



**Quebec, December 20, 2015**

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*Chair of the International Project on Competence in Psychology (IPCP)*  
*Supported by the International Association of Applied Psychology (IAAP) and*  
*International Union of Psychological Science (IUPsyS)*

Dear Sverre,

**RE: Third IPCP Progress Report and Revised Draft of the International Declaration on Core Competences in Psychology**

Thank you for inviting national, regional and international organisations of psychology to review and comment the second draft of the *International Declaration on Core Competences in Psychology*.

I have circulated the Third IPCP Progress Report and the revised version of the Draft of the *International Declaration* among the members of the IAAP Board of Directors. You will find attached a summary of the comments and suggestions that I have received in response to my request for feedback. I hope you will find them helpful.

I would like to use this opportunity to thank you for your work on this important international project.

I look forward to our next meeting in Beijing, China during the first week of February 2016.

Yours sincerely,

Janel

Prof./Dr. Janel Gauthier  
President  
International Association of Applied Psychology

Encl.: Summary of Comments and Suggestions from the IAAP Board of Directors  
cc.: IAAP Board of Directors



**SUMMARY OF COMMENTS RECEIVED  
ON THE SECOND DRAFT OF THE INTERNATIONAL DECLARATION  
ON CORE COMPETENCES IN PSYCHOLOGY  
DATED “JUNE 2015”**

Submitted on behalf of IAAP to the IPCP Work Group  
by  
Prof. Janel Gauthier, Ph.D.  
President of IAAP  
December 20, 2015

## GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, general comments about the revised draft document have been positive and supportive. Here are some examples:

“Thank you for the continued work on this important project and the more than reasonable time frame provided for review. I have read the full document. It is my opinion that this version has benefited from the last round of feedback and is even better. I do not have suggested changes for this version. I find that it covers the right areas in the right ways.”

“I think that the document looks good. In my opinion, its utility kind of depends on the end purpose. However, I think that for setting up minimal international aspirational standards, this is nice work.”

“I am happy with the Second Draft of The International Declaration on Core Competences in Psychology with just two proposed additions...They may be edited as appropriate.”

“I have reviewed the document. Please consider my few comments:

- They document is well-written and clear in its content.
- The preamble offers a well-articulated rationale for and aims of the document.
- The competences seem reasonable and appropriately inclusive and general enough to promote wide adherence and guidelines across psychological specialty areas of practice as well as across nations.
- One minor, yet nonetheless significant detail, I expect the word “Competences” was used deliberately instead of the more often used and familiar “Competencies.”

- The glossary provides a useful resource for definitions of key concepts.”

“Thank you for the remainder on commenting on second draft of the declaration. I have not responded on the first call as I found the document very well build, with a clear structure and consistent with its’ objectives. I am also part of the reference group of the document and I specified there that the document has improved a lot from a version to another and now has a much better consistency and is much clear. I appreciate the clear structure, with the concepts being defined and creating a common ground of understanding. It is broad enough and as specific at it can be, in order to encompass the diversity we are dealing with in psychology. I only have two observations or doubts...”

“Thank you for sending the reminder allowing us to still comment on the second draft of the International Declaration on Core Competences in Psychology. I carefully read the document and would like to congratulate everyone involved in this project. I fully endorse this version.”

Other general comments had to do with the operationalisation of the proposed descriptions of some competences. Here is an example:

“I did find some things vague, tautological or ill-defined. For example, how are “has the necessary specialized skills” (SK2, p. 6) or “applied relevant ethics codes” (PE1, p. 6) or “demonstrates cultural competence” (WD2, p. 7) operationalized?”

Below are a couple of additional examples where I don't believe that competencies are really defined at all:

PA	Conducts psychological assessments and evaluations	PA1	Identifies assessment or evaluation needs in individuals, groups, organizations or situations
PI	Conducts psychological interventions	PI1	Plans and carries out psychological interventions, with individuals, groups or organizations.

How is conducting these a demonstration of competence?”

## SPECIFIC COMMENTS

### PREAMBLE

Page 4, 1<sup>st</sup> paragraph: MOVE "travel" BEFORE "communicate"

Page 4, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph: I CONSIDER THAT THE EMPHASIS PUT IN THE COMPETENCIES AS THE SOURCE FOR THE INTERNATIONAL PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY IS UNDERVALUING THE IMPORTANCE OF SCIENTIFIC ACHIEVEMENTS AND THE IDENTITY OF PSYCHOLOGY AS AN INTEGRATION OF SCIENCE AND PROFESSION.

Page 5, 2<sup>nd</sup> paragraph:

- IMPORTANT TO CLARIFY IF THE DOCUMENT REFERS TO COMPETENCES OR COMPETENCIES.
- IN MY VIEW THE CONCEPT OF COMPETENCE ENCOMPASSES THE CONCEPT OF KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS. THUS, IT IS NOT VERY COHERENT TO INCLUDE KNOWLEDGE AND SKILLS AS A DOMAIN OF COMPETENCIES...

Page 5, 3<sup>rd</sup> paragraph:

- THE FUNCTIONS OF THIS COMPETENCES MODEL ARE NOT CLEAR... NEITHER IS THE RELATION BETWEEN THIS INTERNATIONAL MODEL AND THE REGIONAL OR THE NATIONAL ONES... IS IT INTENDED THAT THIS MODEL SHOULD JUST ADAPTED TO FIT THE LOCAL CONTEXT? IS ADAPTATION ENOUGH?
- THE FUNCTIONS OF THIS COMPETENCES MODEL SHOULD BE BETTER ELABORATED. THEY ARE PARTLY MENTIONED HERE BUT NOT DESCRIBED IN A SYSTEMATIC WAY. IN MY VIEW, AS THIS IS A CORE MODEL, NOT ALL THE RELEVANT COMPETENCES FOR CONTEXTUALIZED PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE ARE CONSIDERED. SO THIS MODEL SHOULD NOT ONLY BE ADAPTED FOR WORKING IN DIFFERENT CONTEXTS, IT ALSO SHOULD BE DEVELOPED AND COMPLEMENTED WITH OTHER RELEVANT COMPETENCES IN DIFFERENT REGIONS AND COUNTRIES...

## **CORE COMPETENCE MODEL**

**General comment** about the CORE COMPETENCE MODEL:  
THIS LOOKS MORE LIKE A CATALOGUE... MAYBE THE WHOLE RATIONALE AND MENTAL MODEL BEHIND THIS LIST SHOULD BE ELABORATED AND FORMULATED.

### **• Knowledge and Skills**

#### **KN (Possesses the necessary knowledge)**

KN1: The word "EVIDENCE" should be added.

KN1: In several cells below, COMPETENCE is used as the referent for the knowledge, skills, etc. Its meaning is not clear. Does it refer to each of the competences listed below? Does it refer to competent practice in general? Is it intended to refer to competences in plural? Clarification is needed.

#### **SK (Possessed the necessary skills)**

SK2: "area of psychological practice" is a concept that should be defined... (not included in the Glossary)

### **• Professional Behaviour**

#### **PE (Practices ethically)**

PE1: « relevant » or "appropriate"?

PE2: not very specific... In some cases laws are not aligned with ethical principles???

PE2: To replace "relevant laws and rules" with "statutory and non-statutory laws".

#### **AP (Acts professionally)**

AP1: the concept of best practice without any contextualization may be really problematic.

AP1: To replace “best” with “good”.

AP2: To rephrase AP2 as “Provides services to clients competently.”

AP3: to rephrase AP3 as “Operates competently within the boundaries of one’s own profession”.

Page 7, AP6: too much broad and ambiguous.

**ER (Related appropriately to clients and others)**

ER1: CLIENTS ARE NOT THE ONLY RELEVANT GROUP OF STAKEHOLDERS, IN SOME CLASES CLIENTS ARE NOT THE USERS, OR THE RELEVANT AUDIENCES. A MORE COMPREHENSIVE VIEW OF STAKEHOLDERS SHOULD BE CONSIDERED. "RELEVANT OTHERS" IS TOO AMBIGUOUS.

**WD (Works with diversity)**

WD1: A COMMA NEEDS TO BE ADDED AFTER "political"

WD1: just understanding? Is this enough?

WD2: To rephrase WD2 as “Demonstrates a competence of cultural sensitivity”.

WD3: WD3 ALMOST THE SAME OF WD6

WD4: WD4 ALMOST THE SAME OF SR3

WD4: That all? And so what?

WD6: WD6 ALMOST THE SAME OF WD3

WD6: Too generic, maybe there are forms of diversity that should not be included when working....

**SR (Reflects on own work)**

Page 8, SR3: SR3 ALMOST THE SAME OF WD4

• **Professional Activities**

**PA (Conducts psychological assessments and evaluations)**

PA1: PA1 ALMOST THE SAME OF PI1.

PA1: I WOULD REWRITE PA1 ADDING "communities" AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE (GIVEN ALSO THE DEFINITION OF "CLIENT").

PA1: THE MEANING OF THESE TWO TERMS SHOULD BE CLARIFIED. IS EVALUATION REFERRING TO THE ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERVENTION OUTPUTS, OR OUTCOMES?

PA2: In addition to the existing statement in PA2 “Selects, designs or develops assessments or evaluations, using methods appropriate for the goals and purposes of the activity”, add “as well as appropriate for the language and cultural context” at the end of that statement.

PA3 “Conducts assessments or evaluations, including delivery, scoring, interpretation, feedback and application of results”, add “taking into account the appropriate norms for the persons being assessed and research on the cross-cultural applications of the methods”.

**PI (Conducts psychological interventions)**

PI1: PI1 ALMOST THE SAME OF PA1.

PI1: I WOULD REWRITE PI1, ADDING AT THE END OF THE SENTENCE ALSO "situations, communities" (GIVEN ALSO THE "CLIENT" DEFINITION).

## GLOSSARY

**Note:** Revise listing because some of the concepts are not listed in the correct alphabetical order.

**FONDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE** (page 10):

- IS KNOWLEDGE ON SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE (BE IT EXPERIMENTAL, EMPIRICAL, ETC.) INCLUDED?
- “Psychology in general” is rather a blurry concept.

**SPECIALIZED KNOWLEDGE** (page 10): the definitions refers especially to specialized applied or professional knowledge; it does not suit well for basic disciplinary specialities.

**BASIC SKILLS** (page 10):

- Again, the concept of psychology in general is not very clear nor helpful.
- It is written "Specialized skills are domain-general and refer to psychology in general..." I understand that correct is "Basic skills are domain-general..."

**CLIENT** (page 10): differentiate from user, audience and other stakeholders

**COMPETENCES** (page 10): probably the word “competencies” is more appropriate than the word “competences”.

**CONTINUING EDUCATION** (page 11):

- Wouldn't it be better to use and define “continuous professional development” instead of using and defining “continuing education”?
- all “adults or professionals”, given what follows in the definition.

**CULTURE** (page 11): I DO NOT AGREE HERE: I WOULD RATHER REWRITE SOMETHING LIKE "both tangible and intangible elements are important".

**DIVERSITY** (page 11): I WOULD ADD "communities".

**EVALUATION** (page 11): nothing is said about the evaluation of the psychological intervention by the psychologist...

**INTERVENTION** (page 11) (last word) change “changed” for “improved”?

**MENTORING** (page 12): Why is “mentoring” defined in the glossary? Since the concept does not appear anywhere before in the document, it should be deleted?

**PSYCHOLOGIST** (page 12): just “well-being”! What about competent behaviors, and other relevant outputs?

**PSYCHOLOGICAL INTERVENTION** (page 12) (end of definition): any kind of change?

**RESEARCH** (page 13): not only knowledge; development of tools, techniques and so on is also a goal of research.