Education Self-Assessment Tool

Do I have the Core Educational Competencies to be Eligible for CPCA Membership?

The Canadian Professional Counsellors Association is a unique counselling association for several reasons. But the most important reason is that the CPCA is the only counselling association that adheres to a Competency Based Model. You can learn more about our Competency Based Model by clicking on the linked text. But in short, you can have a varied educational background and still be eligible to become a CPCA Member. The question is whether you have the educational core competencies to become one of the following designation options:

1. The **RPC** or **RPC Provisional** designation – this designation is for those who will work within the **Mental Health Counselling Scope of Practice**. To obtain the full **RPC** designation (without the "provisional" status) requires not only the educational competencies but also a minimum of: (a) **150** counselling supervision hours, (b) **250** direct client contact hours and (c) **200** hours of professional practice or currency hours for a total of **600** hours.

2. The **MPCC** or **MPCC Provisional** designation - this designation is for those who will work within the **Clinical Counselling Scope of Practice**. To obtain the full **MPCC** designation (without the "provisional" status) requires not only the educational competencies but also a minimum of: (a) **150** counselling supervision hours, (b) **250** direct client contact hours and (c) **200** hours of professional practice or currency hours for a total of **600** hours. This designation also requires specific counselling education which must include: (1) Training in the use of the DSM-5-TR, (2) Training in Assessment with Differential Diagnosis, (3) Training in Mental Health Pharmacology. Other clinical mental health additional training could include: addiction counselling, biopsychosocial approach to counselling, PTSD counselling, group therapy. The exact names of courses may vary but the material covered should be similar.

The four options of what you may be eligible for include:

	Provisional Status	**Full Status**
Mental Health Scope of Practice	**RPC Provisional** requirements: 1. Education/Training addressing all CPCA Core Counselling Competencies	**RPC** requirements: 1. Education/Training addressing all CPCA Core Counselling Competencies 2. 600 hours in counselling/ therapy practice
Clinical Counselling Scope of Practice	**MPCC Provisional** requirements: 1. Education/Training addressing all CPCA Core Counselling Competencies 2. Specific training in Clinical Mental Health Education	**MPCC** requirements: 1. Education/Training addressing all CPCA Core Counselling Competencies 2. Specific training in Clinical Mental Health Education 3. 600 hours in counselling/ therapy practice

From the chart above, if you do not have (a) **150** counselling supervision hours, (b) **250** direct client contact hours and (c) **200** hours of professional practice hours for a total of **600** hours, you would need to choose the **Provisional Status** for application. If you do not have the specific training in **Clinical Mental Health Education**, you would need to apply for the **RPC** or **RPC Provisional** designation.

However, if you are not sure if your education would make you eligible for membership, you have **3 options**:

1. **Complete this Education Self-Assessment Tool** – You can use this form (at no cost) and you should have a clear sense of whether you meet the educational core competencies to apply to the CPCA. Please note that completing this document is not a guarantee for membership with the CPCA, but it will give you clarity as to whether you may or may not need further education or specific courses to be eligible for membership.

2. **Request a CPCA Educational Review** – You may also request that the CPCA does an Educational Review for you at a (non-refundable) cost of **$75 + $5 admin fee** + **Tax**. This is done by submitting the CPCA Substantiating Education for Application Form. It needs to be filled it out completely, and saved to your computer. Then email it and all course outlines to registrar@thecpca.ca requesting a CPCA Educational Review. Payment is sent to payment@thecpca.ca with password: **education**

3. **Start an Application** – You can go to the Membership Application page on the CPCA website and click on the application link. Applications have a **$150** (+ GST/HST) non-refundable processing fee. As a part of your application, it is possible that an Educational Review will also need to be completed, but it will be done as a part of your application process without additional fees.

On the next page is a complete list of the CPCA Core Competencies that need to have been addressed within your educational background. These core competencies come from the CPCA Core Competencies document. Review each competency listed below and check the "Yes" or "No" box beside each competency as to whether you have taken an accredited course which addressed this core competency. At the end of the document list the competency areas which may be missing in your educational background.

If you are currently a student in your counselling related educational training, you can benefit from becoming a CPCA Student Member. Submit an easy application to get started with the CPCA.

IMPORTANT NOTE: If you have completed a **CPCA approved educational program** in counselling, clinical counselling, counselling psychology, or professional counselling, please do **not** use this tool. If your educational program has been approved by the CPCA, it means that it is recognized to fulfill the CPCA educational core competencies listed below. For a list of CPCA approved educational programs, please check out the website under **Membership Eligibility**.

Canadian Professional Counsellors Association

List of Core Competencies	Do I Have This Core Competency covered in an accredited course or part of a course which I have successfully taken?
1. **COUNSELLING FOUNDATIONS** – knowing psychological health, development, and dysfunction	
A. **Human Development and Functioning**	
o Understands development Across the Life Span, and life transitions	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Understands contextual and systemic influences of social, biological, and family	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Integrates knowledge of the significance of religion, spirituality, values, and meaning	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
B. **Culture and Diversity**	
o Understands sociological and cultural barriers that may affect counselling	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Adapts counselling approach to meet the cultural/spiritual/ethnic specific needs of the client	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Recognizes and adjusts therapeutic approach due to historic and systemic oppression, power imbalance and its impact on the counselling relationship	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
C. **Theoretical Framework**	
o Uses and applies established therapeutic theory	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Establishes a therapeutic relationship informed by the theoretical framework	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Recognizes and understands how human problems develop	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Applies a theoretical framework to client contexts and presentations	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Applies a theory of change consistent with the theoretical framework	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Recognizes the benefits, limitations, and contraindications of differing theoretical frameworks	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
D. **Mental Heath**	
o Understands the impact of trauma on psychological functioning	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Recognizes impact of major classes of psychotropic drugs and their effects	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Recognizes the major diagnostic categories identified in the DSM-5 and IDC and their possible implications for counselling	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Recognizes the impact of drug and alcohol misuse, abuse, and addiction	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Understands and uses knowledge of neurobiology pertinent to clinical practice	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Understands psychopathology and abnormal psychology and the nature of dysfunction	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
2. **COUNSELLING INTERVENTIONS** – knowing when and how to complete successful interventions	
A. **Clinical Assessment**	
o Understands purpose and can perform a full clinical assessment process	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
o Understands what client issue(s) to address first and rationale for prioritization	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
B. **Crisis Intervention**	

    o   Able to assess crisis and level of risk   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Able to assess suicidal & homicidal risk, and other types of risk   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Able to address when a client is in crisis   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

C. Conflict Resolution

    o   Manages a client's conflict or a conflict with a client   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

3. COUNSELLING PROCESSES – Having the knowledge and skills to work with client issues

A. Orientation

    o   Explains the proposed theoretical framework for therapy   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Describes the therapeutic process establish agreement on who is the client for the purposes of therapy   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Explains the responsibilities of counsellor and client in the therapeutic relationship   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Explains confidentiality and its limits   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Establishes ongoing informed consent   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Provides key administrative policies and procedural information to client

B. Assessment

    o   Identifies client's strengths, vulnerabilities, resilience, and resources.   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Selects and uses appropriate assessment tools   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Refers clients to external assessment where appropriate

    o   Identifies client's expectations of therapy and its outcomes

    o   Integrates assessment data into proposed therapeutic process   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Communicates assessment information so client understands its relationship to proposed therapeutic process   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Assesses for and addresses legal duty to report and legal duty to warn   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

C. Therapeutic Relationship

    o   Establishes and maintains a client-therapist relationship   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Establishes and maintains therapeutic boundaries   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Defines clear limits of response to client's requests or demands   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Regains therapeutic perspective when it has been diminished   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Monitors and responds to quality of client-therapist relationship in an ongoing way

D. Therapeutic Process

    o   Adapts therapeutic process to meet specific needs of client

    o   Formulates working hypothesis to account for presenting problems of clients   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Uses working hypothesis to guide therapeutic approach   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Obtains, interprets, and integrates multiple sources of information pertaining to working hypotheses   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Assesses working hypothesis an effectiveness of the therapeutic approach   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Reformulates working hypothesis and therapeutic approach as appropriate   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Manages interpretations to the therapeutic process   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Reviews process with client on an ongoing basis   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Develops and monitors safety plan with client and/or others

    o   Fosters and promotes client's ability to function independent of therapy   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    o   Manages interruptions to the therapeutic process due to external factors

    o   Identifies situations in which referral may benefit the client   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

- o Refers client, when needed or appropriate, in a timely fashion   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- E. **Closure**   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
    - o Recognizes when to conclude therapy
    - o Prepares client for the ending of a course of therapy   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
    - o Conducts an effective closure process   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
    - o Identifies follow up options   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
    - o Reviews support systems and resources
    - o Addresses premature endings   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

4. **COUNSELLING SKILLS AND TECHNIQUES** – using counselling skills to build therapeutic relationship
    - A. **Therapeutic Relationship**
        - o Uses counselling skills to create an emotionally safe, respectful, authentic, accepting, and therapeutic relationship   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
    - B. **Therapeutic Communication and Process**
        - o Uses counselling skills such as listening, paraphrasing, empathy, probing   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - o Uses counselling skills such as immediacy, and reframing   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - o Uses different types of appropriate challenging to enhance the formation of the therapeutic relationship   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

5. **ETHICS AND ETHICAL PRACTICE** – Using ethical principles to guide best practice
    - A. **Commitment to Regulatory Standards**
        - A. Complies with all relevant federal and provincial/territorial legislation   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - B. Complies with all relevant municipal and other local bylaws   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - C. Complies with all requirements of statutory regulatory body   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - D. Complies with all requirements of self regulatory organization   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - E. Adheres to Standards of Practice of a professional association   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - F. Distinguishes between the role of a provincial regulatory body and a professional association   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

    - B. **Commitment to Ethical Practice**
        - A. Recognizes ethical issues encountered in clinical practice   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - B. Applies an ethical decision-making process   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - C. Addresses organizational policies and practices that are inconsistent with legislation and professional standards   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - D. Resolves ethical dilemmas in a manner consistent with legislation and professional standards   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - E. Recognizes and acknowledges personal accountability in decision making
        - F. Recognizes one's scope of practice and to not work beyond one's scope of practice   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
        - G. Uses ethical communication where ethical principles are maintained in all communications with client   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

6. **REFLECTIVE PRACTICE** – Taking care of self to better take care of the client
    - A. **Self Awareness**

- o Recognizes instances where counselling therapist's life experiences may enhance or compromise effectiveness   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Recognizes when subjectivity values and biases may compromise counselling effectiveness   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Obtains support to enhance objectivity.   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

B. Self-Care & Personal Safety
- o Maintains wellness practices that contribute to professional performance   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Builds and uses a support network
- o Recognizes compromised performance and addresses these indicators   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Recognizes and addresses need for personal counselling   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Recognizes and addresses risks to personal safety   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

C. Clinical Supervision and Personal/Professional Congruence
- o Seeks regular clinical supervision for best welfare of clients & self-reflective practice   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Differentiates administrative supervision, clinical supervision, & consultation   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Recognizes the principles of clinical supervision and the complexities of the role of clinical supervisor   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
- o Strives to be a fully integrated person whose personal and professional life are congruent and who present consistently in both contexts   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

7. **PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE** – Doing the business of counselling
   A. Clinical Records
   - o Maintains comprehensive records of professional activity   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Ensures clarity and legibility of records   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Maintains security and preservation of records   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Recognizes and addresses factors affecting confidentiality and access to information   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Recognizes and addresses factors affecting transfer of information and records to others   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

   B. Professional Business Practices
   - o Recognizes and addresses liability concerns   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Establishes sound business management policies and procedures
   - o Establishes procedures to deal effectively with client crises and emergency situations   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Establishes procedures to provide services during therapeutic absence   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Employs ethical advertising principles   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Maintains professional deportment congruent with practice setting   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Uses planning and time management skills

   C. Collegial Relationships - Consultation and Collaboration
   - o Recognizes the principles of consultation and the complexities of the role of the consultant   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Provides consultation within therapist's limits of professional expertise   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Creates and sustains working relationships with other professionals
   - o Differentiates the functions of other service providers   ➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
   - o Shows respect to other disciplines and professions

Education Self-Assessment Tool

Do I have the Core Educational Competencies to be Eligible for CPCA Membership?

○ Participates in collaborative practice	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
○ Develops and maintains a referral network	
○ Identifies community resources relevant to client needs	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

8. PROFESSIONAL COMMUNICATION – Presenting oneself as a professional to the world

A. Third Party Support

○ Identifies when advocacy or third-party support may be of value to the client, and advises client accordingly	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
○ Supports clients to overcome barriers	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

B. Referrals and Third-Party Reports

○ Prepares clear, concise, accurate, and timely reports, appropriate team events of the recipient and the client	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
○ Recognizes ethical and legal implications when preparing reports	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

C. Media/social media

○ Considers and follows all ethical considerations when using media or social media in professional and in personal accounts	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐
○ Considers and follows all standards of practice associated with the use of media/social media	➡ Yes ☐ No ☐

Do you have any specific course related to the **Clinical Counselling Scope of Practice**:

1) Training in the use of the DSM-5-TR*	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
2) Training in Assessment with Differential Diagnosis*	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
3) Training in Mental Health Pharmacology*	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
4) Training in Addictions or Addictions Counselling	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
5) Training in the Biopsychosocial Approach to Counselling	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
6) Training in PTSD treatment or PTSD counselling	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
7) Training in Group Therapy (not psychoeducational presentations)	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]
8) Other training specific to mental health issues	➡ Yes [ ]	No [ ]

*These courses are required for Clinical Counselling Scope of Practice

Planning Tool - List the Educational Core Competencies which were not covered in any of your course work:

Education Self-Assessment Tool

Do I have the Core Educational Competencies to be Eligible for CPCA Membership?

If I am missing some competency areas, where might I be able to gain the training I need?

There are many places where you can obtain courses to address gaps in your educational background. Below are only a few links to course lists which may help you find the type of course(s) you are looking for:

- https://sprottshaw.com/child-family/professional-counsellor and click on the "courses" tab
- https://www.rhodescollege.ca/programs/diploma/counselling-training-courses
- https://www.counsellortraining.com/counsellor-diploma-courses.php
- https://stenbergcollege.com/program/counselling-therapist and click on "program courses"
- https://www.yorkvilleu.ca/programs/master-of-arts-in-counselling-psychology and scroll 1/2 way down.
- Also review the CPCA Standards or Practice and CPCA Code of Ethics as part of your learning

The CPCA is not endorsing any specific program, but we hope that you can find the course(s) that might be of help to you in rounding out your educational training to become a Professional Counsellor.

Your Next Step?

Your next step is up to you. From doing this Educational Self-Assessment tool, you have some direction and can: (1) make application to the CPCA or (2) find the course work that will help you move forward. If you have further questions, please feel to email the CPCA at admissions@thecpca.ca. Thanks.