

# **Understanding the Spirit Behind the CPA Accreditation Standards**

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## What this session is designed to help you do:

- Recognize the most frequently misunderstood standards
- Engage in a wider process of thinking around the implementation of the standards - AKA the 'spirit'

## What is not included:

- Specific directives about program structure
- Specific examples of completed self-studies
  - But – the **CCPPP listserve** is a wonderful resource for these needs and many others: [www.ccpvp.ca](http://www.ccpvp.ca)

# Differences between Regulation & Accreditation

Regulation	Accreditation
Satisfying minimum standards	Satisfying minimum standards which are typically set at a higher threshold
Protection of the public	Protection of the public by way of first protecting students
Checklist of independent requirements that must all be met	“The whole is greater than the sum of its parts” – no program is perfect, some requirements are more challenging to meet, & many interact with each other

## Key for addressing all standards:

- **\*No program is perfect\***
- Not simply a 'yes or no' checklist
- Much more so about HOW meeting / working towards meeting the standard
- Spirit is very much in the HOW and WHY

The accreditation standards ask programs to answer:

- *What do you do?*
- *Why do you do it?*
- *How do you do it?*
- *How well do you do it?*
- *How do you ensure that you continue to do it well and better?*
- This is a helpful global template for the information that the Panel expects to see addressed in a SS

# **Review of new program applications and most challenging standards to meet**

## **New doctoral programs – Most common weaknesses:**

- Clarity of info provided (thoroughness, organization, etc.)
- Faculty modeling of program philosophy, training model
- Degree of emphasis on assessment/intervention training
- Connection of core course to MRA competencies
- Link between practicum experiences and program goals
- Connection of practicum supervisors to program
- Documentation of how meeting goals and objectives

## **New internship programs – Most common weaknesses:**

- Clarity of info provided (thoroughness, organization, etc.)
- Regular – not coincidental – contact among interns
- Supervision training for supervisors
- Clear training plans and standards for completion, along with mechanisms for review
- Cohesive training experiences across consortia sites
- Documentation of how meeting goals and objectives



# **Survey of Training Programs – Most important and most challenging standards**

## Survey responses –

### Most important standards:

- Separation of roles of DoT and Dept Head/Chief/PPL
- Clear mission and philosophy
- MRA competencies reflected in core curriculum
- Breadth of training in assessment and intervention
- Stipends for interns
- Support for work-life balance
- Supervision excellence
- Support from management
- Ongoing program evaluation
- All of them

## Survey responses –

### Most challenging standards:

- Maintaining institutional support in face of health care system changes
- Breadth of courses and training experiences
- Training in program evaluation and supervision
- Integration of research
- Stipends for interns
- Availability of accredited internships
- Years to completion
- Ongoing program evaluation
- Accreditation application process

# **Understanding the ‘Spirit’ behind Program Evaluation and Quality Improvement**

## Key points re Program Evaluation:

- HOW does the program CONTINUALLY use the outcome data they collect (for e.g., competency ratings, career paths, etc.) to FEED BACK INTO program development
  - How does the program use the info to review and revise their standards for completion, policies and procedures, etc.?
  - Informed by both internal and external markers

## Key points re Program Evaluation:

- Program evaluation needs to be designed to allow programs to answer important questions such as:
  - Do our procedures enable us to select the most suitable students/interns?
  - Are the standards for success in courses/practica/rotations appropriate and are they sufficiently adaptive to where the student/intern is in their training?
  - Do our policies support supervisors in providing the best quality of supervision possible?
  - Overall, how well does our program train students/interns? (NOT JUST how well do students/interns do upon completion)

# For all standards - demonstrating HOW:

Not Just...	But most importantly...
We train scientist-practitioners	Here is how we have structured the program to enable every student to be competent to combine research & clinical practice – and here is how we know we are doing this well
We provide all students with a copy of the program policies	Here is how we ensure/verify that students actually read, understand, and can apply the information if needed
We have x core faculty	Here is how our program has evaluated the adequacy of faculty numbers, taking into account cohort size, research supervision, teaching & admin duties, available practica & internships, student funding, time to completion, etc.
We fund min 2 interns per year	Here is how we ensure that the interns have regular opportunities to interact and support each other
We survey all past students/interns	Here is how we know that our program is training students to do the right things and to do them well, based on both internal and external markers – and here is how we make and evaluate changes when needed

**Accreditation essentially involves  
documenting how your program reflects:**

**Construction  
versus Convenience**



# Resources

## For both Doctoral & Internship Programs:

- CCPPP Membership & Mentoring

[www.ccppp.ca](http://www.ccppp.ca)

- Consultation with CPA Accreditation Panel

[www.cpa.ca/accreditation](http://www.cpa.ca/accreditation)

## Additional Resources for Internship Programs:

- APPIC Membership & Mentoring

[www.appic.org](http://www.appic.org)

- CCTC Internship Development Toolkit

[www.apa.org/education/grad/internship-toolkit.aspx](http://www.apa.org/education/grad/internship-toolkit.aspx)