



IRCEP Application Guideline Packet

March 22, 2024

Contents

History.....	<u>3</u>
Purpose.....	<u>3</u>
Vision.....	<u>4</u>
Mission.....	<u>4</u>
IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards.....	<u>4</u>
Benefits and Value of IRCEP Recognition.....	<u>5</u>
Eligibility Requirements.....	<u>6</u>
IRCEP Contact.....	<u>6</u>
Application Fee Structure and Application Fee.....	<u>7</u>
Payment Methods.....	<u>8</u>
Application and Documentation Submission.....	<u>8</u>
Application Overview.....	<u>9</u>
Application Review Process.....	<u>10</u>
Maintaining IRCEP Recognition Status.....	<u>11</u>
Annual Maintenance Fee.....	<u>11</u>
Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ).....	<u>12</u>

History

The International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP) was developed by the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP) to respond to a growing request for an international quality assurance recognition review process for Counsellor education and training programmes around the world.

Recognizing that the CACREP accreditation standards were not easily applied to or even necessarily appropriate for use by Counselling programmes external to the United States higher education system, the CACREP Board began examining ways it could foster quality assurance for the education and training of counsellors regardless of culture, country, region, work setting, or educational system.

The result of this examination was CACREP's decision, in 2008, to establish an international steering committee to assist in the creation of an international Registry of programmes. The steering committee was charged with developing a set of quality assurance principles that were culturally sensitive, rigorous, and flexible enough to be used by a variety of educational systems. The committee was further charged with developing review processes to determine a programme's eligibility to seek and become IRCEP recognized and approved for inclusion on the Registry.

The members of the steering committee were selected to represent various regions of the world and included representation from Europe, Asia, Africa, the Americas, and Oceania. In September 2009, members of this international group of counsellors met in Buenos Aires, Argentina to finalize the professional quality assurance principles and procedures to be implemented as the IRCEP application and recognition approval process.

Purpose

The International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP) is an International Affiliate of the Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs (CACREP).

IRCEP's purpose is to serve as the international quality assurance agency to foster excellence in the education and training of professional counsellors worldwide and empower programmes to develop counsellor training curricula appropriate to their country, regions, and/or culture, while simultaneously recognizing the broad tenets of education and training common to the practice of counselling regardless of practice location.

Vision

IRCEP's vision is to promote the ongoing development and recognition of the Counselling profession worldwide through a Registry of approved counsellor education and training programmes that meet a set of Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards essential to the education and training of counsellors regardless of culture, country, region, work setting, or educational system.

Mission

IRCEP's mission is to promote the development and advancement of professional principles of quality in counsellor education and training programmes and the recognition of the Counselling profession worldwide by:

- Advancing quality assurance through a set of professional principles that reflect the needs of diverse societies and cultures.
- Strengthening the public's understanding of counselling worldwide through advocacy and collaborative leadership.
- Creating networks of counsellor educators, students, and practitioners where information and resources can be shared across borders to advance the knowledge base of the counselling profession worldwide.

IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards

IRCEP's Principles are essential to the education and training of counsellors while culturally sensitive, rigorous, and flexible enough to be used by a variety of educational systems worldwide. The principles are designed to ensure value to stakeholders. The stakeholders include students, educators, academic programmes, employers, and community members.

The IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards are:

- Principle 1: Learning Environment
- Principle 2: Academic Quality
- Principle 3: Student Recruitment, Enrollment, And Retention
- Principle 4: Foundational Counselling Curriculum
- Principle 5: Educator Recruitment, Employment, And Retention
- Principle 6: Programme Leadership

Refer to the application form for further detail on the six (6) principles and guidance on how to respond to each of them for review.

Benefits and Value of IRCEP Recognition

By pursuing and maintaining IRCEP recognition, the counsellor education and training programme demonstrates commitment to the Counselling profession and adherence to the rigorous international recognition review process.

Recognition by the IRCEP facilitates:

1. **Global Standard of Quality:** Demonstrates to the public and the Counselling profession that the programme has met the highest international Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards for educating and training counsellors and building stronger professional counsellor identity within programmes and their graduates.
2. **Global Visibility:** Offers global visibility of institutions and programmes through IRCEP's Directory, which helps students, faculty, and the public locate quality international counsellor education and training programmes worldwide.
3. **Global Collaboration:** Enhances international and global collaboration amongst faculty and students for research, publication, instruction, and learning opportunities.
4. **Shared Best Practices:** IRCEP counsellor education and training programmes are part of a network where international initiatives/activities, information, and resources are shared across borders to advance the knowledge base of the counselling profession worldwide.
5. **Global Recognition:** Provides counsellor education and training programmes global recognition through IRCEP's website, newsletter, and social media platforms; as well as the approval to display and promote IRCEP digital badges on the programme's website and social media platforms.
6. **Degree Mobility:** Graduating from an IRCEP recognized and approved programme may facilitate students' entry and mobility into advanced degree programmes and special practice certifications.

Eligibility Requirements

The Institution and/or Counsellor education and training programme must meet **ALL** the following requirements **prior** to applying to the International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP) to be considered for recognition:

- The institution offers a Counsellor education and training programme and/or has curriculum with a focus on counselling education or training in the respective country, state, city, or region.
Acceptable documentation: Letter and signature from Institution's (or Programme) Authorized representative on institution's letterhead.
- The institution has legal approval to operate the Counsellor education and training programme in the respective country, state, city, or region.
Acceptable documentation: License, permits, etc. of legitimacy to operate.
- The institution possesses programmatic accreditation, recognition and/or approval by the regional regulatory or oversight agency that has authority over and/or oversight of Counsellor education and training programmes in the respective country, state, city, or region.
Acceptable documentation: Letter and signature from regulatory agency or association on letterhead or certificate that includes name and signature of regulatory or oversight agency.

Note: The Institution and/or Counsellor education and training programme must submit documentation evidence along with application materials that demonstrates it meets the eligibility requirements.

Contact

For further information or questions regarding the application process contact IRCEP Managing Director via email: ircep@ircep.org

Application Fee Structure

IRCEP, an international affiliate of CACREP, is supported by the fees paid by Counsellor education and training programmes wishing to be internationally recognized, registered, and approved programmes.

Because IRCEP's quality assurance review process must operate within the parameters of US non-profit organization requirements, every effort is made to be fiscally responsible and to provide a responsive quality service to the Counsellor education and training programmes that apply for recognition status.

It is important to note, that none of the members of the IRCEP Advisory Council or the CACREP Board of Directors receive any monetary compensation for the services they provide to IRCEP. They only receive reimbursement for expenses for the periodic in-person meetings they attend.

Application Fee

\$1,000 USD (nonrefundable)

The application fee must be remitted when the application is submitted to IRCEP for review. No application will be reviewed, or feedback provided until the application fee has been received.

If more than three (3) months lapses between receipt of the application documents and the application fee, the application will be voided. The programme will be required to submit a new application and requisite application fee.

Payment Method Options

Credit Card:

Contact Heidi Campbell, Operations Associate, via phone (703) 535-5990 or via email hcampbell@cacrep.org

Check:

Payable to IRCEP

Mailing address:

IRCEP

c/o Council for Accreditation of Counseling and Related Educational Programs

500 Montgomery Street, Suite 350

Alexandria, Virginia 22314

Electronic Funds Transfer:

Contact IRCEP Managing Director via email ircep@ircep.org for Automated Clearing House (ACH) information to process electronic funds payment.

Application and Document Submission

The application forms can be found in the application packet or on the IRCEP [website](http://www.ircep.org) at www.ircep.org

Application and all supporting documentation are to be submitted via email (in English) to ircep@ircep.org. Please note if the application is a translation from the language in which the programme is delivered, it must include an affidavit of “accurate translation.”

No information will be released to the public regarding the application status of a programme during the review process.

Application Overview

There are three (3) key sections of the IRCEP application process.

- 1. Section 1: Eligibility Requirements**
 - a. Programmes must meet **ALL** the eligibility requirements **prior** to applying to the International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP) to be considered for recognition.
 - b. Programmes must submit evidence of eligibility requirements.

- 2. Section 2: Application Contact and Signature Page**
 - a. Programmes must submit a completed application contact form, in English. Please note if the application is a translation from the language in which the programme is delivered, it must include an affidavit of “accurate translation.”
 - b. Programmes must provide detailed contact information for programme and its liaisons. Please note when programme is approved the programme and contact information will be listed on the IRCEP directory found on the IRCEP [website](#).
 - c. Programmes must provide the names of two (2) expert consultants from the same region or country, who are **not** affiliated with the programme. These individuals should be knowledgeable about the educational system in the applicant programme’s region and may be contacted by IRCEP reviewers.
 - d. The signature section must be completed and signed by an authorized programme official representative/s who can attest to/verify that the information contained in the application is accurate and verifiable.

- 3. Section 3: IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards**
 - a. The counsellor education and training programme must submit a narrative description, in English, of how the programme meets each of the six (6) IRCEP Principles essential to the education and training of professional counsellors.
 - b. Programme must provide supporting documentation that verifies the information included in the narrative description.

Application Review Process

The following application review process is designed to ensure that Counsellor education and training programme applications have been examined by multiple reviewers for compliance with the requirements:

1. IRCEP's Managing Director accepts application and coordinates review of application with IRCEP Advisory Council. Note: IRCEP Advisory Council meets three (3) times annually (February, June, and October).
2. IRCEP Advisory Council reviews applications within a 10-week period from date received. At the end of the 10-week period, the advisory council (reviewers) convenes to provide feedback and recommendations.
3. The reviewers' comments, questions, concerns, and recommendations for action which may include requesting additional information are collated.
4. If IRCEP Advisory Council (reviewers) have questions or concerns that may be clarified by submission of additional information and/or documentation, the applicant programme will be contacted with a request for the additional information.
5. If IRCEP Advisory Council (reviewers) have expressed concerns in understanding the context in which the Counsellor education and training programme operates, the local experts identified on the application form may be contacted for consultation.
6. If the applicant programme does not sufficiently meet the IRCEP application requirements, the representatives listed on contact application form:
 - a. will receive a written document outlining the areas found to be deficient in the application and provided with a choice to withdraw its application from further review.
 - b. If applicant programme chooses to continue in the review process, it must supply all additional information to address the concerns outlined on the initial review to IRCEP via email to ircep@ircep.org within 3 weeks of receipt of written request.
- c. The 2nd review will follow the same timeline and decision-making process as outlined for the initial review. All decisions made are final.
7. IRCEP's Managing Director forwards IRCEP's Advisory Council's final recommendations to the CACREP Board of Directors for their final action. Note: CACREP board meets four (4) times annually (January, April, July, October)
8. Applicant programmes that were not approved may reapply at the end of 12 months following receipt of the decision letter.
9. When a programme is approved, IRCEP recognition is granted for a five (5) year period. Only approved programmes can promote this status on their programme website, social media, and educational material as "Recognized by The International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP), an international affiliate of CACREP." Recognized programs will receive a digital badge to use for this purpose.

Maintaining IRCEP Recognition Status

To maintain IRCEP recognition status, the Counsellor education and training program will:

1. Submit an Annual Programme Progress Report along with annual maintenance fee of \$200 USD (due 31st of January of every year). Programs will be invoiced.
2. Failure to submit the Annual Programme Progress Report along with the annual maintenance fee will result in withdrawal of a programme's registry listing and recognition status.
3. The Annual Programme Progress Reports provide the counsellor education and training program an opportunity to share and highlight their most current international work and IRCEP activities.
4. The information and documentation submitted in the Annual Programme Progress Report may be used on IRCEP's website, newsletter, promotional material, and social media platforms.
5. If the Annual Programme Progress Report indicates that the Counsellor education and training programme is no longer meeting the IRCEP quality assurance principles, IRCEP maintains the right to require that a full application review be conducted should the program wish to continue to be recognized and remain on the Registry. If a full review is required, the programme must commence with an initial application process along with fees.
6. At the end of the 5-year period, IRCEP recognized and approved programmes will need to submit a renewal application providing updates on how the programme continues to meet the IRCEP professional principles while highlighting achievements and international activities.

Annual Maintenance Fee

\$ 200 USD

The annual maintenance fee is due on 31st of January of every year.

Failure to submit the Annual Programme Progress Report along with the annual maintenance fee will result in withdrawal of a programme's registry listing and recognition status.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Q: Can programmes other than Counsellor Education and Training Programmes apply for IRCEP recognition and approval?

A: Please note that applications for IRCEP recognition and approval are only open to Counsellor Education and Training Programmes **and/or** programmes that have curriculum with a focus on counselling education or training. Programs offering degrees and/or curriculum without a focus on counselling education or training unfortunately are not eligible to apply. If you have questions about eligibility, please contact IRCEP Managing Director via email ircep@ircep.org

Q: What are Eligibility Requirements to apply for IRCEP Recognition?

A: Institutions and/or Counsellor education and training programmes must meet **ALL** the following requirements **prior** to applying to IRCEP for recognition consideration:

1. Offers Counsellor education and training programme degrees **and/or** programme curriculum with a focus on counselling education or training.
2. Has legal approval to operate the programme.
3. Possesses programmatic accreditation, recognition and approval by the regional regulatory agency that has authority and oversight of Counsellor education and training programmes.

Refer to *Eligibility Requirements* section in the Application Guideline Packet for more detailed information.

Q: Can the Counsellor Education and Training programme be taught in another language other than English?

A: Yes, the programme can be taught in any language, however the IRCEP application and all supporting documentation must be submitted in English. Please note if the application is a translation from the language in which the programme is delivered, it must include an affidavit of “accurate translation.”

Q: Does the Counsellor programme have to be master's or doctoral level?

A: No, depending on the requirements for counselling practice in a country or region, programmes can be associate, bachelor’s, master’s, or doctoral level. While there is no degree requirement, programmes must be able to provide evidence that the programme is a bona fide or legitimate programme, and the programme must demonstrate that it has sufficient resources to operate. This includes the faculty or educators, as well as access to learning resources.

Q: How can a programme submit application and supporting documentation for review?

A: Application and all supporting documentation are to be submitted via email (in English) to ircep@ircep.org

Q: How much is the Application fee? Must I submit payment at time of application submission?

A: The application fee is \$1,000 USD (nonrefundable). The application fee must be remitted when the application is submitted to IRCEP for review. No application will be reviewed, or feedback provided until the application fee has been received.

If more than three (3) months lapses between receipt of the application documents and the application fee, the application will be voided. The programme will be required to submit a new application and requisite application fee.

Q: How can programmes pay for the application fee?

A: Payments can be made in various forms: Checks, Credit Cards, or Electronic Funds Transfer. Please review the *Application Payment Methods* section in the Application Guideline Packet for more detailed information.

Q: What are the most current IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards and where can they be located?

A: The IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards are essential to the education and training of counsellors:

Principle 1: Learning Environment

Principle 2: Academic Quality

Principle 3: Student Recruitment, Enrollment, And Retention

Principle 4: Foundational Counselling Curriculum

Principle 5: Educator Recruitment, Employment, And Retention

Principle 6: Programme Leadership

They can be found on IRCEP's [website](#) as well as within this Application Guideline Packet and forms that must be addressed for review.

Q: Who can I contact about IRCEP application, requirements, eligibility, and selection?

A: If you have questions about IRCEP application, requirements, eligibility, selection please contact IRCEP Managing Director via email ircep@ircep.org

Q: Can a programme request to withdraw from the review process after the application has been submitted?

A: Yes, applicant programmes may withdraw from the review process at any time **prior** to a final decision being made via email to ircep@ircep.org. If a decision has been made about a programme prior to the programme’s request to withdraw from the review process, the programme representatives will be contacted on IRCEP final decision.

Q: How long is the IRCEP Recognition Cycle?

A: When a programme is approved, IRCEP recognition is granted for a five (5) year period. Only approved programmes can promote their programme on their website, social media, and educational material as “Recognized by The International Registry of Counsellor Education Programs (IRCEP), an international affiliate of CACREP.”

Q: What does a programme do after recognition cycle has ended?

A: At the end of the 5-year period, IRCEP recognized and approved programmes will need to submit a renewal application providing updates on how the programme continues to meet the IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards while highlighting achievements and international activities in which it has engaged.

Q: Does a programme need to submit documents or fees during the 5-year approved cycle?

A: Yes, for a Counsellor education and training programme to maintain its IRCEP recognition status, it must submit an annual progress report **and** maintenance fee of \$200 USD.

Refer to *Maintaining IRCEP Recognition Status* and *Annual Maintenance Fee* section in this Application Guideline Packet for more detailed information.

Q: What happens if a programme application is denied IRCEP recognition.

A: If the applicant programme does not sufficiently meet any and all parts of the application criteria (e.g., eligibility, IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards etc.), the representatives listed on contact application form:

- a. will receive a written document outlining the areas found to be deficient in the application and provided with a choice to withdraw its application from further review.
- b. if applicant programme chooses to continue in the review process, it must supply all additional information to address the concerns outlined on the

initial review to IRCEP via email ircep@ircep.org within 3 weeks of receipt of written request.

- c. The 2nd review will follow the same timeline and decision-making process as outlined for the initial review. All decisions made are final.

Refer to *Application Review Process* section in this Application Guideline Packet for more detailed information.

Q: How soon after a Programme application is denied can an application be submitted for re-consideration?

A: Applicant programmes that were not approved initially may reapply at the end of 12 months following receipt of the decision letter. It is important that programme applicants review their initial application, findings, and comments to ensure that any concerns were addressed and/or clarified. Programmes may also contact IRCEP's Managing Director via email ircep@ircep.org to request a formal meeting. Requests for meetings must be made in writing via email. Phone calls will not be considered as an option for setting up meeting appointments.