

## Chisholm Institute - APAC Accreditation assessment summary report

<b>Higher education provider</b>	Chisholm Institute
<b>Name of the Psychology AOU</b>	Higher Education College
<b>Standards version</b>	Version 1.2, 1 January 2019
<b>Purpose of assessment</b>	Monitoring visit (out of cycle follow up)
<b>Programs and level of study assessed</b>	Bachelor of Psychology (Level 1)
<b>Campus</b>	Frankston
<b>Date of site visit</b>	17 March 2023
<b>Date of APAC Board Determination</b>	28 August 2023
<b>Accreditation end date</b>	31 December 2026

## Background and overview

In July 2021, the Chisholm Institute (Chisholm) submitted an application to the Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC) seeking accreditation for a newly developed Level 1 Bachelor of psychology program. The program was developed in response to the local demand for a qualified allied health workforce and to create pathways to higher education for non-traditional students. The program is designed as a stackable qualification comprised of an Associate Degree (second year or phase 2 of the 1-3 year psychology sequence) and Bachelor Degree in Psychology (third year or phase 3 of the 1-3 year psychology sequence) sequentially and enables students to progressively acquire the *Level 1 Foundational Competencies* over two years full-time or equivalent part-time.

Following a desktop review, the program was accredited from 1 June 2021 until 31 December 2026, subject to six conditions and one monitoring requirement. The monitoring requirement was imposed to allow a follow up visit to be undertaken by mid-2023 to ensure that the program is rolling out as intended and that it continues to meet the *Accreditation Standards*.

Subsequently, in September 2021, the Higher Education College (College) provided a progress report demonstrating:

- how the learning resources and facilities are sufficient to support the student achievement of the learning outcomes and the *Level 1 Foundational Competencies* in the program, and
- that newly appointed staff are appropriately qualified for teaching, assessment and administrative duties that that there is sufficient staffing to support the student cohort in acquiring the Level 1 Foundational Competencies.

and as such, the conditions of accreditation against Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.5 was determined as met.

The monitoring visit focused on the outstanding conditions of accreditation against criteria under Standard 1 Public safety, Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, Standard 3 Program of study and Standard 5 Assessment relevant to the rollout of the program.

The APAC Accreditation Assessment Team considered the College's 12-page progress report and attached appendices received in January 2023. Following the Assessment Team Zoom conference held on 1 March 2023, additional information was requested and received from the College, including:

- details of the assessment requirements and marking rubrics demonstrating that *Foundational Competency 1.5* (interpersonal skills and teamwork) is appropriately assessed as a required learning outcome within the following units:
  - Thinking Psychologically
  - Exploring Research
  - Cognition, Language and Perception

- Individual Differences in Capacity, Behaviour and Personality
- Motivation and Emotion
- Psychological Health and Wellbeing
- Contemporary Issues in Community Psychology
- Psychological Disorders and Evidence Based Intervention
- details of the outcomes of the desktop benchmarking exercises undertaken
- the plans to expand the Course Advisory Committee and to hold future meetings.

The Assessment Team conducted a virtual monitoring site visit on 17 March 2023. During the visit, the Assessment Team interviewed a range of individuals, including:

- Higher Education College and Course Coordinator
- Unit Co-ordinators and academic teaching staff
- Level 1 current students
- Higher Education Governance Officer
- Chief of Student Success and Support
- Chief Financial Officer.

The findings in this report are based on the Assessment Team's evaluation of the material outlined above and interview evidence gathered at the time of the virtual monitoring site visit.

## Key findings

The College is currently delivering the first iteration of the program and provides non-traditional students with an opportunity to complete a stackable undergraduate qualification in psychology. At the time of the virtual site visit, students had commenced the third year of the program.

The College is situated within the larger Institute profile and has a focus on providing individualised one-on-one support to ensure students are successful in their studies. The Assessment Team heard positive feedback about the quality of the program, the level of support and optimism provided to the cohort, and the opportunities to provide personalised learning experiences.

Evidence gathered by the Assessment Team indicates that most staff hold suitable qualifications and the appropriate experience for the units that they teach. However, some staff teaching units within the accredited sequence do not appear to have the necessary foundational knowledge of the competencies. As a result, students are seeking external support to assist with their development of those competencies.

Further evidence is needed to demonstrate that teaching staff are appropriately qualified, possess the requisite levels of teaching and professional experience, and are well equipped to integrate current contemporary developments in psychology into their teaching practice.

While the curriculum appears to cover most of the *Level 1 Foundational Competencies*, the Assessment Team is concerned that *Foundational Competency 1.5* (criterion 3.2) is neither integrated into assessment nor incorporated into the marking rubrics as a required learning outcome. Further development of external benchmarking activities is required from Chisholm and may help to support these curriculum improvements.

Opportunities also exist to improve the student learning experience. The College is encouraged to consider more flexible applications of the Learning Management System to support staff in developing high quality learning resources and activities. The advantages of offering undergraduate students placement experience warrant further attention, as does the need to increase student awareness of the College's student representation system.

The College has established and employed a range of mechanisms to enable external input into the design and delivery of the program, including the College's Higher Education Industry Advisory Committee (HEIAC). Broadening the range of employer membership on the HEIAC would help to strengthen the depth and breadth of external input into the program design and management.

Before seeking to grow this degree, the College is encouraged to consider the implications of staff resourcing particularly around teaching capacity, the viability of learning experiences and the sufficiency of administration staff.

## APAC Board determination

That Chisholm Institute's **Bachelor of Psychology** (Level 1) (Campus: Frankston) program remains accredited until **31 December 2026** subject to the following conditions:

By **30 December 2023**:

1. To ensure Standard 1 Public safety, criterion 1.7, Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.3 and Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.5 are met, the College is to provide evidence demonstrating that all staff are appropriately qualified for teaching and assessment, and that there is sufficient staffing to support the student cohort in acquiring the *Level 1 Foundational Competencies*.
2. To ensure Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.2 is met, the College is to provide an update on the progress and outcomes of external benchmarking activities.
3. To ensure Standard 2 Academic governance and quality assurance, criterion 2.3 is met, the College is to provide evidence that there is relevant external and student input into the design and management of the program.
4. To ensure Standard 3 Program of study, criterion 3.2 and Standard 5 Assessment, criteria 5.1, 5.2 and 5.3 are met, the College is to provide evidence demonstrating that all *Level 1 Foundational Competencies* are:
  - i. adequately taught and clearly articulated as a required learning outcome, specifically *Foundational Competency 1.5*, and
  - ii. appropriately assessed using criterion-based assessments.
5. To ensure Standard 5 Assessment, criterion 5.4 is met the College is to provide evidence demonstrating that moderation processes and practices are consistent, and that appropriate assessment and feedback is given to students throughout the program.

Table 1: Summary of findings regarding each criterion for each Standard

Level 1	
Domain 1: Public safety	<b>Standard Statement 1: Public safety is assured</b>
	Standard is substantially met
Domain 2: Academic governance and quality assurance	<b>Standard Statement 2: Academic governance and quality assurance processes are effective</b>
	Standard is substantially met
Domain 3: Program of study	<b>Standard Statement 3: Program of study, design, delivery and resourcing enable students to achieve the required graduate competencies</b>
	Standard is substantially met
Domain 4: The student experience	<b>Standard Statement 4: Students are provided with equitable and timely access to information and support</b>
	Standard is met
Domain 5: Assessment	<b>Standard Statement 5: Assessment is fair, reliable and valid</b>
	Standard is not met

## Quality improvement suggestions

The suggestions are as follows. It is recommended that the Higher Education College at Chisholm Institute:

1. connect program content and learning outcomes more explicitly to assessment methods, documents and processes.
2. integrate into assessment rubrics clear indicators of how marks are assigned to individual students who have completed teamwork.
3. increase student awareness of the student representation system and how it works.
4. establish a pool of benchmarking partners and identify opportunities to engage in external benchmarking activities.
5. enabling flexible applications of the Learning Management System to support staff in developing high quality learning resources.

## Commendations

A commendation refers to a particularly significant achievement by the education provider with regard to the program.

The Assessment Team has made the subsequent commendations following the evaluation of the program.

The Higher Education College at Chisholm Institute is commended for:

1. an innovative course structure involving stackable qualifications that have the potential to raise the aspirations of non-traditional students and support their attainment of a Bachelor of Psychology degree.
2. a program aimed at providing job opportunities and a pipeline of graduates to meet the psychosocial service needs of a low socioeconomic status region.
3. providing students with individualised support to enable positive learning experience.