation functions, APAC:

- (a) focuses on the achievement and maintenance of high educational and training standards, as well as the assurance of competence among practitioners graduating from APAC accredited courses;
- (b) following accreditation of a program, monitors the implementation of recommendations and other developments in the program; and
- (c) undertakes a cycle of assessments with a full assessment of each program at least once every five years.

Appointment and Training of Assessors

APAC maintains a database of suitably qualified and skilled assessors which is regularly updated. APAC assessors are appointed for a term of three years and, as a condition of their appointment, are required to attain certification as an APAC assessor by attendance at, and successful completion of, an APAC accreditation assessor training course followed by orientation to the process of assessment, usually by accompanying an experienced and senior team leader on a number of assessments. APAC assessors and staff are expected to make decisions responsibly, and at all times to apply standards in a consistent and impartial fashion.

Potential Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality Provisions

APAC requires proposed members of assessment teams to declare any relevant personal or professional interest that may be perceived to conflict with their duties as an assessor. To this end, all assessors must sign an Assessor Declaration Form (available on the APAC website) containing a conflict of interest declaration at the outset of appointment to an assessment team and procedures are in place to deal with potential or perceived conflicts of interest (see the *APAC Accreditation Assessment Handbook* and the *Rules* set out in this document). APAC requires assessors, administrators and members of APAC to keep accreditation information confidential and to use such information only in conjunction with the APAC assessment process and only for the purpose for which it was obtained. There can, however be exceptions to the confidentiality of information, such as

where assessors come into the possession of information suggesting unethical behaviour or of circumstances which represent a danger to others (eg negligent supervision practices). In these cases the APAC Board will be notified swiftly and may make a decision to pass the relevant material over to an appropriate authority (eg a registration board, the police or an ethics committee) for investigation.

Timeliness

Accreditation is a time consuming and expensive process. Educational Institutions and APAC itself invest substantial time and money in the process, and the outcomes can have serious implications for the viability of courses, completion of studies by students, staffing, professional registration of graduates and eligibility for membership of professional bodies. For these reasons it is very important that accreditation processes occur in a timely fashion. Assessors, administrators, and members of APAC are conscious of their responsibility to meet the deadlines which have been built into the accreditation process so as to ensure that the needs of all parties are as far as possible met by the process within a reasonable time frame. Despite this, however, such a rigorous and multifaceted process cannot be rushed and by virtue of its many interconnected elements does take time. APAC strives to conduct the process as efficiently as possible and to meet agreed deadlines without compromising the quality of its work.

Types of Assessments

APAC essentially undertakes course accreditation assessments in the following five circumstances:

- an application is received for the accreditation of a new AOU and its courses;
- an application is received for the accreditation of a new course or courses at an AOU already offering an APAC accredited course or courses;
- an application is received to re-accredit an existing AOU and its accredited courses at the conclusion of its five year accreditation cycle;
- an AOU advises of its intentions to make changes to aspects of its functioning (or changes to its courses) which could reasonably be expected to have an impact on its ability to continue to meet the APAC Standards;
- complaints are received by APAC or other credible information comes into APAC's possession which suggests that an accredited AOU and/or its psychology courses may no longer meet the APAC Accreditation Standards.

In cases where APAC imposes conditions on the accreditation or reaccreditation of an AOU or its courses, APAC also conducts more limited follow-up assessments to track the Institution's progress in meeting or maintaining those conditions.

Overview of the Assessment Process

The timing of accreditation assessments is arranged in consultation with the Head of the AOU. Normal five-year cycle visits are usually required to fit into an annual timetable set down by APAC (which is set out in this document). Review and audit assessments can be made by APAC at any time and where this occurs APAC provides advance notice of the assessment and any required site visit to the AOU. The length of a site visit varies depending on the nature of the visit, the size of the AOU, the number of courses, the location and number of campuses to be visited. Normal cycle assessment site visits are usually three to four days in duration, but may take longer if additional time is required to ensure that the assessment team is able to properly assess the AOU and to consult with it regarding the assessment process.

APAC only assesses programs for which an application for accreditation has been made. The application requires submission of information about a range of aspects of the program(s) and this information is checked and collated by the APAC Secretariat before being provided to an assessment team for examination. This review constitutes the first phase of the assessment process and is

intended to ensure that the members of the assessment team are well prepared for the next phase of the assessment process, a site visit. The composition of the assessment team is explained in detail in the Rules (see Section 2.11) and full account of potential conflicts of interest is taken in making the appointments, with team members rarely assessing in the same state or territory in which they reside and work. In the case of an application from an overseas Institution, a representative of the relevant local licensing/registration authority will also be invited to attend the site visit along with the team, as an observer. The Team Leader will always be an experienced APAC-certified assessor and is responsible for the on-site conduct of the visit, including the preparation and presentation of the team's assessment report.

The assessment team's visit is coordinated by the Secretariat in consultation with the office of the AOU. The program for the visit is pre-arranged with the AOU by the APAC Secretariat and must meet certain requirements (see the application materials), however the assessment team may request any reasonable variation or addition to the program needed to properly make its assessment.

The assessment team can request to inspect any and all physical resources, including teaching and research laboratories, computer-assisted learning facilities, libraries, community and on-campus clinics, and any other teaching or practice settings in use or proposed, as it deems necessary to properly make its assessment.

The assessment team can request to consult any members of the institution's staff, students and supervisors which it deems necessary in order to carry out its assessment including the Vice-Chancellor/President/Head and other senior officers of the Institution, and representatives of any government department or service, regional health authority, or other relevant body external to the Institution. The assessment team may choose to interview supervisors, employers, registration board members or other relevant people external to the Institution which it sees fit in the course of its assessment, before, during or after the site visit.

Maximum opportunities for interactive discussion with the senior staff and with the students of the AOU are provided during the visit and the program is structured to allow on-site changes if necessary, including additional time to allow further consultation with key individuals and groups if required.

The Assessment Report and Checklist

At the conclusion of the site visit, the first draft of a formal report is prepared by the assessment team, with the team leader responsible for coordinating the writing and for ensuring its timely delivery. The report includes: matters of fact regarding the structure, function and nature of the AOU and its courses; relevant details of the assessment activities undertaken by the assessment team; the assessment team's recommendations for accreditation and the grounds on which they are based. The report reflects the collective judgment of the assessment team members regarding the extent to which the AOU and its courses meet the APAC *Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses*, perceived strengths and weaknesses, problem areas requiring attention, and distinctive aspects to be encouraged. The AOU's Head of School or nominee (and where appropriate, other senior officers of the Institution such as the Dean or Vice Chancellor or nominee) are usually provided with a short briefing at the conclusion of the visit outlining the team's preliminary views and likely recommendations. A first draft of the report is normally provided to the Head of the AOU before the team leaves the site and the report is simultaneously forwarded to the APAC Secretariat by the team leader.

Within two weeks of receiving the draft report, the Head of the AOU is required to submit a rejoinder containing comments on the factual accuracy of the report and on the recommendations, conclusions or judgments contained in it. Having considered the rejoinder, the assessment team make any final changes to the report usually within three weeks of the rejoinder deadline.

Final assessment team reports received from team leaders are carefully scrutinised and APAC may choose to modify, call for changes to, or reject any report. APAC may also choose to conduct additional enquiries and/or assessments should it deem necessary before the APAC Board makes a determination of accreditation status. APAC can choose to reject recommendations of the Program Development and Accreditation Committee (the working committee providing assessment services),

call for more assessment or seek out any other advice or evidence as it deems necessary to make a determination. Only APAC can make a determination of accreditation status.

Reporting of APAC Accreditation Determinations

Following an APAC accreditation determination, the assessment outcomes and a summary of the assessment report are made public on the APAC website at: <http://www.apac.psychology.org.au> and notification of the outcome is sent to:

- (a) the Head of the AOU and other appropriate senior officer(s) of the Institution;
- (b) the psychologist Registration Board; and
- (c) the APS (for advising the APS Board, and relevant APS Colleges).

STATUS OF RULES AND STANDARDS

- A. These rules and standards are made by the Board for the conduct of the accreditation process, pursuant to and subject to the provisions of the Constitution.
- B. The Rules govern the accreditation process and the Standards set out the minimum requirements for accreditation. Applicants for accreditation are required to follow the Rules and demonstrate that they meet the Standards in order to gain accreditation.
- C. The Board has the power to make, amend or revoke these Rules and Standards.
- D. A copy of these Rules and Standards as amended from time to time, will be available through the APAC website or upon request from the Secretariat of APAC.

RULES FOR ACCREDITATION

Table of Contents

SECTION 1	DEFINITIONS	11
SECTION 2	APPLICATIONS FOR ACCREDITATION	13
2.1	General	13
2.2	Failure to apply for assessment for accreditation	13
2.3	APS College Course Approval.....	13
2.4	Accreditation Process	14
2.5	Applications for accreditation of proposed new courses in psychology	15
2.6	Applications for reaccreditation prior to expiry of Accreditation Period.....	16
2.7	Discontinued programs	16
2.8	Combined applications	16
2.9	Application Forms	16
2.10	Fees and costs	17
2.11	Composition of an Assessment Team	17
2.12	Site visits.....	18
2.13	Timing of accreditation process	19
2.14	Exceptional circumstances extension of Accreditation Period.....	19
SECTION 3	TIMELINE FOR ACCREDITATION	19
3.1	Time for making application.....	19
3.2	Late provision of information.....	19
3.3	Tables	19
SECTION 4	ACCREDITATION STANDARDS	22
4.1	Importance of Standards	22
SECTION 5	ACCREDITATION STATUS	22
5.1	Accreditation of AOU and its courses	22
5.2	Accreditation Status.....	23
5.3	Publication of accreditation status	24
5.4	Change in accreditation status	25
5.5	Impact on students of change in accreditation status.....	25
5.6	Changes to AOU or courses during the Accreditation Period	25
SECTION 6	NEW COURSE DEVELOPMENT	26
6.1	Pre-accreditation course development	26
6.2	Requests for assistance in course development	26
6.3	Costs of course development assistance	26
SECTION 7	MONITORING COMPLIANCE	26
7.1	Annual reporting	26
7.2	Auditing compliance with the Accreditation Standards	26
7.3	Complaints.....	27
7.4	Costs of an audit.....	27
SECTION 8	APEALS	27
8.1	General	27
8.2	Entitlement to Appeal.....	27
8.3	Lodging a notice of appeal	27
8.4	Appointment of an Appeals Committee	28
8.5	Conduct of appeals process	28
8.6	Site visits in the appeal process	28
8.7	Decision of the Appeals Committee.....	29

8.8 Costs of the appeal process 29

8.9 Timetable of the appeals process..... 29

RULES FOR ACCREDITATION

SECTION 1 DEFINITIONS

Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) means a department or school, or other separately identifiable academic organisational unit of an Institution providing tertiary education and responsible for the psychology programs therein.

Academic staff means all teaching staff in a course/s of psychology and includes continuing, contract and casual teaching staff.

Accreditation Period means the period of time for which an AOU or course in psychology is accredited by APAC as meeting all the *Accreditation Standards*. The Accreditation Period is usually five (5) years commencing on 1 January of the year following the accreditation process and ending on 31 December four years later.

Accreditation Withdrawn means the removal or revoking of the status of Full Accreditation or Conditional Accreditation from an AOU or any of its courses.

APA format means the rules for the publication of manuscripts described in the current Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

APAC means the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council Limited.

APAC website means the web pages accessed through <http://www.apac.psychology.org.au/>.

Applicant means the Institution making an application for assessment for accreditation of an AOU and/or its course/s in psychology.

Application Fee means all of the monies required to be paid to APAC in consideration of any APAC accreditation assessment as published by APAC from time to time.

Application Form means the appropriate application form published by APAC from time to time.

APS means The Australian Psychological Society Limited.

APS College means the constituent units within the Australian Psychological Society that are concerned with specialist areas of practice in psychology.

APS College (Course) Approval means professional course approval, given by the APS, to those professional courses that meet the APS College Course Approval Guidelines for the respective College/s.

APS College Course Approval Guidelines means the guidelines developed by each APS College Course Approval Committee for the specification of education and training requirements for membership of the College.

Assessment Team means the person or people appointed by APAC in accordance with clause 2.11 of these Rules to assess the Applicant's AOU and courses for accreditation.

Board means the Board of Directors of APAC.

Conditional Accreditation means that the accreditation of an AOU or one or more of its courses has conditions attached, such conditions relating specifically to the AOU itself or to one or more of its courses.

Constitution means the Constitution of APAC.

Core topics means content areas that all students must take in the course of studying for their degree. Core topics are taught in core units which are the compulsory parts of a course.

Course means a series of Units or other program of study, formally approved by an Institution, the successful completion of which results in the award of a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate as defined in Schedule 1 of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

CPRB means the Council of Psychologists Registration Boards (Australasia) Incorporated Limited, a representative body of Registration Boards from Australia and New Zealand.

Dual Approval means course approval given by two APS Colleges to a specific professional course that meets the APS College Approval Guidelines for each of those Colleges.

Electives means units or subjects which are optional and while students are not required to take any specific elective, they may be required to take a certain number of electives chosen from a greater number in order to complete their course.

Extended Period has the meaning set out in clause 2.14 of the Rules.

Full Accreditation means that an AOU or a course has been assessed as satisfying all Accreditation Standards.

Head means Head of the psychology AOU.

Institution means a University, Australian company, other incorporated body, unincorporated body or Institution established in Australia and registered with and accredited by the relevant state or territory government or federal authorities, offering a course of study leading to a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate and as defined in the Higher Education Support Act 2003, and including overseas Institutions.

Offshore means not physically located in Australian territory.

Overseas Institution means a tertiary academic Institution recognised by one or more of 'The World of Learning' published by Europa Publications Ltd, the Australian Education International's 'Country Education Profile', or Local Regional Accreditation bodies, offering a course of tertiary study leading to a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate equivalent to those defined in the Authority for Learning outcomes of the Australian Qualifications Framework 2002.

PDAC means the Program Development and Accreditation Committee of the Australian Psychological Society Limited. This Committee provides, on contract to APAC, certain expert accreditation assessment and course development advice and services, making accreditation recommendations to the Board of Directors of APAC and recommendations regarding College course approval of specialist postgraduate courses to the Board of Directors of the APS.

Registration Board(s) means any applicable psychologist registration board established pursuant to legislation for the purpose of registering psychologists.

Principal supervisor means the identified main supervisor who is responsible for the work of a student and the majority of his/her supervision.

Program means all of the requirements, formally approved by the Institution, the successful completion of which results in the award of a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate.

Rules means these rules for accreditation of psychology AOU's and courses as prescribed by APAC and amended from time to time.

Sequence means a recognised set of units of study in psychology and the rules governing their completion including the order in which they must be undertaken.

Site Visit Agenda means the schedule of activities during the site visit as approved by the APAC Secretariat for the purposes of accreditation assessment.

Society means The Australian Psychological Society Limited.

Standards means these standards for accreditation of psychology AOU's and courses as prescribed by APAC and amended from time to time.

Unit means a separate and identifiable component of an undergraduate or postgraduate course, usually with its own assessment components and with a member of the Academic staff responsible for coordination, as defined in Schedule 1 of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Year in the context of course descriptions, for example "a four year course" means full time study and is taken to involve two semesters or three terms/trimesters of work. Thus a four year course will involve eight semesters of full-time study. In addition, when reference is made to a specific year level, for example third year, this should be read as the third full-time year of study in the course.

SECTION 2 APPLICATIONS FOR ACCREDITATION

2.1 General

- (a) APAC will not be held responsible for any Application Forms or other information not received.
- (b) The onus is on the Applicant to demonstrate how its AOU and courses in psychology meet the Standards and how it will continue to meet those Standards during the Accreditation Period.
- (c) It is expected that there will be only one accredited AOU in each Institution which has responsibility for all psychology courses offered by that Institution.
- (d) Where two or more institutions propose to offer courses in cooperation with each other and intend to establish joint ownership, badging of, and/or responsibility for those courses, it is a requirement that one institution only makes the accreditation application and is responsible for entering into an accreditation contract with APAC. That institution must have an AOU which meets the accreditation standards in order for the proposed jointly branded courses to be accredited.
- (e) The accreditation process considers each of the AOU and the courses in psychology offered by that AOU. It is possible that an AOU may be accredited, without all of its courses in psychology gaining accreditation.
- (f) In order for an AOU to obtain Full Accreditation, it must meet all of the Standards that apply to AOU's, and the courses in psychology offered by that AOU being assessed for accreditation must meet all of the relevant Standards for those courses.
- (g) The Standards may be amended from time to time to reflect changes in government and community expectations of the education standards for psychologists.
- (h) In conducting an assessment for accreditation, APAC will have regard to:
 - (i) written material provided via the Application Form;
 - (ii) a report of observations made by an Assessment Team during a site visit to the AOU of the Applicant;
 - (iii) the Applicant's response to any matters that have been raised by the Assessment Team; and
 - (iv) any other relevant information or material.

2.2 Failure to apply for assessment for accreditation

- (a) An Institution must apply for assessment for accreditation of its AOU and courses in psychology. If no application is received by APAC, no assessment will be made.
- (b) The accreditation of an AOU or its courses will not be extended beyond the Accreditation Period as a result of the failure of an Institution to make a timely application for assessment for accreditation.
- (c) If an AOU fails to make an application for assessment for accreditation within the first 12 months of commencing any new unaccredited course, then the students who graduated from that sequence of study will be deemed to have graduated from a course that was not accredited for the purposes of their sequence of study. For example, if the AOU offers a three year undergraduate sequence and fails to apply for accreditation before students enrolled in that sequence conclude their first year of study, any assessment for accreditation of that sequence will not be of benefit to those students.

2.3 APS College Course Approval

- (a) If an AOU seeks APS College Course Approval of the postgraduate courses in psychology offered by it, the postgraduate courses in psychology must meet the relevant APS Postgraduate Course Approval Guidelines.
- (b) Applicants should contact the Society to obtain information about APS College Course Approval Guidelines and assessments.

- (c) Assessment for APS College Course Approval is conducted by the APS at the same time as assessment for accreditation as a matter of convenience only, and is otherwise outside the jurisdiction of APAC.

2.4 Accreditation Process

- (a) An application for assessment for accreditation or for reaccreditation must be initiated by the submission of a fully completed APAC Application Form to be received by the APAC Secretariat no later than 31 March in any year in which an assessment is to take place.
- (b) For Institutions with current accreditation, APAC may write to that Institution in the year immediately preceding the final year of that Institution's Accreditation Period:
- (i) reminding it that an Application Form and all required documentation should be submitted to APAC by 31 March of the following year;
 - (ii) seeking confirmation that the Institution will be making an application for assessment for accreditation;
 - (iii) requesting information regarding the details of undergraduate and postgraduate courses to be assessed; and
 - (iv) asking for the nomination of specific dates (usually from June to August) during which a site visit may be conducted.
- (c) Upon receipt of an Application Form, the Application Form will be reviewed to assess whether all required documentation has been adequately provided.
- (i) If an Application Form is assessed as including all required information to an adequate level, the Applicant will be sent an acknowledgement of receipt.
 - (ii) If an Application Form is assessed as deficient in any way, the Applicant will receive a request for any missing documentation or additional information. The Applicant should submit missing documentation or additional information in the form requested within two (2) weeks of receiving the request.
- (d) Before 31 March of each year a site visit calendar will be prepared for all Institutions which have applied for assessment for accreditation and Assessment Teams will be nominated to assess each application and conduct the site visits.
- (e) Applicants will be notified of the dates of their site visit and the proposed members of the Assessment Team conducting their site visit no later than four (4) weeks prior to the commencement of the site visit. Any changes to the membership of the Assessment Team will be notified to the Applicant as soon as practicable.
- (f) Upon receipt of confirmation of the dates for their site visit, Applicants should prepare a proposed Site Visit Agenda providing the Assessment Team with sufficient time to conduct all required assessments as set out in Rule 2.12. An example of a Site Visit Agenda is set out in Appendix 1 of these Standards.
- (g) At the conclusion of the site visit, the Assessment Team or nominee will meet with the Head of the AOU to discuss the outcome of the visit and any particular concerns that members of the Assessment Team may have.
- (h) On the final day of the site visit, the first draft of a formal report is prepared by the Assessment Team. The purpose of this report is to communicate:
- (i) matters of fact regarding the structure, function and nature of the AOU and its courses relevant to the APAC Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses;
 - (ii) relevant details of the activities undertaken by the Assessment Team in the course of making its assessment.
 - (iii) the Assessment Team's draft recommendations for accreditation and the grounds on which they are based;
 - (iv) the College assessors' recommendations for APS course approval and the grounds on which they are based;

- (i) The first draft of the report will be forwarded to the Head of the AOU and to the APAC Secretariat by the Assessment Team. The Head of the AOU will have two (2) weeks within which to submit a rejoinder containing:
 - (i) Comments on the factual accuracy of the report
 - (ii) Comments on the recommendations, conclusions or judgements contained in the report
- (j) The recommendations and opinions contained within the draft report are those of the Assessment Team, not APAC. The contents of the report are subject to change following review by PDAC and APAC.
- (k) If no rejoinder is received from the Head of the AOU within the specified time frame, it will be assumed that there are no errors of fact within the report and that the applicant has no comments to make on the conclusions and/or recommendations contained within.
- (l) PDAC will review the report of the Assessment Team and make recommendations to APAC based upon its review of the report and any further comments provided by the Applicant. PDAC will make recommendations about the accreditation status of the AOU and its courses, as well as any specific recommendations for action to be taken by the AOU.
- (m) APAC will make a determination as to the accreditation status of the AOU and its courses based on the information and recommendations that it has received from PDAC prior to 15 November in the year of assessment.
- (n) The Chair of APAC will notify Applicants of the outcome of their assessment no later than 30 December in the year of assessment. The possible outcomes of an assessment are set out in Section 5.
- (o) Any matters which are stated as requiring further action as part of a recommendation for Full Accreditation or Conditional Accreditation will be monitored to determine whether those matters are addressed within the specified time frames.
- (p) Any Applicant not satisfied with the assessment may appeal the assessment in accordance with the provisions of Section 8.
- (q) Assessments of APS College Course Approvals must be appealed through the Society.

Application for accreditation of an AOU

- (r) An application for accreditation of a new AOU must demonstrate on the appropriate application form, how the AOU meets the standards contained in Section 2 of the Accreditation Standards
- (s) An AOU applying for accreditation may concurrently apply for the accreditation of one or more psychology courses according to the Rules outlined in 2.5 below.
- (t) Accreditation of courses offered by a new AOU will not be retrospective and the accreditation will only take effect from the start of the year following accreditation of the AOU.
- (u) APAC strongly encourages AOU's to undertake a self-assessment against the APAC Standards 12-18 months before APAC's scheduled assessment, since it is a valuable quality improvement tool. APAC may require AOU's to provide evidence of having completed such a self-assessment.

2.5 Applications for accreditation of proposed new courses in psychology

- (a) It is not possible to complete a full accreditation assessment of a course in psychology or an AOU which has no current students enrolled. As a result, applications for assessment of courses in psychology or AOU's which have not previously been accredited should be made within the first 12 months of students being enrolled in and participating in the course.
- (b) Applications for accreditation of new courses in psychology should include:
 - (i) full details of the course in psychology submitted on the appropriate Application Form;
 - (ii) details of any additional staff who have been appointed to teach in the course in psychology when it is introduced, or any proposal to appoint staff to positions in the AOU in which the course will be taught; and

- (iii) full current staffing details of the AOU and any changes to courses in psychology since the last site visit.
- (c) A fee will be payable for any assessment (including any site visit) required as part of the accreditation of a course in psychology outside an established accreditation cycle.

2.6 Applications for reaccreditation prior to expiry of Accreditation Period

- (a) There is no automatic renewal or extension of the Accreditation Period for AOU's or courses in psychology which have previously been accredited.
- (b) An Applicant with accredited AOU's and courses in psychology must make an application for assessment for accreditation in accordance with these Rules prior to the expiry of their Accreditation Period.
- (c) Failure to make an application for assessment for accreditation prior to expiry of the Accreditation Period may result in the AOU and its courses in psychology being determined as Accreditation Withdrawn.

2.7 Discontinued programs

Where an accredited course is discontinued (no new students are being admitted) and students remain enrolled in the course (ie the course is being "taught out"), an *Application for Accreditation of a Discontinued (Taught-Out) Psychology Program* should be made and included as part of any cycle assessment application (this application is available from the APAC Secretariat). See also Section 5.5 of these Rules.

2.8 Combined applications

- (a) Applications for assessment for reaccreditation of already accredited AOU's or courses in psychology and assessment for accreditation of any new courses in psychology may be made on the same Application Form.
- (b) In completing a combined application, Applicants must clearly differentiate between the courses in psychology to be reassessed for accreditation, and the courses not previously assessed.

2.9 Application Forms

- (a) Applications must be made on the Application Form specified by APAC.
- (b) Application Forms are available through the APAC website or by contacting APAC.
- (c) The Vice-Chancellor or President of the Applicant must sign the Application Form cover sheet. Applications submitted without the appropriately signed cover sheet will not be accepted.
- (d) One original hard copy of the Application Form with original signatures and attachments must be submitted to APAC by 31 March of the year in which the AOU is to be assessed for accreditation.
- (e) Applicants must also submit six (6) electronic copies of the complete Application Form and all attachments, each copy on a separate CD-ROM.
- (f) Application Forms must not be submitted by email.
- (g) It is expected that the Application Form will be prepared by senior Academic staff involved in the teaching of courses in psychology. The Application Form must identify a senior member of the Academic staff as a contact point for the Assessment Team to seek clarification or request additional documentation.
- (h) The Application Form and attachments will be provided to each member of the Assessment Team appointed to assess the application.

2.10 Fees and costs

- (a) Applicants are required to pay an Application Fee at the time of submitting their Application Forms. APAC will issue a tax invoice for payment of the fee after receipt of notice from the Applicant of the courses and campuses to be assessed.
- (b) The Application Fee is set annually by APAC and listed in the APAC Schedule of Fees which can be downloaded from the APAC website.
- (c) Applications for assessment for reaccreditation received after 31 March in the year of assessment for accreditation will attract an additional late fee set annually by APAC and included in the APAC Schedule of Fees.
- (d) The Application Fee is calculated as outlined in the APAC Schedule of Fees.
- (e) The Application Fee is not refundable.
- (f) If, after the site visit, it is determined that there has been an under-calculation of the Application Fee, APAC will issue a tax invoice to the Applicant for payment of the balance due.
- (g) The costs of all offshore travel, including business class airfares, accommodation, meals, taxi fares and any other expenses associated with an offshore site visit by the Assessment Team are the responsibility of the Applicant.

2.11 Composition of an Assessment Team

- (a) APAC will appoint an Assessment Team for each assessment. The composition of the Assessment Team is usually:
 - (i) Assessment Team Leader – an APAC-certified and experienced assessor whose usual place of employment is not located in the same State or Territory as the AOU to be assessed and who is responsible for coordinating the assessment.
 - (ii) PDAC Assessor - an APAC-certified assessor whose usual place of employment is not located in the same State or Territory as the AOU to be assessed.
 - (iii) Registration Board Representative - A representative of the relevant psychologist Registration Board.
 - (iv) APS College Representatives - A representative of each relevant APS College joins the Assessment Team on the last 1-2 days of the site visit for the purpose of making, on behalf of the APS, a Course Approval assessment of any specialist postgraduate courses against the College's Course Approval Guidelines.
- (b) Observers may also be appointed by APAC to Assessment Teams, and are considered to be full members of the Assessment Team.
- (c) Before being appointed to an Assessment Team and before commencement of any assessment each proposed team member is required to sign a confidentiality agreement and a declaration of any relevant personal or professional interest which may be perceived to conflict with his/her ability to undertake impartially his/her duties as a member of an Assessment Team.
- (d) Where a potential conflict of interest is drawn to the attention of the APAC Secretariat by persons external to the Applicant, the Secretariat will notify the Head of the AOU. Where this is the case, the Head of the AOU has until four (4) weeks before any site visit to communicate to APAC in writing any concerns arising from the perceived conflict and the nature of those concerns. Where a potential conflict of interest is identified by the Applicant, it must be drawn to the attention of the Secretariat in writing without delay.

APAC will assess any claimed or declared potential conflict of interest and may, at its discretion, choose to:

- (i) Replace the relevant member of the Assessment Team.
- (ii) Postpone an assessment and conduct a secondary site visit if a suitable replacement for the College approval assessor cannot be found prior to the visit.
- (iii) Postpone the site visit to which the accreditation assessor is allocated where no suitable replacement can be found prior to the visit.

2.12 Site visits

- (a) After consideration of the Application Form and attachments received from an Applicant, the Assessment Team will make a site visit to the Applicant's AOU at the time notified to the AOU prior to the site visit.
- (b) The purpose of a site visit includes:
 - (i) providing the Assessment Team with the opportunity to clarify or seek further information about any issues arising from the Application Form and attachments;
 - (ii) enabling the Assessment Team to check that all resources, policies and procedures of the AOU meet the required standard for accreditation;
 - (iii) enabling the Assessment Team to meet and interview staff, students and other relevant persons, and to review teaching methods, materials and student assessments; and
 - (iv) allowing the Assessment Team to discuss any matters that arise during the site visit and timeframes for addressing those matters.
- (c) The composition of the proposed Assessment Team will be communicated in writing to the Head of the AOU at least four (4) weeks prior to the site visit, together with the name and email contact details of APAC's site visit team leader. Any changes to the membership of the Assessment Team will be notified to the Applicant as soon as practicable.
- (d) The Head of the AOU will be responsible for coordinating all arrangements for the site visit in consultation with the APAC secretariat and site visit team leader.
- (e) Where an Applicant has more than one campus, the Assessment Team will conduct a site visit to each campus at which a sequence to be accredited is being/will be taught.
- (f) Site Visit Agendas must be submitted to APAC at least three (3) weeks prior to the date of the site visit so that appropriate advance planning by the Assessment Team can be undertaken.
 - (i) It is essential that the Site Visit Agenda is approved by the APAC secretariat at least one (1) week prior to the date of commencement of the site visit.
 - (ii) APAC will be responsible for all site visit travel and accommodation arrangements unless the site visit is to be conducted at an Offshore campus.
 - (iii) For Offshore campuses, the Applicant will be responsible for the arrangement and payment of all site visit travel arrangements, including business class airfares and accommodation for assessors travelling to those campuses. The Applicant must provide a copy of the confirmed travel itinerary and Site Visit Agenda to APAC no later than twenty-one (21) days prior to the commencement of the site visit.
- (g) The duration of a site visit will depend on the number of campuses and the complexity of the courses to be accredited. Members of the Assessment Team should be given ample time to examine all of the resources and courses in psychology to be assessed.
- (h) During the site visit the Assessment Team or members of the Assessment Team will:
 - (i) meet with the Vice-Chancellor, President, or his/her nominee (eg, Deputy Vice-Chancellor or Dean of Faculty);
 - (ii) meet with academic, administrative, technical and other staff, students and any other relevant persons;
 - (iii) inspect facilities including teaching venues, computer laboratories, research laboratories, teaching laboratory equipment, the test library, and the main library on each campus at which psychology is taught; and
 - (iv) consider examples of students' work, in particular, recently completed Honours and coursework Masters and Doctoral theses along with examiners' reports for these theses.
- (i) At the conclusion of the site visit, the Assessment Team will meet with the Head of the AOU and other senior officers of the Institution, to discuss the likely outcome of the visit, any particular matters that members of the Assessment Team may wish to raise, and to provide a confidential draft version of the accreditation report. Note that the final report may differ from

the initial draft, which is presented to facilitate correction of errors and the preparation of a rejoinder by the AOU.

2.13 Timing of accreditation process

- (a) The accreditation process has been designed to run for the Accreditation Period, such that an AOU and all the courses offered by that AOU are assessed and considered for accreditation in a particular year and as part of one process.
- (b) Full Accreditation will be granted for the Accreditation Period, subject to the Institution continuing to comply with the Standards.
- (c) If an AOU has made substantial changes to a course or courses and wishes to have these considered for accreditation before the expiry of the Accreditation Period, a new application and an assessment will be necessary and this may include a site visit, at the Applicant's expense.
- (d) If courses are introduced during the Accreditation Period at campuses other than those for which accreditation has been granted, a new application and an assessment will be necessary and this may include a site visit, at the Applicant's expense.
- (e) Any new courses introduced or courses substantially changed during the Accreditation Period, such that a new application for accreditation is made by an Institution for the purpose of accrediting those courses, will be assessed for the balance of the Accreditation Period and will thereafter be assessed at the same time as the AOU and all other courses offered by the AOU.

2.14 Exceptional circumstances extension of Accreditation Period

- (a) In exceptional circumstances and prior to 16 October in the year before the expiry of its Accreditation Period, an AOU may apply to APAC to extend its period of accreditation for no more than twelve (12) months from the date of expiry of its Accreditation Period.
- (b) In the event that APAC, at its sole discretion, extends the AOU's Accreditation Period for no more than twelve (12) months (the **Extended Period**), then:
 - (i) the AOU and all of its accredited courses will hold a status of Conditional Accreditation for the Extended Period; and
 - (ii) the AOU must make an application for accreditation prior to the end of the Extended Period, failing which the AOU and all of its accredited courses will then hold a status of Accreditation Withdrawn (revoked).

SECTION 3 TIMELINE FOR ACCREDITATION

3.1 Time for making application

Applicants should submit an application for assessment for reaccreditation no later than the year prior to offering a new course, or the year prior to the year in which their Accreditation Period expires. This will permit an assessment to be scheduled for the following year. Applicants should note also Rule 2.5.

3.2 Late provision of information

Please note that the dates set out below are final dates for receipt of information from Applicants or provision of information by APAC in the normal accreditation process. Documents or information received from Applicants after these dates may not be taken into consideration until the commencement of the assessment process in the following year.

3.3 Tables

The following timetables apply to normal accreditation cycles. Where an assessment is conducted outside of a normal cycle the dates listed will be varied at the determination of the Secretariat.

The **Pre-site visit timetable** consists of the administrative process undertaken in order to prepare for an assessment. In the case of an audit or other assessment conducted outside of a normal accreditation cycle, some steps may be deemed unnecessary by the Secretariat.

Timing	Task
September	Notification of Intended Application form is updated on the APAC website. Application for Accreditation form is updated on the APAC website. Cycle AOU's receive letter and email regarding Notification of Intended Application. Non cycle AOU's receive email regarding Notification of Intended Application for out-of-cycle assessments. Assessment windows posted to APAC website
16 October	Deadline for receipt of confirmation of Notification of Intended Application from cycle and non-cycle AOU's.
16 October	Deadline for AOU's to request an extension on their scheduled assessment cycle.
November PDAC meeting	Secretariat assigns institutions to Assessment Teams with regard for potential conflicts of interest and preferred dates of the institution, and notifies the Assessment Teams.
December	Anticipated fees are calculated and invoices prepared dated 2 January of the following year.
January	Correspondence sent to AOU's acknowledging receipt of form and advising of the date that has been selected for the accreditation site visit.
31 January	Deadline for AOU's to request a change in assessment date.
January - February	Assessment schedule is published on the APAC website. Registration Board assessors appointed.
1 March	Correspondence sent advising AOU's of the composition of Assessment Teams.
31 March	Deadline for receipt of applications for assessment, site visit agenda and payment of accreditation fees, including applications for out-of-sequence assessments.
April	Secretariat checks to ensure documentation is complete.
April and May	Assessor training sessions held. Applications for assessment are distributed to assessors. Course applications entered into the accreditation database.
June - August	Site visits are conducted.
August - September	Out-of-sequence site visits are conducted.

The **Site visit timetable** consists of the process undertaken in order to conduct the assessment. Phases one to three will typically be conducted on consecutive days.

Timing	Task
April - May	Assessors receive application documentation.
4 weeks prior	Assessors notify Secretariat of any missing, incomplete or inconsistent data in applications. Secretariat requests additional information from the AOU
3 weeks prior to site visit	Secretariat coordinates site visit agenda, which is to be confirmed by the AOU and all Assessment Team members.
2 weeks prior to site visit	Deadline for AOU to supply additional information to the Secretariat. Secretariat forwards additional information to assessors.
One week prior to site visit	Any requested audio meetings with interviewees are conducted.
Phase 1 on site visit	Assessment of undergraduate courses completed.
Phase 2 on site visit	Assessment of postgraduate courses completed.
Phase 3 on site	Head has until 12pm to supply the Assessment Team with any additional

visit	information. Assessment team writes the report and recommendation sections of the checklist and forwards a copy to the Head and Secretariat before leaving the AOU. All Assessment Team members are to retain a copy of the report. Secretariat forwards a copy to the Registration Board Registrar.
Phase 4 on site visit	Assessment completed of any off-shore programs. Assessment team writes the report including recommendation sections and forwards a copy to the Head and Secretariat before leaving the AOU. All Assessment Team members are to retain a copy of the report.

The **Post-site visit timetable** consists of the process undertaken following the site visit, including the requirements for the AOU to respond to any conditions placed upon either the AOU and/or its courses.

Timing	Task
Week after Phase	Secretariat cross references report with accreditation database to identify any potential anomalies.
2 weeks after site visit	Deadline for Head to submit rejoinder documentation, including errors of fact, to the Secretariat for consideration. Secretariat forwards supplied information to Assessment Team.
3 weeks after site visit	Assessment team to incorporate any intended changes in the report under direction of team leader and submit to Secretariat.
4 weeks after site visit	Report and rejoinder documentation added to PDAC agenda.
October	All assessments for the year should be completed. Reports considered by PDAC. Accreditation recommendations are forwarded to the APAC Board of Directors and course approval recommendations are forwarded to the APS Board of Directors. Any required revisions to be made to the assessment report by the team leader and forwarded to the Secretariat.
November	Recommendations for accreditation considered by APAC Board. Recommendations for postgraduate course approval considered by APS Board.
30 November	Final report and correspondence outlining accepted recommendations sent to the Head of the AOU by the Secretariat. Copies of the final report and correspondence to be sent to the Vice Chancellor or President of the Institution, the Assessment Team, and the Registration Board Registrar.
28 February	First progress report outlining how any conditions have been met due to be submitted to the Secretariat.
March - June	Secretariat to forward report to the Assessment Team. Response from Assessment Team due. Response from Assessment Team considered by PDAC. Recommendation forwarded to APAC for consideration. Correspondence outlining accepted recommendations sent to the Head by the Secretariat. Copies sent to the Vice Chancellor, the Assessment Team, and the relevant Registration Board Registrar. Correspondence outlining accepted approval recommendations sent to the Head by the Secretariat. Copies sent to the Vice Chancellor, the Assessment Team, and the relevant College Chair/Course Approvals Convenor.
1 July	Deadline by which all courses with conditions attached must be listed on the APAC website.
31 August	Second and final progress report outlining how any conditions have been met to be submitted to the Secretariat.

September	Secretariat to forward final report to the Assessment Team. Response from Assessment Team considered by PDAC. Recommendation forwarded to APAC for consideration. Correspondence outlining accepted recommendations sent to the Head by the Secretariat. Copies sent to the Vice Chancellor, the Assessment Team, and the relevant Registration Board registrar. Correspondence outlining accepted approval recommendations sent to the Head by the Secretariat. Copies sent to the Vice Chancellor, the Assessment Team, and the relevant College Chair/Course Approvals Convenor.
31 October	Any AOU's or courses with outstanding conditions to receive a recommendation of Accreditation Failed/Withdrawn.
28 February	Annual Update form to be submitted to the APAC Secretariat.
March	Annual Update forms to be distributed to assessors.
31 March	Flying minute to be sent to APAC recommending conditional accreditation for all AOU's which have failed to submit.
12-18 months prior to the AOU's scheduled assessment	AOU's undertake a self-assessment against the APAC Standards 12-18 months before APAC's scheduled assessment.

SECTION 4 ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

4.1 Importance of Standards

- (a) The Standards have been developed to ensure that all accredited AOU's offer courses which are of a high quality and meet the needs of consumers, students, the community as a whole, government, the discipline and the profession, while allowing flexibility in content and design.
- (b) Applicants for assessment for accreditation must meet all of the Standards before being granted Full Accreditation.
- (c) An AOU will be granted accreditation only in respect of its accredited courses.
- (d) Failure to meet the relevant Standards for a course may result in an Applicant AOU not being accredited for the purpose of providing that course.
- (e) An accredited AOU can offer courses in psychology that are not accredited provided that it clearly informs all students proposing to enrol in those courses that the course(s) do not fall within the AOU's accreditation and either do not meet the Standards or have not been assessed for accreditation.
- (f) The Standards take precedence over all APS College Course Approval Guidelines for the purpose of accreditation.

SECTION 5 ACCREDITATION STATUS

5.1 Accreditation of AOU and its courses

- (a) Accreditation applies to both the AOU and the courses offered by it.
- (b) An AOU and the courses in psychology offered by it are assessed separately, however:
 - (i) An AOU may obtain an award of Full Accreditation provided that at least one course in psychology offered by it also obtains an award of Full Accreditation.
 - (ii) If all courses in psychology offered by an AOU are awarded no better than Conditional Accreditation, then the AOU will also be awarded Conditional Accreditation, provided that it meets the Standards.

- (iii) If an AOU obtains Conditional Accreditation then no course in psychology offered by that AOU can obtain an accreditation status higher than Conditional Accreditation until the AOU gains Full Accreditation.

5.2 Accreditation Status

- (a) An Applicant can obtain the following accreditation status:
 - (i) Full Accreditation;
 - (ii) Conditional Accreditation;
 - (iii) Accreditation Failed; or
 - (iv) Accreditation Withdrawn.
- (b) Full Accreditation will only be awarded if the Applicant's AOU/s and all of the courses for which it has applied for accreditation meet all of the Standards.
- (c) An award of Conditional Accreditation may be made if it is determined that:
 - (i) the Applicant does not meet all of the Standards but does meet most of the Standards and the Standards not currently met by the AOU or its courses are in APAC's view likely to be addressed within 12 months of the date of determination of accreditation status; or
 - (ii) a previously accredited Applicant makes a change to its courses or resources such that the AOU or its courses no longer meet the Standards and the Standards not currently met by the AOU or its courses are in APAC's view likely to be addressed within 12 months of the date of determination of accreditation status; or
 - (iii) a course has not previously been accredited in the form in which it is now being proposed and the first students to graduate from that course are yet to graduate; or
 - (iv) an AOU has not previously been accredited and the first students to graduate from an assessable course of that AOU are yet to graduate; or
 - (v) an AOU has provided insufficient evidence that satisfaction of all relevant Standards has been maintained; or
 - (vi) if APAC audits an Institution which has Full Accreditation and finds that the Institution has not maintained the Standards and the Assessment Team that conducts the audit determines that the Standards not currently met by the AOU or its courses are likely to be addressed within 12 months of the date of determination of the audit.
- (d) An award of Conditional Accreditation will be accompanied by a detailed list of matters to be addressed and a date, normally within 12 months, by which those matters should be addressed (Conditional period). If all matters are addressed by the prescribed date, then the Conditional Accreditation may be withdrawn and Full Accreditation may be granted. If they are not addressed to APAC's satisfaction within the Conditional period then the AOU or its courses may be determined as having Accreditation Failed status. A course that has not previously been accredited and/or an AOU that has not previously been accredited may be identified with the additional notation "under development".
- (e) Accreditation Failed status means that a previously accredited course or AOU loses its accreditation status, or in the case of a new application, does not gain accreditation.
- (f) An award of Accreditation Failed will only be made:
 - (i) if serious concerns arise in regard to the AOU or its courses, which the Institution cannot adequately demonstrate it is able to fully address within a 12 month period; or
 - (ii) if the AOU modifies accredited courses after a site visit which are in clear violation of the Standards, without prior consultation with APAC.
- (g) A determination of Accreditation Failed will be accompanied by a statement of reasons which:
 - (i) outline the areas of concern to APAC;
 - (ii) state the time in which any appeal against the determination must be made; and
 - (iii) may offer additional course development advice.

- (h) A determination of Accreditation Withdrawn (revoked) may be made for a previously accredited AOU in which the courses or resources of the AOU have changed such that the AOU or its courses no longer meet the Standards.

A determination of Accreditation Withdrawn will be accompanied by a detailed list of matters to be addressed and a date, normally within 12 months, by which those matters should be addressed. If all matters are addressed to APAC's satisfaction by the prescribed date, then Accreditation Withdrawn status may be removed and Full Accreditation may be granted.
Summary table - grades of accreditation:

Status on website or response to enquiry	Explanations
Full Accreditation	Application for accreditation was made and the course and AOU have been assessed as meeting all of the accreditation standards [Rule 5.2(b)].
Conditional Accreditation	Application for accreditation was made and the course and or AOU failed to meet all of the accreditation standards, but are likely to meet those standards within a period of less than 12 months of the date of assessment, [Rule 5.2(c)(i) and (ii)] or this is a new AOU or a new course for which the first cohort of students is yet to graduate [Rule 5.2(c)(iii) and (iv)]. May also include the reference "under development" [Rule 5.2(d)]. An audit of the AOU or course within the accreditation period has determined that the standards have not been maintained, or there is insufficient evidence to support that the standards have been maintained [Rule 5.2(c)(v) and (vi)].
Accreditation Withdrawn (revoked)	The course was previously accredited but having changed significantly since accreditation no longer meets the Standards [Rule 5.2(h)].
Accreditation Failed	An application for accreditation or re-accreditation was made and the course and or AOU have failed to meet the accreditation standards [Rule 5.2(e)]. The course was assessed as holding a status of Conditional Accreditation and the conditions have not been met within the time limit stipulated.
Accreditation Expired	The course was previously accredited and either: - The accreditation period has come to an end and no application for re-accreditation has been made, or - An application for re-accreditation has been made after the expiry of the accreditation period and the course has not yet been re-assessed.

5.3 Publication of accreditation status

- (a) It is the responsibility of an AOU to at all times accurately inform students and the public of the accreditation status of its courses.
- (b) APAC will maintain a publicly available list of all APAC-accredited courses and AOU's on the APAC website. The list will state whether a course or AOU holds Full Accreditation, Conditional Accreditation or a status of Accreditation Withdrawn and will be amended to reflect any change in status of courses or AOU's from time to time.
- (c) The change in status of an AOU or any of its courses in psychology from Full Accreditation to Conditional Accreditation will be published on the APAC website.

- (d) APAC will publish on its website a summary of the outcomes of each assessment conducted.

5.4 Change in accreditation status

- (a) An Institution's accreditation status may be changed as a result of:
- (i) the closure of the Institution's relevant AOU;
 - (ii) the withdrawal of a course/s in psychology;
 - (iii) an accreditation process;
 - (iv) an audit process; or
 - (v) compliance or non-compliance with the requirements of conditions of Conditional Accreditation.
- (b) An Institution's accreditation status may be changed by APAC as a result of an assessment for accreditation, whether at the commencement of an Accreditation Period or otherwise.
- (c) An AOU which has its accreditation status changed may resubmit an application for accreditation at any time.

5.5 Impact on students of change in accreditation status

- (a) Students completing a course in psychology with an accreditation status of Full Accreditation or Conditional Accreditation as at the date of their completion of that course will have completed an accredited course.
- (b) Where a student completes a course which has an accreditation status of Accreditation Failed, Accreditation Withdrawn or no accreditation status (due to lack of assessment for accreditation either at all or in a timely manner) then that student will not have completed an accredited course.

5.6 Changes to AOU's or courses during the Accreditation Period

- (a) Each Institution with an accredited AOU and accredited courses in psychology must consistently monitor the AOU and courses to ensure that the AOU and courses continue at all times to meet the Standards.
- (b) Institutions are expected to inform APAC of; changes in its AOU's, new courses introduced, substantive changes to course structure, discontinuation of accredited courses, changes to unit codes and/or names, changes to core and elective unit requirements, changes to course names and to resource levels including staffing (particularly resignations and other ways in which the number of staff decreases or the staffing profile shifts significantly) immediately, and where the changes are planned, no later than one month after the proposed changes are announced.
- (c) Major changes to courses or AOU resources may affect the accreditation status of the AOU and, by informing APAC, a cooperative effort can be made to accommodate any short-term difficulties that may arise.
- (d) Where an AOU or course holds a status of Conditional Accreditation, reports setting out the progress toward satisfaction of all Standards must be submitted to APAC prior to 28 February and 31 August in the year immediately following Accreditation. Progress reports are mandatory and must detail:
- (i) actions that have been taken towards satisfying those Standards which were not satisfied at the time of assessment for Accreditation; and
 - (ii) how the satisfaction of all other Standards remains met.
- (e) Failure to inform APAC of any changes may adversely affect the future accreditation status of a course or an AOU or result in the AOU or one or more of its courses being determined as Accreditation Withdrawn.

SECTION 6 NEW COURSE DEVELOPMENT

6.1 Pre-accreditation course development

- (a) APAC views the provision of assistance to Institutions for the development of courses in psychology as an important role, which it undertakes in a cooperative manner. The involvement of APAC at the development stage can greatly assist with the accreditation process.
- (b) Any information or advice provided by a team appointed by APAC to participate in a course development process should be regarded as opinion only and will be provided in good faith. The provision of such information or advice does not automatically guarantee that a course in psychology will be accredited in an assessment for accreditation and it remains the responsibility of an AOU to demonstrate how its courses meet the Standards.

6.2 Requests for assistance in course development

- (a) Requests for course development advice should be directed in the first instance to the APAC secretariat which will appoint appropriate consultants to participate in the course development process.
- (b) All Institutions planning new schools of psychology or courses in psychology may request development assistance from APAC. APAC provides assistance for the development of courses:
 - (i) in an Institution that is not currently accredited and so does not offer accredited courses; and
 - (ii) for the development of any new courses in psychology in an accredited AOU.

6.3 Costs of course development assistance

Any costs involved are borne by the Institution directly.

SECTION 7 MONITORING COMPLIANCE

7.1 Annual reporting

- (a) Each Institution with an accredited AOU and accredited courses in psychology must submit the APAC Annual Update Form prior to 28 February each year.
- (b) Failure to submit the Annual Update Form prior to 28 February may result in a determination of Conditional Accreditation for the AOU and all of its courses.
- (c) Where an Institution is scheduled for a full assessment of the AOU and all of its courses that year, the requirement to submit the Annual Update Form will be waived.

7.2 Auditing compliance with the Accreditation Standards

- (a) APAC may audit an Institution at any time during the Accreditation Period.
- (b) APAC will provide Institutions with twenty-one (21) days written notice of an audit.
- (c) Institutions agree to provide APAC with full access to all staff, materials and facilities provided by the Institution for the purpose of APAC conducting an audit, as required and to facilitate access to students, as required.
- (d) APAC will determine the extent of its audit of an Institution. An audit process may include any one or more of the following:
 - (i) A request for confirmation of information provided in the immediately preceding accreditation assessment participated in by the Institution;
 - (ii) A request for copies of current course documentation for review;

- (iii) A request for interview with any one or more members of staff, students, or other stakeholders who might reasonably be expected to contribute information useful to the conduct of the audit; and
- (iv) A site visit to any one or more campuses of an Institution, as well as other locations where practica are conducted.

7.3 Complaints

- (a) APAC may investigate any complaints about an Institution received by it in regard to the standards of teaching, assessment or resources in psychology, or any other matter referred to in the Standards.
- (b) If the Institution complained about has not previously been accredited by APAC, APAC must inform the complainant that it has no power to investigate the complaint. Where APAC encounters evidence suggestive of a breach of the law or conduct which is unethical, APAC will take steps to draw the matter to the attention of the relevant authorities.

7.4 Costs of an audit

If a site visit is conducted as part of an audit process, the Institution being audited shall be liable for the cost of all travel, accommodation, meals and taxi fares of the audit Assessment Team and an itemised invoice for any such costs incurred will be forwarded to the Institution within six (6) weeks of the end of the audit site visit. That invoice will be payable by the Institution within thirty (30) days.

SECTION 8 APPEALS

8.1 General

In this Section, the Applicant or Institution which lodges an appeal is referred to as the Appellant.

8.2 Entitlement to Appeal

- (a) An Applicant may appeal a determination of Accreditation Failed or a determination of Accreditation Withdrawn.
- (b) A person or entity other than the Applicant or the relevant Institution cannot appeal a determination of APAC.
- (c) A determination of Conditional Accreditation cannot be appealed. Any Applicant dissatisfied with a determination of Conditional Accreditation may submit proof of satisfaction of the matters to be addressed at any time after the date of the determination of Conditional Accreditation (and before expiry of the Conditional period), for the purpose of gaining Full Accreditation.
- (d) A determination by the APS not to grant APS College Course Approval must be appealed through the Society and cannot be appealed through APAC.

8.3 Lodging a notice of appeal

- (a) An Appellant may appeal a determination of Accreditation Failed or Accreditation Withdrawn in respect of the AOU or any of its courses, provided that a notice of appeal:
 - (i) is made in writing addressed to the Chair of APAC;
 - (ii) is received by the APAC secretariat no later than thirty (30) days from the date of the determination of Accreditation Failed or Accreditation Withdrawn;
 - (iii) briefly sets out the areas of determination with which the Appellant takes issue; and
 - (iv) states whether or not the Appellant requires a site visit to be conducted as part of the appeal process.

- (b) A notice of appeal received by APAC more than thirty (30) days after the date of the determination of Accreditation Failed or Accreditation Withdrawn is invalid and will not be considered.
- (c) A notice of appeal is not required to be in any specific format, provided that it is in writing and contains the information set out in subparagraph (a).

8.4 Appointment of an Appeals Committee

- (a) Upon receipt of a notice of appeal, APAC will form an Appeals Committee made up of not less than four (4) people with prior experience in the accreditation assessment process.
- (b) The following persons will not be members of the Appeals Committee:
 - (i) members of the Assessment Team which assessed the Appellant's application for accreditation Approval;
 - (ii) members of PDAC at the time the Appellant was assessed for accreditation; and
 - (iii) members of the Board at the time Appellant was assessed for accreditation.
- (c) The Appeals Committee may appoint a chairperson from amongst their number.

8.5 Conduct of appeals process

- (a) The Appeals Committee will determine its own processes and procedures for conduct of the appeals process.
- (b) The Appeals Committee may inform itself in any way it sees fit, including but not limited to considering any one or more of the following:
 - (i) the original Application Form;
 - (ii) the report of the Assessment Team;
 - (iii) the determination of the APAC Board;
 - (iv) any further information supplied by the Appellant about the AOU and its courses during any site visit conducted by the Appeals Committee (where relevant); and
 - (v) any and all further information provided by the Appellant during the appeals process.
- (c) In conducting the appeal, the Appeals Committee must determine whether or not the Appellant's AOU and/or courses in psychology meet the Standards.

8.6 Site visits in the appeal process

- (a) If the notice of appeal states that the Appellant requires a site visit, the Appeals Committee will appoint a time for a site visit.
- (b) If the notice of appeal sets out issues of concern about findings made in respect of the resources of an AOU, the Appeals Committee may, at its discretion, determine that a site visit is appropriate and appoint a time for a site visit.
- (c) If the Appeals Committee appoints a time for a site visit, the Appellant shall do all things reasonably necessary to accommodate the site visit at that time. The time for a site visit will only be changed in exceptional circumstances.
- (d) The Appeals Committee will notify the Appellant of the time for the site visit no less than fourteen (14) days prior to the date the site visit is to commence.
- (e) When notifying the Appellant of a site visit by the Appeals Committee, the Appeals Committee will specify any matters it wishes to address during the visit, which may include:
 - (i) people to be interviewed;
 - (ii) resources to be reviewed;
 - (iii) assessments to be reviewed; and
 - (iv) any other relevant matter.

- (f) The Appellant will have the opportunity during the site visit to present any material relevant to the Standards that it wishes to present in support of its appeal.

8.7 Decision of the Appeals Committee

- (a) The decision of the Appeals Committee is final and no further correspondence will be entered into.
- (b) A copy of the decision of the Appeals Committee will be provided in writing to the Appellant within fourteen (14) days of the date of the decision.
- (c) An Applicant unsuccessful upon appeal may make a new application for assessment for accreditation at any time.

8.8 Costs of the appeal process

- (a) There is no fee for lodging a notice of appeal of a determination of Accreditation Failed or a determination of Accreditation Withdrawn.
- (b) If a site visit is conducted as part of the appeal process, the Appellant shall be liable for the cost of all travel, accommodation, meals and taxi fares of the Appeals Committee and an itemised invoice for any such costs incurred will be forwarded to the Applicant within six (6) weeks of the end of the site visit. That invoice will be payable by the Appellant within thirty (30) days.

8.9 Timetable of the appeals process

- (a) The appeals process should be completed in a timely manner.
- (b) APAC will endeavour to ensure that the appeal process is completed within six (6) months of the date of a determination of Accreditation Failed or a determination of Accreditation Withdrawn.
- (c) For an appeals process that runs over the December – January holiday period, the dates between 21 December and 9 January shall not be included in any calculation of time.
- (d) The following table sets out an example of the anticipated timetable of the appeals process:

zero	Determination of Accreditation Failed
+ 30 days	Lodgement of notice of appeal
+ 45 days	Appointment of Appeals Committee
+ 60 days	Notification of site visit (if any)
+ 75 – 90 days	Site visit conducted
+ 60 – 90 days	Decision of Appeals Committee
+ 90 – 104 days	Notification to Appellant of decision of Appeals Committee

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

Table of Contents

APAC's Purpose	2
Accreditation as a Quality Assurance Mechanism.....	2
Assessment Teams	3
APAC Secretariat.....	3
APAC's Assessment Principles	4
Appointment and Training of Assessors	4
Potential Conflicts of Interest and Confidentiality Provisions	4
Timeliness.....	5
<u>SECTION 1</u> <u>DEFINITIONS</u>	31
<u>SECTION 2</u> <u>GENERAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS</u>	33
2.1 The Psychology AOU.....	33
2.2 Multi-Campus Institutions	33
2.3 Degree Nomenclature.....	34
2.4 Academic Staffing.....	35
2.5 Resources.....	37
2.6 Teaching Materials and Methods: Managing the Learning Process	39
<u>SECTION 3</u> <u>UNDERGRADUATE 3-YEAR SEQUENCE COURSES</u>	40
3.1 Three year courses.....	40
<u>SECTION 4</u> <u>UNDERGRADUATE 4TH YEAR AND FOUR YEAR COURSES</u>	43
4.1 Fourth year courses.....	43
4.2 Four year courses.....	46
4.3 Four year integrated bridging courses	46
<u>SECTION 5</u> <u>POSTGRADUATE PROFESSIONAL COURSES</u>	46
5.2 Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology (5 th year)	54
5.3 Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Courses of Professional Education	56
5.4 Professional Doctorates.....	60
5.5 Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Psychology (Area of Specialisation) (GCP)	62
<u>SECTION 6</u> <u>HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH (HDR) PROGRAMS</u>	63
<u>SECTION 7</u> <u>APPENDICES</u>	64
Appendix 1 - Example of site visit agenda	64
Appendix 2 - References	66

ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

SECTION 1 DEFINITIONS

Academic Organisational Unit (AOU) means a department or school, or other separately identifiable academic organisational unit of an Institution providing tertiary education and responsible for the psychology programs therein.

Academic staff means all teaching staff in a course/s of psychology and includes continuing, contract and casual teaching staff.

Accreditation Period means the period of time for which an AOU or course in psychology is accredited by APAC as meeting all the *Accreditation Standards*. The Accreditation Period is usually five (5) years commencing on 1 January of the year following the accreditation process and ending on 31 December four years later.

Accreditation Withdrawn means the removal or revoking of the status of Full Accreditation or Conditional Accreditation from an AOU or any of its courses.

APA format means the rules for the publication of manuscripts described in the current Edition of the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (APA).

APAC means the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council Limited.

APAC website means the web pages accessed through <http://www.apac.psychology.org.au/>.

Applicant means the Institution making an application for assessment for accreditation of an AOU and/or its course/s in psychology.

Application Form means the appropriate application form published by APAC from time to time.

APS means The Australian Psychological Society Limited.

APS College means the constituent units within the Australian Psychological Society that are concerned with specialist areas of practice in psychology.

APS College (Course) Approval means professional course approval, given by the APS, to those professional courses that meet the APS College Course Approval Guidelines for the respective College/s.

APS College Course Approval Guidelines means the guidelines developed by each APS College Course Approval Committee for the specification of education and training requirements for membership of the College.

Assessment Team means the person or people appointed by APAC in accordance with clause 2.11 of these Rules to assess the Applicant's AOU and courses for accreditation.

Board means the Board of Directors of APAC.

Conditional Accreditation means that the accreditation of an AOU or one or more of its courses has conditions attached, such conditions relating specifically to the AOU itself or to one or more of its courses.

Constitution means the Constitution of APAC.

Core topics means content areas that all students must take in the course of studying for their degree. Core topics are taught in core units which are the compulsory parts of a course.

Course means a series of Units or other program of study, formally approved by an Institution, the successful completion of which results in the award of a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate as defined in Schedule 1 of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

CPRB means the Council of Psychologists Registration Boards (Australasia) Incorporated Limited, a representative body of Registration Boards from Australia and New Zealand.

Dual Approval means course approval given by two APS Colleges to a specific professional course that meets the APS College Approval Guidelines for each of those Colleges.

Electives means units or subjects which are optional and while students are not required to take any specific elective, they may be required to take a certain number of electives chosen from a greater number in order to complete their course.

Extended Period has the meaning set out in clause 2.14 of the Rules.

Full Accreditation means that an AOU or a course has been assessed as satisfying all Accreditation Standards.

Head means Head of the psychology AOU.

Institution means a University, Australian company, other incorporated body, unincorporated body or Institution established in Australia and registered with and accredited by the relevant state or territory government or federal authorities, offering a course of tertiary study leading to a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate and as defined in the Higher Education Support Act 2003, and including overseas Institutions.

Offshore means not physically located in Australian territory.

Overseas Institution means a tertiary academic Institution recognised by one or more of 'The World of Learning' published by Europa Publications Ltd, the Australian Education International's 'Country Education Profile', or Local Regional Accreditation bodies, offering a course of study leading to a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate equivalent to those defined in the Authority for Learning outcomes of the Australian Qualifications Framework 2002.

PDAC means the Program Development and Accreditation Committee of the Australian Psychological Society Limited. This Committee provides, on contract to APAC, certain expert accreditation assessment and course development advice and services, making accreditation recommendations to the Board of Directors of APAC and recommendations regarding College course approval of specialist postgraduate courses to the Board of Directors of the APS.

Registration Board(s) means any applicable psychologist registration board established pursuant to legislation for the purpose of registering psychologists.

Principal supervisor means the identified main supervisor who is responsible for the work of a student and the majority of his/her supervision.

Program means all of the requirements, formally approved by the Institution, the successful completion of which results in the award of a degree, diploma, advanced diploma or certificate.

Rules means these rules for accreditation of psychology AOU's and courses as prescribed by APAC and amended from time to time.

Sequence means a recognised set of units of study in psychology and the rules governing their completion including the order in which they must be undertaken.

Site Visit Agenda means the schedule of activities during the site visit as approved by the APAC Secretariat for the purposes of accreditation assessment.

Society means The Australian Psychological Society Limited.

Standards means these standards for accreditation of psychology AOU's and courses as prescribed by APAC and amended from time to time.

Unit means a separate and identifiable component of an undergraduate or postgraduate course, usually with its own assessment components and with a member of the Academic staff responsible for coordination, as defined in Schedule 1 of the Higher Education Support Act 2003.

Year in the context of course descriptions, for example "a four year course" means full time study and is taken to involve two semesters or three terms/trimesters of work. Thus a four year course will involve eight semesters of full-time study. In addition, when reference is made to a specific year level, for example third year, this should be read as the third full-time year of study in the course.

SECTION 2 GENERAL ACCREDITATION STANDARDS

2.1 The Psychology AOU

- 2.1.1 The Psychology AOU must be an identifiable core of psychologists with a recognised Head.
- 2.1.2 The Psychology AOU must feature the term 'Psychology' in its title (eg, School of Psychology, School of Psychological Science, Department of Psychology).
- 2.1.3 The Psychology AOU must demonstrate it possesses a milieu of research and scholarship in which staff are actively involved in conducting and publishing their research work and where their research informs teaching.
- 2.1.4 A Psychology AOU must demonstrate that it has
- (i) the necessary and appropriate level of staffing and other resources and facilities; and
 - (ii) sufficient academic, financial and administrative control
- to ensure provision of a high standard of education and training in psychology in all courses for which it is seeking or has obtained accreditation.
- 2.1.5 The Head of the Psychology AOU must be a senior, experienced and recognised academic who has postgraduate qualifications in psychology and publications in peer-reviewed scientific journals, who has attained appointment as an academic at level C or higher, or an equivalent rank.
- 2.1.6 To obtain Full Accreditation, the AOU must have a Full-Time Level E appointment in the discipline of psychology (APAC provides a set of benchmarking criteria for a Level E academic position on its website).
- 2.1.7 The staff of an AOU must at all times comply with all applicable codes of ethical conduct, including any staff code of conduct which the Institution has in place.
- 2.1.8 Grades of assessment employed in courses offered by the AOU should conform to the guidelines set down in the *Australian Vice-Chancellors' Committee Grades for Undergraduate and Postgraduate Coursework Degree Subjects 2002* available from Universities Australia.
- 2.1.9 No student may progress within the sequence of accredited psychology units if that student receives any grade of less than 50% for a required psychology unit, without first repeating the unit and achieving the minimum grade of 50%. Grading systems in which any student's grade is dependent on the calculation of a median, aggregation or averaging of the marks of multiple students must not be employed.
- 2.1.10 The AOU must demonstrate that it has in place a documented process of regular quality review which focuses on the teaching and training in its psychology courses, as well as considering the qualifications and ongoing education of the staff who teach into them.

2.2 Multi-Campus Institutions

- 2.2.1 Where an Institution offers psychology courses across different campuses it must be able to clearly demonstrate that:
- (i) there are appropriate staffing and resource levels on each campus;
 - (ii) students on each campus have equivalent levels of access to units, courses and facilities;
 - (iii) students on each campus receive an equivalent standard of teaching and course experience;
 - (iv) students on each campus are required to meet equivalent standards of academic performance and have equivalent assessment requirements.

- 2.2.2 The geographical locations of campuses relative to each other may be sufficiently close to function effectively as one in so far as students have direct access to units, courses and all resources on both, without any special arrangements being put in place.

2.3 Degree Nomenclature

APAC will give consideration to the nomenclature for degrees which are awarded following successful completion of sequences of study in psychology offered by the AOU. APAC is of the firm view there should be consistency in the naming of degrees and that nomenclature must convey the level of a degree completed as well as giving an appropriate indication of the content. Course titles must be consistent with the current version of the *Australian Qualifications Framework*.

- 2.3.1 Three year undergraduate courses of study should lead to a generic degree in psychology. Acceptable titles are; *Bachelor of Science*; *Bachelor of Social Science*, *Bachelor of Psychological Science* and *Bachelor of Arts*. The degree title should not make reference to specialisation or application in psychology. Unacceptable titles include *Bachelor of Applied Psychology* and *Bachelor of Educational Psychology*. It is however possible to embed the accredited 3-year sequence of psychology units within other degrees that do not include psychology in the title.
- 2.3.2 Three year undergraduate courses available to existing graduates with a conferred bachelors (or higher level) degree (in any discipline) and which provide a psychology major Sequence should be termed *Graduate Diploma in Psychological Science* or some similar title, but without any reference to areas of specialisation or application.
- 2.3.3 The nomenclature Bachelor of Psychology is to be reserved for integrated four year sequences.
- 2.3.4 Four year undergraduate courses of study should result in a degree in which the only discipline name appearing in the degree title is 'Psychology' and there must be no reference to a specialisation or application. Acceptable titles include Bachelor of Science with Honours in Psychology, Bachelor of Arts with Honours (Psychology) and Bachelor of Psychology (Hons). Unacceptable titles include Bachelor of Science with Honours (Geography), Bachelor of Disability Studies, and Bachelor of Applied Psychology (Honours).
- 2.3.5 Four year integrated undergraduate bridging programs which combine the three year undergraduate major sequence in psychology available to graduates possessing a conferred bachelors (or higher) level degree (ie Graduate Diploma in Psychology) with a fourth year course (as outlined in these Standards) must bear a generic Masters degree title appropriate to the AOU's faculty, such as *Master of Arts* or *Master of Science* and must not use the name *Master of Psychology*, which is to be reserved for professional 5th and 6th year programs. Examples of unacceptable titles are Master of Psychological Studies or Master of Educational Psychology (Pass).
- 2.3.6 Bachelor degrees must require at least three years of full-time study or equivalent. Bachelor degrees with Honours must require at least at least four years of full-time study or equivalent.
- 2.3.7 Fourth year courses should exist only for the purpose of allowing students who have completed an existing accredited three year course, within the last 10 years, and who have had their degree conferred, to complete the fourth year. These courses must be equivalent to Honours standard. Fourth year courses in psychology should lead to an Honours degree or a Graduate Diploma in Psychology so they are distinguishable from the Graduate Diploma in Psychological Science (or similar title) referred to in 2.3.2. This title will make clear reference to the discipline and avoid reference to areas of specialisation or application within the discipline. Unacceptable titles are Graduate Diploma in Education, Graduate Diploma in Applied Psychology and Graduate Diploma in Organisational Psychology. Where an AOU has adopted the title Postgraduate Diploma in Psychology it may retain the use of that title if preferred, but must also avoid reference in the title to areas of specialisation or application within the discipline.
- 2.3.8 Postgraduate fifth year coursework courses intended to prepare candidates for the 5+1 pathway to registration must be no less than one calendar year of full-time study or equivalent and should lead to a Graduate Diploma or Postgraduate Diploma. The diploma

title should include the term 'Psychology' but must not reflect any area of specialisation or application, either as part of the main diploma title or following the main title.

- 2.3.9 Postgraduate fifth and sixth year coursework courses must be no less than two calendar years of full-time study or equivalent and should lead to a Masters degree. Where the course can be undertaken in an accelerated mode, the minimum length of the course must be no less than 18 months in duration. The degree title should include the term 'Psychology' and, where relevant, reflect an area of specialisation or application, either as part of the main degree title or following the main title. Examples of acceptable degree titles are Master of Psychology (Clinical), Master of Educational Psychology and Master of Psychology (Organisational). Examples of unacceptable titles are Master of Arts and Master of Science (Psychology).
- 2.3.10 Postgraduate coursework courses (fifth and sixth years only) may also be offered as generalist courses, in which case no specialisation or application is implied. The accreditation requirements in Section 5 of the Standards will apply and it should be noted that the APS has no parallel APS College approval process. A suitable degree title would be *Master of Psychology*.
- 2.3.11 Postgraduate doctoral level courses which include all the components of the postgraduate coursework requirements for an accredited Masters course within that AOU should include clear reference to the area of specialisation or application in the degree title. In addition these doctoral courses can only be referred to as PhDs if they include a course of research leading to a thesis equivalent in status to other PhDs by research. For this reason it would be expected that such degrees would be the equivalent of no less than four years of full-time study. Acceptable titles for these degrees include PhD (Clinical Psychology) and PhD (Educational Psychology).
- 2.3.12 DPsych or PsyD courses must have a thesis or dissertation requirement which is of the highest quality and which reflects the fact that the degree is at the doctoral level. Further, these degrees are required to include a research component which involves at least the equivalent of one year full-time spent on the thesis component of the course. These degrees must be equivalent of no less than three years of full-time study and must give an indication of the area of specialisation or application. Examples of acceptable titles are DPsych (Clinical), PsyD (Organisational) and DPsych (Clinical and Clinical Neuropsychology). Examples of unacceptable titles for such courses are PhD and PhD (Psychology).
- 2.3.13 Postgraduate bridging programs (see Standard 5.5) should lead to a Graduate Certificate or Graduate Diploma. The diploma title should include the term 'Psychology' and reflect an area of specialisation or application, either as part of the main degree title or following the main title.

Note: APAC advises that in order to reduce the potential for confusion, Institutions should take care to avoid a situation in which degrees for which accreditation is sought bear the same name as other degrees offered by the Institution which contain an unaccredited psychology major. APAC advises that in situations where doubt may arise, the Institution should identify on student transcripts where an APAC accredited sequence has been completed.

2.4 Academic Staffing

This section provides general information about academic staffing in an AOU. These accreditation standards provide details of the requirements that are stated by APAC in order to ensure that an education in psychology is offered at a standard which merits accreditation. AOU's should note that meeting the staffing requirements does not necessarily mean that APAC will deem the level of staffing to be acceptable for the profile of a particular AOU. The staffing profile of an AOU comprises the number of staff, the spread of appointments (Level A through Level E), their qualifications and experience (including qualifications at a level which would confer eligibility for membership of the APS and for registration), and whether they are tenured or on fixed-term appointments.

The actual staffing requirements will depend on the number and range of courses offered, the student:academic staff ratio, and the areas of expertise of the staff, which should provide adequate coverage of all areas in which courses are offered.

The requirements will also take account of the teaching commitments of staff, and in AOU's which teach three trimesters in one year (that is, which offer courses during a summer and/or winter semester in addition to the other two semesters), it is expected that staffing levels will be higher to ensure that the staff have sufficient time for ongoing professional development, research, and for course development. These issues should be borne in mind when making a submission for accreditation. In the case of multi-campus Institutions, these accreditation standards apply to each campus which has an AOU offering an undergraduate course and/or postgraduate coursework and research degrees.

- 2.4.1 An AOU proposing to offer undergraduate and professional postgraduate courses in psychology will only be considered for accreditation if there are 10 or more full-time (or full-time equivalent) psychology academic staff members in that AOU. At least eight of the staff must hold full-time appointments, be based full-time on the campus at which the Head and the administration of the AOU resides, and must possess qualifications which meet the eligibility requirements for full membership of the APS. (Note: this requirement should not be read as stating that all academic members of staff in the AOU should be full members or eligible for full membership of the APS. It is recognised that academic staff with training in areas related to psychology can make a significant contribution to courses in psychology. Although that contribution will be recognised and taken into account, such staff will not count towards the requirement of 10 members of full-time staff, or equivalent, who meet the eligibility requirements). If the Head is not located at the campus where the main administration of the AOU is located, the AOU must be able to demonstrate convincingly that the head has direct responsibility for the running of the AOU as well as effective and close operational oversight of the AOU including its courses.
- 2.4.2 The requirement of 10 full-time equivalent staff is viewed as sufficient only for the AOU to offer one full four year undergraduate sequence, one professional postgraduate course (at least fifth and sixth year) and some postgraduate research supervision. The number of staff in the Psychology AOU should be greater than 10 if more courses are offered.
- 2.4.3 The student:academic staff ratio calculated across all currently accredited courses within the AOU should be similar to other science-based disciplines, must never be greater than 22 to 1, and should also meet the requirements set out in Standards 2.4.4 to 2.4.11, and 5.1.2 to 5.1.3. The required method for calculating a student:academic staff ratio is set out in detail in the APAC student:staff ratio calculation form (available from the APAC website).
- 2.4.4 The staffing profile must include at least one full-time Level E appointment in Psychology (APAC provides a set of benchmarking criteria for a Level E academic position on its website).
- 2.4.5 In an AOU with the 10 full-time equivalent psychology staff there should be at least three appointments at Levels C or D and this number should increase in proportion to the total number of staff so that the ratio of full time equivalent staff to level C and D staff is always 10:3.
- 2.4.6 In an AOU with the 10 full-time equivalent psychology staff with expertise relevant to the teaching of psychology, at least 80% of staff should have PhDs, established or promising research records with demonstrated research activity in the forms of grants, conference presentations, and publications in peer-reviewed international journals, and should be involved in the teaching of undergraduate psychology.
- 2.4.7 The psychology academic staff must have demonstrated teaching and research supervision experience. Whereas it would be expected that most would have demonstrated ability in teaching at both undergraduate and postgraduate levels, including the supervision of honours and postgraduate research, each staff member should have a demonstrated ability at least at one of these levels. An AOU should be able to demonstrate systematic monitoring of teaching quality such as participation in regular formal teaching/unit evaluation and a staff performance management scheme.

- 2.4.8 For each professional postgraduate program there should be at least three staff who hold a doctoral degree in a relevant area of psychology and no less than half of the total staff EFT teaching into the program must have qualifications which make them eligible for full membership of the relevant APS College. Of these at least two staff members must be full-time appointments within the Institution and all should make a substantial contribution to the relevant program. Each program should be supported by appropriate Level D/E involvement with sufficient time available and relevant professional expertise to provide academic leadership for the program. A program must be directed by a full time staff member appointed at least at Level C, who has qualifications which clearly make her/him eligible for membership of the relevant APS College and also suitably qualified and experienced to run a professional postgraduate program. In deciding on the suitability of the Level D/E leadership for the program, account will be taken of the number of professional postgraduate programs offered within the AOU relative to the number of Level D/E appointments. It would be expected that a Level D/E would have responsibility for no more than two cognate programs, and that other Level D/E staff would be available where more than two programs are offered. The onus is on the Psychology AOU to demonstrate that it has appropriate academic and administrative responsibility for the delivery of the program. These requirements need to be met even in dual professional courses.
- 2.4.9 The areas of expertise of the psychology academic staff must be sufficient to cover the core subjects and some specialist options in the three and four year courses (see Sections 3.1.6 to 3.1.10 and 4.1.4 to 4.1.7 of the Standards). The expertise should also cover most of the areas taught in any postgraduate coursework course(s) offered by the AOU, recognising that the AOU may employ, on a part-time or casual basis, individuals with particular expertise to teach in some specialist areas in postgraduate courses. Professional postgraduate courses should only be offered if the resources and staffing dedicated to them do not impact negatively on the capacity of the AOU to teach the core topics in the three and four year undergraduate courses.
- 2.4.10 Multiple professional postgraduate courses will be examined carefully with respect to the adequacy of their staffing and the impact that this staffing has on the capacity of the AOU to support the undergraduate curriculum adequately. Each AOU and its programs is assessed on individual basis, taking into account all of the factors relevant to the particular AOU and courses in question. To meet accreditation Standards, the AOU may be instructed by APAC that it needs to reduce the number of professional courses offered before it could a grade of accreditation.
- 2.4.11 In a multi-campus Institution where on one of the campuses only the three or four year undergraduate sequence is taught, there must be at least eight full-time (or full-time equivalent) psychology academic staff based on that campus or courses should be supplemented through distance education methods, consistent with the Standards in Section 2.6). At least one of the appointments must be at Level E or D and a further two at least at Level C. At least fifty percent of these staff should hold research higher degrees and should have established research records with demonstrated research activity in the forms of grants, conference presentations, and publications in refereed journals. All staff should also have demonstrated teaching experience at the undergraduate level, including the supervision of Honours research. The areas of expertise of these psychology academic staff should be sufficient to cover the core subjects and some specialist options in the three and four year undergraduate program (see Sections 3.1.6 to 3.1.10, 4.1.4 to 4.1.7, of the Standards).

2.5 Resources

The resources available in the AOU will be given careful consideration by APAC. The required resources include secretarial, administrative and technical support as well as adequately equipped teaching and research facilities, fully networked computing facilities, test library materials, and general library resources. The following accreditation standards provide more information about these resources. When interpreting the accreditation standards it is important that applicants recognise that the amount and extent of resources required will depend on the number of courses offered and the number of students enrolled in these courses. It is important that AOU provide adequate resources and facilities for students with disabilities to undertake study within the AOU.

- 2.5.1 The Psychology AOU must demonstrate access to adequate secretarial, administrative, technical and computing resources to support its research and teaching activities, including mixed mode and distance teaching. These may be dedicated or shared within a School or Faculty or other appropriate organisational unit.
- 2.5.2 The Psychology AOU must have access to lecture theatres, tutorial rooms and computer facilities that meet all of its teaching requirements. Specifically:
- Lecture rooms must be equipped with appropriate audiovisual facilities.
 - Some rooms used for professional skills training must have video recording facilities.
 - Units taught by distance or in mixed mode must be supported by an online learning management system.
- 2.5.3 The Psychology AOU must have assured access to adequate and guaranteed laboratory space, including at least one undergraduate laboratory with computer facilities for undergraduate classes.
- 2.5.4 The Psychology AOU must have assured access to adequate and guaranteed laboratory facilities sufficient to meet the needs of the research programs of the academic staff and of the students completing courses with research components.
- 2.5.5 Laboratories must be equipped with standard psychological apparatus, and/or computers, required for demonstrating and running a range of experiments and other exercises which form part of modern, up-to-date psychology curricula.
- 2.5.6 Students must have adequate access to computers beyond those required in formal laboratory sessions to support their research and teaching needs.
- 2.5.7 The Psychology AOU must provide access for staff and students to a range of software including packages for statistical analysis, spreadsheets, data presentation and word processing.
- 2.5.8 The Psychology AOU must have access to a computer network which has full electronic mail facilities and is linked to the Internet and on-line databases.
- 2.5.9 The Psychology AOU must have a test library which has up-to-date copies of the most frequently used psychological tests including copies of tests required to support postgraduate teaching programs and research programs in specialist areas. Sufficient copies of tests and associated materials (e.g., response booklets) should be held to meet teaching and research needs. The AOU(s) making use of the facilities should be able to demonstrate that a portion of the budget commensurate with the size of the AOU(s) is allocated to the purchase of tests and associated materials. In the case of multi-campus Institutions, there should be a test library with adequate holdings on each campus at which psychology courses are taught or an effective and satisfactory means of ensuring rapid and secure test/document delivery between campuses.
- 2.5.10 A member of the psychology academic staff who is at Level B or higher should have responsibility for the test library and the AOU should be able to demonstrate that procedures are in place to restrict access to psychological test materials to qualified psychologists and students enrolled in assessment and testing units who are under the supervision of a suitably qualified staff member and who require access as part of the syllabus for the unit in which they are enrolled.
- 2.5.11 The Institutional library or libraries must provide ready access to a comprehensive and up-to-date range of psychology texts, monographs, journals and databases. Where postgraduate courses are offered, there should be sufficient specialist monograph and journal holdings to support each course. The library should also provide substantial and widespread access to appropriate and commonly used Psychology electronic data bases and provide regular training to staff and students in their use. The AOU should be able to demonstrate that funding commensurate with the number of psychology courses offered and the number of students enrolled is allocated to the purchase of library materials for psychology.
- 2.5.12 In the case of multi-campus Institutions, the onus is on the AOU to demonstrate that there is guaranteed equity of access to these holdings for all students irrespective of the

campus at which they are based. APAC will give consideration both to the holdings on each campus and to the total holdings with respect to the number of courses offered and the arrangements in place to meet requests for library materials sent from another campus.

2.6 Teaching Materials and Methods: Managing the Learning Process

The minimum required content for psychology courses is set out in the sections of these Standards relevant to the level of the course (see Standards 3.1.6 to 3.1.10, 4.1.4 to 4.1.7 and 5.1.12). APAC recognises that there are diverse ways in which the material can be taught, including face-to-face teaching, distance education, and mixed modes. In evaluating an application for accreditation of a course, the following Standards will be applied:

- 2.6.1 Distance education and the use of online learning management systems must not be considered cheaper ways of teaching and they must be resourced at the same level as face-to-face teaching.
- 2.6.2 For each unit, students must be provided with a unit outline specifying the content of the unit, the nature of the assessments, details of textbooks and readings and any other relevant information.
- 2.6.3 Unit material should be regularly updated to ensure the information reflects the current knowledge in the area.
- 2.6.4 Where a unit is delivered in more than one mode, the content, objectives, and methods of assessment should be the same for all modes of delivery.
- 2.6.5 In undergraduate courses, there must be laboratory training offered. The laboratory training offered to off-campus students must be equivalent in content, duration and quality and outcome to that undertaken by on-campus students.
- 2.6.6 Undergraduate research units should have residential schools if they are offered to off-campus students (departure from this approach must be carefully justified with regard to the quality and equivalence of the learning experience and outcomes).
- 2.6.7 Where there is some practical skills training in undergraduate courses, opportunities must also be available for off-campus students to complete these components.
- 2.6.8 All students should have some means of regularly gaining timely access to staff so that questions can be answered and difficulties resolved.
- 2.6.9 At the fourth, fifth and sixth year level, each unit must offer a residential school for off-campus students.
- 2.6.10 All units should provide the opportunity for formative assessment aimed primarily at facilitating learning as distinct from contributing to the final assessment e.g., electronic quizzes, comments on essays and peer assessment, and marked according to the same criteria and standards as those applying to on-campus assessments.
- 2.6.11 Assessments which count for the final grade must be the same for all modes of delivery of the unit.
- 2.6.12 Assignments and other forms of assessed work should be marked and returned in a timely manner.
- 2.6.13 Student evaluations of coursework units should be obtained and academic staff should use other additional methods to assess the adequacy of the student learning experience. These might include peer evaluations and external assessors.
- 2.6.14 Where units are offered in different modes, periodic comparisons between the performance of students in the different modes must be made to ensure the standard of the offerings is comparable.

Special Arrangements for Offshore Teaching

- 2.6.15 In addition to the conditions set out above, the following features are considered particularly important and must be clearly present in offshore delivery of courses:

- (a) the appointment of suitably qualified local tutors to assist with educational advice and support (i.e., eligible for Associate Membership of the APS)
- (b) local administrative assistance
- (c) direct access to staff members (i.e., not just through any agents)
- (d) where the home Institution does not intend to offer residential schools in the other country, written agreement be undertaken with the students that they can attend residential schools in Australia
- (e) access to adequate library, test library and laboratory facilities in the other country, supplemented by the provision of and arrangements with local universities for library, test library and laboratory access to the same standard as that provided to students at the Australian AOU. This includes adequate electronic access to the home Institution's library resources.
- (f) provision of local computer support
- (g) evidence of on-going scrutiny of students' academic progress to ensure they are meeting the same standards as those required of Australian students.

Note: A site visit to an Offshore location is deemed essential to the accreditation assessment process.

SECTION 3 UNDERGRADUATE 3-YEAR SEQUENCE COURSES

This section provides accreditation standards for undergraduate 3-year sequence courses in psychology.

APAC only recognises for accreditation, courses designed to provide an education in psychology. It does not recognise courses designed to provide education in another discipline or profession, even if these have a substantial psychological content.

It is necessary that students complete an integrated and planned four year sequence in psychology to ensure that systematic coverage of the discipline is achieved. This may be accomplished either as a combination of a three year sequence plus a fourth year, or as an integrated four year sequence within a single AOU. The following sections (3.1 and 4.1 of the Standards) describe the Standards where this four year sequence is undertaken in two separate components.

3.1 Three year courses

These standards apply to all three year courses in psychology which lead to a Bachelors degree or Graduate Diploma in Psychological Science (or similar), and to three year sequences which are integrated into four year Honours or Pass degree courses. It is important to note that three year sequences are expected to form adequate foundational preparation upon which later study at the advanced level is built (see Standards Section 4.1).

The main objective of the three year course or sequence is to provide students with a thorough education in the scientific discipline of psychology, while also providing students with some material of an introductory nature regarding the application of the discipline. Taking account of the nature of the discipline and its applications as well as developments in psychology and allied disciplines, a three year course in psychology should cover the core areas of the discipline including the main theoretical positions; recognise the scientific bases of the discipline; and provide education in the range of methods and analyses that form an integral part of the scientific approach adopted by the discipline as outlined in Standard 3.1.7. The course will also include laboratory work in which the students are expected to participate, and the APS *Code of Ethics* and the complementary *Ethical Guidelines* must be covered.

Length

- 3.1.1 The length of the course should be three years of full-time study, or the equivalent.

Course Structure

- 3.1.2 The first year of the course must include a minimum of 25% psychology.
- 3.1.3 The second year of the course should include a minimum of 50% psychology. In AOUs where structural limitations preclude this, then students must be able to average a minimum of 50% psychology across their second and third years (e.g., 33% in second year, followed by 67% in third year). In these cases, the acceptable minimum at second year is 33%.
- 3.1.4 The third year of the course must include a minimum of 50% psychology and there should be the option for students to enrol in more psychology units.
- 3.1.5 The course must be structured to ensure that the core areas (see Standard 3.1.7) within the discipline are covered by all students, while also offering the opportunity through elective components for students to study some areas in greater depth. It is recognised that the elective components in any AOU are likely to reflect the particular areas of strength and expertise of the AOU.

Course Content

- 3.1.6 The emphasis of the course must be on providing an education in the core discipline of psychology and not in one or more specialist areas of the discipline. Over the three years, students must be continuously introduced to the scientific study of psychology so as to prepare them to enter fourth year equipped to pursue advanced studies in a wide range of topics and to design and conduct quality research in an area of their choice. They must also have developed skills in conducting a range of practical laboratory experiments (including with humans), and acquired appropriate report writing skills which conform to accepted psychological standards.
- 3.1.7 The accredited three-year sequence must provide students with a solid foundation in the core psychology graduate attributes (based on the *Graduate Attributes of the Four-Year Undergraduate Psychology Program*, available from the APAC website) including, but not limited to, each of the following:

Graduate Attribute 1: Core knowledge and understanding

Acquire an understanding of core topics in the discipline, including:

- abnormal psychology
- biological bases of behaviour
- cognition, information processing and language
- individual differences in capacity and behaviour, testing and assessment, and personality
- learning
- lifespan developmental psychology
- motivation and emotion
- perception
- social psychology
- history and philosophy of psychology
- intercultural diversity and indigenous psychology

Graduate Attribute 2: Research methods in psychology

- describe the basic characteristics of the science of psychology
- describe, apply and evaluate the different research methods used by psychologists
- demonstrate practical skills in laboratory-based and other psychological research
- design and conduct basic studies to address psychological questions: frame research questions; undertake literature searches; critically analyse theoretical and empirical studies; formulate testable hypotheses; operationalise variables; choose an appropriate methodology; make valid and reliable measurements; analyse data and interpret results; and write research reports

Graduate Attribute 3: Critical thinking skills

- apply knowledge of the scientific method in thinking about problems related to behaviour and mental processes
- question claims that arise from myth, stereotype, pseudoscience or untested assumptions
- recognise and defend against the major fallacies of human thinking

Graduate Attribute 4: Values, research and professional ethics

- evaluate psychologists' behaviour in psychological research and other professional contexts in relation to the Australian Psychological Society "Code of Ethics" and the complementary "Ethical Guidelines", as well as the Australian "National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce"
- use information in an ethical manner (e.g., acknowledge and respect work and intellectual property rights of others through appropriate citations in oral and written communication)

Graduate Attribute 5: Communication skills

- write a standard research report using American Psychological Association (APA) structure and formatting conventions
- demonstrate effective oral communication skills in various formats (e.g., debate, group discussion, presentation) and for various purposes

Graduate Attribute 6: Learning and the application of psychology

- apply knowledge of legislative frameworks (including privacy, human rights)
- apply knowledge of consumer and carer participation in psychological care
- apply knowledge of psychology, society and the workplace/influencing systems
- describe major areas of applied psychology (e.g., clinical, organizational)
- demonstrate a capacity for independent learning to sustain personal and professional development in the changing world of the science and practice of psychology

- 3.1.8 The AOU must clearly demonstrate that the course provides substantial coverage in the core topics. Some core topics (such as research and professional ethics) may be naturally integrated within other topics, but must be clearly in evidence in the curriculum.
- 3.1.9 The content of the lectures, tutorials and laboratories in the course must be supported by relevant and up-to-date evidence-based scientific reference material. This material should include peer-reviewed empirical articles in the best international scientific journals, preferably at all year levels and certainly at all levels beyond first year.
- 3.1.10 At all three year levels, students must have formal practical work as part of their coursework in psychology, with much, though by no means all, of this practical work taking place in laboratory sessions. It is recommended that consideration be given to the application of the science of psychology to real-world problems and issues. That is, science and application should be integrated wherever possible.

Assessment

- 3.1.11 The assessment of components of the course should involve coursework, submissions by students including essays and laboratory reports, and formal examinations. An AOU must not rely solely on multiple choice assessments in a course. If oral presentations are included as an assessment component of any course, then the basis upon which these are graded should be clear. See also Standard 2.1.9.
- 3.1.12 Assessment must ensure that the breadth and depth of knowledge and skills of the core subjects in the discipline are assessed in accordance with the unit learning outcomes.
- 3.1.13 Students should receive detailed and timely feedback on their assessments.
- 3.1.14 Appropriate procedures must be in place (e.g., Boards of Examiners) to ensure that standards are maintained and that all assessment and awarding of final marks or grades is treated with the utmost care and attention. Regular external independent moderation should be undertaken at intervals to benchmark the assessment practices of the AOU

against other APAC-accredited AOU's. The APAC Secretariat can assist with advice about how to set up a benchmarking exercise.

- 3.1.15 Appropriate procedures which meet modern governance standards must be in place to deal with student appeals.
- 3.1.16 Appropriate procedures must be in place to deal with cases of plagiarism or other instances of unethical conduct.

Awarding of credit or advanced standing

- 3.1.17 Any students transferring from one AOU to another in Australia while completing a three year course or entering an accredited course following the completion of a degree or studies in another course must only be given credit for studies in psychology previously undertaken if the AOU at which they completed these studies is APAC-accredited and the completed units for which advanced standing is to be granted are part of an APAC-accredited sequence. The onus is on the AOU to which the student is transferring to ensure that this is the case. AOU's should be prepared to justify such decisions should APAC conduct an audit of the AOU's transfer credit practices.
- 3.1.18 Studies undertaken at non-Australian Institutions must be carefully evaluated by the AOU to determine their strict equivalence to the studies for which credit is to be granted, and the AOU must be prepared to defend its decisions regarding the granting of credit should APAC conduct an audit of the AOU's transfer credit practices.
- 3.1.19 It is the responsibility of the AOU to which a student is transferring to make sure that all core areas of the discipline are covered by the point of completion of the degree. Because there is some flexibility in the structure of courses, and AOU's may vary in the way in which core subjects are covered, it is not sufficient to assume that completion of a particular year at one Institution, (for example second year), will necessarily provide adequate preparation for what would usually be the next year's work in the sequence at the receiving Institution (in this example, third year). It may be necessary to prescribe an individually tailored course to ensure that such students cover all core subjects. This prescription must enable students to complete the equivalent of an accredited course. Please note that APAC does not accredit individual students' courses of study.

SECTION 4 UNDERGRADUATE 4TH YEAR AND FOUR YEAR COURSES

4.1 Fourth year courses

The main objectives of the fourth year psychology course are to provide for the completion of an integrated and comprehensive education in the discipline of psychology, to permit advanced level study in a range of areas, and to develop competence in conducting research. Fourth year topics must include education in the theoretical and empirical bases underpinning the construction, implementation, and interpretation of some of the more widely used cognitive and personality assessments, and evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention.

These Accreditation Standards apply to fourth year courses in psychology which lead to a degree as specified in Section 2.3.7 of the Standards. It is recognised that, in some AOU's, students may take out a three year degree (e.g., BSc) and then complete the fourth year and take out an Honours degree (e.g., BSc Hons) either at the same or a different Institution.

Entry Requirements

- 4.1.1 The entry requirement for a fourth year course is previous successful completion within the last 10 years, of an accredited three year sequence in psychology or the first three

years of an integrated accredited four year course. The fourth year course is intended only for those who have previously completed an accredited three year sequence and wish to complete the fourth year. The minimum entry standard must be a Credit average in second and third year units, including Credit in the majority of the psychology units.

Length

4.1.2 The length of the course must be one year full-time or the equivalent part time.

Course Structure

4.1.3 The fourth year course should normally be 100% psychology, though it is recognised that in some cases it may be appropriate to have up to a maximum of 20% of the course in a cognate discipline. The onus is on the AOU to demonstrate the relevance of any cognate discipline to the study of psychology at this level. In all cases there should be the option for students to take 100% psychology.

Course Content

4.1.4 The accredited fourth year must provide students with advanced education and training in the core psychology graduate attributes (based on "*Graduate Attributes of the Four-Year Undergraduate Psychology Program*", available from the APAC website) including, but not limited to, the following:

- advanced theoretical and empirical knowledge in the core research areas of the discipline (see Standard 3.1.7, Graduate Attribute 1)
- knowledge of the theoretical and empirical bases underpinning the construction, implementation, and interpretation of some of the most widely used cognitive and personality assessments
- knowledge of the theoretical and empirical bases underpinning evidence-based approaches to psychological intervention
- understanding and explaining how the science and practice of psychology is influenced by social, historical, professional, and cultural contexts

4.1.5 The accredited fourth year may offer some opportunity for coverage of applied topics and basic skills (e.g. interviewing skills, fundamentals of psychological testing). Applied material must be based on the scientist-practitioner model. The basis for subsequent training should be emphasized, rather than mastery of advanced professional skills.

4.1.6 The content of all lectures, seminars and tutorials in the course must be supported by relevant and up-to-date reference material which includes references to peer-reviewed scientific journal articles.

4.1.7 A placement component may be included in the fourth year of the course consisting of no more than 10% of the total fourth year credit points. Procedures should be in place to ensure students on placement are adequately prepared, closely supervised, and that they conduct themselves in an ethical and professional manner.

Research Methods and Professional and Research Ethics

4.1.8 Prior to undertaking any research or supervised testing and assessment and preferably in the undergraduate course, students should be given sufficient grounding in relevant research methods and in professional and research ethics.

Research Project

4.1.9 The fourth year must contain a substantial research project.

4.1.10 Students in the fourth year of a psychology course must undertake a research project which carries a final assessment weight reflecting a minimum of one third of the credit point weight for the year. It is expected that the credit point weight will reflect the percentage of the year's work.

4.1.11 The research project must include an individual research question, individual intensive empirical literature review, individual data analysis, individual reporting of results and discussion, but may involve shared data collection. The research project should be

structured so that students participate in all of the steps involved in research including the formulation of research questions, the design of the study including selection of appropriate methodology, the collection and analysis of data to test the research question, the interpretation of the findings and the writing up of the report.

- 4.1.12 The research question being pursued must address issues specifically relevant to the field of psychology.
- 4.1.13 The research project may be supervised either solely or jointly, but in all cases at least one supervisor must be a member of the academic staff from the Psychology AOU.
- 4.1.14 The research project should be written up, adhering to APA format, and presented as a report for assessment. The report should include a substantial literature review and may take the final form of a traditional thesis, or a literature review accompanied by a report of the research presented in the format of a peer-reviewed scientific journal article.
- 4.1.15 The total length of the text of the written research report should be between 9000 and 15000 words. Data collected for the research project must be available for inspection by APAC on request.

Assessment

- 4.1.16 The assessment of components of the course should involve coursework, submissions by students including essays and laboratory reports, and examinations. If oral presentations are included as an assessment component of any course then the basis upon which these are graded should be made clear. See also Standard 2.1.9.
- 4.1.17 Students must receive detailed and timely feedback on their assignments.
- 4.1.18 The research report or thesis must be assessed by at least two examiners. The supervisor should not normally be an examiner. If the supervisor is an examiner, then at least three examiners are mandatory.
- 4.1.19 Each examiner of a research report must provide a grade and a comprehensive examiner's report. In addition, appropriate procedures must be in place to resolve any discrepancies that arise between examiners.
- 4.1.20 Appropriate procedures must be in place (e.g., Boards of Examiners, external audits) to ensure that standards are maintained and that all assessment and awarding of final marks or grades is treated with the utmost care and attention. Evidence of an external audit of students' work conducted within the previous three to five years must be made available for inspection by APAC, which may, if this has not been undertaken, require that one be conducted.
- 4.1.21 Procedures which comply with good governance practices must be in place to deal with student appeals.
- 4.1.22 Procedures which comply with good governance practices must be in place to deal with cases of plagiarism or other instances of unethical conduct.

Awarding of credit or advanced standing

- 4.1.23 Students transferring from one AOU to another in Australia in order to undertake a fourth year course in psychology can only be granted recognition for studies in psychology completed if the AOU(s) at which they completed the previous three years is(are) APAC accredited and the completed units were part of an APAC accredited sequence. Credit for any previous studies at the 4th year or higher level and undertaken within Australia, cannot be awarded toward an APAC accredited fourth year unless the units in question were part of an APAC accredited sequence.
- 4.1.24 Studies undertaken at non-Australian institutions must be carefully evaluated by the AOU to determine their strict equivalence to the studies for which credit is to be granted, and the AOU must be prepared to defend its decisions regarding the granting of credit should APAC conduct an audit of the AOU's transfer credit practices.
- 4.1.25 Apart from exceptional circumstances, students should not be able to transfer from one Institution or AOU to another during the fourth year of a program and should complete their fourth year at one AOU.

4.2 Four year courses

The three year undergraduate sequence and fourth year requirements set out in these Standards can be integrated into a four year course. Such courses must meet all of the Standards set down herein for the three year undergraduate sequence as well as all of the Standards for fourth year courses. Where such a course is offered it is possible to relocate elements from the three years and fourth year within the four year period to provide additional flexibility as long as all standards are still met (including nomenclature requirements for four year degrees which are set out in Standards 2.3.3 and 2.3.4).

4.3 Four year integrated bridging courses

A four year integrated bridging program which combines the requirements of the three year undergraduate sequence in psychology available to graduates possessing a conferred bachelors (or higher) level degree (ie Graduate Diploma in Psychology) with a fourth year course (as outlined in these Standards) must meet all of the requirements set out in the APAC Standards for both the three year undergraduate major sequence as well as those for fourth year courses. The four year integrated bridging program must also require no less than two calendar years of full-time study or the equivalent. These programs must bear a generic Masters degree title appropriate to the AOU's faculty, such as *Master of Arts* or *Master of Science* and must not use the name *Master of Psychology*, which is to be reserved for professional 5th and 6th year programs.

SECTION 5 POSTGRADUATE PROFESSIONAL COURSES

5.1 This section (5) provides detailed requirements for all postgraduate courses in psychology (with some exceptions where indicated) which are designed to prepare candidates for entry into the profession of psychology, especially registration as a psychologist. It covers:

- 5th year Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology courses;
- Masters courses which incorporate the fifth and sixth years of professional education and training;
- Professional Doctoral courses (which require additional years of study), and
- Certificate and Diploma courses which assist bridging from one specialty area of psychology to another.

All work in these professional courses should adhere to the scientist-practitioner model and always direct students to the relevant scientific empirical evidence base for each and every aspect of the course.

For the purposes of specialist recognition APAC recognises the APS determination of approved specialist courses.

It should be noted that the Board of the APS permits the development of doctoral degrees which are dually approved, the completion of which enables membership of two APS Colleges.

The requirements in this section apply to fifth year courses that lead to a Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology, fifth and sixth year professional courses in psychology and professional bridging courses leading to a Graduate Certificates (Diplomas).

The primary objective of the fifth year Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology should be to provide a general education in the professional practice of psychology which would result in a graduate obtaining the basic skills needed to prepare for a final year of supervised practice under the authority of the Registration Board before gaining full registration. This education must be at an advanced level, building on and extending the knowledge and skills of the APAC-accredited four-year undergraduate sequence and should not be highly specialised in nature.

The primary objective of the fifth and sixth year courses offered either as a Masters degree or the equivalent part of a DPsych or combined Masters/PhD course, should be to provide an education in the professional practice of psychology such that the graduate has the skills and knowledge to gain

registration and practice as a psychologist. This education must be at the advanced level, building on and extending the knowledge and skills of the APAC-accredited four-year undergraduate sequence. It should include full coverage and mastery of the general knowledge and skills required by psychological practitioners as well as knowledge and skills in any applicable area of specialisation of the course. This should occur through the careful integration of coursework, research and practical placement experiences. For DPpsych courses there is an additional objective of providing advanced level specialist knowledge and skills.

The primary objective of bridging Graduate Certificates or Diplomas (Standard 5.5) should be to offer additional education and training to psychologists who are already eligible for membership of one APS college and have completed an accredited professional postgraduate coursework degree to accumulate coursework and study which might assist when applying for membership of another APS college, or for other professional purposes.

These Standards set the requirements that must be met by all courses in order to establish and maintain the highest standards of education and training. In addition, the accreditation of Masters and Doctoral courses providing professional training includes approval by the appropriate APS College (where one exists for a particular specialisation). The APS College Course Approval Guidelines for each APS College should be read in conjunction with the Standards in this section. It is highly desirable that a degree course with a specialisation reflected in the title and which meets all accreditation Standards also meets the relevant APS College Course Approval Guidelines.

Upon completion of Masters course requirements, the student should be eligible for Associate Membership of the appropriate APS College. Note that APAC will not accredit coursework Masters courses with dual specialisations in the one stream as it would not be possible to meet all the requirements of coursework, placement and research for two separate specialisations.

Staffing

- 5.1.1 All professional postgraduate courses must meet the staffing requirements set out in Standards 2.4.8 to 2.4.10.
- 5.1.2 The student:academic staff ratio for postgraduate coursework Masters and Doctoral courses must be no greater than 8 to 1 when calculated using the same method as required in Standard 2.4.3. Where there is more than one specialisation and/or a generalist course, the postgraduate coursework student:academic staff ratio is not to be averaged across the different streams (eg Forensic, Counselling, Clinical). The academic staff component of the ratio is calculated by totalling the Effective Full Time equivalent (EFT) staff contribution made by each staff member to the postgraduate Masters and Doctoral programs only. A second separate calculation using the same method should be made for any 5th year Graduate Diploma in Professional Psychology program, the student:staff ratio for which must never be greater than 15:1.
- 5.1.3 Staff members who are responsible for any practical placement supervision associated with a course must be registered psychologists, and must also have at least two years' relevant full-time professional experience as a psychologist following completion of their own specialist postgraduate qualifications. For Masters and Doctoral specialist professional courses, such staff must be members of, or eligible for full membership of, the appropriate APS College.

Advisory/Liaison and Quality Review Committee

- 5.1.4 The AOU must have in place for each course an effective quality review committee through which there can be full consultation with representatives of the field supervisors and of organisations likely to employ the Institution's graduates regarding the standards of training being achieved in the course. The committee must be able to show written evidence of activities aimed at auditing and improving the quality of the training offered (such as reports) and must be a formally constituted Advisory or Liaison Committee involving staff representatives from the AOU responsible for the course(s), student representatives with at least one representative from each year of the course(s), and at least four representatives from agencies providing practical placements and future employers.

Resources

The following resource requirements should be read in conjunction with Section 2.5 of the Standards.

- 5.1.5 There should be adequate facilities available to the School or Department for training students in interviewing, testing and assessment. These facilities should include rooms which are sufficiently well sound-proofed to carry out training and confidential assessments and which have video-recording equipment and/or one way viewing facilities. These rooms should also be appropriately furnished for conducting formal testing and for interviewing.
- 5.1.6 The test library should hold a sufficient range of tests and sufficient copies in the area of specialisation for each course, where relevant, to meet the needs of that course.
- 5.1.7 The Institutional library should have substantial holdings of, or electronic access to, journals, monographs and relevant peer-reviewed international journal databases in each area of course specialisation offered by the AOU.
- 5.1.8 All students in each course should have access to computers with a range of software for word-processing and data analysis and presentation, as well as access to the Internet.

Credit for Previous Study/Experience

- 5.1.9 Students should only be given credit for any coursework if it is strictly equivalent to coursework in the current course, and in the case of prior studies at an Australian institution, the coursework for which credit is to be granted must also have been successfully completed in an APAC accredited course within the previous ten year period. Studies undertaken at non-Australian institutions must be carefully evaluated by the AOU to determine their strict equivalence to the coursework for which credit is to be granted, and the AOU must be prepared to defend its decisions regarding the granting of credit should APAC conduct an audit of the AOU's credit practices.
- 5.1.10 Students can only be given credit for placement experience completed as part of their current employment if it is of direct relevance to the course, if the work would ordinarily be undertaken by a qualified psychologist, and if supervision is arranged to fulfil all of the usual requirements of placements which are part of the course. Any such experience must not amount to more than one placement component and in must not constitute more than 30% of the total placement requirements of the course. AOU's must not give credit for previous employment experience (prior to entry into the APAC accredited professional course) as it is not integrated into the overall learning undertaken during the course. Placement experience completed as part of current employment should not normally be credited in a fifth year Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology course.
- 5.1.11 Students should not be given any credit for any previous research experience including research higher degrees as the research component is integrated into the course.

Core capabilities and attributes

- 5.1.12 Core capabilities and attributes:

The following table lists the essential core capabilities and attributes (and the knowledge underpinning them) to ensure that graduates are equipped to practice psychology safely upon registration. The list is not intended as a comprehensive list of course content. Neither is it intended to direct the content of a particular specialty. Further, demonstration of having achieved many of the capabilities listed cannot be done in isolation from other capabilities, and because of the complexity of the learning, may require integrated simultaneous assessment.

For 5th and 6th year professional courses (Masters and Doctoral levels) each of the core capabilities and attributes must be covered in detail. Since graduates of 5th year Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology courses are required to complete one year post-graduation supervision in order to obtain registration, they would be expected to demonstrate the same capabilities and attributes as 5th and 6th year graduates for 5.1.12(b) but will have covered all the others in less detail.

<p>5.1.12(a) Knowledge of the Discipline</p>	<p>Overall knowledge of the discipline underpins all of the other capabilities and includes knowledge of psychological principles, professional ethics and standards, theories of individual and systemic functioning and change, dysfunctional behaviour, psychopathology, the cultural bases of behaviour and organisational systems.</p> <p><u>Demonstrated capabilities:</u> Strong knowledge of at least:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant psychological theories and models; • published empirical findings supporting theories (especially those which underpin the major forms of psychological intervention) and the methods employed to establish them; • the major methods of psychological investigation and techniques of measurement, and their application and interpretation; and • design and implementation of psychological interventions.
<p>5.1.12(b) Ethical, Legal and Professional Matters</p>	<p>The ethical, legal and professional aspects of psychological practice.</p> <p><u>Demonstrated capabilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Familiarity with legal and professional matters including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the main provisions of the State and Commonwealth Acts and Regulations of Parliament relevant to psychologists' work; ○ codes of conduct relevant to psychologists' work including those published by relevant psychologist Registration Board(s); ○ the Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines; ○ confidentiality and privacy issues; ○ administrative and record keeping procedures (including adequate clarification of any financial arrangements); ○ consent issues; ○ issues concerning practice with minors and those unable to provide informed consent; ○ boundary issues; ○ sexual propriety; ○ psycho-legal issues; ○ role and cultural issues, including issues for minority or marginalised groups; ○ gender and sexuality issues; ○ service needs of vulnerable groups in society; ○ registration issues; ○ advertising and public statements; ○ billing practices; ○ the role of the psychologist within the profession and the workplace; ○ the roles of other professions and the capacity to report to other professionals appropriately and to work collaboratively; ○ the propriety of relationships amongst psychologists, and between psychologists and other professionals, employers and clients; ○ the mechanisms for the resolution of conflict between psychologists and clients, colleagues, employers and other professionals;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ negotiated workplace agreements ○ note-taking and record keeping ● Conduct or behaviour consistent with the legal requirements and codes of conduct relevant to psychologists, especially: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ ethical and professional behaviour and manner ○ State, Territory and Federal Codes of Behaviour for Psychologists and statements of Clients' rights; ○ the Australian Psychological Society's Code of Ethics and Ethical Guidelines; ○ appropriately clarifying and negotiating the role and responsibilities as a trainee psychologist; ○ record keeping, including demonstrated knowledge of the ethical and legal implications of administrative and record keeping procedures including confidentiality; ● Self-evaluation or self-assessment skills, including identification of the limits of one's professional competence; ● Ability to apply ethical principles to ethical dilemmas.
<p>5.1.12(c) Psychological Assessment & Measurement</p>	<p>The ongoing, interactive, and inclusive process that serves to describe, conceptualise, and predict relevant aspects of a client (<u>be that client an organization, group or individual</u>).</p> <p><u>Demonstrated capabilities:</u> A strong level of skills and knowledge in conducting systematic psychological assessment using a wide range of assessment techniques, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the theoretical basis for the assessment techniques used in psychology; ● knowledge of psychometric properties of psychological tests and the ability to use this knowledge to inform problem formulation; ● test selection - ability to select appropriate assessment techniques and instruments with proper consideration of issues relating to reliability and validity; ● test administration and interpretive skills, including experience in the skilled administration and interpretation of at least: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ the current version of an individually administered adult or child test of intelligence (some examples of appropriate tests include - WISC IV, WAIS IV, WPPSI-III, Stanford-Binet V, Kaufman Adolescent and Adult Intelligence Test, Kaufman Assessment Battery for Children, Differential Ability Scales); ○ the current version of at least one major standardised test of personality (examples of appropriate tests include - 16PF, MMPI, CPI, OMNI, NEO-PI); ○ the current version of at least one specialised memory assessment (e.g. Wechsler Memory Scale, Wide Range Assessment of Memory and Learning); and ○ other tests, appropriate to the learning objectives of the course, which are based on empirically validated approaches and equivalent accuracy in the measurement of cognitive or behavioural functioning or an accurate measurement of aptitude, abilities or skills. ● awareness of limitations of psychological tests with particular reference to notions of validity, reliability, and cultural issues; ● proficiency in interviewing (structured and unstructured interviews,

	<p>selection interviews, survey interviewing, history taking, clinical interviewing for diagnostic purposes and group-based interviewing);</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • systematic observation of behaviour involving both naturalistic and clinical observation and in using predetermined procedures for observing the behaviour of one or more persons; • knowledge of psychopathology and of diagnostic classification systems (including current versions of DSM and ICD); • assessment and diagnostic processes (selecting the appropriate assessment tool(s), administering the assessment tool(s), interpreting the assessment results, interviewing /micro counselling skills involved in the assessment process, problem formulation and hypothesis testing); • the ability to competently undertake a mental status examination; and • writing informed, succinct, valid and well organised reports.
<p>5.1.12(d) Intervention Strategies</p>	<p>Activities that promote, restore, sustain or enhance cognitive functioning and a sense of well being in individuals or groups of clients through preventive, developmental or remedial services and/or in the case of groups or organizations, restoring or enhancing group or organizational functioning.</p> <p><u>Demonstrated capabilities:</u> Strong skills and knowledge regarding intervention strategies, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • superior interpersonal skills (including the ability to form a professional relationship including positive working alliances with clients and colleagues); • ability to skilfully negotiate a treatment or service contract; • ability to use a theoretical system that explains aetiology and remediation of psychological, social or organizational problems; • ability to investigate identified issues relevant to the delivery of the interventions (e.g., ethical dilemmas, stakeholders); • ability to identify the nature and documented efficacy of potential interventions; • ability to design and/or plan preventative, developmental or remedial interventions to achieve the best possible outcomes; • formulation of treatment plans, goals and strategies for intervention including the ability to justify the link between diagnosis formulation and intervention chosen; • researching the empirical literature to develop plans for interventions and drawing on published studies and theories/models relevant to the problem and intervention; • justifying the link between diagnosis/formulation and the intervention chosen; • implementing preventative, developmental or remedial programs and interventions; • familiarity with a range in intervention techniques and strategies as well as their theoretical and empirical bases, for both individuals and groups; • counselling skills; • highly skilled use of core behaviour change skills including counselling and cognitive behavioural approaches to helping as appropriate in group individual or organizational settings; • organisational interventions; career development (i.e., helping with career planning in private or organisational contexts);

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● ability to design and implement evaluations of the impact of the interventions (including the ability to employ appropriate research designs to evaluate the effectiveness of psychological interventions) including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ measuring attitude and behaviour change ○ evaluation of a client's response to the initial intervention ○ revision of problem formulation and initial intervention if necessary ○ program evaluation
<p>5.1.12(e) Research and Evaluation</p>	<p>(Note: See also Standards 5.3.11 – 5.3.16 for 5th and 6th year professional Masters research thesis requirements, and Standards 5.4.6 – 5.4.11 for professional Doctoral thesis requirements. 5th year Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology and Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Psychology courses are not required to have a research thesis but must cover this capability by means of other assignments or coursework).</p> <p>Systematic inquiry involving problem identification and the acquisition, organisation, and interpretation of information allowing critical analysis and disciplined, rigorous, careful and scientific inquiry into psychological phenomena.</p> <p><u>Demonstrated capabilities:</u> The application of research knowledge and skills to psychological practice, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● finding, understanding, collating and critiquing published empirical research findings relevant to a phenomenon or problem of interest; ● identifying and defining problem situations based on observation and other assessment; ● generating hypotheses based problem definition and other information; ● designing interventions, therapeutic programs or other means to test hypotheses including an understanding of the principles of single case designs; ● designing and implementing program evaluation; ● collecting, recording, and analysing responses to interventions or therapeutic programs; ● use of qualitative and quantitative methods, skilled analysis of data, and the ability to draw accurate research inferences ● critical evaluation of the effectiveness of interventions and programs including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ suggesting modifications for future use and ○ awareness of issues regarding reliability and validity of observations.
<p>5.1.12(f) Communication and Interpersonal Relationships</p>	<p>The capacity to convey, appraise and interpret information in both oral and written formats and to interact on a professional level with a wide range of client groups and other professionals, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● the ability to establish and maintain constructive working relationships and in clinical settings therapeutic alliances with clients; ● the ability to communicate, interact and liaise for a range of purposes (e.g., discussing research with other professionals; discussing relevant psychological services with clients, potential clients); ● the ability to develop knowledge of theories and empirical data on professional relationships, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ interpersonal relationships;

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ power relationships; ○ therapeutic alliance; ○ interface with social psychology; ○ more specific knowledge of the fluctuations of the therapeutic/professional relationship as a function of intervention setting; and <p><u>Demonstrated capabilities:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● high level oral communication and interpersonal skills in communicating effectively with clients, other psychologists, other professionals, the community; individuals, small groups and agencies from varied cultural, ethnic, religious, social and political backgrounds, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ rapport building skills ○ professional personal presentation ○ clarity, accuracy, coherence, organisation and succinctness of communication ○ style of communication (appropriateness for audience) ○ organisation of communication ○ seeking out and understanding information ○ personal and professional boundaries in communications ● seeking out, understanding and responding appropriately to information provided by a range of persons in order to adequately meet their needs; ● excellent written communication, including the ability to write, in an organised fashion, reports and other documents: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ which are informed, succinct, accurate, lucid and well-organised; ○ for a range of audiences, including educational, health and legal professionals, courts, government departments, insurance companies, corporations and other entities and which clearly communicate the intent of the writer taking into consideration the sensitivity of the matters under discussion and the capacity of the reader to accurately interpret the information
--	--

Core Capabilities assessment

- 5.1.13 No student must be permitted to graduate from the course without undergoing formal documented assessment of his/her competence, proficiency and professionalism in *each* of the core capabilities and attributes listed in Standard 5.1.12 (a-f).
- 5.1.14 No student must be permitted to graduate from the course unless he/she is assessed as having attained a sufficiently high level of competence, proficiency and professionalism in each of the core capabilities and attributes listed in Standard 5.1.12. Documented evidence of this assessment must be available for inspection by APAC.
- 5.1.15 The AOU must be able to provide clear documented evidence of the assessment procedures used to assess the competence, proficiency and professionalism of each student for each of the core capabilities and attributes listed in Standard 5.1.12 and in particular must be able to show the recorded outcomes of those assessment procedures for each student.
- 5.1.16 The AOU must require that the passing grade for each and every assessment task relating to the core capabilities and attributes listed in Standard 5.1.12 is never lower than 50%.

Log Book

- 5.1.17 On commencing the 5th year, every postgraduate professional coursework student must commence a single log book of practica, casework and supervision experiences. The log book must detail the nature and hours of all placement or other practica undertaken (internal and external), as well as the dates, nature and hours of supervision, with group supervision clearly differentiated from individual (ie one-on-one) supervision and the log book clearly specifying the nature of client work undertaken. Supervisors are required to regularly endorse, by signed notation, that the log book is a true reflection of the practica undertaken and log books must be available for inspection by APAC if requested during an audit or accreditation assessment. The log book should be carried over into the 6th and subsequent years of professional postgraduate training and a copy retained by the AOU for a period of ten years following the graduation of the student which can be inspected by APAC or the Registration Board on request. A final check of the log book must be a requirement of the course and this check must be confirmed by the signature of the/a primary supervisor on the log book itself.

Assessment

- 5.1.18 The assessment of coursework must ensure that students have gained a sound knowledge of all areas presented and must involve comprehensive documented examination of that knowledge.
- 5.1.19 In addition to the assessment procedures specified in Standards 5.1.13 to 5.1.16 and 5.1.17, and in keeping with the requirements at the undergraduate level, the Institution is expected to have in place procedures (e.g., Boards of Examiners) to ensure that standards are maintained and that all assessment and awarding of final marks or grades is treated with the utmost care and attention. In addition there must be clearly stated procedures for student appeals against unfair assessment, and for dealing with cases of plagiarism and other unethical conduct. Students must be required to pass each and every component of the course before the degree can be awarded.

5.2 Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology (5th year)

The Standards in this Section are additional requirements to those set out in Section 5 above (Standards 5.1–5.1.19).

The objective of the Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology is the provision of one year of full time education in the professional practice of psychology sufficient to prepare candidates for a final year of supervised internship in the field prior to registration. This education must:

- be at the foundational (professional) level, building and extending on the knowledge and skills of the APAC-accredited four-year undergraduate sequence;
- take an evidence-based approach and be based on the scientist-practitioner model;
- be broad and generalist (rather than specialist) in nature (note however, that inclusion of a limited number of specialist units is possible) and
- concentrate on the core professional capabilities outlined in these Standards (see Standard 5.1.12(a-f)).

Entry Requirements

- 5.2.1 Students accepted into a Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology course must have successfully completed a four year, or three year plus a fourth year, APAC-accredited sequence in psychology within the last 10 years, and be eligible for registration with the Registration Board as a conditional/provisional psychologist. An exception to this Standard may be made for currently registered psychologists who can demonstrate current compliance with Registration Board CPD requirements seeking to gain a professional postgraduate qualification.
- 5.2.2 Selection procedures should include consideration of each applicant's details as set out in an application form, referee reports from at least two referees, and the checking of

original degree certificates. It is required that the procedures should also include interviews for shortlisted candidates, either face-to-face or via teleconferencing, by a panel comprising at least two members of academic staff of the AOU, one of whom has qualifications equivalent to those required for full membership of the APS.

Length

- 5.2.3 The length of Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology courses must be one calendar year of full-time study or the equivalent.

Course Structure

- 5.2.4 At least 90% of the coursework must comprise study in psychology and be taught by psychologists, with any portion of the course that is not psychological or taught by psychologists being in an area of direct relevance to professional practice as a psychologist.
- 5.2.5 There must be two main components in the course: (1) coursework and (2) practica. The course must be structured so that the learning experiences across the coursework and practica components are clearly integrated.
- 5.2.6 The two components must be weighted according to content and the Institution's required unit weightings, so that each falls within the following specified ranges:

Coursework	60-75%
Practica & skills training	25-40%

The percentages are estimated by a matrix including the credit point value of the units, the number of hours spent per unit and the relative value of the unit to the total course and this matrix should be available for inspection by APAC accreditation assessors.

Coursework

- 5.2.7 The coursework component of the course must include foundational education and training in the core capabilities and attributes listed in Standard 5.1.12(a-f) and should link with the practical and skills training components of the course.

Practica and skills training

- 5.2.8 There should be provision for education and training in practical professional skills and knowledge within the course which should primarily be aimed at adequately preparing the student for a future 6th year of Registration Board approved supervision before registration.
- 5.2.9 The content of the practica should be of a nature which supports the achievement of the capabilities set down in Standard 5.1.12 and, in addition to supervised placement experience with psychological issues, can include, but not be limited to, role playing and skills practice, simulated learning environments, observation of supervisors working with clients and case analysis.
- 5.2.10 Students in the Graduate Diploma of Professional Psychology must complete a minimum of 300 hours of logged supervised practica and skills training.
- 5.2.11 There must be adequate education and training in professional skills and knowledge, including ethical decision making for the practitioner, within the course for all students prior to beginning their first placement. In addition, there should be ongoing class contact with students that relates to and builds on their placement experiences.
- 5.2.12 All reports and casenotes written by the student and arising from training undertaken as part of any placement must bear the signature of the responsible supervisor.
- 5.2.13 Supervision of the placement component should involve on average one hour of direct contact for each full day (7.5 hours) of placement. Direct contact may include telephone or video conference contact.
- 5.2.14 Ideally, the placement should occur within the AOU itself and be supervised by suitably qualified academic staff (see standard 5.1.3).

- 5.2.15 Any placements external to the AOU and not supervised by an academic member of staff must be supervised by a field supervisor who is formally recognised by the AOU offering the course and who holds current registration as a psychologist with the relevant Psychologist Registration Board. Each field supervisor should submit a brief curriculum vitae with details of his or her qualifications and relevant experience for consideration by the course coordinator. These must be held on file in the AOU and be available for inspection by APAC if requested during an audit or accreditation assessment.
- 5.2.16 A member of staff from the AOU who holds qualifications at a level clearly making him/her eligible for membership of the APS, and who is registered as a psychologist with the relevant Psychologist Registration Board should be appointed as practica and skills training coordinator and should have the responsibility for liaising directly with field supervisors and for ensuring that students have appropriate placement experiences.
- 5.2.17 Prior to the placement the student and supervisor must complete and sign a supervision contract stating the objectives for the placement including the range of activities to be covered and the skill base to be developed.
- 5.2.18 At the end of the placement the supervisor must complete a final assessment of the student's performance. That information, together with an assessment of the student's performance on the other components of the practica and skills training undertaken, will be used to assess whether or not the student has acquired the required professional skills and knowledge. The final decision regarding whether the student has passed or failed the placement should be made by the placement coordinator in full consultation with the field supervisor.

5.3 Fifth and Sixth Year Masters Courses of Professional Education

The Standards in this Section are additional to those set out in Section 5 (Standards 5.1 – 5.1.19), which also apply.

Entry Requirements

- 5.3.1 Students accepted into a fifth and sixth year Masters course must have successfully completed a four year, or three year plus a fourth year, APAC-accredited sequence in psychology, within the last 10 years, with an upper second class Honours (2A) or equivalent overall mark, and be eligible for registration with the psychologist Registration Board as a conditional/provisional psychologist. An exception to this Standard may be made for currently registered psychologists who can demonstrate current compliance with Registration Board CPD requirements seeking to gain a professional postgraduate qualification.
- 5.3.2 Selection procedures must conform to the requirements set out in Standard 5.2.2, with the additional requirement that selection panels for candidates being selected into Masters and Doctoral postgraduate professional programs should include a staff member who has qualifications clearly equivalent to those required for membership of the APS College relevant to any area of specialisation of the course.

Length

- 5.3.3 The length of coursework Masters courses must be two calendar years (eight semesters) of full-time study or the equivalent part-time study. Where the course can be undertaken in an accelerated mode, the minimum length of the course must be no less than 18 months in duration.
- 5.3.4 The length of a doctoral course which includes the equivalent of the fifth and sixth year education and training and leads to a PhD should be a minimum of four calendar years of full-time study or the part-time equivalent.

Course Structure

- 5.3.5 At least 70% of the coursework must comprise study in psychology and be taught by psychologists, and any portion of the course that is not psychological must be in an area of direct relevance to the particular specialisation. In this context it is recognised that other subjects and skills may form an essential part of a professional education and training course. For example, knowledge of educational systems may be an essential part of the education and training of educational psychologists and knowledge of management and organisations may be an essential part of the education and training of organisational psychologists. APS College Course Approval guidelines are a useful source of guidance in this regard.
- 5.3.6 There must be three main components in the course: coursework, research and practical placement. The course must be structured so that the learning experiences across these three components are integrated.
- 5.3.7 For Masters level courses, the three components must be weighted according to content and the Institution's required unit weightings, so that each falls within the following specified ranges:
- Coursework 40-50%
 - Research 20-33% (The dissertation should be at an equivalent standard to Honours)
 - Practical placement 25-30%
- The percentages are estimated by a matrix including the credit point value of the units, the number of hours spent per unit and the relative value of the unit to the total course. The matrix must be available on request for inspection by APAC assessors. For Masters courses, all coursework prescribed by the relevant APS College must be covered if APS College Course Approval is to be attained. The dissertation must be equivalent to an Honours standard and there should be a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised placement. In a PhD course, the research component should carry a weight of 67% while the time spent on coursework and practica should be no less than that which is required in the relevant coursework Masters course.
- 5.3.8 There must be evidence that Students are required to pass each of the three components in order to successfully complete the degree.

Coursework

- 5.3.9 In addition to specialist content, all courses must;
- (a) address all of the core capabilities outlined in Standard 5.1.12;
 - (b) cover the current version of the *National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce*;
 - (c) include considerable depth of teaching in practice management, storing and accessing psychology files and record keeping and
 - (d) managing people.
- 5.3.10 The coursework component should clearly link with both the research and practical placement components. It is recognised that some areas of knowledge and some of the skills will be acquired in conjunction with these other components. However, there should be documentary evidence that the knowledge and skills specified in 5.3.9, as well as those specifically related to any area of specialisation, are taught in the coursework component. It is not sufficient, for example, to allow the administration and interpretation of complex psychometric instruments to be learned only while the student is on a placement.

Research

- 5.3.11 The research project should be conducted in an area of relevance to any area of specialisation of the course and must have as its central focus the scientific analysis of a problem.

- 5.3.12 The research project can be undertaken under supervision as an individual or a group project. As students will have completed a major research project previously, they should be demonstrating greater independence than at the fourth year level. The project must be designed so that each student is required to undertake all of the steps involved in conducting an empirical investigation or enquiry, including:
- review of the relevant scientific literature;
 - the formulation of a research question or questions (or in the case of a literature review and a paper for publication, explication of a model or theoretical proposition);
 - the design of an appropriate rigorous scientific method for investigating the question;
 - the collection and analysis of data; and
 - the interpretation of findings and the preparation of a report.
- 5.3.13 The research project must take the form of one or more of the following:
- a program evaluation study;
 - a study based on experimental single case design;
 - a critical review, pilot study and full grant application;
 - a critical review and a meta analysis;
 - a critical review and secondary data analyses;
 - a traditional empirical research project; or
 - a literature review and an article suitable for submission to a peer-reviewed international scientific journal
- and the total length of the project report must be no less than 5000 words. Data collected for the project must be available for inspection by APAC.
- 5.3.14 The research project may be supervised either solely or jointly, but in all cases at least one supervisor must be an academic member of staff from the AOU presenting the course, and at least one supervisor should hold doctoral qualifications.
- 5.3.15 In the case of Masters students intending to upgrade their enrolment to a professional doctoral degree (i.e., DPsych or equivalent), the research component must be of high quality and reflect the fact that the student will be enrolling in a degree at the doctoral level. Further, doctoral degrees must have a research component which consists of at least the equivalent of one year full-time spent on the thesis component of the course (see Standards 2.3.11 and 5.4.4).
- 5.3.16 The final classification of the thesis must be decided by the appropriate Committee or other body within the Institution, based on the examiners' reports.

Practical Placements

- 5.3.17 There must be adequate education and training in professional skills and knowledge, including ethics, within the course for all students prior to beginning their first placement. In addition, there should be ongoing class contact with students that relates to and builds on their placement experiences.
- 5.3.18 For a Masters, or combined Masters/PhD degree, each student must complete a minimum of 1000 hours of supervised practical placement experience. This experience must be of a nature appropriate to an area of specialisation covered by the course, with the expectation that many placement opportunities would be in agencies which would be future potential employers of psychologists who have the particular specialisation. Generalist courses, or those specialist areas which are just developing, must ensure a range of suitable professional placements are undertaken. Specific APS Course Approval requirements (where applicable) should be met.
- 5.3.19 Practical placements must provide students with experience and skill development in a range of settings. Placements must include casework which involves face-to-face work with clients (individuals, groups or organisations as appropriate to the course). Face-to face work is defined as real time verbal communication in the presence of client(s) in the room with the trainee or interacting with the trainee by means of videoconference technology where there is a real time image of the each of the parties, including a clear

view of facial expressions. While casework with clients by means of other electronic media or use of simulation is permissible, face-to-face casework must never be less than 66% of the total casework undertaken as part of the course. There must be at least three different practical placements in different settings, with at least two of these being external to the AOU offering the course.

- 5.3.20 One placement in each course conducted within the AOU itself and supervised by suitably qualified academic staff (see standard 5.1.3) is encouraged as long as the facilities provide practical experience with “real life” issues (e.g., a psychology clinic within the AOU itself where the public receive services). A log book of casework and supervision must be maintained by each student as outlined in Standard 5.1.17. Supervisors are also required to endorse, by signed notation, that the log book is a true reflection of each placement.
- 5.3.21 All external placements must be supervised by a field supervisor who is formally recognised by the AOU institution offering the course. Each field supervisor must submit a brief curriculum vitae with details of his or her qualifications and relevant experience for consideration by the course coordinator. These must be held on file in the AOU and be available for inspection by APAC if requested during an audit or accreditation assessment.
- 5.3.22 All reports and case notes written by the student arising from training undertaken as part of any internal or external placement must bear the signature of the responsible supervisor.
- 5.3.23 All field supervisors should be members or hold qualifications which make them eligible for membership of the appropriate APS College, or of an APS College for supervision for a generalist course, and additionally, should have at least two years relevant full-time experience as a psychologist, following the award of their postgraduate psychology degree. All field supervisors must also hold current full registration as a psychologist with the Registration Board in the supervisor’s country of principal residence.
- 5.3.24 In instances where there is an appropriate placement opportunity but the requirements stated in Standard 5.3.23 cannot be met, then a staff member from the Institution meeting the requirements stated in Standard 5.1.3 should be assigned the responsibility for the placement in conjunction with a member of staff at the agency. (Note this should only occur during one practical placement and must constitute no more than 30% of a student’s total placement experience for that course. In addition, if the student is also completing a placement within the AOU, the supervising staff member must be a different person in each case).
- 5.3.25 Supervision of all placements must involve one hour of direct contact for each full day of placement (7.5 hrs). Direct contact supervision may include telephone, video conference or other electronic forms of real-time interaction, as long as the total percentage of supervision conducted by such electronic means across all casework units is never greater than 40% for any given student. Additionally, APS College Approval Guidelines for distance supervision should be met. Where supervision comprises a mix of individual and small group formats, no less than 50% can be individual supervision. For specific details see the APS College Course Approval Guidelines.
- 5.3.26 A member of staff from the AOU who is a member, or can clearly demonstrate eligibility for membership, of an APS College or the appropriate specialist APS College, must be appointed as placement coordinator and should have the responsibility for liaising directly with all field supervisors and for ensuring that students have an appropriate range of placement experiences.
- 5.3.27 At the beginning of each placement the student and supervisor must complete and sign a supervision contract stating the objectives for the placement including the range of activities to be covered and the skill base to be developed. This form should be approved and signed by the placement coordinator.
- 5.3.28 Once approximately half the placement has been completed, an interim review should be conducted which involves the student and supervisor reviewing progress, the student’s performance and the extent to which the placement objectives are being met. A copy of this review should be given to the placement coordinator and any action that is required as a result should be taken. Placement reviews must be held on file by the AOU and be made available for inspection by APAC if requested.

- 5.3.29 At the end of the placement the supervisor must complete a final assessment and make a recommendation whether the student has completed the placement to an acceptable level, whether further time should be spent on that placement because the student has not yet met requirements, or whether the student has failed to meet the required standards and is not likely to do so with further work. The final decision regarding whether the student has passed or failed the placement should be made by the placement coordinator in full consultation with the field supervisor.
- 5.3.30 No more than 33% of any external placement may be undertaken at any workplace where the student is employed.

5.4 Professional Doctorates

The requirements in this Section apply to all professional doctoral degrees and are additional to the requirements set out in Sections 5.1 – 5.1.19, which also apply.

The primary objective of the professional doctorate should be to provide an education in the professional practice of psychology and in applied psychological research. This education and training should be clearly evidence-based and founded on the scientist-practitioner model. Taking account of the nature of the discipline and its applications to professional practice, education in psychology at this level should include full coverage and mastery of the general knowledge and skills required by psychological practitioners as well as advanced knowledge of the area of specialisation/s of the course. This should occur through the integration of coursework, research and practical placement experience.

These standards for accreditation set the requirements that must be met by all courses in order to establish and maintain high standards. In addition, as the accreditation of a course providing professional education and training will be accompanied by a process of assessment for approval by the appropriate APS College (where one exists for a particular specialisation), the APS Course Approval Guidelines for each APS College should be read in conjunction with the standards in this section. It is highly desirable that a degree course with a specialisation reflected in the title that is accredited by APAC also meets the relevant APS College Course Approval Guidelines and achieves course approval by the APS, so that upon completion of the course requirements, the student should be eligible for full membership of the appropriate APS College(s).

APAC will accredit professional doctorate degrees with dual specialisations where it can be clearly demonstrated that the course has the capacity to meet all the requirements of coursework, placement and research for two separate APS Colleges according to the relevant APS College Course Approval Guidelines.

Entry Requirements

The entry requirements are the same as set out in Standards 5.3.1 and 5.3.2.

Length

- 5.4.1 The length of a doctoral course that leads to a PsyD or DPsych should be a minimum of three calendar years of full-time study or the part-time equivalent.

Course Structure

- 5.4.2 At least 90% of the coursework must comprise study in psychology and be taught by psychologists, with any portion of the course that is not psychological being in an area of direct relevance to the particular specialisation. In this context it is recognised that other subjects and skills may form an essential part of a professional training course. For example, knowledge of educational systems may be an essential part of the education and training of educational psychologists and knowledge of management and organisations may be an essential part of the education and training of organisational psychologists. Refer to APS College Course Approval Guidelines for further detail regarding specialist content.
- 5.4.3 There should be three main components in the course: coursework, research and practical placement. The course must be structured so that the learning experiences

across these three components are integrated. Students must be required to pass all three components in order to complete the course.

5.4.4 For DPsy or PsyD courses, the following structure should apply:

- * **Coursework:** The amount and spread of coursework meets: (1) all of that as set out in Standard 5.3.7; (2) the relevant APS College Course Approval Guidelines and (3) in addition, the DPsy/PsyD includes additional coursework of greater depth and/or breadth than is generally found in a Masters coursework degree (note that this additional work may be introduced following the fifth and sixth years or integrated across the three year course).
- * **Practicum:** Students should undertake 1500 hours of supervised practicum. The additional 500 hours of practicum must involve supervision which emphasises a higher level of autonomy and responsibility, and a higher level integration of theory and practice. Reference should be made to the APS Course Approval Guidelines of the relevant APS College/s to ensure appropriate placement experiences. Training in supervision will also feature during the final year of study, either as part of the advanced practicum work, or as part of advanced coursework, or some combination of both.
- * **Thesis or Dissertation:** The thesis or dissertation must be of high quality and reflect the fact that this is a doctoral level degree. Further, these degrees are expected to consist of a research component that requires at least the equivalent of one year full-time work spent on the thesis component of the course (see Standard 2.3.12). The thesis topic should be relevant to any specialist aspects of the degree, and both examiners should be external to the Institution. Where a thesis is being submitted as part of a course of study that is designed to meet two specialist streams, examiners should be selected with expertise that ensures both areas are adequately examined.

5.4.5 Students must be required to pass each of the three components as set out in 5.3.7 and 5.3.8 in order to complete the course.

Coursework

Standards 5.3.9 – 5.3.10 must be met.

Research

- 5.4.6 The research project must require an empirical research thesis and should be conducted in an area of relevance to the area of specialisation/s of the course.
- 5.4.7 The research project must involve an individual project conducted under supervision. As students will have completed a major research project previously, they should be demonstrating greater independence than at fourth year level, while working under supervision.
- 5.4.8 The project should be structured so that students undertake all of the steps involved in the research including the formulation of the research question(s), the design of the study including the selection of appropriate methodology, the collection and analysis of data, the interpretation of the findings and preparation of the report.
- 5.4.9 The research project may be supervised either solely or jointly, but in all cases at least one supervisor must be an academic member of staff from the AOU presenting the course, and both supervisors should hold doctoral qualifications.
- 5.4.10 The examination for a thesis completed as part of a professional doctoral degree (i.e., DPsy or equivalent) should be conducted by at least two examiners external to the Institution with qualifications at least equivalent to the degree being examined.
- 5.4.11 The final classification should be decided by the appropriate Committee or other body within the Institution, based on the examiners' reports.

Practical Placements

Standards 5.3.17 – 5.3.30 must be met.

Credit for Previous Experience

- 5.4.12 In addition to the requirement that Standards 5.1.9 – 5.1.11 are met, entry to a DPsych/PsyD degree with advanced standing resulting from the prior award of a Masters coursework degree in the same professional area should be possible. However, the candidate must be required to complete a new thesis, equivalent in standard to that required for the DPsych/PsyD. Credit should only be granted for coursework that can be demonstrated to be equivalent in terms of content and depth of study to the DPsych/PsyD subjects and undertaken preferably in the last 5 years. Although such credit may be granted, the course of study should include at least 18 months of full-time study or its equivalent and a minimum of 50% of the total course content, including the thesis, additional 500 practicum hours and any DPsych/PsyD coursework subjects for which credit cannot be awarded.

5.5 Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Psychology (Area of Specialisation) (GCP)

The Graduate Certificate or Diploma in Psychology (GCP or GDP) offers additional education and training for a psychologist who is already eligible for membership of an APS college and has completed an accredited professional postgraduate coursework degree to accumulate coursework and study which might assist when applying for membership of another APS college, or for other professional purposes.

Entry Requirements

- 5.5.1 Students accepted into the Graduate Certificate or Diploma must meet the following three criteria:
- (i) a postgraduate professional degree in a specified accredited specialisation and eligibility for or full membership of the college of that specialization;
 - (ii) the original postgraduate training must have provided at least 500 hours of supervised practice appropriate and relevant to practise in the specialty area of the second or additional college; and
 - (iii) the original postgraduate thesis must be appropriate to the area of the second or additional college

Length

- 5.5.2 The course must be a minimum of one year part-time.

Course Structure

There are two components to the course: practicum and coursework.

Practicum

- 5.5.3 500 hours of relevant placement experience supervised by psychologist(s) who are members of the second or additional college. This additional supervised practice should be in parallel/be linked to additional coursework.
- 5.5.4 The placement should be consistent with standards 5.3.17 – 5.3.30

Coursework

- 5.5.5 All coursework required for the second or additional specialty must be covered either in the original postgraduate training in psychology, or by additional units in the GCP. The additional coursework must include the equivalent of at least four semester-long units covering knowledge, competencies, and skills in the new specialty and include placement requirements.

SECTION 6 HIGHER DEGREE BY RESEARCH (HDR) PROGRAMS

This section refers to research higher degree programs with a duration of two or more years of full-time study, or equivalent. These degrees may be research Masters degrees or research Doctorates with the title Doctor of Philosophy.

Such programs are not specifically accredited for the purpose of registration as a psychologist or membership of the APS, however the inclusion of research higher degree programs is regarded as important to the fostering of a milieu of scholarly scientific endeavour and for the education of research psychologists. Research topics vary in their relevance to psychology and some may have insufficient psychological content to permit registration as a psychologist or membership of the APS.

The AOU must demonstrate that it has sufficient qualified staff to provide adequate supervision and teaching across all research and professional programs offered, irrespective of whether they are all being put forward for accreditation.

SECTION 7 APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Example of site visit agenda

Institution: (Name of Institution)

Date: (Date/s of AOU Review)

Address: (Address of School and location of Psychology Department)

DAY ONE

Time	Description
9:00am – 9:45am	Venue: Meeting with Head of Department
9:45am – 10:15am	Inspection of laboratories, libraries, online facilities, etc.
10:15am – 11:15am	Venue: Meeting with undergraduate teaching staff
11:15am – 11:45am	Venue: Morning tea and inspection of undergraduate work samples
11:45am – 12:45pm	Venue: Meeting with undergraduate students
12:45pm – 1:30pm	Venue: (To be held away from student meetings.) Lunch with staff
1:30pm – 2:30pm	Venue: Meeting with fourth year students
2:30pm – 3:00pm	Venue: Afternoon tea and inspection of fourth year work samples
3:00pm – 4:00pm	Venue: Meeting with fourth year teaching staff
4:00pm – 4:20pm	Venue: Meeting with administrative and technical staff
4:20pm – 4:40pm	Venue: Meeting with Postgraduate Research Students
4:40pm – 5:00pm	Venue: Meeting with the Departmental Research Coordinator
5:00pm	Venue: Assessment Team Meeting

DAY TWO

Time	Description – Please provide separate venues for each College specialisation	
	Specialisation 1	Specialisation 2
8:30am – 9:00am	Venue: Assessment Team Meeting	
9:00am – 9:30am	Inspection of test library and Psychology Clinic.	
9:30am – 10:00am	Venue: Meeting with Psychology Clinic Coordinator (where relevant)	Venue: Meeting with course convenor (where the Clinic is not relevant)
10:00am – 10:45am	Venue: Morning tea and inspection of coursework Masters/Doctoral work samples	
10:45am – 11:45am	Venue: Meeting with coursework Masters/Doctoral staff	Venue: Meeting with coursework Masters/Doctoral staff
11:45am – 12:45pm	Venue: Meeting with coursework Masters/Doctoral fieldwork supervisors	Venue: Meeting with coursework Masters/Doctoral fieldwork supervisors
12:45pm – 1:30pm	Venue: Lunch with staff and fieldwork supervisors	
1:30pm – 2:30pm	Venue: Meeting with coursework Masters/Doctoral students	Venue: Meeting with coursework Masters/Doctoral students
2:30pm – 3:30pm	Venue: Afternoon tea, Assessment Team Meeting and any required follow up meetings.	
3:30pm – 4:00pm	Venue: Meeting with the Head of Department	
4:00pm – 4:30pm	Venue: Meeting with the Vice Chancellor or his/her nominee	

DAY THREE

Time	Description
8:30am – 12:30pm	Venue: Assessment Team to draft assessment report. Head of Department and course coordinators should be available for consultation.
12:30pm – 1:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	Venue: Assessment Team to draft assessment report.

Appendix 2 - References

- American Psychological Association (2008) *Guidelines and Principles for Accreditation of Programs in Professional Psychology*. APA Office of Program Consultation and Accreditation, Washington, DC, Author.
- Australian Medical Council (2002). *Assessment and accreditation of Medical Schools: Standards and procedures*. Kingston, Author.
- Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (2008). *Rules for Accreditation and Accreditation Standards for Psychology Courses*. Melbourne, Author.
- Australian Psychological Society (2008). *Professional Practice Handbook*. Accessed from: http://www.psychology.org.au/prac_resources/pphandbook/ on 12/02/09.
- Commonwealth Department of Health and Ageing (2002). *National Practice Standards for the Mental Health Workforce*, endorsed by the AHMAC National Mental Health Working Group, Canberra, Author.
- Commonwealth of Australia. (n.d.). Country Education Profiles (CEP) Online. Retrieved 13/03/09, from <http://aei.gov.au/AEI/CEP/Default.htm> .
- Consortium for Accreditation in Higher Education, (2004). *Accreditation in the European Higher Education Area*. Document accessed on 20/10/08 from www.aic.lv/ace/ace_disk/Bologna/contrib/Statem_oth/ECA_on_Bergen.pdf.
- Dunn, D.S. et al (2007). Quality benchmarks in undergraduate psychology programs. *American Psychologist*, 62(7), 650-670.
- Epstein, R.M. and Hundert, E.M. (2002). Defining and assessing professional competence. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 287(2), 226-235.
- Europa Publications. (2010). *The Europa World of Learning* (60th ed.). London: Routledge.
- European Federation of Professional Psychologists Associations (2006). *EuroPsy – the European Certificate in Psychology*. London, Author.
- Hall, J.E. and Altmaier, E.M. (2008). *Global Promise: Quality Assurance and Accountability in Professional Psychology*. New York, Oxford University Press.
- International Standards Organisation (2005). *Conformity assessment – General requirements for accreditation bodies accrediting conformity assessment bodies ISO/IEC 17011*. Geneva, ISO.
- Kaslow, N.J. et al (2007). Guiding principles and recommendations for the assessment of competence. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 38(5), 441-451.
- McDaniel, S.H. et al (2002). A training curriculum for professional psychologists in primary care. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 33(1), 65-72.
- New South Wales Psychologist Registration Board (2008). *Supervision Guidelines*. Sydney, Author.
- New Zealand Psychologists Board (2008). *Standards and Procedures for the Accreditation of Qualifications Leading to Registration as a Psychologist in New Zealand*. Wellington, Author.
- New Zealand Psychologists Board (2006). *Core competencies for the practice of psychology in New Zealand*. Wellington, Author.
- Psychologists Board of Queensland (2008). *Supervision guidelines: Guidelines for the supervision program for probationary registrants and supervisors*. Brisbane, Author.

Psychologists Registration Board of Victoria (2005). *Supervision Program: Guidelines for Provisional Psychologists and Supervisors*. Melbourne, Author.

Roe, R. A. (2002). What makes a competent psychologist? *The European Psychologist*, 7(3), 192-203.

Shaw, C.D. (2004). *Toolkit for Accreditation Programs*. International Society for Quality in Health Care, East Melbourne, ISQA.

World Health Organisation (2005). *WHO/WFME Guidelines for Accreditation of Basic Medical Education*, Geneva/Copenhagen.