

Lessons from Canada's Professional Psychology Community

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Accreditation is intended to **protect the interests of students, benefit the public, and improve the quality of teaching, learning, research, and practice in health service psychology.** Through its standards, the accrediting body is expected to encourage dual attainment of a **common level of professional competency, and ongoing improvement of educational institutions and training programs, sound educational experimentation, and constructive innovation...** Thus, accreditation in psychology is intended to **“achieve general agreement on the goals of training ... encourage experimentation on methods of achieving those goals and ... suggest ways of establishing high standards in a setting of flexibility and reasonable freedom.”**

THE APA COMMITTEE ON TRAINING IN CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY (1947).
FIRST REPORT OF THE NEW ACCREDITATION PROCESS IN
PSYCHOLOGY. *AMERICAN PSYCHOLOGIST*, 2, 539-558.

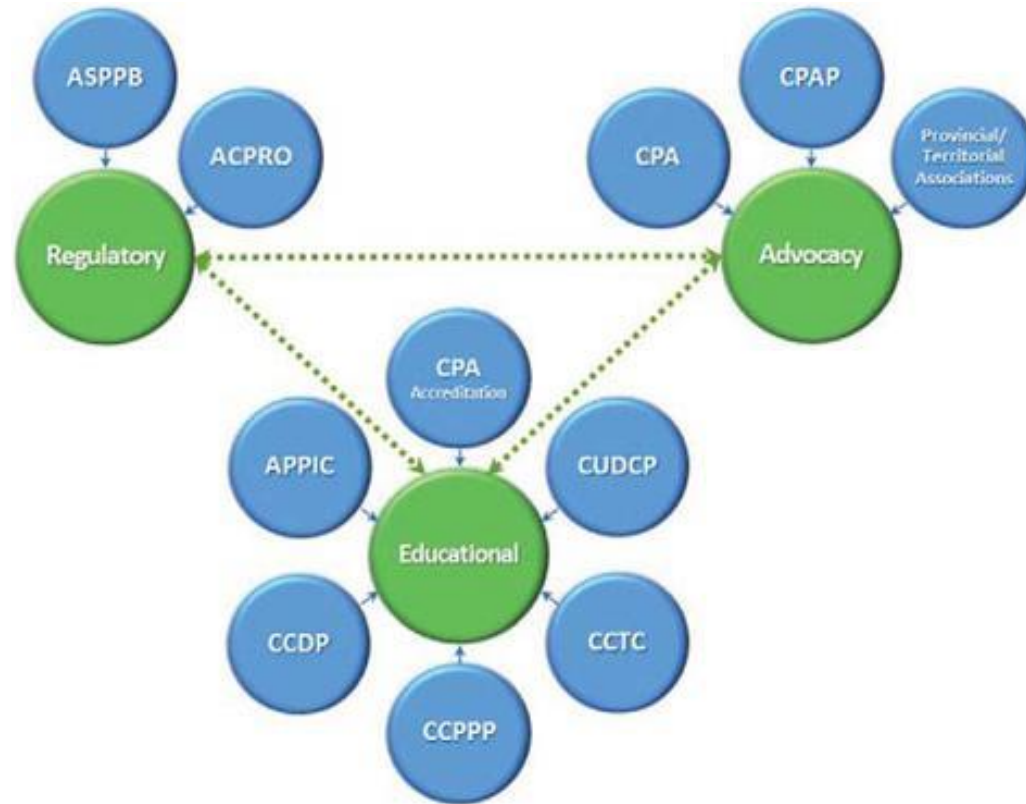
Organization of doctoral-level professional psychology training in Canada

Protects title of psychologist
Allow psychologists the controlled act of diagnosis
Some but not all provinces/territories allow Master's level to have the title of psychologist (and assesses the competencies)



Goghari, V. M., Hagstrom, S., Madon, S., & Messer-Engel, K. (2020). Experiences and learnings from professional psychology training partners during the COVID-19 pandemic: Impacts, challenges, and opportunities. *Canadian Psychology / Psychologie canadienne*, 61(3), 167–189.
<https://doi.org/10.1037/cap0000250>

Organizations associated with the Canadian context



Organisations associated with the Canadian context with regulatory, advocacy, and educational missions in professional psychology.

ACPRO = Association of Canadian Psychology Regulatory Organisations;

ASPPB = Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards;

CPA = Canadian Psychological Association;

CPAP = Council of Professional Associations of Psychology;

APPIC = Association of Psychology Postdoctoral and Internship Centers;

CCDP = Council of Canadian Departments of Psychology;

CCPPP = Canadian Council of Professional Psychology Programs;

CCTC = Council of Chairs of Training Councils;

CUDCP = Council of University Directors of Clinical Psychology.

Goghari, V. M., Hagstrom, S., Madon, S., & Messer-Engel, K. (2020). Experiences and learnings from professional psychology training partners during the COVID-19 pandemic: Impacts, challenges, and opportunities. *Canadian Psychology / Psychologie canadienne*, 61(3), 167–189.
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CPA Accreditation Standard Revisions (released 2023)

The major changes to the Standards around increasing access to professional psychology:

- student support and resident/intern compensation (including indexing resident compensation to local living wages)
- integrating Equity, Diversity, Inclusion, Social Justice, Human Rights, and Reconciliation into training, faculty, and program Standards
- broadening the eligibility requirements for programs to be able to apply for accreditation (thus reducing barriers for some of those programs' students to access accredited residency placements)
- providing additional flexibility for programs to offer some proportion of their training through electronically-mediated or distance technology

Diversity & Reconciliation- Largest Issue

Added Foundational Competencies:

Individual, social, and cultural diversity: underscores the awareness and sensitivity in working professionally and conducting research with individuals, groups, and communities who represent various cultural and personal backgrounds and characteristics, as well as the importance of addressing issues of human rights and social justice in all aspects of training.

Indigenous interculturalism: underscores the importance of specific inclusion of education and training related to work and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples in Canada. Training is regionally relevant and includes awareness of the significant work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, as well as the history and harm caused by colonialism and its many sequelae. Training also includes culturally appropriate and strength-based approaches linked to functional competencies (e.g., “Two-Eyed Seeing”).

Bias evaluation, reflective practice: refers to the requirement that a program provide students/residents with skills to be able to reflect on their own biases, assumptions, beliefs, power, and privilege concerning professional practice and to be aware of cognitive biases in deriving and organizing information, as well as in arriving at conclusions and recommendations (e.g., confirmation bias, recency effect).

Ottawa

Black psychologists say there are too few of them in Canada — and that's a problem

Psychology professionals say 'racist' accreditation practices need to change



[Nicole Williams](#) · CBC News · Posted: Sep 01, 2021 4:00 AM EDT | Last Updated: September 1, 2021

Additional Guidance

APPENDIX E

Framework Document for Regional Relationship Building With Indigenous Communities

INTRODUCTION

There are over 630 Indigenous communities in Canada, representing more than 50 Nations and more than 50 distinct languages. Recognition of the unique history, culture, traditions, strengths, and beauty of Indigenous Peoples in Canada and their communities is an essential step in building lasting, respectful, and mutually beneficial relationships.

PURPOSE

The CPA's *Accreditation Standards for Doctoral and Residency Programs in Professional Psychology* have consistently included Standards related to the need for programs to continually evaluate and improve themselves based on changes in local, regional, and national needs for psychological services. However, in order to honour the CPA's commitments to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada's *Calls to Action* and recommendations outlined in *Psychology's Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Report*, and in order to aid programs in building sustainable relationships with Indigenous communities in their regions, the CPA Accreditation Panel thought it necessary to provide additional guidance in this regard.

How to Make Accreditation a Lever for Change

Be bold – don't accredit programs that do not meet important criteria or enough criteria

Balance being prescriptive in standards vs flexibility

Encourage faculty in programs to serve and site reviewers and panel members

Train site reviewers well – to be “eyes and ears” of the panel – not advocate for the programs

Reward honest progress vs pretending to be perfect for programs

- Acknowledge the inherent issue of faculty and students want to be accredited AND want to look good at the institutional level



How to Make Accreditation a Lever for Change

Assess and reward diversity-related progress

- Student and faculty diversity – data collection?
- Curriculum
- Clinical experiences
- Research questions, methods and samples

Train site reviewers to especially focus on issues of:

- Curriculum
- Time to completion
- Faculty and Student Wellness



Does Canada Need Master's Level Accreditation?

The New York Times

College looks to cut psychologist training requirements, citing Ford government changes

National association warns proposal a 'serious threat to public safety'



Jack Hauen
Sep 29, 2025 4:41 PM



Improving access to psychologists shouldn't mean dangerously lowering our standards

SKYE FITZPATRICK, JENN BOSSIO AND MICHAEL K. CHENG

CONTRIBUTED TO THE GLOBE AND MAIL

PUBLISHED OCTOBER 13, 2025

Ontario Psychologists Clash Over How Much Training Is Enough

Psychologists are pushing back against a proposal to cut their training requirements in a bid to license more providers.

By Vjosa Isai

Oct. 18, 2025

PSYCH CAREERS

Rethinking Who Can Be Called a Psychologist

Elitism is stalling solutions to Canada's mental health crisis.

Updated October 21, 2025 | Reviewed by Margaret Foley



KEY POINTS

- The title "psychologist" is already used by MA-level practitioners in many Canadian provinces and globally.
- Ontario's limitations on MA-level practitioners has been a barrier that drives away needed clinicians.
- Title protectionism has discouraged the creation of training programs needed to end a mental health crisis.

MINISTRY OF HEALTH CONSULTATIONS ON PROPOSED CHANGES TO CERTAIN PSYCHOLOGISTS' SCOPE OF PRACTICE TO ADVANCE ACCESS TO CERTAIN MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES IN ONTARIO

The Ministry is consulting on the following scope of practice expansions for psychologists:

- Authorizing psychologists with advanced education and who hold a postdoctoral Master of Science degree in clinical psychopharmacology (MSCP), to prescribe select psychotropic drugs for the management and/or treatment of mental health conditions and addictions.
- Authorizing these same psychologists to order and interpret specific laboratory tests (e.g., bloodwork, urinalysis, mouth swabs) and/or other tests (e.g., electrocardiograms (ECGs)) to support therapeutic drug monitoring.
- Enhancing collaboration between psychologists and primary care providers, such as physicians and nurse practitioners.

THANK YOU

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