



Psychotherapy & Counselling  
Federation of Australia

# PACFA Membership and Registration Requirements and Annual Renewal Requirements

## 1. Application Requirements

### 1.1. Provisional and Clinical Membership and Registration Requirements

Applicants for Provisional Membership or Registration must demonstrate completion of training that meets the requirements of the PACFA Training Standards (2018).

The PACFA Training Standards (2018) are based on the Australian Qualifications Framework (AQF) standards and levels of learning. See [www.aqf.edu.au](http://www.aqf.edu.au).

Education and training in counselling and psychotherapy must be undertaken in a qualification approved by the Tertiary Education Quality Standards Agency (TEQSA) or the Australian Skills Quality Authority (ASQA) at either the undergraduate or postgraduate levels (AQF level 7 to 9). The minimum volume of learning requirements listed below apply to any program, whether undergraduate or postgraduate.

400 hours of instruction (minimum) (applicable to AQF level 7-9). This may be made up of:

- i) 200 hours direct person-to-person instruction of which 60 hours may be synchronous online (e.g., interactive webinars).
  - This equates to 140 hours, which must be solely taught face-to-face, plus 60 hours of synchronous training
  - The central focus of this person-to-person instruction is on interpersonal skills development
- ii) 200 hours of instruction may be conducted via online asynchronous training for theory-based studies.

In addition, a minimum of 40 hours of face-to-face counselling or psychotherapy practice (client contact) with 10 hours of supervision (related to client contact) must be completed within training and assessed as successful by the training provider. Successful completion of supervised practice is required to be evidenced by a log signed by the responsible supervisor(s).

For Clinical Membership and Registration, an additional 75 hours of post-qualifying supervision linked to 750 additional hours of post-qualifying client contact, accumulated over a minimum two-year period, are required. Hours of supervised client contact that are completed post-training may be undertaken via synchronous video conferencing or telephone.

### 1.2 Recognition of Prior Learning Requirements

Where an applicant's professional training, supervision and development do not fit the requirements of the PACFA Training Standards (2018), they may apply to PACFA for recognition of prior learning

(RPL) for Clinical or Provisional Membership or Registration, in limited circumstances. RPL applicants must demonstrate how their training and experience meet the requirements of the PACFA Training Standards (2018). Refer to the [Guidelines for RPL Applications](#) for more details.

## **2. Annual Renewal Requirements**

PACFA registered Members and other Registrants must demonstrate that they have met the Membership and Registration Renewal Requirements for ongoing professional development, supervision, ethical practice and professional indemnity insurance on an annual basis.

### **2.1 Continuing Professional Development for registered Members and Registrants**

Continuing Professional Development (CPD) requirements are intended to support the obligation of professional counsellors and/or psychotherapists to maintain currency within their profession and with new developments in clinical practice. Members and Registrants must undertake a minimum of 20 hours of CPD in the period 1 July to 30 June each year. The following categories of CPD apply:

**Category A:** Minimum annual requirement – 15 hours

The whole of the annual requirement of 20 CPD hours may be accrued from Category A only.

**Category B:** Maximum claimable annual allowance - 5 hours

The 20 hours of CPD must be accrued in the 12 months prior to membership renewal i.e. between 1 July and 30 June in the previous 12 months. The CPD requirements for a registration period of less than 12 months can be taken pro rata in the first year of membership or registration. Pro rata CPD will be calculated on a monthly basis, for example, for 6 months of registration, the requirements will be halved to 10 hours.

For details, refer to the [PACFA CPD Policy](#).

### **2.2 Guidelines for content of CPD for PACFA Members and Registrants**

- CPD should be relevant to ongoing **clinical** practice as a counsellor and/or psychotherapist.
- CPD should be relevant to the core competencies of counselling and/or psychotherapy practice.

For details refer to the [PACFA CPD Policy](#).

### **2.3 Continuing Professional Development for Educators**

Academic and Associate Academic Members of the Australian College Counselling and Psychotherapy Educators (ACCAPE) are required to complete an additional ten hours of CPD relating to their education practice.

For details refer to the ACCAPE Membership Requirements.

### **2.4 Clinical Supervision**

#### **2.4.1 Supervision Requirements for Clinical and Provisional Members and Registrants**

Clinical and Provisional Members and Registrants who have accrued up to 400 client practice hours over the year must have undertaken 10 hours of formal supervision linked to their practice.

Clinical and Provisional Members and Registrants who have accrued more than 400 client practice hours over the year must have undertaken 15 hours of formal supervision linked to their practice.

It is strongly recommended that practitioners with a full-time practice seek additional hours of supervision proportional to the client practice hours they accrue.

Supervision may be individual, or in a group setting with no more than six participants.

#### **2.4.2 Peer Supervision for Clinical Members and Registrants**

PACFA Clinical Members and Registrants who are eligible to participate in Peer Supervision may claim a maximum of 50% of the required 10 (or 15) hours of supervision as Peer Supervision.

Peer Supervision can only be claimed by Clinical Members and Registrants who have been listed as PACFA Clinical Registrants continuously for at least five years prior to the commencement of peer supervision. Where a Registrant has not been listed as a Clinical Registrant with PACFA for 5 years prior to the commencement of peer supervision, evidence of prior eligibility for clinical registration (i.e. evidence that the Registrant had completed 750 post-qualifying client contact hours linked to 75 hours of post-qualifying supervision hours) AND evidence of the 5 years supervised practice since becoming eligible for clinical registration is to be provided, in order to be eligible to claim Peer Supervision.

Peer supervision is a formal process in which practitioners contract to provide collegial feedback, critique and enhancement of each other's clinical practice. Colleagues or peers work together for mutual benefit, and rotate the roles of supervisor and supervisee. Peer supervision can be undertaken as a dyad or within a group of no more than six participants.

#### **2.5 Renewal Requirements for Mental Health Practitioners and Accredited Supervisors**

For PACFA **Accredited Mental Health Practitioners**, it is **recommended** that:

- 5 hours of 20 hours of CPD relates specifically to mental health practice. This requirement may involve activities from Categories A or B.
- 5 hours of the 15 hours supervision relates specifically to mental health practice.

For PACFA **Accredited Supervisors** it is **recommended** that:

- 5 hours of CPD relates specifically to supervision practice. This requirement may involve activities from Categories A or B.
- 5 hours of the 15 hours supervision relates specifically to supervision practice.

#### **2.6 Other Renewal Requirements**

As part of the annual renewal process, Members and Registrants are also required to:

- Be an individual member of PACFA or demonstrate current membership of a PACFA Member Association;
- Complete a signed declaration to adhere to the PACFA Code of Ethics and Complaint Procedures; and
- Complete a signed declaration that they hold Professional Indemnity Insurance.