

IRCEP

PRINCIPLES OF QUALITY ASSURANCE AND PROFESSIONAL STANDARDS

IRCEP serves as the international quality assurance agency to foster excellence in the education and training of professional counsellors worldwide through a Registry of approved counsellor education and training programmes. These programmes have demonstrated adherence to the rigorous international recognition review process and have met the 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. They are designed to ensure value to stakeholders. The stakeholders include students, educators, academic programmes, employers, and community members.

Although the IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards delineate recognition requirements, they do not dictate the manner in which programmes may choose to meet the set of professional principles. Thus, programme innovation is encouraged in meeting both the intent and spirit of the IRCEP Principles. Providing evidence of meeting or exceeding the IRCEP Principles is the responsibility of the programme.

Note: Guidelines are offered at the end of each section on what programmes can provide to demonstrate meeting or exceeding the IRCEP Principles of Quality Assurance and Professional Standards.

PRINCIPLE 1: LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

The following principles apply to Counsellor education and training programmes for which IRCEP recognition is being sought unless otherwise specified.

The Institution and/or Counsellor education and training programme **must provide required documentation** that supports how the institution and/or organization meets the numbered mandates below. Note: The following (#'s 1,2,3) are eligibility requirements for programmes when seeking IRCEP recognition and approval:

The institution and/or organization:

1. must have legal approval to operate the Counsellor education and training programme in the respective country, state, city, or region.
2. must offer 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.
3. must possess programmatic accreditation, recognition and/or approval by the regional regulatory agency that has authority and oversight of Counsellor education and training programmes in the respective country, state, city, or region.
4. shall describe any and all special permission or licenses that are required for operating the counsellor education and training programme;
5. shall provide information on requirements that must be met in the programme's respective country, region and local area before an educational programme can be offered to students.
6. must clearly identify the counsellor education and training programme as part of the institution's degree offerings and has primary responsibility for the preparation of students in the programme, the respective areas of responsibility and the relationship between them must be clearly documented.
7. provides programme with financial and administrative support to ensure continuity, quality, and effectiveness for all programme delivery types.

In addition, the Institution and Counsellor education and training programme intentionally creates and effectively maintains an inclusive and equitable learning community that respects individual differences.

Guidelines for meeting Principle 1:

1. Provide documents and/or links that offer detailed information on the special permission or licenses that are required for operating a counsellor education and training programme in the respective country, region, and local area.
2. Provide documents that demonstrate institution's legitimacy to operate (e.g., License, permits etc.).
3. Provide letter with signature from Institution's or Programme's Authorized representative on institution's letterhead demonstrating the offering of a Counsellor education and training programme and/or offering of a curriculum

with a focus on counselling education or training (refer to *Principle # 4 Foundational Counselling Curriculum* for specific details on curriculum).

4. Provide Letter with signature from regulatory agency that has authority and oversight of Counsellor education and training programmes on letterhead **or** certificate that includes name and signature of regulatory agency.
5. Provide documents and/or links that offer detailed information on requirements that must be met in the programme's respective country, region and local area **before** an educational program can be offered to students.

PRINCIPLE 2: ACADEMIC QUALITY

The following principles apply to Counsellor education and training programmes for which IRCEP recognition is being sought unless otherwise specified.

Counsellor education and training programmes must be committed to attaining the highest quality in their preparation of students and must demonstrate the process, tools, and thresholds used to measure quality. Academic quality is determined by evaluation of programme mission and objectives and assessment of students' knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

The purpose of student evaluation is for counsellor education and training programme faculty to continuously monitor student demonstration of key knowledge, skills, and dispositions to prepare them for practice as a counsellor.

PROGRAMME MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

A. PROGRAMME MISSION

The Counsellor education and training programme has a mission statement that:

1. defines and outlines the fundamental purpose of the programme;
2. reflects input from persons involved in the conduct of the programme: counsellor education programme faculty, current and former students, and community partners;
3. reflects counselling practice in a diverse, multicultural, and global society;
4. is on the programme website in a location accessible to the public; and
5. is included in programme documents accessible to students.

B. PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES

The programme objectives:

1. reflect current knowledge and projected needs concerning counselling practice in a diverse, multicultural, and global society;
2. reflect input from persons involved in the conduct of the programme: counsellor education and training programme faculty, current and former students, and community partners;
3. are written in measurable terms so they can be evaluated.
4. are on the programme website in a location accessible to the public; and
5. are included in programme documents accessible to students.

INDIVIDUAL STUDENT ASSESSMENT

- C. The Counsellor education and training programmes continuously and systematically assess how students individually demonstrate progress toward and mastery of the knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions throughout the programme to prepare them for practice as a counsellor.

The assessment process includes:

1. identify and define knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions to be assessed.
2. a systematic process in place for communicating feedback to students on their individual assessments of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.
3. a written policy for student retention, remediation, and dismissal from the program consistent with institutional policies and procedures.

Guidelines for meeting Principle 2:

1. Describe the programme mission and objectives.
2. Provide links to an official website and documents (e.g., programme catalogue, student handbook, syllabi) demonstrating that students, faculty, and the public have access to programme mission and objectives.
3. Describe the assessment process of how the counsellor education programme faculty systematically assesses each student's progress of both knowledge and skills, and professional disposition.
4. Provide samples of the multiple assessment tools used by the counsellor education programme faculty to determine each student's acquisition of both knowledge and skills, and professional disposition.
5. Provide programme and institutional written policy that describes the review or analysis process of individual student data for the purpose of retention, remediation, and dismissal.
6. Describe and provide samples of the counsellor education programme systematic process for communicating feedback to students on their individual assessments of knowledge, skills, and professional dispositions.

PRINCIPLE 3: STUDENT RECRUITMENT, ENROLLMENT, AND RETENTION

The following principles apply to Counsellor education and training programmes for which IRCEP recognition is being sought unless otherwise specified.

The counsellor education programme engages in efforts to recruit, enroll, and retain students that enhance and support the programme.

Process of recruitment, enrollment, and retention of students involves:

- a. Programme description of
 1. programme delivery types, including geographic locations;
 2. admission criteria.
 3. minimum degree requirements; and
 4. type of degree and/or certificates student will obtain upon successful completion of programme.
- b. Provision of a new student orientation
- c. Supports student engagement in professional activities and service that contribute to professional and personal growth.
- d. Opportunities for students to evaluate their experience within the counsellor education and training programme.

Guidelines for meeting Principle 3:

1. Provide links to an official website of institution and/or programme demonstrating that students and the public have access to detailed programme description.
2. Provide documentation that demonstrates how students are selected for and admitted in the programme.
3. Provide copies of Student Orientation (e.g., agenda, PowerPoint (PDF format) material presented.
4. Provide links, agendas, announcements, and/or information made available to students on professional development and service opportunities.
5. Provide documents that students use to evaluate their experience within the counsellor education and training programme.

PRINCIPLE 4: FOUNDATIONAL COUNSELLING CURRICULUM

The following principles apply to Counsellor education and training programmes for which IRCEP recognition is being sought unless otherwise specified.

IRCEP empowers 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 culture, country, region, work practice setting, or educational system.

The Counsellor education and training programme offers curriculum for obtaining essential knowledge and skills necessary to function effectively as a professional counsellor across service delivery modalities. Curriculum knowledge domains and outcome expectations are frequently interrelated and not mutually exclusive. Ethical behavior, diversity, equity, inclusion, and critical thinking are integral to counsellor preparation and should be infused throughout the curriculum. Counsellor preparation programmes address content and strategies across the eight (8) foundational curriculum areas.

The eight (8) foundational curriculum areas represent the knowledge required of all entry level counsellor education graduates.

Counsellor education programmes **must document** where and in what manner each of the numbered areas listed below is covered in the curriculum.

1. Professional Counselling Orientation and Ethical Practice
2. Social and Cultural Identities and Diversity
3. Lifespan Human Development
4. Theories and Techniques
5. Counselling Skills and Practice
6. Supervised Field Practice
7. Professional Identity
8. Research and Assessment

Guidelines for meeting Principle 4:

- a. Describe where and in what manner are the eight (8) foundational areas covered in the curriculum.
- b. Provide documents (e.g., Syllabi, course and/or programme catalogue) and/or links to documents that describe the curricular requirements and/or show how students progress through the programme.

PRINCIPLE 5: EDUCATOR RECRUITMENT, EMPLOYMENT, AND RETENTION

The following principles apply to Counsellor education and training programmes for which IRCEP recognition is being sought unless otherwise specified.

The counsellor education programme engages in efforts to recruit, employ, and retain counsellor educators, instructors, and trainers that enhance and support the programme.

The counsellor education programme:

1. Employs counsellor educators, instructors, and trainers (full-time and/or affiliates) who support the mission, objectives, and curriculum of the counsellor education programme;
2. Orients counsellor educators, instructors, and trainers (full-time and affiliates) to programme, accreditation/recognition requirements relevant to the courses they teach, programme delivery types, and programme and institutional policies and procedures.
3. Ensures that counselling and training programme educators have relevant preparation and/or experience in relation to the: (a) course content they teach and (b) delivery types.
4. Provides resources of appropriate quality and sufficiency to ensure continuity, quality, and effectiveness and meet the demands of the programme and programme delivery types.
5. Supports educators, instructors, and trainers to participate in professional activities and services that contribute to personal and professional growth.

Guidelines for meeting Principle 5:

1. Provide information on the number of individuals teaching in the programme (full-time and affiliate/adjuncts).
2. Provide instructors resumes along with information regarding their qualifications and relevant professional counselling credentials to teach in the programme, and clearly define if they are full-time core educators, part-time, or affiliate/adjuncts.
3. Describe resources provided to educators to ensure continuity, quality, and effectiveness for learning, teaching and research of all programme delivery types (e.g., classrooms with digital, audio/visual equipment, recording facilities).
4. Describe training counseling skills training environments offered and provide copies of community or agency facility partnerships and agreements.
5. Provide links, agendas, announcements and/or information made available to educators, on professional and service opportunities.

PRINCIPLE 6: PROGRAMME LEADERSHIP

The following principles apply to Counsellor education and training programmes for which IRCEP recognition is being sought unless otherwise specified.

The counsellor education and training programme has clearly defined leadership that is coordinated by one or more individual(s) that can include core counsellor education faculty/educator.

Written job description(s) for individual(s) providing this leadership include:

1. having responsibility for the coordination of the counsellor education programme,
2. responding to inquiries regarding the overall counsellor education programme,
3. providing input and making recommendations regarding the development of budget and expenditures, and
4. providing or delegating year-round leadership to the operation of the programme(s),

Guidelines for meeting Principle 6:

1. provide the name, title, and contact information of the individual(s) who holds leadership responsibilities.
2. provide job description of the individual(s) who holds leadership responsibilities.
3. provide links to documents that support the individual(s) authority to provide year-round leadership (e.g., official position description, letter of appointment)