

**Review and Remediation Policy  
Clinical Psychology Program  
Department of Psychology  
Queen's University**

**Scope**

This policy applies to any clinical activity in which a student is engaged as part of their training in the Clinical Psychology Program at Queen's University. These activities include, but are not limited to, practicum, internship, provision of psychology services at the Psychology Clinic at Queen's, outreach activities included in the Clinical Psychology Outreach Program, clinical activities in a research lab, and other clinical activities that are considered program-sanctioned clinical training experiences.

The School of Graduate Studies provides policies specific to performance in other course work and thesis. [http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/General\\_Regulations.html](http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/General_Regulations.html)

**Philosophy**

We anticipate that most issues or concerns related to student performance will be resolved through informal mechanisms. We strongly encourage students and supervisors to adopt a proactive approach to resolving problems. Central to this is the maintenance of regular communication between students and faculty/clinical supervisors regarding the performance of students, the quantity and quality of training opportunities being provided and the quantity and quality of supervision being received.

We respond to issues on a case-by-case basis and support the student to our fullest ability in terms of accommodation (e.g., extended deadlines, switch of supervisor, leave) and provide them with relevant resources (e.g., School of Graduate Studies website, Employee Assistance Program).

On occasion, however, concerns related to performance may develop which are more significant, extensive, or cannot be resolved through informal mechanisms. When this occurs, a more formal procedure will be invoked to resolve the problem. Policies and procedures exist for these situations and these are described in the following sections. These policies and procedures are designed to protect the interests of all those involved (e.g., students, faculty, supervisors, the department, the institution).

**Performance Requiring Review**

Performance requiring review refers to problems which persist despite informal efforts to resolve them, or serious breaches of ethical conduct. They are problems or concerns, which if not resolved, are likely to prevent a student from successfully completing the degree requirements.

Formal procedures are initiated when it is determined that a student's performance requires review. Performance requiring review is likely to include one or more of the following characteristics:

- a) the student receives a rating of "Does not Meet Expectations" in one or more domain of an end-point practicum evaluation;
- b) the student's behaviour constitutes a serious ethical or professional concern;
- c) the student's behaviour does not change as a function of feedback, remediation efforts, or time;
- d) the student does not acknowledge, understand, or address the problematic behaviour when it is identified;
- e) the student's behaviour has potential for ethical or legal ramifications if not addressed;
- f) a disproportionate amount of attention by training personnel is required;
- g) the student's behaviour negatively affects the public image of the department, university and/or practicum setting.

### **Process**

These processes will be initiated if a Clinical Supervisor or Faculty member has identified concerns about performance (as outlined above) that warrants further attention from the Clinical Program. This may be following an opportunity for demonstrating response to feedback and training, or may be immediately depending on the nature of the concern.

In situations of major ethical violations (e.g. sexual contact with a client, a significant breach of confidentiality, other behaviour that would be considered Professional Misconduct by the College of Psychologists of Ontario) a student may be asked to withdraw immediately or placed on probation. However, in other instances, if significant concerns about the performance of a student continue despite informal efforts to address the problem (e.g., teaching, additional opportunities to practice, readings and discussion of ethical issues), a review committee will be formed including the Director of Clinical Training, and other relevant parties (e.g., the student's academic or clinical placement supervisor, the Director of the Psychology Clinic/Practicum Coordinator, the Chair of the Graduate Committee) to determine whether or not the student's performance requires remediation, probation or immediate withdrawal from the program. The student will be informed in writing (i.e., email) of the committee's concerns and the policies and procedures regarding performance requiring review, remediation, and probation.

The student will be given an opportunity to present additional information relevant to the stated concerns. A formal meeting will be held with the review committee and the student to discuss the concerns and the review committee's proposal regarding the next steps (e.g., a formal remediation plan, probation, withdrawal from the program). The student may choose to be accompanied by a representative (e.g., Society of Graduate and Professional Students Advisor) if desired. A written recording of the meeting will be prepared by the Director of Clinical Training and shared with the student and the

members of the review committee by email. The student is informed in writing of the process of appealing the decision of the review committee.

### **Formal Remediation Plan**

In cases where the review committee is recommending a formal remediation plan, the relevant faculty/supervisors and the student will be asked for input in the development of the remediation plan. The Director of Clinical Training will be responsible for preparing the formal remediation plan. The plan is intended to provide a means of resolving the issue(s) and returning the student's performance to the expected and required level. It includes:

- a) a summary of the performance and informal efforts already taken to address concerns,
- b) the specific areas of remediation, objectives of the remediation plan, and actions to be taken by the student and faculty/supervisors,
- c) the method of evaluation of progress on the remediation plan,
- d) the time frame of the remediation plan and evaluation,
- e) a description of the requirements in order to achieve satisfactory progress (e.g., in the case of a remediation practicum placement, not only must the objectives of the remediation plan be attained, no further areas of remediation should be identified),
- f) indication that the student understands:
  - The identified areas to be remediated
  - The expected level of performance on remediation objectives
  - The nature of the remedial program
  - The time frame of the remedial program
  - The assessment techniques to be used
  - The consequences of a successful/failed remediation plan
  - I have been given the chance to clarify all components of this remediation plan

The plan may include a modification of the goals and objectives for various activities, a reduction of the student's involvement in other activities, and a change in the frequency and/or manner in which supervision is provided (e.g., more direct and frequent interactions and observation of the student's activities). The student is provided with a copy of the remediation plan and required to sign the plan, along with the Director of Clinical Training. Others involved in the remediation plan (e.g., Director of Psychology Clinic/Practicum Coordinator, faculty) may be requested to sign as well. If the student does not wish to engage in the remediation plan, they must withdraw from the Clinical Program.

At the conclusion of the time period specified in the remediation plan the Director of Clinical Training will review the student's progress and determine if the objectives of the remediation plan have been achieved. The Director of Clinical Training may request the support of the review committee in making this decision. The Director of Clinical Training may determine that the remediation plan has been successfully completed, that

further remediation is required, or that the student's registration in the programme should be terminated. The Director of Clinical Training and/or review committee meets with the student (and representative) to discuss the decision and a written summary of the decision is provided by the Director of Clinical Training to both the student and the student's Faculty supervisor. The student is informed in writing of the process of appealing the decision.

### **Withdrawal from the Program**

In situations where the student has been found to have engaged in serious ethical violations (e.g. sexual contact with a client, a significant breach of confidentiality, other behaviour that would be considered Professional Misconduct by the College of Psychologists of Ontario) the student may be removed from the Clinical Program or placed on probation. A student who is not successful in completing a formal remediation plan may also be removed from the Clinical Program.

### **Appeal Procedures**

Students are encouraged to discuss concerns with the Director of Clinical Training and resolve them informally. In the event that informal efforts to resolve concerns are unsuccessful, a formal appeal procedure exists.

See here for more information on appeals against academic decisions as well as the steps involved:

[http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Appeals\\_Against\\_Academic\\_Decisions.html](http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Appeals_Against_Academic_Decisions.html)

Information related to an appeal of an academic grade can be found here:

[http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Appeal\\_of\\_an\\_Assigned\\_Grade\\_in\\_a\\_Graduate\\_Course.html](http://www.queensu.ca/calendars/sgsr/Appeal_of_an_Assigned_Grade_in_a_Graduate_Course.html)

### **Probation**

The Graduate Committee is empowered to put a student on probation if progress is deemed unsatisfactory. This is reserved for those students who are deemed to be making inadequate progress during the first 5 years of registration. If this action does have to be taken, the student will be told clearly the reasons for it and will be given directions as to how to improve. The maximum probationary period would be one year, after which the student would be taken off probation or asked to withdraw from the program.

### **Permanent Review**

This normally applies to students: in M.Sc.3 and above; students who entered the graduate program with an M.Sc. who are registered beyond year 4; and students who entered the graduate program with a B.A. who are registered beyond year 6. Permanent Review entails: A review by the Graduate Committee of the student's progress at the end of each term; specifications of progress to be made by the end of the following term; and possible sanctions to be imposed for failure to make progress as specified at previous review.\*"

\*Please also note that in situations in which students do not meet the deadline for completion of their PhD, they are asked by the Department to withdraw and re-register at the time of defense.

If the issues are such that they cannot be accommodated from within the Department, the student is informed that the School of Graduate Studies should become involved.

See here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/home> and there is a link to a page of resources in terms of graduate supervision here: <http://www.queensu.ca/sgs/current-students/graduate-supervision>. Graduate students also have access to Advisors (see: <http://www.sgps.ca/services/advisors.html> for more information).