APAC–APPA Towards Good Practice Guide Series

Informed consent example

Purpose

Australian Psychology Accreditation Council (APAC), in partnership with the Australian Psychology Placement Alliance (APPA), have developed a series of *Towards Good Practice Guides* that focus on the placement components of accredited and approved psychology programs of study.

This example has been generously shared to support the sharing of knowledge and approaches across different program types and education providers.

Examples and exemplars are intended to encourage discussion and reflection, rather than provide prescribed models of compliance. Adopting an example does not, in itself, demonstrate that a program meets the Accreditation Standards.

We thank all education providers for contributing examples and exemplars to this project.

APAC Accredited program

Education provider:	The Cairnmillar Institute
Program:	Master of Psychology (Clinical Psychology)
Unit/subject (if applicable):	N/A

Overview

Informed consent documentation from The Cairnmillar Institute related to the provision of psychological services by provisional psychologists, under supervision, for postgraduate clinical psychology studies.

Documentation provided:

- Student guide: Informed consent for education and training purposes (p. 2-7),
- Information on the student intranet (p. 8-10),
- Informed consent form: Education and Training (p. 11-12),
- Informed consent for service (p. 13-18),
- Consent to share information (p.19-20).

Student Guide: Informed Consent for Education and Training Purposes

Purpose and Scope

This guide includes a **Student Summary Sheet** version of the *Informed Consent for Education and Training form* which is simple, accessible, and written for students to use when **verbally explaining the consent process to clients** before presenting the official form. It's recommended that students use their own words and check understanding, to reinforce consent as a process rather than a script.

The guide explains the mandatory requirement for all Cairnmillar students to obtain written informed consent when using any client information for education and training purposes. This includes information for coursework, coursework-based research (education and training only) and placements (external and within the Cairnmillar clinics). For example, if you are using a client's case for coursework purposes, you will need to have obtained their written informed consent to do so.

It's important that students understand that this consent does not extend to research or publications. Students are required to follow the informed consent process approved by the relevant Ethics Committee in relation to research.

Frequently Asked Questions

Why do we need to obtain informed consent from clients for use of their information for education and training purposes?

Clients accessing psychology, psychotherapy or counselling services have a right to privacy and to understand how their private information will be handled. Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy students are required to obtain written informed consent for the use of de-identified client information for training and education purposes. Below are the relevant references to this requirement:

- **AHPRA (Psychology):** Psychology Board of Australia's Code of Conduct (2025) section 3.3 (h)
- **PACFA (Counselling & Psychotherapy)**: Code of Ethics (2017) section 4, subsection 5 (g) and section 5,
- **ACA (Counselling & Psychotherapy):** Code of Ethics and Practice (2019) section 4.2 (a)(iii) and 4.7 (d)

What if the client has already provided informed consent, do I still need to give them this form?

It depends on whether the client's existing consent includes permission for their information to be used for education and training purposes. If the placement organisation's own informed consent form specifically includes consent for activities such as supervision, case discussions, assessments, or session observations, then you may not need to ask the client to complete this additional CMI

form. However, if the placement organisation's consent does not clearly cover education and training, or if you are unsure, you must provide this form to ensure informed consent is obtained for all relevant uses of client information. **Always check with your placement provider and supervisor to confirm which consent form(s) should be used in your setting**.

Remember, supervision consent is mandatory for all students. If a client does not consent to their information being shared for supervision, ***you must discuss this with your supervisor or placement representative***, as the client may need to be reassigned to another practitioner who is not under supervision.

Where do I store the completed version of this form?

The completed version of this form must be stored in the client's health record along with other client notes. Any education and training materials created by students (e.g., assessments tasks) are stored separately with Cairnmillar (e.g., Sonia).

What's the difference between a health record and education records?

Health records

Health records contain information about a person's physical or mental health, disability, or the health services they receive. This includes client case notes, assessment information, treatment details, and any other information collected while providing a health service. Health records are governed by health privacy laws and are owned and managed by the health service where care is provided, not by students.

Education records

Education records relate to your progress and performance as a student. These include assessment submissions, competency evaluations, placement documentation, and evidence used for accreditation or audit purposes. Where education records include references to client work, this information is de-identified wherever possible and used only to assess learning outcomes. or example, for supervisor observations you will delete the recording after your unit is complete, however the SONIA forms you submit will contain deidentified client material.

Education records are governed by education and privacy laws and are retained by the Institute in line with regulatory requirements.

Can I just give the client this form or do I have to explain it to them?

You are required to verbally explain and/or reiterate and obtain verbal consent to ensure the client understands what they are agreeing to and answer any questions they may have. Please note this in the client's notes for the session.

How do I de-identify the client's information?

There is information on my.CMI here that students are required to comply with for all education and training work, including for assessments, timesheets (logbooks), reflections etc. You can use this information to explain deidentifying to clients. Note that supervision (individual) and supervisor observations, cannot be deidentified.

Am I required to use this form for role plays etc. in coursework or pre-placement assessments?

Please refer to your unit information on Canvas or enquire with unit teaching staff for guidance.

Who do I need to obtain informed consent from?

There are two main principles underpinning the requirements for managing informed consent, that the client be competent to provide consent and that consent is given freely and without coercion. It is your responsibility to consider whether the client has capacity to consent. CMI recommends you follow the same policies, procedures, and approach your placement service uses for clinical informed consent when deciding whether the client can provide consent.

Student Summary Sheet: Explaining informed consent to clients

(Education and Training Purposes)

This sheet helps you explain to clients why you are asking for their consent and what it means. Please use your own words to make it sound natural and check that the client understands before asking them to sign.

1. Why we need consent

As part of your training, you'll need to:

- Discuss client work in supervision
- Use de-identified information (no names or identifying details) in case reports, presentations, and assessments; and teaching (where relevant)
- Possibly have your supervisor observe or review your work

The client needs to know and agree to this before you do so.

Remember that if the client does not consent to discussing their case in supervision, then as a student you cannot provide them with a service. You will need to discuss, with your supervisor and the placement representative, how to manage situations where this occurs and seek alternative service options to provide for the client (continuity of care principle).

Please be mindful to respect the client's right to provide consent freely and without coercion when explaining the requirement for supervision, including positively discussing alternative service option if consent is not provided.

You can say: *"Because I'm a student completing my professional training, I'm required to discuss my work in supervision, and also use some de-identified details from our sessions for learning purposes. This helps me to receive feedback and develop my professional skills and supports the quality of service provided to you"*

2. How their information will be used

Explain that:

- Their information will only be used for **education and supervision**, not for research or marketing.
- Any identifying information (name, address, workplace, etc.) will be removed when used for case reports and assessments.
- Supervisors who observe sessions are bound by professional confidentiality.

You can say: *"Your privacy is protected, I'll remove your name and any details that could identify you. Only my supervisor and the education team will see this information for training purposes."*

3. Privacy and confidentiality

Make sure clients understand the limits of confidentiality:

- You cannot keep information private if there is **serious risk of harm**, or if the law requires disclosure (for example, child protection or a court order).

- Supervisors and the education team are also bound by professional codes of ethics and must act on these responsibilities.
- If you are providing this form at the same time as informed consent for the service, you can adjust it accordingly so you don't double up. Just remember to specifically address the education and training purpose use and that learning assessments will be identified where possible.

You can say: *"Similar to what we discussed when you consented to the service, what you share with me is kept confidential and is only discussed with my supervisor as part of my training. There are some limits to confidentiality where I may be required by law to share information, including if there is a serious safety concern about you or someone else, or if records must be released, such as under a subpoena. If you agree to your deidentified information being used for education and training purposes, your name and other identifying details will be removed where possible."*

4. How records are stored

Clarify that:

- These are **education records**, not health records.
- Health records, including notes and materials are stored securely, either in the placement service's system or Cairnmillar's approved system.
- For education records, these are stored securely with Cairnmillar, for example through Sonia and/or Canvas. This means access is limited to you (the student), your supervisor, and authorised education staff.

You can say: *"Any notes or learning materials I create for the purpose of my learning are kept securely as part of my training records, not your health record, and only authorised people can access them."*

5. Withdrawing consent

Explain that:

- Clients can withdraw consent at any time.
- Work already completed or submitted for assessment cannot be removed.
- If a client withdraws consent for supervision, you must discuss this with your supervisor and placement provider staff so alternative arrangements can be made. As a student, you are required to discuss your client work with your supervisor to ensure safe, high-quality care.

You can say: *"You can change your mind later, just let me, a staff member or my supervisor know either verbally or in writing. Because I'm a student, I must be supervised, which means I need to discuss your care with my supervisor to make sure the service is safe and high-quality. If you withdraw consent for supervision, we will talk with the service to arrange an alternative clinician or service option for you. Anything already used for my learning cannot be withdrawn, but we won't use anything new from that point on."*

6. Checking understanding

Before asking for a signature, check that the client understands.
You might ask:

- *"Does that make sense?"*
- *"Do you have any questions about how your information will be used?"*

Then provide the official **Informed Consent Form: Education and Training** for them to sign.

Key contact

If the client wants more information or has concerns, they can contact:
The Cairnmillar Institute Email: placements@cairnmillar.edu.au

Information on our student intranet

Informed Consent and Information Sharing

Informed consent protects client rights and supports ethical, transparent practice. During placement, you may need to obtain consent in three different contexts:

1. **Informed consent for services** – the client agrees to receive the psychological service
2. **Informed consent for education and training** – the client agrees to the use of their information for student learning and supervision
3. **Consent to share information** – the client agrees to their information being shared with another person or service

These consent processes are related, but they are not the same. A client may agree to receive services but decline the use of their information for education and training, or decline a request to share information with others.

1. Informed Consent for Services

This covers the psychological service itself, including privacy and confidentiality, limits to confidentiality, supervision, telehealth (if relevant), fees (if relevant), and complaints processes.

What to do: Always follow the placement organisation's process and use their service consent forms. If you need to use the Cairnmillar template, discuss this with your supervisor first and amend it to fit the service context.

Template: Informed Consent for Service Template

2. Informed Consent for Education and Training

This covers the use of client information for student learning and supervision, including:

- supervision (if not already covered in service consent)
- education assessments using de-identified information (e.g. case reports, presentations, learning tasks)
- supervisor observations or recordings for learning and clinical oversight
- teaching using de-identified information

Important:

- Within the placement service, identifiable information may still need to be accessed by supervisors or the placement team for clinical oversight and safe care.

- Information used in **education records** (e.g. Sonia timesheets, placement assessments, case reports submitted for assessment, teaching materials) must be **de-identified**.

What to do

Check with your supervisor or placement contact whether the placement providers standard consent processes already include consent for education and training.

If it does not, discuss this with your supervisor and use the approved Cairnmillar form where permitted.

Guide: Student Guide: Informed Consent for Education and Training

Template: Informed Consent for Education and Training

3. Consent for Sharing Information

Consent to share information is used when client information needs to be shared with another person, service, or organisation outside the immediate care relationship. This requires separate consent unless otherwise permitted or required by law.

Examples may include:

- Sharing information with a GP or referrer
- Communicating with a school or other agency
- Coordinating care with another treating professional

Information should only be shared with the client's consent, or where otherwise permitted or required by law. Always check the placement organisation's process first and discuss with your supervisor before using the Cairnmillar template.

Template: Consent for Information Sharing

What to do on placement

Step 1 — Check the placement provider's process first

Ask your supervisor or placement contact:

- Does the service's consent form already include consent for education and training?
- Does the service have its own process for sharing information with others?

If yes, use the placement provider's forms and processes.

Step 2 — Use the Cairnmillar template where needed

If the placement provider does not already cover the relevant consent area, discuss this with your supervisor and placement contact and use the approved Cairnmillar template where permitted.

Step 3 — Store consent correctly

Signed consent forms must be stored in line with the placement organisation's record-keeping requirements.

Do **not** upload identifiable consent forms into Sonia or other education systems.

If you are unsure which form or process applies, check with your supervisor and placement contact before proceeding.

Informed Consent Form: Education and Training

Purpose of this form

The Cairnmillar Institute (CMI) is a higher education provider that trains students in psychology, counselling, and psychotherapy. As part of their training, students are required to discuss client work in supervision and use examples from their professional practice for educational purposes.

This form explains how your information may be used for education and training, and how your privacy will be protected. Please read carefully and ask any questions before giving your consent.

1. How your information may be used

If you give consent, your student practitioner may use information from your sessions for education and training purposes, including:

- **Supervision**: Discussing your case in supervision sessions with their qualified supervisor(s), including deidentified discussions within group supervision, to support their learning and professional development. All student practitioners are required to work under supervision as part of their professional training. This means their supervisor must review their work, including client notes and reports, and discuss aspects of their practice to ensure safety and quality.
  It is mandatory that students engage in supervision. You are not required to consent to the student discussing your case in supervision, however if you prefer not to consent, your student practitioner will discuss alternative service options with you.
- **Education Assessments:** Using **de-identified information** (that means removing your name and any details that could identify you) in written or verbal assessments such as case reports, case presentations, reflective assignments etc.
- **Observations:** Your student's supervisor may observe or review parts of their work to support the student's learning and ensure quality of practice. This may involve the supervisor, or authorised Cairnmillar Institute staff, viewing a session or a recording that includes your image and/or voice. Observations can take place in person, online, or by reviewing a video recording.

  Your practitioner will let you know beforehand how the observation will occur and will seek your verbal consent at the time of the observation.
- **Teaching:** Using **de-identified information** to teach and train others. This includes but is not limited to developing case scenarios, presentations, lectures, written education material such as textbooks, and role plays.

Your information will **not** be used for research, marketing, or shared outside education and supervision requirements.

2. Privacy and confidentiality

Your privacy and confidentiality are very important to us. The student and their supervisor are bound by professional ethics and privacy laws. This means they cannot share information about you with anyone outside their education or supervision requirements, except if:

- You provide consent to share the information with a third party for a specified purpose
- There is a risk of serious harm to you or someone else
- They are required by law (for example, through a court order or mandatory reporting duty)
- They are required to meet professional or ethical obligations as an AHPRA-registered or other qualified health professional

3. Access, storage and retention of records

The student's notes (e.g., notes regarding the education component and not the delivery of services) and related education materials are considered **education records**, not health records.

- These records are stored on secure and encrypted systems controlled by CMI.
- Only the student, their supervisor, and authorised CMI staff involved in training and assessment can access these records.
- Education records are generally retained for the period required under education and institutional recordkeeping policies and securely deleted after that time.

4. Withdrawing your consent

You can withdraw your consent at any time by letting your student practitioner or their supervisor know verbally or in writing. If you withdraw your consent, your information will no longer be used for education or assessment purposes. However, work already completed or submitted before your withdrawal cannot be removed from educational records or assessments already undertaken.

5. Client details and consent

Client Name:	**Client DOB:**	**Placement Organisation:**
Parent/Guardian Name (if applicable):	***Parent/Guardian Phone:***	***Relationship to client:***

I **give consent** for my information to be used in **supervision and** for (tick all that apply):

☐ **Education Assessments** ☐ **Observations** ☐ **Teaching**

Client/Parent/Guardian Signature:	**Date:**

If you have questions about how your information is used or stored, please contact: **The Cairnmillar Institute**
Email: placements@cairnmillar.edu.au

Student Practitioner Full Name:	**Date:**

Informed Consent for Service

1. Client, service and practitioner details

Service / clinic		**File / client ID**	
Client name		**Date of birth**	
Practitioner name		**Profession**	
Role	Student practitioner	**If student, course**	
Supervisor		**Primary service type**	Assessment / Treatment / Other (please state):

Client group (please tick one):

☐ Adult client ☐ Child (<16 years) ☐ Young Person (16-17 years)

Consent category (please tick one):

☐ Client has capacity by to provide their own consent

☐ Client is a child or young person, lacks capacity to consent, and/or consent is otherwise provided by an authorised representative (e.g., parent, guardian, authorised decision-maker).

2. Consent for service

Your consent is required before we provide a psychology, counselling, and/or psychotherapy service. Before services begin, your practitioner will explain the nature and purpose of the service, the likely benefits, any relevant risks or limitations, and the options available to you. Please ask questions if anything is unclear.

You have a right to withdraw this consent at any time by telling your psychologist or putting your request in writing. You cannot withdraw consent for a service that has already occurred. Your practitioner can discuss with you any implications of withdrawing consent.

3. About the service

The service may include assessment, counselling, psychotherapy, psychological intervention, formulation, review, treatment planning, report writing, liaison with other providers, and related clinical activities relevant to your care.

4. Supervision

To support safe and effective service delivery, the practitioner's work may be discussed in supervision and relevant information may be reviewed by the supervisor. This may include review of clinical notes, case formulation, risk management plans, correspondence, and other information relevant to your care.

Information shared for supervision, training, and service quality purposes will be limited to what is reasonably necessary and handled in accordance with applicable privacy, confidentiality, and service requirements.

5. Personal information and records

To provide a safe and appropriate service, we need to collect and record personal information relevant to your care. This information is a necessary part of the services provided and guides treatment. This may include information about your presenting concerns, history, health, risk, supports, family or relationship context, and information generated through assessment or treatment.

You do not have to provide all requested information. However, if relevant information is withheld, this may affect our ability to assess your needs or provide an appropriate service.

6. Purpose of collecting and holding information

Your personal information is gathered as part of your assessment and treatment. Your information will be confidentially retained to document what happens during sessions and enable the practitioner to provide relevant and informed service to you.

At times, with your consent, we may also gather information from others to help informed the service. That information is treated in the same way as your personal information. for clinical care, documentation, continuity of service, supervision, training, service governance, legal compliance, and safety purposes.

7. Storage, access and privacy

Your information is stored securely in accordance with applicable law and service policies and procedures. It is stored using ("insert the relevant storage method such as secure electronic systems that adhere to Australian Privacy laws / secure filing system etc.")

It will be accessed only by authorised persons who require access for clinical, supervision, administrative, quality assurance, legal, or safety purposes.

You may request access to your personal information or records, subject to applicable law, professional obligations, and service policies. If you would like to access your information, please discuss it with us or you can request in writing. If you believe any information held is inaccurate, incomplete, or out of date, please raise this with your practitioner or the service.

Psychologists, Counsellor and Psychotherapists are required to keep clear and accurate client records as part of their professional obligations. If you do not wish for your personal information to be collected, we may not be able to provide the service to you. Please discuss any concerns you have with your practitioner.

8. Confidentiality and its limits

Personal information gathered by your practitioner will remain confidential except for certain circumstances. In most cases sharing of information will only occur with your consent. Information you provide will be treated confidentially, except where sharing is required or authorised. This may include:

- you consent to information being shared with another person or service;
- sharing is required or authorised by law;

- there is a serious concern about your safety or the safety of another person;
- mandatory reporting obligations apply; or
- a court, tribunal, subpoena, warrant, or other lawful process requires disclosure.

Practitioners, particularly student practitioners, are required to consult and receive supervision from colleagues from time to time. If your information is shared in this context, all care is taken to deidentify your information in such a way that you remain anonymous.

Where possible and appropriate, the limits of confidentiality will be explained to you and discussed with you.

9. Working with other people or services

With your consent, information may be shared with relevant people or services involved in your care. Complete any applicable items below if you wish to authorise contact or information sharing.

Consent item	Authorised	Name / details
Parent / guardian / authorised representative	☐ Yes ☐ No	
General practitioner / referrer	☐ Yes ☐ No	
School / education provider	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Other treating practitioner / service	☐ Yes ☐ No	
Other (specify)	☐ Yes ☐ No	

10. Fees

The cost of consultation is outlined below. Standard consultation is usually between 45-60 minutes.

Fee arrangements	Insert fee structure, including cancellation fees (or no fee if not applicable)
Payment arrangements	Payment is required on the day of attendance. The following payment options apply: ("insert payment options, if applicable")

11. Cancellation Policy

If, for some reason, you need to cancel or reschedule your appointment, please give us as least ("xx hours/yy days") notice. This clinic has a policy regarding late cancellation. If less than [xx] notice is given, you may/will be charged in accordance with the above fee schedule. Settlement of this account is required prior to further sessions being scheduled.

12. Telehealth services

Some or all services may be provided by telehealth, including by video conference or telephone, where this is considered appropriate for your care and the service is able to support this safely and effectively.

Telehealth can offer flexible access to services, but it also has some limitations and risks. These may include:

- technical difficulties, interruptions, or reduced quality of connection.
- limits to privacy if you are in a shared or unsuitable environment.
- limits to what the practitioner can observe compared with in-person sessions.
- limits to the suitability of telehealth for some clinical presentations, levels of risk, or types of intervention.

By consenting to telehealth services, you understand and agree that:

- telehealth may be used for assessment, counselling, psychotherapy, review, and related service activities where appropriate.
- you are responsible for choosing, where possible, a private and safe location for telehealth sessions.
- you will take reasonable steps to protect your own privacy, including using a secure device and internet connection where possible.
- the practitioner or service may confirm your identity, location, and emergency contact details at the start of a telehealth session, particularly where clinically indicated.
- if there are concerns about safety, privacy, technology failure, or the suitability of telehealth, the practitioner may pause, reschedule, or recommend an in-person appointment or another service option.
- the same confidentiality and record-keeping principles apply to telehealth services, subject to the usual legal and ethical limits to confidentiality.
- telehealth sessions will not be recorded unless you are separately informed and specific consent is obtained.

13. How to make a complaint

If you have any concerns about your contact with this service, please discuss these with your practitioner, if you are able. If you would like to make a complaint, you are able to do so by contacting either by phone or in writing to: ("include appropriate contact details here").

If your complaint relates to a Cairnmillar student, you can also contact the Dean of the Faculty of Psychology, Counselling and Psychotherapy via email (dean@cairnmillar.edu.au) or phone (03) 9813 3400

14. Period of consent

This consent applies for the duration of the service unless it is withdrawn earlier, reviewed because the nature of the service changes, or ends on the date specified below.

End date (if applicable): ____ / ____ / _____

15. Consent statement

By signing below, I confirm that (please tick all boxes as relevant):

- ☐ I have read and understood this form, or it has been explained to me in a way I understand,
- ☐ I have had the opportunity to ask questions,
- ☐ I understand the nature of the service, including the role of supervision,
- ☐ I understand how my information may be collected, used, stored, and disclosed,
- ☐ I understand the nature, benefits, limitations, and risks of telehealth services and consent to receiving services by telehealth where appropriate, and
- ☐ I consent to receive the service described above.

16. Signatures

Client

Complete where the client has capacity to provide their own consent.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Parent 1 / guardian / authorised decision-maker

Complete where the client is a child or young person, lacks capacity to consent, or consent is otherwise provided by an authorised representative.

Name	
Relationship to client / basis of authority	
Contact phone and email	
Signature	
Date	

Parent 2 / guardian / authorised decision-maker

Complete where the client is a child or young person, lacks capacity to consent, or consent is otherwise provided by an authorised representative.

Name	
Relationship to client / basis of authority	
Contact phone and email	

Signature	
Date	

Cairnmillar INSTITUTE

Consent to Share Information

Client, service and practitioner details

Service / clinic		**File / client ID**	
Client name		**Date of birth**	
Practitioner name		**Profession**	
Role	Student practitioner	**If student, course**	
Supervisor		**Primary service type**	Assessment / Treatment / Other (please state):

Client group (please tick one):

☐ Adult client ☐ Child (<16 years) ☐ Young Person (16-17 years)

Consent category (please tick one):

☐ Client has capacity by to provide their own consent

☐ Client is a child or young person, lacks capacity to consent, and/or consent is otherwise provided by an authorised representative (e.g., parent, guardian, authorised decision-maker).

It has been discussed with me, and where applicable, my authorised decision-maker how and why certain information may be shared with others, as listed below. I understand this and give my consent for the information to be shared as stated. This consent remains current for the period of _____ and will be revisited as required.

Consent to share information		
Personal information to be shared (including exceptions	**Name of agency or person with who the information will be shared with**	**Purpose of information sharing**

Written Consent

Client

Complete where the client has capacity to provide their own consent.

Name	
Signature	
Date	

Parent 1 / guardian / authorised decision-maker

Complete where the client is a child or young person, lacks capacity to consent, or consent is otherwise provided by an authorised representative.

Name	
Relationship to client / basis of authority	
Contact phone and email	
Signature	
Date	

Parent 2 / guardian / authorised decision-maker

Complete where the client is a child or young person, lacks capacity to consent, or consent is otherwise provided by an authorised representative.

Name	
Relationship to client / basis of authority	
Contact phone and email	
Signature	
Date	