Competence as a Common Language for Professional Identity and International Recognition

International Project on Competence in Psychology (IPCP)

Supported by the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP) and International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS)

Third IPCP Progress Report, June 2015

At the 5th International Congress on Licensure, Certification and Credentialing of Psychologists it was decided to take the process onwards in a project that is supported by IAAP and IUPsyS, and which has the same goal; to promote the development of "A global agreement on identifying the benchmark competences that define professional psychology" (See Report of the Congress Part 1, September 2014).

The project has been named "International Project on Competence in Psychology – IPCP". A Work Group has been established which consists of:

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The Work Group published its first progress report in April 2014. It included a revision of the draft Summary Model of basic competences. The report was distributed to the "Reference Group", a worldwide network of over 250 addresses. In addition the draft was discussed at a three hour open meeting at ICAP2014 in Paris (July) with almost 60 participants present. The project was also presented at two symposia at the same congress.
The project also has been presented and discussed in open meetings at the East African Regional Conference in Kampala in November 2013 and at the 20th South African Psychology Congress in Durban, September 2014.

The Work Group met for a one-day meeting in Paris, in conjunction with the ICAP2014, and for a two-day meeting in Oslo 22nd and 23rd September 2014. At these meetings, all

comments received between April and September were considered and discussed, and a revised draft was developed.

A Second Progress Report including this revised draft document was forwarded to the Reference Group in November 2014 and a second round of comments were received. The Work Group then met in Auckland, New Zealand on the 13th and 15th of February 2015, where these latest comments were considered and the Competence Model revised once more.

The Auckland meeting was attended by: Sverre Nielsen (Chair), Steve DeMers, Dave Bartram, Steve Osborne, Buxin Han, Janel Gauthier, Dragos Iliescu (recorder of the competence model and glossary), Waikaremoana Waitoki, Germán Gutiérrez and Amy Hilson(recorder of minutes). Apologies were received from Tholene Sodi.

The meeting resulted in a revised declaration (table), a revised Preamble, and a glossary.

It was decided that following this meeting and completion of the document revisions, the Work Group will present the final draft at the European Congress of Psychology (ECP) in Milan, July 7-10, 2015, where there will be a "panel discussion" together with the presidents of IAAP and IUPsyS. The session will be an open meeting, and will provide an opportunity to discuss the work that has been done, and to formally present the Draft Declaration to IUPsyS and IAAP. Hopefully IUPsyS and IAAP will formally endorse the document in Yokohama in 2016.

Process between Milan (July 2015) and Yokohama (July 2016)

After internal deliberations within IUPsyS and IAAP, and eventual other inputs, with a deadline for feedback to the IPCP Work Group late autumn 2015, the IPCP Work Group before the end of 2015 will consider eventual need of a final revision of the Final Draft. A final Work Group meeting could then be convened at the end of 2015 or early 2016 in good time prior to the ICP in July 2016 (Yokohama).

Given the participation and the process whereby people have been able to have their comments addressed throughout the process, there is likelihood for good support by IAAP and IUPsyS.

The period of August-December 2015 will be "last chance" for input/feedback before the document is in its Final Draft form. This means that the end of the process is at hand. Any final comments can come directly to the Work Group or through IUPsyS and IAAP, but this will be the last chance to influence the wording of the draft that will be proposed to IAAP and IUPsyS.

This last round of consultation must take place as much as possible at an organizational level. Comments made on behalf of organizations will carry more weight than individual comments. Again we ask all the members of the Reference Group to bring this draft to their

organizations and to collate feedback in the form of an organizational response. When several members of the Reference Group are from the same organization, we hope that these members will cooperate in bringing this draft to their respective organisation.

Comments on this draft can be sent to sverre@psykologforeningen.no.

Deadline for Comments: 1. December 2015.

Final Draft v. 1.0

International Declaration on Core Competences in Professional Psychology

Preamble

Psychology as a profession is practiced around the world within the social, cultural, educational, political and legal context of each country. Increasingly, psychologists travel, study, practice, consult, collaborate and communicate across international boundaries. Such changes have resulted in many benefits for clients, for societies and for the profession itself. These benefits include the ability to determine the applicability of psychological knowledge and techniques with diverse populations, the ability to share different approaches and strategies for addressing common problems, and the ability to identify areas of unmet need and to deploy appropriate resources to these areas. However, given the unique cultural and legal contexts in which psychologists practice around the world, on one hand, and the expansion of their activities beyond national boundaries, on the other hand, new issues and challenges have emerged, and created the need to develop a coherent international professional identity for psychologists.

Professional competences play a critical role in the professional work of psychologists and the quality of services provided by them. The international professional identity of psychologists may be developed by identifying a broadly recognized and internationally accepted set of core competences that define appropriate professional practice. Some of these competences may be obvious and are explicitly recognized worldwide, such as the competence for being an ethical psychologist. Others may be less explicit but equally important.

Currently, there are many different models for psychology education and training, and multiple models for professional regulation in each country and region of the world. The timing and amount of focus on discipline-specific studies can vary by many years in different educational systems, as can the academic degree required for entry into the profession. The International Declaration of Core Competences in Professional Psychology identifies a set of internationally recognized and endorsed competences that serve as the foundation for a coherent global professional identity and possibly an international recognition system for equating professional preparation systems, program accreditation, professional credentialing, and regulation of professional conduct.

The core competences presented in this Declaration are those expected of all psychologists providing services to clients at the time of entry to the profession. It is recognized and acknowledged that while these core competences serve as the basis for entry to the profession, the practicing psychologist is expected to maintain continuing competence as the profession changes and practice evolves. It is also acknowledged that this Declaration describes the core competences related to the professional practice of applied psychologists. Some psychologists work exclusively as scientists and

academicians while others work as practitioners with a variety of client populations including individuals, couples, families, groups, organizations, schools, etc. This Declaration describes the internationally agreed upon core competences related to the practice of psychology with any of these client populations and is not intended to describe or apply to psychologists engaged in teaching or research.

The document contains three parts. Part One is this Preamble. Part Two of the Declaration contains the Core Competence Model in the form of a table that includes three competence domains (Knowledge and Skills, Professional Behaviour, and Professional Activities), a number of competences under each domain and a number of possible behavioural descriptions for each of the competences. Part Three contains a Glossary of terms used in the Declaration to promote clarity where words and terms may have multiple meanings especially across a broad international audience.

The competences articulated in the International Declaration are general, not specific. We consider that different organizations, communities, nations, and regions may use and adapt these competences to better fit their local context. The expression, demonstration or application of a universally endorsed competence could be quite different in a specific national or cultural context. We encourage local or regional translation of these competences into specific education and training requirements. Such outcomes may vary across cultures, thus capturing the variety of expression and richness of a diverse and international professional community.

The significance of the International Declaration of Core Competences in Professional Psychology depends on its endorsement by organizations that have a mission in the practice of psychology at the international, regional or national level. All such organizations are encouraged to explicitly endorse this Declaration, promote awareness, respect and understanding thereof, absorb its principles in their own documents and practices and expand and adapt the scope of the Declaration to their own particular contexts.

CORE COMPETENCE MODEL

	Competence		Descriptions
	KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS		
KN	Possesses the necessary knowledge	KN1	Has the necessary foundational knowledge of psychological concepts, constructs, methods, theory and practice to support competence
		KN2	Has the necessary specialised knowledge of psychological concepts, constructs, methods, theory and practice relating to own chosen area to support competence
SK	Possesses the necessary skills	SK1	Has the necessary basic skills to support competence in psychological practice
		SK2	Has the necessary specialised skills to operate in own chosen area of psychological practice to support competence
	PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOUR		
PE	Practices ethically	PE1	Applies relevant ethics codes in one's professional practice and conduct
		PE2	Adheres to relevant laws and rules in one's professional practice and conduct
		PE3	Resolves ethical dilemmas in one's professional practice using an appropriate approach
AP	Acts professionally	AP1	Follows accepted best practice
		AP2	Maintains competence
		AP3	Operates within the boundaries of one's own competence

	Competence		Descriptions
		AP4	Consults peers, supervisors, or other relevant sources when appropriate
		AP5	Makes referrals to relevant others when appropriate
		AP6	Chooses professionally appropriate courses of action in response to unpredictable and complex events
ER	Relates appropriately to clients and others	ER1	Establishes, maintains and develops appropriate working relationships with clients and relevant others
		ER2	Establishes, maintains and develops appropriate working relationships with colleagues in psychology and other professions
WD	Works with diversity	WD1	Works with an understanding of the historical, political social and cultural context of clients, colleagues, and others
		WD2	Demonstrates cultural competence
		WD3	Identifies, acknowledges and respects diversity in others
		WD4	Recognizes the impact of one's own values, beliefs and experiences on one's professional behavior, clients, and relevant others
		WD5	Works and communicates effectively with all forms of diversity in clients, colleagues, and others
		WD6	Is inclusive of all forms of diversity in working with clients, colleagues and others
EP	Operates as an evidence-based practitioner	EP1	Adopts an evidence-based orientation to the provision of assessments, interventions, service delivery and other psychological activities

	Competence		Descriptions
		EP2	Consults psychological and other relevant research to inform practice
		EP3	Recognizes the limitations of the evidence available to inform practice
SR	Reflects on own work	SR1	Evaluates the efficacy of one's activities and service provision
		SR2	Reflects on and implements areas for improvement in one's practice
		SR3	Reflects on one's own values and beliefs and the impact they may have on one's practice
		SR4	Validates reflections with peers or supervisors, when appropriate
	PROFESSIONAL ACTIVITIES		
SG	Sets relevant goals	SG1	Develops goals based on needs analysis
		SG2	Aligns goals with those of clients and others
PA	Conducts psychological assessments and evaluations	PA1	Identifies assessment or evaluation needs in individuals, groups, organizations or situations
		PA2	Selects, designs or develops assessments or evaluations, using methods appropriate for the goals and purposes of the activity
		PA3	Conducts assessments or evaluations, including delivery, scoring, interpretation, feedback and application of results

	Competence		Descriptions
PI	Conducts psychological interventions	PI1	Plans and carries out psychological interventions, with individuals, groups or organizations.
		PI2	Designs, develops and evaluates the usefulness and effectiveness of psychological interventions, using methods appropriate for the goals and purposes of the intervention
		PI3	Integrates assessment and other information with psychological knowledge to guide and develop psychological interventions
		PI4	Evaluates the usefulness and effectiveness of one's own interventions
		PI5	Uses evaluation results to review and revise interventions as necessary
		PI6	Provides guidance and advice to other relevant parties involved in the psychological intervention
CO	Communicates effectively and appropriately	CO1	Communicates with diverse audiences as necessary for the effective conduct of one's professional activities
		CO2	Provides relevant and clear feedback, reporting and guidance to clients and relevant others
		CO3	Provides clear and objective information on psychological matters to relevant audiences

Glossary (draft)

In this Document the following definitions apply:

Assessment: see *Psychological Assessment*.

Foundational knowledge: Facts and information, which are acquired through education and which form the theoretical and practical understanding of a subject. In psychology, foundational knowledge refers to knowledge about psychological concepts, constructs, methods, both as theory and as practice; this knowledge refers to psychology in general and not as applied to specific practice areas of psychology. (See also Specialized knowledge)

Specialized knowledge: Facts and information, acquired through education and which form the theoretical and practical understanding of a subject. In psychology, specialized knowledge builds on and expands Foundational knowledge, and refers to specific areas of psychology, such as clinical, educational, work and organizational or others, i.e. to concepts, constructs, methods which are typical for or suffer specific particularities when applied in those contexts. (See also Foundational knowledge)

Basic skills: Learned abilities which enable a professional to carry out professional tasks with a certain minimum amount of proficiency, when applied to psychology *in general*. Specialized skills are domain-general and refer to psychology in general and not as applied to specific practice areas of psychology. (See also Specialized skills)

Specialized skills: Learned abilities which enable a professional to carry out professional tasks with a certain minimum amount of proficiency, when applied to own chosen area of specialization within psychology, such as clinical, educational, work and organizational or others. Specialized skills build on basic skills, and use them in particular ways, as needed in those specific professional contexts. (See also Basic skills)

Best practice: a method or technique that has consistently shown results superior to those achieved with other means, and that is accepted as a quality benchmark for correct or accepted practice within a given socio-cultural setting.

Client: An individual, group, community or organization using the professional services of a psychologist.

Competence: a combination of practical and theoretical knowledge, cognitive skills, behavior, and values used to perform a specific behavior or set of behaviors to a standard, in professional practice settings associated with a professional role.

Competences: Clusters of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other attributes that enable a person to act effectively and to a defined standard in a professional practice situation.

Constructs: Explanatory variables which are not directly observable; they form the building blocks of scientific theories and models and lie at the heart of psychological explanations and interventions.

Continuing Education: Education provided for adults after they have left the formal education system and during their professional lives, usually non-formal and consisting typically of private study and reflection or short courses, which are sometimes credited by a professional association as proof of the fact that the person that took that course has acquired specific knowledge, skills, or abilities, thereby maintaining or expanding his or her professional competence.

Core (competence): A competence the possession of which is critical to the overall ability of a person to practice to an acceptable professional standard. Core competences are expected to be possessed by all those who claim competence in professional practice. It should be noted that additional competences may also be required, depending upon areas of specialism and socio-cultural settings, to ensure overall competence as a practitioner.

Cultural competence: Competent professional behavior based on recognition, awareness for, respect for, knowledge about, understanding of, and skill related to the cultural aspects of psychological work. These characteristics are necessary to perform professional psychological services which recognize the diverse worldviews and practices of both oneself and of clients from different cultural backgrounds. Cultural competence is focused on the understanding of self and other as bearers of culture that is influenced by historical, social, economic and political determinants and how these factors influence psychological health and wellbeing and psychological theories, models and practices.

Culture: A repertoire consisting of intangible and tangible elements, characteristic for a human society, community or group, which helps members of that society, community, or group to interpret in a similar way the meaning of symbols and behaviors. Of these, intangible elements such as symbols, ideas, values, interpretations are considered more important than tangible elements such as artifacts, tools, and other cultural elements.

Diversity: An attribute similar to heterogeneity, signifying the presence and inclusion of individuals, groups, and cultures which are different from each other, but also including respect for and appreciation of those variables which define the differences.

Evaluation: A process describing in a structured manner some aspect of the quality of an entity or procedure. Depending on the approach, the process describes the presence or level of development of specific characteristics of the entity or procedures and compares these characteristics against a pre-specified standard.

Evidence: The available body of information indicating whether a particular professional action or professional decision in a particular context for a particular use has quality and relevance.

Evidence-based practitioner: A psychologist who conducts his/her professional work by the existing evidence, i.e. based on inferences from information and data that are grounded in theory and that support the quality and the relevance of a particular action or decision in a particular context for a particular use.

Intervention: A deliberate and structured process usually based on a theoretical or practice-based model and having an expected outcome. The process is one in which some action is taken through which it is expected that the individual or group of individuals involved will be changed.

Mentoring: A professional dyadic relationship aimed at development, in which an experienced person (the mentor) assists another (the mentee) in developing professional competence in a specific area.

Needs analysis: An analytic process run by a psychologist in order to understand or elicit from his/her client the actual or desired needs for the psychological service to be provided. Needs analysis informs the psychological service and guides it to goals which are relevant to the client or the client's problem.

Practitioner: An individual who as a result of qualification (oftentimes there is a requirement also for registration) practices a profession. When used in the context of Psychology, a practitioner is a person who is not only qualified (and, if needed, registered), but also practices the profession in applied settings, as opposed to adopting only such roles as administration, teaching, or research.

Professionalism: The level of excellence or competence, especially with respect to ethics and values, reflected in conduct, aims, and qualities, that is characteristic and expected from a practitioner.

Psychologist: A professional practitioner who is competent to carry out assessment and intervention related to psychological and behavioral variables, in order to improve the well-being of individuals, groups, communities, and/or society as a whole.

Psychological assessment: A systematic process that uses a combination of techniques and methods (such as tests, inventories, interview, observation) in order to evaluate various psychological and behavioral characteristics (e.g., traits, capabilities) of an individual or group of individuals.

Psychological evaluation: A systematic evaluation (see Evaluation) of constructs (see Constructs) which are psychological in nature.

Psychological intervention: An intervention (see Intervention) developed through psychological methods and based on psychological theories or models in order to facilitate change in an individual or a group of individuals.

Professional Activities: Activities which are performed by a psychologist as part of his/her service to a client.

Professional Behavior: Professional conduct of a psychologist that conforms to the principles defined by a body of regulations to which psychologists are expected to abide. Professional conduct (or professional behavior) is usually defined by professional bodies, but in some countries or regions it may be also defined by law. It refers not to activities per se, but to the underlying principles and values behind any professional activity, such as (but not exclusively related to) ethics, effective service, self-reflection and self-development and others.

Psychological Practice: The sum of professional activities undertaken by a psychologist. Psychological practice is done by a psychologist through a formal contractual relationship with clients with the psychologist acting as a service provider, and may in some countries and regions be regulated (e.g. subject to licensure or certification).

Professional Psychology: An organized community of psychologists representing applied psychological best practice. These psychologists offer professional services to clients, focusing on the practical application of psychology.

Research: The systematic investigation of reality with the aim of increasing the stock of knowledge or applying the current stock of knowledge in new ways.

Stakeholder: An individual, group, or organization that has an interest or a concern in a process or its outcome.

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