



Inherent Requirements Policy

Master of Psychology (Forensic)

School of Psychology, UNSW

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PART 1: Introduction

1.1 Introduction to the Inherent Requirements Policy

The UNSW School of Psychology supports the right of all people to pursue psychology programs. The School is committed to making reasonable adjustments to teaching and learning, assessment, clinical/forensic practice and other activities to address the impact of students' disabilities so that they are able to participate in their program.

Inherent Requirements (IR) are the abilities, knowledge and standards of conduct and performance that are essential for a student to be able to achieve the learning outcomes of the MPPsychol (Forensic) program and transition to the profession, including standards set by professional or accreditation bodies, such as Ahpra (Australian Health Practitioner Regulation Agency) and PsyBA (Psychology Board of Australia).

To support potential and current students' decision making, a series of inherent requirement statements have been developed that specify the requirements of the MPPsychol (Forensic) program. The statements are clustered under eight domains consisting of:

- Ethical behaviour
- Behavioural stability
- Legal requirements
- Communication
- Cognition
- Relational skills
- Reflective skills
- Sustainable performance

Many of the activities associated with the professional practice of a registered psychologist are time sensitive, where the capacity to perform certain activities within specified time limits is required to reduce or avoid risks to client safety and wellbeing. The safety and wellbeing of students and others is always of paramount importance. The inherent requirements outlined below provide a guide to understanding the requirements and the type of reasonable adjustments that could be put in place to allow a student to complete the program without compromising the academic integrity of the program. Successful completion of the MPPsychol (Forensic) program at UNSW enables a student to apply for registration as a registered psychologist with the PsyBA, which is a partner board of Ahpra.

1.2 How to Read the Inherent Requirements Statements

If a student intends to enrol in the MPPsychol (Forensic) program in the UNSW School of Psychology, reviewing the inherent requirements are essential to reflect on the potential challenges in meeting them. If a student thinks they may experience challenges related to a disability, chronic health condition or any other reason, they should discuss their concerns with the [UNSW Equitable Learning Support](#) in conjunction with the Program Director. Staff work collaboratively with students to determine reasonable adjustments to assist in meeting the Inherent Requirements. In the case where it is determined that Inherent Requirements cannot be met with reasonable adjustments, the University staff can provide guidance regarding other study options.

These inherent requirements should be read in conjunction with:

UNSW MPPsychol (Forensic) Guidelines
UNSW MPPsychol (Forensic) Placement policy
[Psychology Board of Australia codes, guidelines and policies](#)
[Australian Psychology Accreditation Council Standards](#)

Each inherent requirement is made up of the following four levels:

- Level 1 - introduction and description of the inherent requirement
- Level 2 - explanation of why this is an inherent requirement of the program

- Level 3 - the nature of any adjustments that may be made to allow you to meet the requirement
- Level 4 - examples of things you must be able to do to show you've met the requirement

PART 2: Inherent Requirements

2.1 Inherent Requirements

Inherent Requirement 1 – Ethical Behaviour

Level 1 – Definition/description	Psychologists are governed by codes, policies, guidelines and regulations of the organization and jurisdiction in which they work. They are accountable and responsible for ensuring professional and ethical behaviour. Students must demonstrate their knowledge and engagement in ethical behaviour in practice throughout their academic and placement activities.
Level 2 – Rationale	Compliance with professional and ethical standards ensures safe, competent interactions and relationships with students and their clients. Forensic psychologists often must deal with vulnerable and diverse populations; ensuring their physical, psychological, emotional and spiritual well being is of the utmost importance (in keeping with General Principle A (Respect for the rights and dignity of people and peoples) (See Code of Conduct).
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	Any adjustment must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization or Ahpra.
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	Adherence to conduct required to maintain provisional registration as a psychologist, and maintain good standing as a student within UNSW.

Inherent Requirement 2 – Behavioural Stability

Level 1 – Definition/description	Behavioural stability is related to an individual's consistency in their behaviour and cognitive, emotional and socially stable qualities and dispositions. It is required to function and adapt effectively and sensitively across demanding roles and environments. Students must be able to demonstrate behavioural stability to work constructively in diverse and changing academic and clinical environments, which may at times be challenging and unpredictable.
Level 2 – Rationale	Behavioural stability is required to work individually and in teams in diverse and changing environments and with a diversity of clients. Students will be exposed to situations which are challenging and unpredictable, and will be required to have the behavioural stability to manage these objectively and professionally. Behavioural stability should not be conflated with rigidity in cognitive or emotional style; it is

	more closely aligned with the ability to be flexible within a set of professional and ethical parameters.
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	Adjustments must support stable, effective and professional behaviour in both academic and clinical settings. Any adjustment must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization or Ahpra.
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	Being receptive and responding appropriately to constructive feedback. Having a strong tolerance for scrutiny and uncertainty. Demonstrating the ability to manage one's own emotional state in order to be able to develop and maintain a working relationship with a diverse range of clients. Ability to manage conflicts to maintain work relationships with colleagues, within and between organizations.

Inherent Requirement 3 – Legal Requirements

Level 1 – Definition/description	Psychological practice is mandated by specific legislation to enable the safe delivery of care. Students must be able to demonstrate knowledge of, and compliance with, relevant laws and professional regulations through their academic and placement activities.
Level 2 – Rationale	Knowledge, understanding and compliance with legislative and regulatory requirements are necessary pre-requisites to placements in order to reduce the risk of harm to self and others. Compliance with these regulations and the law ensures that students are both responsible and accountable for their practice. Forensic psychologists, in particular, need to be aware of the potential interaction between their practice and the law.
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	Adjustments must be consistent with legal and regulatory requirements. Any adjustment must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization or Ahpra.
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	Complying with legal requirements regarding all aspects of practice. Complying with requirements for provisional registration with the Australian Health Professional Registration Authority (Ahpra). Seeking supervision or guidance if ethical or professional issues arise throughout their professional program.

Inherent Requirement 4 – Communication Skills (verbal, non-verbal and written)

Level 1 – Definition/description	Verbal: Effective and efficient verbal communication, in English, is an essential requirement to provide safe delivery of psychological care. While psychological competency (can easily translate complex psychological terminology to another language from English) in another language is advantageous, it is recognized that most psychological services are provided in English. Students must be able to demonstrate:
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The ability to understand and respond to verbal communication accurately, appropriately and in a timely manner. ❖ The ability to provide clear information in the context of a situation. ❖ Timely clear feedback. ❖ The ability to communicate in group settings. <p>Non-verbal: Effective non-verbal communication is fundamental to psychological practice. Non verbal communication needs to be respectful, clear, attentive, empathic, honest and non-judgmental, and there also needs to be the ability to observe it in others. Students should be able to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The capacity to recognise, interpret and respond appropriately to behavioural cues. ❖ Consistent and appropriate awareness of own behaviours. ❖ Sensitivity to individual and cultural differences. <p>Written: Effective written communication is a fundamental responsibility with professional and legal ramifications. Students must demonstrate capacity to construct coherent written communication appropriate to the circumstances which are completed in a timely manner.</p>
Level 2 – Rationale	<p>Verbal: The practice of psychology depends on effective verbal communication with clients and colleagues. The speed and accuracy of communication may be critical for individual safety or treatment.</p> <p>Non-verbal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues assists with building a working relationship with clients. ❖ Displaying consistent and appropriate facial expressions, eye contact, being mindful of space, pacing, body movements and gestures. ❖ Being sensitive to individual and cultural differences demonstrates respect and empathy, and permits the development of working relationships with clients. ❖ The ability to observe and understand non-verbal cues is essential for safe and effective observation of clients' symptoms and reactions as part of their assessment and treatment. <p>Written: Construction of written assignments to reflect the required academic standards are necessary to convey knowledge and understanding of relevant subject matter for professional practice. Accurate, timely, effective written communication for a range of purposes and audiences is vital to provide consistent and safe client care.</p>
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	<p>Verbal: Any adjustment must address ability to maintain effective, timely, clear and accurate communication to ensure safety.</p> <p>Non-Verbal: Any adjustment must maintain the ability to recognise, interpret and respond to non-verbal cues as well as initiation of effective non-verbal communication in a timely and appropriate manner.</p> <p>Written:</p>

	Any adjustment must not compromise or impede student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of knowledge and cognitive skill required to practice safely.
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	<p>Verbal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Collecting and collating information from clients by asking relevant questions during assessments. ❖ Explaining a treatment plan concisely to a client. ❖ Discussing the client's progress with other professionals. ❖ Participating in group projects and collaborations with other students. <p>Non-Verbal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Recognising and responding to non-verbal cues indicating a change in the emotional state of a client. ❖ Recognising and responding to non-verbal cues in classroom situations. <p>Written:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Constructing an essay to required academic standards including appropriate referencing of sources. ❖ Preparing a psychological assessment report which is appropriate to the purpose and audience, and completed in a timely manner.

Inherent Requirement 5 – Cognition (knowledge and cognitive skill, literacy, numeracy)

Level 1 – Definition/description	<p>Knowledge and Cognitive Skill: Consistent and effective knowledge and cognitive skills must be demonstrated to undertake safe and competent practice. Student demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The capacity to locate, process, integrate, and implement appropriate and relevant information to practice. <p>Literacy: Competent literacy skills are essential to permit safe and effective practice during placements. Students should be able to demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The ability to accurately acquire information and convey appropriate, effective messages. ❖ The ability to read and comprehend a range of literature and information. ❖ The capacity to understand and implement academic conventions to construct written text in a scholarly manner. <p>Numeracy: Competent and accurate numeracy skills are essential to provide safe and effective demonstration of psychology practice skills. Students must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ the ability to interpret and correctly apply numerical data, measurement and numerical criteria in the execution assessments or other 'scoring type' tasks while on placement.
Level 2 – Rationale	Knowledge and Cognitive Skills:

	<p>Satisfactory performance on placements requires identifying and accurately extracting and understanding information from a range of sources, which must also be applied appropriately.</p> <p>Literacy: The ability to acquire information and to accurately convey messages is fundamental to ensure safe and effective assessment, treatment and delivery of care.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The ability to read, decode, interpret and comprehend multiple sources of information is fundamental for safe and effective conduct during placements. <p>Numeracy: Psychological practice relies in part on collecting data in a numerical form, for example psychometric assessments or Routine Outcome Monitoring data; students must be able to accurately record and manage numerical data and to interpret their findings.</p>
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	<p>Knowledge and Cognitive Skills: Any adjustment must not compromise or impede the student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of knowledge and cognitive skill required to practice safely.</p> <p>Literacy: Any adjustment must maintain the ability to effectively acquire, comprehend, apply and communicate accurate information.</p> <p>Numeracy: Any adjustment must not compromise or impede student's ability to demonstrate the minimum acceptable level of capacity to manage and interpret numerical data.</p>
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	<p>Knowledge and Cognitive Skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Ability to apply academic knowledge to practice during placements, for example through developing and testing hypotheses, developing treatment plans and then conducting individual sessions for clients based upon this. <p>Literacy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Conveying a spoken message accurately and effectively in a clinical or forensic setting during placements. <p>Numeracy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Being able to accurately score and interpret a standardised psychological test on placement.

Inherent Requirement 6 – Relational Skills

Level 1 – Definition/description	<p>Psychology practice requires the ability to make and maintain strong relationships with a wide range of clients, often under stressful circumstances. Students are required to undertake course, placement and other activities in mixed gender environments which reflect the Australian work context. Students must demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The ability to attain and maintain a working relationship with clients.
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	❖ The ability to demonstrate common factors in therapy.
Level 2 – Rationale	Highly developed relational skills (common factors) are a cornerstone of effective therapeutic relationships that permit effective assessment and intervention.
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	Any adjustment must not compromise the safety or security of clients, organizations or colleagues, and further, must not compromise any codes, guidelines, policies or regulation of UNSW, the placement organization or Ahpra.
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Able to effectively build a working relationship with a client in order to engage them in an assessment or treatment while on placement. ❖ Effectively managing difficulties arising in the therapeutic relationship while on placement, ability to make repair. ❖ Does not engage in splitting or triangulation within a worksite. ❖ Acts with integrity.

Inherent Requirement 7 – Reflective Skills

Level 1 – Definition/description	<p>Psychological practice requires self-awareness and a capacity for reflectivity in order to consider the effect of one's own issues, actions, values and behaviours on practice. Students demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The ability to accurately reflect on their professional work. ❖ The ability to accept feedback on their professional practice, reflect, and respond constructively.
Level 2 – Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Effective use of supervision is a key teaching strategy in psychology training which requires adequate understanding of oneself in order to appropriately engage in this activity. ❖ Working with clients while on placement; understanding and responding to them requires adequate understanding of oneself and the ability to effectively manage one's reactions to situations that may arise.
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	Any reflective skills impairment must not compromise the student's ability to demonstrate an acceptable minimum level of capacity in this area.
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Identifying when an issue is outside one's level of competency, or when one's practice may be affected by an impairment.

Inherent Requirement 8 – Sustainable Performance

Level 1 – Definition/description	<p>Psychological practice requires both physical and mental performance at a consistent and sustained level to meet individual needs over time. Students demonstrate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Consistent and sustained level of cognitive and physical energy to complete tasks in a timely manner over time. ❖ The ability to perform repetitive activities with a level of concentration that ensures a capacity to focus on the activity. ❖ The capacity to maintain consistency and quality of performance throughout the designated period of duty.
Level 2 – Rationale	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Sufficient physical and mental endurance is an essential requirement needed to perform multiple tasks in an assigned period to provide safe and effective care.
Level 3 – Potential adjustments	<p>Any adjustment must ensure that performance can be maintained in a relatively consistent manner over a given period of time.</p>
Level 4 – Exemplars that demonstrate that students have met the inherent requirement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Participating in workshops, lectures throughout the day. ❖ Remaining focussed and providing consistent responses over a negotiated time frame during placement. ❖ Engaging in appropriate self care to ensure safe and effective delivery of service.

PART 3: Compliance Procedures

3.1 Purpose, Context and Definitions

This procedure prescribes the process through which the MPsycho (Forensic) program manages concerns that a student is not meeting the inherent requirements of their program or subject. The procedures described do not preclude a student from utilising any other form of redress available to the student within UNSW policies and procedures. For the purposes of these procedures, the following definitions apply:

- **Action plan** refers to a student created document/plan that identifies a barrier or issue that requires remediation and is implemented at the request of a program member, clinic team or supervisor.
- **Appeal** means an application made by a student to have a decision reviewed where that decision relates to a matter affecting an outcome on a course or program decision.
- **External Placement site** means the organisation at which the student's placement is undertaken.
- **Fitness to Practice (FTP)** means a student's demonstrated ability to meet the expected standards of conduct, compliance, knowledge, performance, and capacity required by the relevant profession and legislation governing the profession.
- **Inherent Requirements (IR)** means abilities, knowledge, and standards of conduct and performance that are essential for a student to be able to achieve the learning outcomes of a program or subject, and transition to the profession after graduating.
- **Initial Risk Assessment** means the initial evaluation of a concern raised regarding a student's compliance with inherent requirements, completed by the Program Director/program team/clinic team, in order to determine whether the concern should be investigated formally (through UNSW or Ahpra procedures, or through PCAB) or can be addressed informally within the program. Initial risk assessments involve assessment of the severity of potential hazards and risks resulting from the alleged student behaviour or capacity.

- **Internal Placement site** refers to the UNSW Forensic Psychology Clinic (UFPC)
- **Misconduct** means wilful or unreasonable behaviour that the student would be expected to understand as clearly falling short of reasonable professional standards. Refer to the [Student Code of Conduct](#) for more information.
- **Placement** means a work integrated learning activity, required as part of the MPsychol (Forensic) requirements.
- **Placement Coordinator** means the University staff member responsible for managing a student's placement.
- **Procedural Fairness** refers to the procedures used by a decision-maker in dealing with an allegation are fair and requires:
 - adherence to established principles of natural justice;
 - a hearing appropriate to the level;
 - impartiality of the decision-maker; and
 - evidence to support the finding.
- **Professional Competencies Advisory Board (PCAB)** is an ad hoc board of external psychologists convened by the Program Director to more formally review recommendations of a placement, or program failure.
- **Program Leave** is a measure that can be recommended as part of a Remediation Plan when a student's non-compliance with inherent requirements poses an unacceptable level of risk that cannot be addressed through reasonable adjustments. Program leave can prohibit a student from engaging in learning activities, attending placements in placement subjects, and/or prohibit the student from registering or re-registering in subjects that contain the same inherent requirement.
- **Reasonable Adjustment** means the provision of measures, actions or adjustments made to teaching, learning, assessment and placements to enable students with disabilities or chronic health conditions the opportunity to meet the relevant program learning outcomes on the same basis as students without a disability. Reasonable adjustments may also be made on religious or other grounds, such as culture. Reasonable adjustments must ensure that competency attainment is not compromised.
- **Remediation** means the opportunity for students to complete an additional placement in order to address the causes of their failure to meet inherent requirements. If remediation is successful, the student will have regained compliance with their program's inherent requirements.
- **Remediation plan** is a student created and directed plan for addressing competency or IR concerns that have resulted in the failure of a placement.
- **Reporter** means any individual or entity who raises a concern with a MPsychol (Forensic) staff member if they witness or have reasonable suspicion regarding a student's failure to maintain the inherent requirements of their course or program.
- **Student** means any person who is enrolled in the MPsychol (Forensic) program at UNSW.
- **Supervisor** refers to a Board Accredited Supervisor (BAS).
- **Support Person** means a person chosen by a student to support them at an Inherent Requirements meeting. The support person may assist the student but not act as an advocate.

3.2 Procedures

Any person (the reporter) may raise a concern with program staff members regarding a student's compliance with program or placement inherent requirements. The Program Director will conduct an initial risk assessment (see section 3.3 for risk considerations) within a short timeframe to ensure that any immediate or serious risk has been managed. The student and any other relevant staff or others may be consulted in aiding with this determination. Once a level of risk has been determined, the student will be notified by the Program Director to outline a plan and ensure the student has been informed of all avenues of addressing the issue and receiving appropriate resources and support. In the case where an immediate risk needs to be addressed based on the student's capacity or behaviour, such as halting appointments for a student on placement, the

Program Director or appropriate staff (such as the Clinic Director or Placement Coordinator) may ensure that the risk is ameliorated.

Where the Program Director determines that the concern is minor and manageable within the programs' own resources, they will ensure that a reasonable plan is developed and implemented by the student and relevant staff or others (development of an Action plan) to support a student to rectify the noted issue(s). If a more formal review is required, the issue(s) may be sent to other UNSW resolution sites, such as Student Conduct and Integrity) or in the case where there has been a recommendation for failure of a placement, the Program Director has the ability to convene a Professional Competencies Review Board (PCAB).

The process of considering a concern regarding a student's compliance with inherent requirements is carried out in accordance with procedural fairness. Students have the right to:

- have the concern investigated as promptly as possible;
- be given an opportunity to discuss the concern with program staff;
- invite a support person to attend meetings relating to the investigation of a concern; and
- appeal any outcome through other relevant UNSW policies and procedures

3.3 Initial Response – Initial Risk Review

Risk level	Low	Moderate	High
IR breach level	Minor Minor or no impact on student compliance with inherent requirements	Moderate Moderate impact on student compliance with inherent requirements	Major Major failure of student to comply with inherent requirements
Examples of Consequences	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor or no impact on the reputation of the program and its standing with the profession • Minor impact on other students' learning opportunities • No/minor impact on client/public safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moderate impact on the reputation of the program and its standing with the profession • Moderate impact on other students' learning opportunities • Moderate impact on client/public safety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions impact on the reputation of the program and its standing with the profession • Significant impact on the reputation of the University and/or other organisation(s) • Significant impact on client/public safety • Significant impact on other students' learning opportunities
Recommended outcome	No formal investigation or action. Placement supervisors or Placement Coordinator (in the case of external placements) may discuss concern with appropriate individuals to implement an Action Plan	Decision by Program Staff as to whether to manage the situation internally within the program or to seek further consultation with other appropriate UNSW resources. If appropriate, the student may remain engaged in learning activities through reasonable adjustments. For lesser issues, the student may be required to develop and complete an Action Plan within the course or placement, for more serious concerns, students may be asked to take program leave and develop a Remediation plan, or in the most significant cases, then other UNSW processes may be	

		implemented (e.g., Student Misconduct Procedures, or mandatory reporting to Ahpra). Where reasonable adjustment and remediation fail, or in the case of misconduct, the program eligibility may be terminated.	
		In the case where failure of a course or placement is recommended, the Program Director may convene a Professional Competencies Advisory Board (PCAB)	
Examples			
These examples provide a guide only. Risk decisions may be specific to a course or placement			
Conduct	One-off, infrequent, or non-serious instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•failing to engage or actively participate•lack of punctuality•lack of communication of a minor nature or seriousness (e.g. inappropriate communication that does not lead to, or risk, serious consequences)•Impairing in a minor way the ability of a program staff member or another student to participate in a learning activity•Minor inappropriate use of mobile phones or other electronic devices during University or External Placement site placements.•Inadequate preparation or clean-up of placement work area	Frequent or serious instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• lack of punctuality• non-attendance and/or lack of communication at compulsory program or placement-based learning activities without a valid reason• Failure to respond to a direction from a program staff member or placement supervisor resulting in minor risk to clients and/or the wider community (including other students and placement staff) One or more instances of any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Leaving assigned placement without authorisation from program or placement supervisor• Minor breach of privacy or confidentiality (e.g. failure to limit the ability of others to hear or see confidential information). Having confidential materials on a personal laptop.• Minor damage and/or inappropriate use or lack of care of equipment or materials at a placement site	Frequent or serious instances: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• failure to engage or actively participate in program or placement-based learning activity• non-attendance at any placement-based learning activities without a valid reason One or more instances of any of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none">•Fraud (generation of fraudulent placement documents, forgery, copying professional documentation, etc.);• Failure to respond to a direction from a program staff member or placement supervisor resulting (or potentially resulting) in a serious risk to clients and/or the wider community (including other students and placement staff)• Assault, theft or other serious criminal offence• Intoxication by alcohol or drugs in connection with the practice setting (including being under the influence of prescription drugs that impair performance in the placement setting)• Engagement in sexual misconduct in connection

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minor breach of health and safety policy/ requirements 	<p>with the placement</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication issues of a serious nature (including inappropriate use of social media, victimisation, exploitation and blackmail, harassment, bullying, threatening behaviour, serious rudeness or aggression and intimidation) • Serious breach of confidentiality (disclosure of an individual's information to others, where the information was previously unknown). Includes recording or photographing clients or client information using a mobile phone or similar device • Providing intervention to a client without, or outside of the scope of, an approved treatment plan, appropriate supervision, and/or signed client informed consent • Providing intervention to a client without supervision or supervisor approval • Damage to, or inappropriate use or lack of care for equipment or materials • Serious breach of health and safety policy/ requirements
Compliance	<p>One-off, infrequent, or non-serious failure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with minor professional codes or requirements • comply with infection control protocols including failure to wear the required personal protective equipment 	<p>Frequent or serious failure to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • comply with infection control protocols including failure to wear the required personal protective equipment <p>One or more instances of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pending criminal legal matter 	<p>One or more instances of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Failure to complete and/or maintain the pre-placement requirements, including signing of all contracts and documents by all parties, and ensuring their delivery to the Placement

		<p>of a nature that is unlikely to impact the student's ability to maintain required criminal record clearances and meet placement providers' standards to enable them to continue to undertake a placement</p>	<p>Coordinator</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breaching standards of the code of ethics, professional association or professional registration body (including failure to maintain provisional psychologist status) as well as the External Placement site policies and procedures • Pending criminal legal matter of a nature that is likely to impact the student's ability to maintain required criminal record clearances and meet placement providers' standards to enable them to continue to undertake practical placements (recognising a student's right to an assumption of innocence until convicted) • Failure to disclose a criminal charge or conviction where the student is required to do so through a student undertaking as part of placement or Ahpra registration. • Failure to disclose an inability to meet inherent requirements, such as failure to disclose a relevant medical problem or disability • Failure to successfully complete a return to practise competency assessment through the program or Ahpra • Failure to complete and/or maintain the pre-placement requirements that is not able to be addressed in the short-term
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Performance	<p>One-off, infrequent, or non-serious instances of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Illegible recording of client records • Lack of English language proficiency resulting in minor mis-understandings in responding to and giving instructions 	<p>One or more instances of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of English language proficiency resulting in significant misunderstandings in responding to and giving instructions • Deficient, inaccurate or incomplete recording of client records/reports/ case notes/student logs • Failure to demonstrate practical competence to the standard and safety levels expected of a student at their level of training that may be remediable 	<p>One or more instances of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interpersonal communication skills are not of a sufficient standard to undertake placement activities in the community with persistent failure to improve • English language proficiency that places the public at risk of substantial harm • Failure to demonstrate practical competence to the standard and safety levels expected of a student at their level of training that cannot be remediated
Capacity	<p>One-off, infrequent, or non-serious instances of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temporary lowering of capacity (for example due to a mental or physical disability or medical condition) • Exacerbation of an existing physical disability or medical condition that is usually well managed and is capable of redress through reasonable adjustments in the short term 	<p>One or more instances of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existing disability or medical condition that is not well managed but is capable of remediation in the short term 	<p>One or more instances of any of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chronic lowering of capacity (for example due to a mental or physical disability or medical condition) that impacts a student's capacity to meet inherent requirements and/or places the public at risk of substantial harm
Adapted from Western Sydney University and University of Queensland 'Fitness to Practice' Policy			

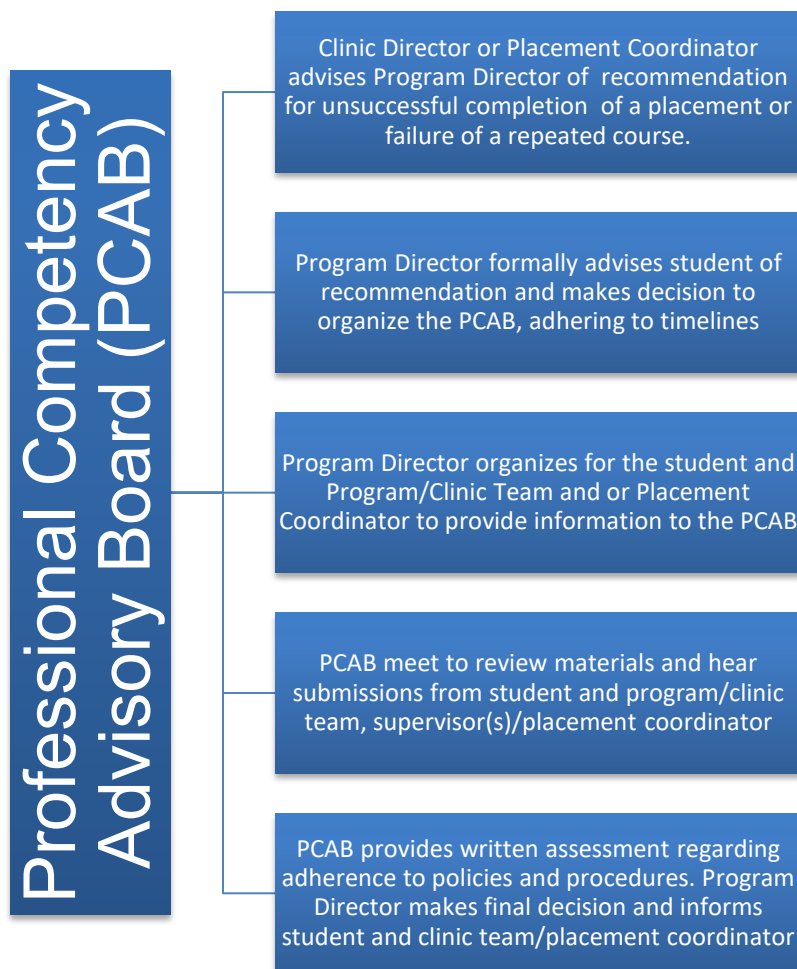
3.4 Professional Competencies Review Board (PCAB)

The PCAB is a non-binding procedure which may be implemented for those instances where the Program Team, Clinic Team or Placement Coordinator/External Placement Supervisor have:

- recommended the unsuccessful completion of an internal or external placement, or
- recommended failure of the program due to more than two unsuccessful attempts to pass a course or placement; or
- recommended failure of the program due to significant professional or ethical behaviour has occurred and mandatory reporting through Ahpra have recommended internal resolution

The PCAB would be considered as an additional local process which sits alongside and does not limit rights to any other university process. The primary remit of the PCAB would be to review the decision process of the program/clinic team or placement coordinator/external placement supervisor so that decisions are reflective of professional practice standards and requirements.

When implemented, the PCAB is convened by the Program Director and is comprised of two independent senior forensic or clinical psychologists who have experience in the supervision of provisional psychologists in training. The PCAB would review information submitted by both the student and the program/clinic team or Placement Coordinatory/external supervisor(s) and provide an assessment as to whether the program adhered to all policies and procedures. Following is a simple flowchart that outlines the procedure.



3.5 Procedures and consideration for PCAB

Convening of a PCAB

A PCAB is convened for any recommendation for unsuccessful completion of a placement, repeated course failure, or program failure (even when a mandatory notification or similar issue has occurred). A student can decline to participate in the PCAB process, though the procedure will still be held in their absence. While the policy on Student Complaint Procedures (<https://www.unsw.edu.au/content/dam/pdfs/governance/policy/2022-01-policies/studentcomplaintprocedure.pdf>) generally identifies that local processes should be sought prior to making a formal complaint, the PCAB process would not preclude a student from seeking additional redress for any concerns they may have. The Program Director would convene the PCAB through contacting contracted psychologists who have been identified and agreed to participate in this process

PCAB timeframe: Given potential concerns regarding whether students can continue to enroll in the associated courses (i.e., PEPs) and census dates that may be relevant, a timeline of four weeks is recommended for the outcome of the PCAB (written report outlining recommendations).

Information provided to the PCAB: The PCAB will be provided with documentation from the Program/Clinic teams and/or Supervisors/Placement Coordinators regarding the competency, professional and/or ethical concerns leading to their recommendation. Documentation may include supervisor notes, supervisor reports, logs, Action plans, Remediation plans, email chains, competency reviews etc. The student will be provided with

a document outlining what information the student will be able to provide to the PCAB. Any redaction or withholding of documentation would need to be discussed with the Program Director and PCAB.

Role of the PCAB members and Program Director: The PCAB will meet (primarily online) once they have received and reviewed the information to identify any outstanding concerns that need to be resolved, and to organize for additional submissions (e.g., interview with the student, program/clinic team, placement coordinator, external supervisor, requests for additional documentation). The Program Director will assist the PCAB members in arranging the necessary access to information and the Program Director's role will also be to facilitate and provide contextual information around the training and university operations. Optimally, the two external members will meet with the student and staff or supervisor(s) in order to form conclusions as to whether all policies and procedures were followed.

The outcomes of the PCAB can be:

No action

- A failure of inherent requirements compliance is not deemed to have occurred; or
- There is insufficient evidence to determine if failure of inherent requirements compliance has occurred;
- In this case, the student must be returned to full participation in placement with no loss of hours of placement, or must be provided a hurdle pass for the related placement course.

Action or Remediation plan

- If the PCAB determined that policies/procedures were not fully followed or that reasonable additional supports could have been put into place, and the potential for remediation is noted, then the PCAB may recommend an Action plan. If the Program Director supports this recommendation, then the student is held responsible for developing and undertaking the Action plan. Students are expected to manage the Action plan with the placement supervisors or other relevant staff/supervisors. In this case, the student would hold the Action plan over to the next placement, the Placement Coordinator would liaise with the External Placement supervisor and the student would be provided a hurdle pass for the related placement course
- If it is noted the recommendation for an Action plan is not deemed to have the possibility of remediating the concerns in the short term, then a Remediation placement can be recommended, where the recommendation for failure of the placement is upheld and the student has the opportunity to achieve competency and compliance. If the Program Director supports this recommendation, program leave is often recommended at this time to ensure the student has adequate time to address any barriers, deficiencies or concerns identified prior to returning for the Remediation placement. The student is held responsible for developing and undertaking the Remediation plan, which includes their understanding of the barriers or deficits, and a detailed plan as to how they will address the concerns within a stated timeframe. The Remediation plan may include actions such as attending psychological therapy, completing a specified treatment program, taking leave, completing further education or assessment, making repair to aggrieved parties, or attending support meetings

Termination from course/program

- In the case where a Remediation plan has not been successful, where a student has failed a course twice and there is no expectation of remediation; or the breach of Inherent Requirements or conduct was so significant that remediation would not be an option, or misconduct occurred, then termination from the program can be recommended. The Program Director has the final decision in these cases (though a student maintains the right to any other resources and avenues they can pursue).

The information contained in this guide is correct as at July 2025. Prospective students should contact UNSW to confirm admission requirements and availability of programs. UNSW reserves the right to change any programs, admission requirement or other information herein without any prior notice. CRICOS Provider No. 000098G.

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