

JUNE, 2001

# *Mutual Recognition Agreement*

*Mutual Recognition Agreement  
of the Regulatory Bodies for  
Professional Psychologists in Canada*

# *Mutual Recognition Agreement*

**Between**

*College of Psychologists of British Columbia*

*College of Alberta Psychologists*

*Saskatchewan Psychological Association*

*Psychological Association of Manitoba*

*College of Psychologists of Ontario*  
*L'Ordre des Psychologues de l'Ontario*

*L'Ordre des Psychologues du Québec*

*College of Psychologists of New Brunswick*  
*College des Psychologues du Nouveau-Brunswick*

*Prince Edward Island Psychologists Registration Board*

*Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology*

*Newfoundland Board of Examiners in Psychology*

*Government of the Northwest Territories*

## 1.0 PURPOSE

We, the undersigned, enter into this Mutual Recognition Agreement (MRA) in order to comply with our obligations under the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT), Chapter 7 (Labour Mobility). The purpose of this MRA is to establish the conditions under which a psychologist who is licensed/registered to practice without supervision in one Canadian jurisdiction will have his/her qualifications recognized in another jurisdiction that is a Party to this Agreement.

## 2.0 DEFINITIONS

- 2.1 *PSYCHOLOGIST* means a person who is fully licensed for the independent practice of psychology as a member of a provincial or territorial body authorized in legislation to regulate the profession of psychology and who has been granted use of the title “psychologist” by that body.
- 2.2 *PSYCHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATE* means a person who is fully licensed for the independent practice of psychology as a member of a provincial or territorial regulatory body authorized in legislation to regulate the profession of psychology and who has been granted use of the title “psychological associate” by that body.
- 2.3 *FULLY LICENSED* means that the applicant has no current restrictions or limitations to a license, has no outstanding fees or dues, and has met competency requirements in the jurisdiction of licensure.
- 2.4 *LICENSED/REGISTERED* in this document refers to licensed, certified, registered, chartered, or any other term describing statutory regulation of psychology practice.
- 2.5 *THE PARTIES* means the regulatory bodies authorized in legislation to regulate the profession of psychology.
- 2.6 *DISCIPLINARY SANCTION* means revocation, suspension or restriction of a license in any jurisdiction.
- 2.7 *RECOGNIZED INSTITUTION* means an institution of higher education that is regionally accredited by an accrediting body authorized by provincial or territorial legislation to grant graduate degrees.
- 2.8 *GRADUATE DEGREE* means a degree obtained in a recognized institution following a bachelor degree.

**3.0 TERMS AND CONDITIONS**

- 3.1 *Whereas* the undersigned agree that it is in the interest of their memberships and members of the general public to enable properly qualified psychologists to have access to employment opportunities to practice psychology in all provinces and territories in Canada;
- 3.2 *Whereas* it is further agreed and understood that the threshold levels of competence and public safety in the practice of psychology must be established, maintained and upheld by regulators to ensure public protection;
- 3.3 *Whereas* this recognition agreement does not modify the authority of each regulatory body to set standards and requirements;
- 3.4 *Whereas* the undersigned recognize that there are different paths to achieve the threshold competence levels for the practice of psychology and the undersigned take the responsibility of setting standards responsibly and in good faith to ensure that the public is protected;
- 3.5 *Whereas* the Parties assess (see Appendix A) the following competencies: Interpersonal Relationships (all jurisdictions); Assessment and Evaluation (all jurisdictions), Intervention and Consultation (all jurisdictions); Research (all jurisdictions); Ethics and Standards (all jurisdictions); Supervision (Quebec and Newfoundland only); Administration (Québec only);
- 3.5.1 *Whereas* the Parties agree that Diagnosis is not a core competency, but rather a component subsumed under Assessment, the preceding notwithstanding, any jurisdiction that has diagnosis as a controlled act, or that may otherwise restrict diagnosis to a qualified subset of registrants, reserves the right to evaluate the competency to carry out and communicate a diagnosis with respect to all applicants seeking registration under AIT.
- 3.6 *Whereas* there are variations in the methods of assessing competencies of individuals (see Appendix B);
- 3.7 *Whereas* there is commonality with respect to initial registration given that initial registration requires an applicant to:
- a. complete a graduate degree in psychology or equivalent from a recognized institution;
  - b. have a minimum of one year of supervised practice (except Québec);
  - c. pass the Examination in the Professional Practice of Psychology (except NWT, Prince Edward Island and Québec);
  - d. pass an oral exam (except Newfoundland, Northwest Territories and Québec);
  - e. declare areas of practice
- 3.8 *Whereas* the Parties agree that this agreement applies only to licensed psychologists who have no current disciplinary sanctions and have no history of disciplinary sanctions in the immediate five years preceding an application for licensure in a new jurisdiction (or however many years the person has been licensed and practicing, whichever is less). Automatic recognition may be hindered as a result of a matter currently under investigation.

- 3.9 *Whereas* no Party will maintain or adopt any requirements for residency in its jurisdiction as part of its occupational standards or requirements;
- 3.10 *Whereas* each Party shall ensure that any measure it adopts or maintains relating to registration of psychologists from any other Party is competency-based and readily accessible or published and does not result in unnecessary delay nor impose inequitable, burdensome fees, except for cost differentials;
- 3.11 *Whereas* each Party may require an applicant for licensure to demonstrate knowledge of the local legislation and policies that apply to the practice of psychology as a condition for registration;
- 3.12 *Whereas*, subject to articles 3.5.1 and 4.8 of this agreement, an applicant who is licensed/registered in a jurisdiction shall not be required to undergo additional training or examination as a condition of licensure/registration in another jurisdiction, excepting when identified scope of practice differences exist;
- 3.13 *Whereas* Parties recognize that in order to be licensed/registered in a Canadian jurisdiction an applicant may be required to:
- a. demonstrate the necessary competencies to begin practice as a psychologist in the jurisdiction where initial application is made, and those competencies are deemed to be equivalent between the jurisdictions that are signatories to this agreement;
  - b. establish and confirm identity for entry onto the register;
  - c. pay applicable fees;
  - d. be fully licensed and practicing in the jurisdiction in which they are currently licensed/registered;
  - e. demonstrate they meet any language requirement in place in a jurisdiction to which they are applying for licensure/registration;
  - f. demonstrate they have met any requirements pertaining to local jurisprudence and ethical codes in a jurisdiction to which they are applying for licensure/registration;
- 3.14 *Whereas* it is recognized that Parties may have members who qualified for licensure/registration under a different regulatory regime, and who may not meet the current occupational standards and requirements for entry to practice. It is recognized that these individuals are qualified, experienced practitioners and are eligible for membership in all signatory jurisdictions provided they meet all other criteria described above;
- 3.15 *Whereas* Parties to this agreement may maintain differing continuing education requirements of practitioners in their jurisdictions. Applicants for licensure/registration will be required to demonstrate compliance with continuing education requirements in the host jurisdiction once licensed/registered there;
- 3.16 *Whereas* Parties to this agreement may maintain differing currency or practice hour requirements for psychologists in their jurisdiction. Applicants for licensure/registration may be required to demonstrate compliance with currency or practice hour requirements in the host jurisdiction, or may be required to demonstrate competency through another mechanism, once licensed/registered there or as a condition for licensure/registration.

**4.0 TERMS OF RECOGNITION**

*Therefore,* based on the principles adhered to above, We the Parties agree to:

- 4.1 Effective on or before July 1st, 2003, evaluate applicants seeking entry to the profession on the core competencies as identified and agreed upon by the Parties, and establish the equivalence of means to assess the competencies (see appendix A and B).
- 4.2 Subject to articles 4.5 and 3.13, license without further assessment a psychologist registered after July 1st, 2003, in one of the signatory jurisdictions.
  - 4.2.1 Subject to articles 4.5 and 3.13 and notwithstanding the above, the parties agree to license a psychological associate registered for autonomous practice after July 1, 2003 in one of the signatory jurisdictions, where that registration is based upon a graduate degree in psychology from a recognized institution and where that registration is based upon the assessment of the agreed upon core competencies. Such recognition will be accorded only if the applicant has met graduate degree requirements at least equivalent to those of the new jurisdiction for practice without supervision.
- 4.3 Subject to articles 4.5 and 3.13, license a psychologist registered in the jurisdiction of a signatory prior to July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003 who has five years of licensed practice in psychology immediately preceding the date of application;
- 4.4 Subject to articles 4.5 and 3.13, license at any time,
  - 4.4.1 A psychologist whose registration is based on a graduate degree in psychology from a program accredited by the Canadian Psychological Association or the American Psychological Association; or
  - 4.4.2 A psychologist who is a registrant of the Canadian Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology or the National Register of Health Service Providers in Psychology; or
  - 4.4.3 A psychologist who presents a current Certificate of Professional Qualification awarded by the Association of State and Provincial Psychology Boards;

**and we the parties agree that:**

- 4.5 Registration in a new jurisdiction may involve:
  - 4.5.1 references
  - 4.5.2 an interview regarding an applicant's intended professional activities in the new jurisdiction;
  - 4.5.3 a signed consent for disclosure of current restrictions or limitations to the license, of unresolved complaints and of prior disciplinary actions;
  - 4.5.4 assessment of the competence to supervise in Quebec and Newfoundland;
  - 4.5.5 assessment of the competence of administration in Quebec;
  - 4.5.6 practice under the professional title specified in the governing statute and regulations of the new jurisdiction for the graduate degree held by the applicant;

- 4.6 When a psychologist is required to make accommodations in order to meet conditions in a new jurisdiction, a party may issue a temporary license to practice for a period sufficient to complete all requirements;
- 4.7 Agreed upon, equivalent mechanisms will be used to assess the various core competencies (see Appendix B);
- 4.8 After July 1, 2003, in cases where an applicant seeking registration in a new jurisdiction has not been assessed for a core competency according to the minimum agreed upon methods of evaluating the core competencies, then that competency may be assessed by the receiving jurisdiction utilizing the methods of the receiving jurisdiction for assessing that competency.

## **5.0 ADMINISTRATION OF THE AGREEMENT**

*To ensure* that transparency obligations of the Labour Mobility Chapter are met, the Parties agree that:

- 5.1 Each Party agrees to give advance notice to other jurisdictions when introducing new requirements or making changes to existing requirements that might impact on the inter provincial/territorial mobility of psychologists.
- 5.2 In the event of a disagreement between two or more parties with respect to the interpretation or application of any clause of this agreement, the Parties involved may initiate consultations with a view to resolving the matter. A Party may request a consultation either on its own behalf or on behalf of a person who is covered by this agreement. This request for consultation will not affect an individual or Party's capacity to access dispute settlement procedures established under the Agreement on Internal Trade (AIT).
- 5.3 In the event that a Party does not wish to continue to be a Party to this agreement, the Party will consult with the jurisdictional Government, and advise the other parties, in writing, at least 12 months before the Party withdraws from the agreement. The notice period is waived where withdrawal is not within the Party's control.
- 5.4 Upon signature of this agreement, the parties will abide by its provisions and extend recognition to psychologists of other signatory jurisdictions under the terms of this agreement.
- 5.5 Nothing in this agreement shall be considered as having the effect of repealing, overriding or having power over any provision of any provincial or territorial statute intended for the registration of professional psychologists.
- 5.6 Nothing in this agreement shall be considered as precluding any signatory from using or developing mechanisms for the mobility of psychologists not covered by this agreement.
- 5.7 Each Party agrees that this agreement is a dynamic and evolving instrument that may be amended with the consent of all signatories. The Parties agree to initiate periodic reviews of this agreement and to review the operation of the agreement when such a request is made by one of the signatories.
- 5.8 Each Party agrees to seek the necessary legislative changes from their respective government if, in order to implement this agreement, there is a need for such changes. Each Party also agrees to make the necessary changes to by-laws, policies or procedures in order to implement this agreement.
- 5.9 In the event that standards or criteria for fast track mechanisms for mobility described in article 4.4 change, the agreement may be amended with the consent of all signatories.

*Signed:*

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Registrar/President Date  
*College of Psychologists of British Columbia*

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President Date  
*College of Alberta Psychologists*

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President Date  
*Saskatchewan Psychological Association*

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Registrar/President Date  
*Psychological Association of Manitoba*

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President/Registrar Date  
*College of Psychologists of Ontario / L'Ordre des Psychologues de l'Ontario*

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Président(e)/Secrétaire Date  
*L'Ordre des Psychologues du Québec*

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Registrar/President Date  
*College of Psychologists of New Brunswick / College des psychologues du Nouveau-Brunswick*

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Registrar Date  
*Prince Edward Island Psychologists Registration Board*

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Registrar Date  
*Nova Scotia Board of Examiners in Psychology*

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Registrar Date  
*Newfoundland Board of Examiners in Psychology*

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Registrar Date  
*Health Professional Licensing, Government of the Northwest Territories*

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## APPENDIX A

### CORE COMPETENCIES

#### Interpersonal Relationships

##### **Definition:**

This basic competency forms part of all the other competencies. Psychologists normally do their work in the context of interpersonal relationships (parent-child, spouses, boss-employee, etc.). They must therefore be able to establish and maintain a constructive working alliance with their clients, and possess adequate cultural competency.

##### **Knowledge:**

Knowledge of theories and empirical data on the professional relationship, such as:

- Interpersonal relationships
- Power relationships
- Therapeutic alliance
- Interface with social psychology
- More specific knowledge of the fluctuations of the therapeutic/professional relationship as a function of intervention setting

Knowledge of self, such as:

- Motivation
- Resources
- Values
- Personal biases
- Factors that may influence the professional relationship (e.g., boundary issues)

Knowledge of others, such as:

- Macro-environment in which the person functions (work, national norms, etc.)
- Micro-environment (personal differences, family, gender differences, etc.)

##### **Skills:**

Effective communication  
Establishment and maintenance of rapport  
Establishment and maintenance of trust and respect in the professional relationship

#### Assessment and evaluation

##### **Definition:**

A competent professional psychologist draws on diverse methods of evaluation, determining which methods are best suited to the task at hand, rather than relying solely or primarily on formalized testing as an automatic response to situations requiring assessment.

The appropriate subject of evaluation in many instances is not an individual person but a couple, family, organization, or system at some other level of organization.

The skills required for assessment can and should be applied to many situations other than initial evaluation, including, for example, treatment outcome, program evaluation, and problems occurring in a broad spectrum of non-clinical settings.

The primary purpose of psychological assessment is to provide an understanding that informs a practical plan of action. It may result in a diagnostic classification or in the identification of strengths or competencies.

##### **Knowledge:**

Assessment methods  
Knowledge of populations served  
Human development  
Diagnosis

##### **Skills:**

Formulation of a referral question  
Selection of methods  
Information collection and processing  
Psychometric methods  
Formulation of hypotheses and making a diagnosis when appropriate  
Report writing  
Formulation of an action plan

## APPENDIX A

### CORE COMPETENCIES (cont'd)

#### Intervention and consultation

**Definition:**

The intervention competency is conceptualized as activities that promote, restore, sustain, and/or enhance positive functioning and a sense of well-being in clients through preventive, developmental and/or remedial services. A broad, comprehensive vision of the intervention competency should include explicitly theory as well as the following knowledge and skills:

**Knowledge:**

The learning of an array of varied interventions with individuals and systems (e.g., couples, families, groups and organizations).

A respect for the positive aspects of all major approaches, which should reflect an openness to varied viewpoints and methods.

Awareness of when to make appropriate referrals and consult.

Awareness of context and diversity.

Knowledge of interventions that promote health and wellness.

**Skills:**

Establish and maintain professional relationships with clients from all populations served.

Establish and maintain appropriate interdisciplinary relationships with colleagues.

Gather information about the nature and severity of problems and formulate hypotheses about the factors that are contributing to the problem through qualitative and quantitative means.

Select appropriate intervention methods.

Analyze the information, develop a conceptual framework, and communicate this to the client.

#### Research

**Definition:**

Professional psychology programs should include research training such that it will enable students to develop:

A basic understanding of and respect for the scientific underpinnings of the discipline.

Knowledge of methods so as to be good consumers of the products of scientific knowledge.

Sufficient skills in the conduct of research to be able to develop and carry out projects in a professional context and, in certain cases, in an academic context with the aid of specialized consultants (e.g. statisticians).

**Knowledge:**

Basic knowledge of research methods and of the applications of scientific research, including:

Applied statistics and measurement theory;  
The logic of different models of scientific research (from laboratory experimentation to quasi-experimental and field research);  
Qualitative research methods (including observation and interviewing), etc., particularly with respect to the nature of reliability and validity in the gathering and interpretation of qualitative data

**Skills:**

Critical reasoning skills.  
Applications of various research approaches to social systems.  
Ability to write professional reports.

## APPENDIX A

### CORE COMPETENCIES (cont'd)

#### Ethics and standards

**Definition:**

Professionals accept their obligations, are sensitive to others, and conduct themselves in an ethical manner. They establish professional relationships within the applicable constraints and standards.

**Knowledge:**

Ethical principles.  
Standards of professional conduct.  
Responsibilities to clients, society, the profession, and colleagues.  
Awareness of potentially conflicting principles.  
Standards for psychological tests and measurements.  
Standards for conducting psychological research..  
Jurisprudence and local knowledge.

**Skills:**

Ethical decision-making process.  
Proactive identification of potential ethical dilemmas.  
Resolution of ethical dilemmas.

#### Supervision

**Definition:**

A kind of management that involves responsibility for the services provided under one's supervision and may involve teaching in the context of a relationship focused on developing or enhancing the competence of the person being supervised. Supervision is a preferred vehicle for the integration of practice, theory and research, with the supervisor as role model.

**Knowledge:**

Models for the acquisition of competencies under supervision.  
Methods and techniques of supervision.  
Evaluation modalities.  
Available technical resources.  
Power relationships as well as cultural, gender issues and ethnic differences.

**Skills:**

- 1 Sensitivity to power, cultural, sex, and ethnic issues.
- 2 Articulation of clear learning objectives.
- 3 Creating an open and participatory climate.
- 4 Learning to be a good supervisee (open to supervision, well prepared, able to use time efficiently, non-defensive, aware of limits, etc.).
- 5 Ability to link learning approaches to specific evaluation criteria.
- 6 Being able to differentiate between teaching and therapy.
- 7 Integration of knowledge.
- 8 Awareness of one's own strengths and limitations as supervisor.
- 9 Preparing a coherent evaluation based on precise learning objectives.

**APPENDIX B ASSESSMENT METHODS**

**Competencies currently Evaluated in Canadian Jurisdictions  
as agreed following the March 4, 2001 AIT meeting of Regulators**

Core Competencies	Minimum necessary evaluations	BC	AB	MB	SK New Proposed	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NF	NWT
1. Interpersonal relationships	Supervised experience	1 yr pre-doc	1600 hr post-Masters	1 yr pre-doc 1 yr post-doc	1 yr post-Masters	3000 hr, at least 1500 post-doc, 5 yr post-Masters	1600 hr pre-doc, and 3 cr course	2 yr doc (1 may be pre-doc), 4 yr post-Masters	2 yr (1 post-doc) 4 yr post-Masters	2 yr post-Masters	2 yr post-Masters	1 yr post-Masters
	References	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Other	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral	Program accredited by OPQ	Oral	Oral Grad. Training	Curric. Oral		Grad. Training
2. Assessment & Evaluation (N.B. Diagnosis)	Relevant Grad. courses in Psych. degree progr.	Yes	Yes (Psych. or equiv.)	Yes (primarily Psych.)	Yes (primarily Psych. courses)	Yes (primarily Psych. in nature)	Yes (in Psychology)	Yes (primarily Psych. in content)	Yes (Psych. Degree or equivalent)	Yes	Yes (Psych. or equiv. pr. approved by the Board)	Yes (Psych. or equiv. Masters)
	Coursework in Assessment	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	9 cr. Courses 500 hr. practicum	Yes	Adequate curric. , practicum	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Supervised experience	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes
Other	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral Diagnosis: separate application	Oral Diagnosis: separate application for Masters	Oral		Oral	References			

**APPENDIX B ASSESSMENT METHODS**  
**Competencies currently Evaluated in Canadian Jurisdictions**  
**as agreed following the March 4, 2001 AIT meeting of Regulators**

Core Competencies	BC	AB	MB	SK (New proposed)	ON	QC	NB	NS	PE	NF	NWT
<b>3. Intervention &amp; consultation</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	9 cr. Courses 500 hr Practicum	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Implicit
	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes	See #1: Yes
	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral	Oral		Oral	References			
<b>4. Research</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes (6 cr in courses; OPQ accreditation requirements)	Yes (both)	Implicit	Yes	2 u-g + 2 grad.	Implicit
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Implicit	Yes	Yes	Yes	Implicit	Implicit	Yes
		Supervised experience if area of competence						Supervised experience if area of competence			
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
<b>5. Ethics and standards</b>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	May be written instead of oral	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
					Ethics included in written juris-prudence exam						
<b>General knowl. in Psych. (not included as a specific Core Competency)</b>	EPPP	EPPP	EPPP	EPPP	EPPP	Grad program OPQ accredited. From u-g major in Psych or 42 cr of u-g Psych.	EPPP	EPPP Psych u-g or equiv		EPPP Psych u-g or equiv for Masters level	