



Updated
Flexible accreditation arrangements during
COVID-19 pandemic
- 9 August 2020

Re: Flexible accreditation arrangements during COVID-19 pandemic Policy Update - 19 August 2020

This Policy update is for Training providers after a review of the PACFA policy on *Flexible accreditation arrangements during COVID-19 pandemic*.

Please note the following two changes have been made to the policy in response to feedback received from the accredited training providers:

1. PACFA's *Flexible accreditation arrangements during COVID-19 pandemic* has been extended to 31 December 2020. A further extension will be considered if required due to the pandemic.
2. Where students complete their placements via telephone in accordance with PACFA's *Flexible accreditation arrangements during COVID-19 pandemic*, they may join PACFA at provisional level upon graduation without having to log any additional fact to face client contact hours. This arrangement is for the period of the COVID-19 pandemic only and is not a permanent change to the PACFA Training Standards.
3. The policy clarifies expectations around client contact via telephone. Only telephone contact involving *therapeutic counselling or psychotherapy* is accepted.

Types of telephone client contact that are accepted

Clarification has been sought by some training providers on the types of counselling conducted by telephone that would be considered suitable for students to complete their client contact hours. The Professional Standards Committee has advised that only client contact undertaken by telephone that involves *therapeutic counselling or psychotherapy* will count towards the 40 client contact hours required to graduate.

The following two specific examples of other types of client contact are not accepted:

- Intake calls for psychologists with the opportunity to observe the psychologist delivering the counselling service
- General phone contact with client to explain services and book appointments.

Review of the PACFA Training Standards

Other matters that have been raised by training providers will be part of the next review of the PACFA Training standards. This will include:

- Whether student or trainee client contact hours completed via video conference or telephone could be a permanent part of the PACFA Training Standards and if it is, the proportion of these alternate forms of client contact that would be considered acceptable
- Whether psychoeducation groups would be accepted as client contact and if they are, what proportion of this form of client contact that would be considered acceptable
- Whether single session crisis telephone counselling would be acceptable.

PACFA's Professional Standards Committee will be undertaking a stakeholder survey to seek your input on these and other matters for the PACFA Training Standards review.